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ThePoint



Constitutional recognition and the Voice to Parliament: let's get this done!

The IEU Victoria Tasmania supports the recognition of Australia's Indigenous peoples in our constitution and the establishment of a Voice to Parliament.

Alongside the broader union movement, faith groups, sporting codes and countless other organisations and community groups, we are wholeheartedly campaigning for a Yes vote in the upcoming referendum.

But we get it: talking about this campaign can be tough. It shouldn't be, but certain political opportunists have managed to

turn what could have been an important, constructive national conversation into a divisive partisan dispute.

This is not to say that there are not real and legitimate debates to be had about the model that will be presented to Australian voters in the upcoming referendum – but these debates are being drowned out by those in politics who have leapt at the

opportunity to further their own careers by feeding the flames of fear and suspicion. Of the many cheap and disingenuous slogans in our recent political history, 'if you don't know, vote no' is right up there with the worst of them. As educators, IEU members will instinctively respond: 'if you don't know, find out!'

This relentlessly negative messaging

has been amplified by mainstream media (and social media) reactionaries, who label anyone keen on fairness and listening to the wishes of our First Nations fellow citizens as 'cultural elites', despite the fact that the call for a Voice to Parliament emerged from the most democratic process imaginable, which produced the

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

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

Support Indigenous literacy and inform your classroom

Grab the acclaimed picture book *Country tells us when...* and the accompanying Teachers Guide and help embed Indigenous perspectives in your school.

The Australian curriculum-aligned lessons for F-6 explore themes of connecting to country, preserving Indigenous languages, and exploring the seasons. The Teacher Guide helps educators create a culturally safe learning environment to engage respectfully with First Nations storytelling. Its lesson plans help teachers explore First Nations history and culture with their students with confidence.

Go to: <https://rb.gy/e61p3>

BioBlitz: Turning students into citizen scientists!

The BioBlitz takes place during National Biodiversity Month which culminates in National Threatened Species Day, 22 September.

Students take images of plant and animal species in their school grounds and record information such as the time, date, and location of the photo. Designated teachers then upload the photos and data to iNaturalist, a global biodiversity citizen science platform.

It's a unique, dynamic way to foster interest in conservation and help build our ecological database.

To register your school for this year's BioBlitz and Zoom training go to: <https://www.ps.org.au/bioblitz-2023>

WorkCover petition

The union movement is calling on the Victorian Government to fix the 'broken' WorkCover scheme for injured workers.

Proposed changes would restrict the type of psychological injury for which workers would be entitled to compensation and make it harder for workers with long-term injuries to access weekly payments.

Injured workers should not bear the cost of fixing WorkCover.

A Megaphone petition is calling on the Victorian Government to reverse proposed cuts, implement recommended changes from a review into compensation; and hold insurance companies to account by reigning in unfair practices.

Sign this petition for WorkCover reform that works for everybody.

Sign the petition at: <https://rb.gy/imccm>

IEU FOR THE VOICE



The IEU is proud to support the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Voice to Parliament, and we encourage members to get behind this historic campaign. Find out more, pledge your vote, get involved in local activities and access a range of resources at www.ieu.news/voice

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Contact us

   @IEUVicTas

 INDEPENDENT EDUCATION UNION VICTORIA TASMANIA

EDITORIAL/ADVERTISING ENQUIRIES

T: (03) 9254 1860
F: (03) 9254 1865
FreeCall: 1800 622 889
E: info@ieuvictas.org.au
W: www.ieuvictas.org.au

CONTRIBUTIONS & LETTERS

from members are welcome and should be forwarded to: *The Point* PO Box 1320, South Melbourne 3205, or by email to: ThePoint@ieuvictas.org.au

MELBOURNE OFFICE:

120 Clarendon Street
Southbank 3006

HOBART OFFICE:

212 Liverpool Street
Hobart 7000

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EDITORIAL CONTENT:

Responsibility for editorial comment is taken by D. Brear, 120 Clarendon Street, Southbank 3006. Views expressed in articles reflect those of the author and are not necessarily union policy.

COMMITTEE OF MANAGEMENT

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Deputy General Secretary:

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President:

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Passion and persistence: The long road to the Workload Agreement

At long last, nearly three years after the IEU first surveyed members right across Victorian Catholic education to shape our bargaining priorities, all Catholic schools in the state are covered by a legally binding Agreement!

It's been a very long road. We've seen the Sale Diocese split off to negotiate a separate Agreement, we've seen IEU members turn up the pressure through postcard campaigns, rallies, protest actions under the 'No

More Freebies' banner and there was some very creative work on social media. We had great member-led local media attention right across the state, and we sent the 'MACS Truck' mobile billboard to visit Catholic schools, the MACS

head office and the National Catholic Education Conference. We've also seen confusion, disarray and an extraordinary series of delays from the employer group as we sought to get this deal done. But we've also seen that when we

stand together, we win!

See page 13-16 for more including Reps on the deal, explainers and implementation success stories.

Bargaining timeline



GENERAL SECRETARY
DAVID BREAR

An Agreement to make it work

Finally, a new Agreement covering staff in Victorian Catholic schools outside the Sale diocese has been approved by the Fair Work Commission.

This was a huge, lengthy undertaking, and the 78.7% vote in favour of the deal is a solid endorsement of the work put in by IEU Reps, members and staff.

We need to acknowledge though that there were individual schools where the vote in favour of the Agreement was not strong. IEU Organisers are out in these workplaces speaking to staff and asking whether their concerns are with the Agreement itself or with the way it's being interpreted and implemented. We're finding the latter is generally the case.

Like the deal in the Sale diocese, this 'Workload Agreement' breaks new ground in tackling workload intensification. The reduction of scheduled class time, phasing out of extras, regulation of teachers' hours through the 30 + 8 model and time in lieu (TIL), are all designed to put a lid on workload, which we all know has been

spiralling out of control for decades.

So where are schools getting implementation wrong?

With TIL, the process is supposed to start with the Principal consulting with Reps in the school's Consultative Committee to develop a list of activities outside of normal working hours that will attract TIL. The list should be complete, but school leaders should also respect and acknowledge the fact that teachers work excess hours every week.

Once the activities are determined, consultation should occur around appropriate staffing and around planning how best to acquit the TIL staff are accruing. The 'Plan, Accrue, Acquit' sequence should be subject to consultation and agreed upon in advance.

We're hearing great stories from schools where this is working – but there are still

some getting the process wrong, and some making it up as they go along, which is always going to lead to unfairness.

Two other massive goodwill-killers we've seen in schools are the 'banking' of employer directed time to be used later for acquittal, and school leaders telling staff they 'owe' the school time.

While schools can technically 'bank' time, there are practical reasons why it won't be a big issue once this Agreement is properly implemented – chiefly that given the amount of time teachers are directed by their employer, there is precious little time left to bank!

As for those employers who tell their staff they owe time – please!

Technically, Australian workers are only required to work a 38-hour week, and we know teachers in schools work many hours more than that. So if anything it's

employers that owe time to teachers, not the other way around.

This Agreement introduces significant changes and we acknowledge that in some schools it will take time to bed it down so that members experience its full benefits.

But the union remains as committed as ever to making positive changes happen as quickly as possible, and we'll be out in schools working with members and school leaders until every school gets it right!

Meanwhile, we'll also continue striving to conclude a deal in Tasmanian Catholic schools and for more than 40 independent schools across Victoria and Tasmania where we are currently negotiating – and given the workload wins in the Victorian Catholic Agreement, there are now new benchmarks for these other sectors to meet!



KNOW YOUR RIGHTS

Flexible Working Arrangements & Reasonable Adjustments

Employees can request changes to their working arrangements to help balance work with other important aspects of their lives. In most cases, these can be categorised as ‘flexible working arrangements’ or as ‘reasonable adjustments’.

What is the difference?

‘Flexible working arrangements’ are changes to an employee’s work patterns on the grounds of family situations, caring requirements or age.

‘Reasonable adjustments’ are modifications or alterations made to the work environment, work processes, or conditions to ensure an employee with a disability has equal opportunity to perform their job and participate fully in the workplace.

Flexible Working Arrangements

The IEU can provide support throughout the flexible working arrangements (FWA) application process. We can offer advice on writing your request, prepare you for the discussion with your employer, and guide you through understanding your employer’s response.

Full-time and part-time employees can now request flexible work arrangements if they’ve worked with the same employer for at least 12 months and they:

- Are the parent, or have responsibility for the care, of a child who is school aged or younger
- Are a carer (under the Carer Recognition Act 2010)
- Have a disability
- Are 55 or older
- Are pregnant
- Are experiencing family and domestic violence
- Provide care or support to an immediate family or household member who is experiencing family and domestic violence.

Response to a FWA Request

Once an employee makes a written request for a flexible working arrangement, the employer must respond in writing within 21 days.

The response must indicate either:

- a) That your request is granted

- b) That, after a discussion, an agreement has been reached for a change in your working arrangements that differs from the initial request

- c) That the request has been refused, along with the reasons for refusal (subject to certain conditions).

Grounds for Refusal

The employer can only refuse your request after:

- a) Discussing the request with you and genuinely trying to reach an agreement
- b) Considering the consequences of the refusal for you, the employee
- c) Stating that the refusal is based on reasonable business grounds.

Reasonable Business Grounds

Some of the reasons that might justify refusal include:

- a) The proposed new working arrangements would be too costly
- b) There’s no capacity to change other employees’ working arrangements to accommodate your request
- c) The proposed changes would likely lead to a significant loss in efficiency, productivity, or customer service.

Explanation of Grounds for Refusal

If the employer refuses the request, they must:

- a) Detail the reasons for the refusal
- b) Specify their business grounds for refusal and explain how these grounds apply to the request
- c) Propose alternative changes in working arrangements that would accommodate your circumstances to some extent, or state that there are no such changes.

What you can do if your request is refused

If you believe that your employer has unreasonably refused to accommodate your responsibilities as a parent or carer, here are steps you can take:

1. **Talk to your employer:** You can start by discussing your needs and responsibilities with your employer or supervisor. It can be helpful to propose specific adjustments or accommodations that would assist you.
2. **Seek support from your union:** If discussions with your employer don’t lead to a satisfactory outcome, contact your IEU Organiser. We can provide you with advice and support and potentially represent you in further discussions with your employer.

FWA rights in your Enterprise Agreement

Your Agreement may contain additional rights for part-time or flexible work. For instance, the new Victorian Catholic Agreement grants an employee returning to work from parental leave the right to work part-time in one or more periods at any time from their return to work until the child reaches school age.

Reasonable Adjustments

Under the Victorian Equal Opportunity Act 2010, it is against the law for employers to discriminate against an employee because of their disability. This applies to all stages of employment, including recruitment, returning to work, dismissal, and terms and conditions of work.

Understanding Reasonable Adjustments

‘Reasonable adjustments’ refer to measures or alterations to the workplace, job role, work hours, or other working conditions that help accommodate an employee with a disability. These adjustments can enable an employee to perform their job effectively and safely. Examples include modifying work premises for easier access, such as installing ramps, handrails, or elevators; and altering work hours to allow for

medical appointments or treatment.

Requesting Reasonable Adjustments

If you require reasonable adjustments due to a disability, the following steps are advisable:

1. **Inform your employer about your disability:** Let your employer know about your disability and how it impacts your work. This could be a written or verbal communication.
2. **Identify potential adjustments:** Determine what adjustments might be necessary for you to perform your job effectively. It may be helpful to consult with a medical professional or occupational therapist.
3. **Formally request adjustments:** Put your request in writing, specifying the adjustments needed and how these would help you in your job. Provide any relevant medical or expert opinions if possible.
4. **Engage in an open discussion with your employer:** Be open to a dialogue with your employer to discuss the adjustments, their feasibility, and any potential impact on the workplace or team.

Employer’s Duty

Employers must make reasonable adjustments for an employee with a disability unless it would cause ‘unjustifiable hardship’ to the employer because the changes are too expensive, impractical, or time-consuming.

However, an employer is not obliged to make these adjustments if they are not aware of an employee’s disability. That’s why it’s crucial to communicate your needs openly.

For advice or assistance around making a request for flexible working arrangements or reasonable adjustments, or if your request has been refused, contact the IEU.



IEUA speaks up for independent education

The election of the Labor Federal Government has led to an unprecedented review of most aspects of education, and the IEU’s federal office has been busy making the voice of educators heard.

IEU Australia Federal Secretary Brad Hayes and Deputy Veronica Yewdall are making submissions to 11 major inquiries or reviews, and by August this year had already issued 13 position papers on topics ranging from AI regulation to anti-discrimination laws.

Two key current issues:

National School Reform Agreement (NSRA) / The National Teacher Workforce Action Plan

The NSRA aims to provide ‘greater funding transparency and smarter delivery

of targeted support to staff and students’.

Educators will be glad to know that the first priority of the IEUA submission is reducing teacher workload and burnout. The IEUA says the Agreement can deliver practical and enforceable reforms to schools suffering a staffing crisis if it focuses on:

- Nationally endorsed curriculum or assessment resources
- Streamlined compliance requirements
- Resourcing of additional support staff duties
- Guaranteed support of early career teachers.

Review of Initial Teacher Education (ITE) by the Teacher Education Expert Panel

The IEUA is generally positive about the proposed changes to ITE, saying the insights and classroom experiences of members had helped shape new measures proposed by the panel to better prepare early career teachers.

However, they say there must also be a focus on ‘a comprehensive plan to continue to support new teachers once they reach the classroom’.

New teachers need access to best practice induction programs and paid mentoring

time and require reduced teaching loads.

But, just as important is support for experienced but overworked teachers to support their new colleagues when they are ‘drowning under administrative tasks and compliance red tape’.

‘Experienced teachers need dedicated release time to undertake mentoring roles with beginning teachers.’

To read all of the IEUA’s position papers, go to: www.ieu.org.au/news-publications/ieu-speaks-union-statements/

Tasmanian Catholic bargaining update

Negotiations between the IEU and Tasmanian Catholic school employers continue with monthly full-day bargaining meetings in Hobart, but the parties are still some way off reaching agreement on several key issues.

Staff in Tasmanian Catholic schools are currently being forced to endure inferior conditions to their state school colleagues because their employers are refusing to agree to improve some key conditions to match those already in place in government schools.

The IEU Log of Claims, served on the employers more than 18 months ago, called for a decrease in face-to-face teaching time of an hour per week in Catholic primary schools, as well as increased paid parental leave of 18 weeks for the primary care giver, 4 weeks' paid partner leave and superannuation payments to be made for the first year of parental leave. All of these conditions are already in place in government schools.

In addition, similar to arrangements in government schools, the IEU is seeking improvements around the support offered to teachers new to the profession and their mentors, so that sufficient time is available for graduate teachers to work with more experienced educators as they get to know the ropes while seeking full registration.

The Catholic employers are also

yet to agree to paying some of the bonus payments that were made to lower paid employees in Tasmanian government schools.

While refusing to commit to most of the IEU's claims, the employers have made a number of claims of their own, the most concerning of which are a claim to increase the number of days in the school year and a claim for a new provision that would allow the forced transfer of staff between schools.

The IEU negotiation team continues to push back hard arguing that at a time of staff shortages, employers should be doing everything they can to give Catholic schools a competitive advantage.

The IEU remains hopeful that agreement can be reached before the end of the 2023 school year, but that hope is starting to fade as employers seem intent to continue with a go-slow and to keep putting forward claims that the union simply cannot agree to. The employer also wants to make fairly significant (and in our view unnecessary) changes to the wording of some provisions of the existing Agreement, which will cause further delays.

Clearly the danger of this is that current entitlements may be weakened in the process and more time will simply be chewed up in drafting.

As we go to print, a team of Victorian Organisers are out in force across Tasmania backing up our local staff, updating members on progress in negotiations and building further momentum in our campaign so we can put some real pressure on the employers to agree to a decent deal without further delay.

As always, the bigger we are and the stronger we are, the better the outcomes we can win – so please encourage your colleagues to join you in your union!



IEU commits to climate action at Pacific meeting

The IEU has affirmed its commitment to climate justice and a just transition to renewable energies during a conference hosted by Education International Asia-Pacific and the Council of Pacific Educators (COPE) in Lautoka, Fiji.

During the conference, Pacific education unionists committed to implementing climate action plans for their unions and communities, and Indigenous Pacific unionists led discussions regarding the pressing threat of climate change to their communities. The COPE Women's Network called for a feminist response because it is women who are being disproportionately

affected by climate impacts.

Brad Hayes, IEUA Federal Secretary, presented the paper *Just Transition: How can educators become agents of change in the transition to a low-carbon economy?*

Brad said, 'While there are upcoming exciting opportunities in new green industries, this will be meaningless if the right workers with the right skills mix are not in place... our union values have to underpin what will be a

dramatic period of transition and change to make sure no student, no school, no worker and no industry is left behind.'

You should be safe at work



DEPUTY GENERAL SECRETARY
KYLIE BUSK

Every worker has the right to work in a safe and healthy workplace environment and to perform their work without risk to their physical and psychological health and safety.

Prevention of injury, illness and disease must be prioritised in schools.

There is now Occupational Health and Safety legislation across Australia which obliges employers to identify hazards, assess the level of risk of those hazards, and eliminate or reduce those risks. While there is no doubt that schools are better at controlling 'manual handling' and 'slips and trip' hazards, when it comes to dealing with violent and threatening student behaviour there is much more to do.

We've made the safety of employees in schools a feature of this edition (see pages 8,9) because IEU Officers are being asked much more frequently for advice about violent student behaviour. Members also want to know how much support they should expect from their school to help avoid dangerous situations.

In too many schools, the safety of school staff is not a high enough priority. Too often, our officers take calls from injured workers who have been the victim of assaults or threats. Too often, their colleagues are distressed by such incidents, which for too long have been accepted as 'part of the job'.

While it is an important part of the IEU's job to help members deal with such hardships, it is also our responsibility to ensure that the prevention of mental and physical injury is taken seriously by employers.

Other 'caring professions' such as health balance the complex needs of patients and their own wellbeing, and have measures in place to deal with violence.

Occupations such as nursing have 'zero tolerance' towards occupational violence – and it's time education took such an approach to the hazards in our workplaces. In particular, any workplace injury requiring medical treatment should trigger a notification to WorkSafe authorities.

Excessive workloads might not seem as dramatic a danger as violent physical incidents, but it has a terrible cumulative impact on the wellbeing of staff. That's why the IEU campaigns so strongly in bargaining for measures which confront untenable workloads. Without a policy framework covering matters like time in lieu, designated hours for specific duties and a means for staff to have a say on how their time is allocated, tasks pile up and employees end up stressed and exhausted.

The workload scourge is also being addressed by our federal office, which has insisted that any new education policy initiatives or programs be subject to a Teacher Workload Impact Assessment (TWIA). At a time when the Labor Government is reviewing most aspects of education, this demand is a vital voice on behalf of ordinary members pushed to the brink by 'additional tasks and add-on duties'. You can read about TWIA on page 8.

Whether it is violence or workloads, the IEU is out to change the attitude that education staff should just put up with deteriorating working conditions.

The health and safety of teachers, learning support officers, school leaders, and other school staff must be put first. Without their safety the needs of students simply cannot be met.

Tasmanians for the Voice: Raymond Blizzard

A union is its members. No shock then that the best words about why the IEU supports the Voice to Parliament come from Raymond. We literally couldn't say it better ourselves!



Raymond Blizzard, IEU member, St Brigid's Catholic School New Norfolk

Why do you support the Voice to Parliament?

Firstly, and this needs to be stressed, this is my own humble opinion.

Because it's the right thing to do. Politically, societally, and emotionally.

Politically, now is the time. We, as a nation, have an opportunity, not necessarily to right some wrongs, but to help us move in the right direction.

Societally, now is the time, we must act now before this opportunity is lost.

Emotionally, I feel this deep within my being that it is the right thing to do.

And let's look at it logically, and unemotionally. We are being asked to vote on an advisory body, a body that has no power of veto, no legislative power, no political power. It is an advisory body, composed of indigenous members who will advise the government on issues that concern the indigenous community, nothing more, nothing less. An advisory body.

To me, this is complete and utter common sense and is something that should have always been done anyway. This helps us along the path of becoming a more mature, caring and understanding nation.

How is that not worth voting for?

What do you say to people who are undecided about their vote in the referendum?

I say listen to both sides of the argument but listen critically. Sadly, the No vote proponents have already been spreading lies, half-truths, and misinformation.

This vote is not a sinister power grab or a move designed to divide the country.

This vote is simply about an advisory committee.

Think about the fact that if there was an issue that directly affected you or your community, would you not wish to have a voice, a role in the conversation?

That is what we are voting on. The chance to make a difference, and to ensure that the right people have a seat at the table.

Why the IEU backs the Voice to Parliament

Continued from front page

landmark Uluru Statement from the Heart.

And the ask is not as hard as you might think! In fact it's quite simple: constitutional recognition of the original inhabitants of this continent, and the formation of an advisory body.

That's all it comes down to.

That's why, in this edition, we're also keeping it simple, and on these pages we offer you a straightforward guide to Voice basics and down to earth words from members.

Strip out the opportunistic minority peddling hate and remind yourself of the simple facts. Our indigenous brothers and sisters want this. It's about respect for an immensely rich cultural and human history. It's a modest tweak to a 122-year-old document. It is a big step towards empowering disadvantaged communities and giving them a say. It will help heal and unite a country that that has been divided for too long. It's hardly radical – right now we are one of very few colonised countries that does not have constitutional recognition of or a treaty with their First Nations people. Ultimately, this is an opportunity that we cannot afford to miss.

The Voice is a moral choice, but also a pragmatic one – after years of expensive failure trying to close the gap on indigenous disadvantage, it's time to embrace a mechanism based on expert local advice. Indigenous

input into funding for programs and services in Indigenous communities will help ensure money is spent more efficiently and effectively.

When we listen to people about decisions which affect them, we get better results. This is well known to unionists, who understand that workers need to be consulted on decisions made by employers which affect their work.

The model of the Voice was the result of an exhaustive democratic process. In 2017, 250 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander leaders held a Convention at Uluru, the culmination of 13 First Nation Regional Dialogues across the country, involving more than 1200 Indigenous representatives. The result was the Uluru Statement from the Heart, a powerful document which invites Australians of all backgrounds to walk together toward a better future for all of us.

Australia's First Nations peoples belong to many distinct nations living in vastly different parts of this huge country, so they have many different ideas about how to improve health, education, and fairness for their people. Despite that, the Uluru Statement from the Heart united all those disparate representatives, and over 80% of Indigenous Australians support the Voice to Parliament.

Australians are especially wary of constitutional change, and very few referenda have been successful. The

notion of a referendum is foreign to any of us under the age of 42. This will take real effort.

So, if you support this crucial step towards unity and progression in our country, help spread the word. Most of us are swayed on such issues by people we are familiar with; the opinions of friends and loved ones have as much influence as the best arguments of the learned and famous. The conversations will sometimes be hard – but they are important, and by having them you will be part of something you can be proud of.

Share positive and hopeful content on social media, and let those in your circle know that you aren't moved by fear campaigns: you support fairness, justice, and a better future – you will be voting Yes!



IEU LEARNING HUB

**WEDNESDAY
6 SEPTEMBER**

4:30pm to 6:30pm

Steps to Reconciliation – Uluru and the Voice (primary)

IEU LEARNING HUB

**THURSDAY
7 SEPTEMBER**

4:30pm to 6:30pm

Steps to Reconciliation – Uluru and the Voice (secondary)



Find out more and get involved in campaigning for a First Nations Voice to parliament: www.ieu.news/voice

Yes, please! – Tasmanians on the Voice to Parliament

Tasmania is a key state in the campaign for a Voice to Parliament to give recognition to Australia's Indigenous peoples. Here are the voices of IEU members and other Tasmanians who believe a Yes vote in the referendum is a must.

IEU members on the voice

John Waldock, Tasmanian Council President

Why do you support the Voice to Parliament?

I support the Voice because I see it as a way for First Nations people to have the opportunity to have more input into the political process. I see it as empowering them to have their say on significant national issues, allowing them to contribute their unique wisdom to enrich public discussion. I also see it as a chance for Australians with an immigrant background to listen with an open heart to First Nations people and more fully engage with them in public discourse.

What do you say to people who are undecided about their vote in the referendum?

I encourage voters who are undecided to listen carefully to the positions put by both sides of the vote, to take the time to do their own research, and carefully think about what the positive outcomes of a successful Yes vote will bring. And consider what a successful No vote will say to First Nations people, a people who have engaged in an open and heartfelt process through the Uluru Statement to try to bring our nation together.

Abigail Butler, Dominic College, Glenorchy

Why do you support the Voice to Parliament?

I support the Voice to Parliament because it is the first stage in

attempting to address the wrongs this country has done. It is by listening to the requests made in the Statement From the Heart that we can begin to bring about justice for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples after centuries of abuse and genocide.

What do you say to people who are undecided about their vote in the referendum?

I would remind people that we need to use our privilege and power to uplift the voices of those oppressed by the system we live in. We need to listen to the requests made by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to begin to take action. When there is something harmful that happens, it isn't our place to silence those who are impacted. It is our place to listen and act accordingly.

Other Tasmanians on the voice

Jessica Munday, Secretary, Unions Tasmania, said, 'As unionists, we understand the value of consultation in our workplaces - the right to have a say on matters that affect us. For too long, policies have been imposed on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples without consultation and this needs to change. Unions Tasmania is proud to support the Voice to Parliament. It will begin to deliver long overdue justice to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in Australia, and justice and solidarity has always been union business.'

Dean Parkin, Yes23 Campaign Director said, 'there is diverse and strong community support building for a Yes vote across the state.'

'This is about bringing all Australians together. We are building a positive movement that includes people from all walks of life and we encourage more to join us in getting behind this referendum to give Indigenous people a real say on issues that affect them.'

Alison Overeem, Palawa woman and Manager at Leprena UAICC welcomed the support of Tasmanian community leaders and said 'This is a call to all Tasmanians to walk together. This is what sits at the heart of the Uluru Statement.'

Aimen Jafri, Interim Chair Multicultural Council of Tasmania said: 'The Multicultural Council of Tasmania proudly supports the Uluru Statement from the Heart. We believe in the power of unity and are committed to standing alongside Tasmania's community leaders in advocating for a Yes vote in this year's Voice to Parliament referendum.'

Rodney Croome, President of Equality Tasmania said: 'For 250 years non-Indigenous people have silenced and ignored First Nations Australians, talked over them and at them. Now it's time for us to hear their voices.'

Vaughn Bennison, Executive Officer of Disability Voices Tasmania said: 'I see this as the logical next step to full recognition of equity for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people under the Australian constitution. This is necessary

if Australia is to continue towards being a fully inclusive society where everyone gets a 'fair go.'

About Yes23

Yes23 brings together grassroots organisations all campaigning for constitutional recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people through a voice to parliament.

Yes23 campaigners Marta Hodul Lenton and Lee Archer are based out of the IEU Hobart office, and we have been liaising with them to promote Tasmanian Yes events.

In June, they helped scores of organisations step forward to support a Yes vote on behalf of multicultural communities, women, workers and the LGBTQI+ community in Tasmania, joining over 500 organisations across Australia now backing the Voice to Parliament.

Please contact the IEU office or Marta and Lee if you need any further assistance with Yes resources for your school or community:

Marta Hodul Lenton:
marta@yes23.com.au

Lee Archer: lee@yes23.com.au

Check out Yes23 events in your region:
<https://yes23.com.au>



Voice to Parliament basics

Don't let the naysayers complicate what is a simple proposition. Keep in mind the following Voice facts.

What is a First Nations Voice?

The First Nations Voice is a constitutionally protected body of First Nations people which will advise the Federal Parliament and the executive government on matters relating to First Nations people.

Why is the Voice to Parliament union business?

As unionists we know that when we are consulted about matters that impact us, the result is better decision making. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples need to be listened to on issues that affect them and their families and communities.

How will a First Nations Voice help communities?

A Voice will mean the Government will have better quality information about First Nations communities and issues, delivered directly from communities themselves,

resulting in better quality laws and policies, better targeted investment, and ultimately better outcomes for First Nations people across many sectors.

Why do we need to change the Constitution? Why can't it be an ordinary act of parliament?

Over the last half-century we've seen the rise and fall of the Council for Aboriginal Affairs (1967-1976), the National Aboriginal Consultative Committee (1973-77), the National Aboriginal Conference (1977-85), the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission (1989-2005), the National Indigenous Council (2005-07), the National Congress of Australia's First Peoples (2009-19), and the Prime Minister's Indigenous Advisory Council (2013-19).

In most cases, these were established with good intentions, then abolished

following a change of government. The extraordinary waste, the loss of expertise, and the damaging symbolism of this vital area being treated as a political football has seriously undermined progress for far too long.

It's time to establish a mechanism that ensures that all future governments must listen to Indigenous voices. The proposed change to the Constitution will simply say that the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Voice will exist and will be able to make representations to parliament and government – it will not dictate the composition, powers, or resourcing of the Voice, so it will be able to evolve as needed.

Do First Nations Peoples support the Voice?

Independent research undertaken in January 2023 shows 80% of First Nations

people support the Voice.

Why is the sequence Voice, then Treaty and Truth?

The Constitution is the highest law in the land. This is the best way for us to ensure tangible outcomes to improve the lives of First Nations peoples sooner.

Do other countries have mechanisms like the proposed Voice?

If anything, Australia is an international laggard. Comparable settler-states such as New Zealand and Canada have long had similar (or stronger!) mechanisms, which have proven to be an effective way to ensure that Indigenous peoples, who often make up only a small percentage of the population, can actively participate in decision making regarding the polices and laws that affect them.

- Ulurustatement.org.au; Yes23.com.au



Plan for safety to come first for staff in schools

If there's a violent incident at a non-government school, there's an accepted protocol for what happens next... if a student is at risk.

But if a staff member has been in harm's way? It's a crapshoot. Some schools have up-to-date procedures for workplace safety, but far too many do not.

It's not good enough.

The IEU hears from many members who in their day-to-day work with students are bitten, pushed, kicked, spat at, sworn at or threatened.

We must change the attitude that violent incidents at schools are 'just part of the territory', that they are something to put up with and pretend didn't happen.

Such attitudes were never appropriate, and there are now such complex behavioural challenges facing educators that the risk of serious injury or worse is a real workplace OHS issue.

While it is commendable that educators put their students first, there's no benefit for pupils in having injured and/or traumatised employees unable to carry on because their legitimate issues with a violent incident went unaddressed.

Schools often cite their obligations under the *Disability Standards for Education 2005* as the reason for not responding to student-initiated violence, but this is inadequate and shows a lack of understanding of their legal duty. It's clear that the standards require education providers to make reasonable adjustments for students with a disability but the standards clearly state

that a determination on whether an adjustment is reasonable must take into account the effect of the adjustment on anyone else, *including the education provider, staff and other students.*

We must change the attitude that violent incidents at schools are 'just part of the territory', that they are something to put up with and pretend didn't happen.

When considering adjustments for students with disabilities, employers must keep in mind their clear legal duty under the relevant Health and Safety legislation to control the risk of harm to their employees.

Every school needs a clear, simple step-by-step process for dealing with violent incidents (see the plan on page 9)

Furthermore, there must be a straightforward document every person in the school adheres to which states

how the school can minimise or avoid such incidents in the first place. There must be a **plan** for everyone at school, including staff, to be safe. These plans must be made in consultation with, and available to, all employees who will work with students with identified risk of violence, including CRTs. Information about hazards, in this case student-initiated violence, must be shared with employees exposed to that hazard – confidentiality is not a reason to not share this information.

It is not the student but the behaviour which should be the focus of this risk assessment – it is an employer's legal duty to apply what is known about the behaviour to minimise the risk of injury to that student, other students, and employees. Plans should identify the hazard, assess the risk including the likelihood and possible severity of harm, and implement controls to reduce the risk.

What is work-related violence?

WorkSafe defines work-related violence as 'when a person is abused, threatened or assaulted in a situation related to their work'. It can occur in person, over the phone or online, and be caused by the behaviour of other employees, clients or customers, or members of the public.

It obviously covers physical assaults, but goes much further.

Unacceptable or unreasonable behaviours include:

- Being violent or threatening violence of any kind, including being physically intimidating, aggressive hand gestures or invading another person's personal space
- Speaking or behaving in a rude, aggressive or threatening way, either in person, via email, social media, or over the telephone
- Sending demanding, rude, confronting or threatening letters, emails or text messages
- Discriminatory or derogatory comments
- The use of social media or public forums to make inappropriate or threatening remarks about the school, staff or students.



MEMBER PROFILE

Richard Linton, Parade College, Victorian Catholic Secondary Council

A committed unionist, Richard is a passionate advocate in the campaign against gendered violence.

What are the challenges in promoting the anti-gendered violence campaign?

As a society there is still significant ignorance around what gendered violence actually means. Until there is a collective understanding that gendered violence is not solely restricted to physical acts, then developing a common language and approach that defines, calls out and begins to address issues is difficult. This lack of understanding leads to acts of gendered violence being mislabelled.

Many of the common actions to combat gendered violence are reactive. We need to be proactive and focus on prevention, which is challenging because there are fewer resources available to organisations that take a prevention-first approach.

Schools can promote and educate tomorrow's drivers of this campaign by collaborating at all levels, from students through to their executive.

How do you engage colleagues and members in such a campaign?

I'm not afraid to confront challenging issues in the workplace. Due to experiences in my teenage years, combating gendered violence is something that I am passionate about. Hopefully, this is conveyed through initial conversations with colleagues and students and they know I'm there to support them and be an ally. Sometimes that means discussing issues directly; sometimes it is listening to stories and experiences.

Being an advocate and calling out problematic behaviour and attitudes demonstrate my support for colleagues. It is also important to communicate the results of advocating to school leadership with colleagues. For example, I'm now working with members of College leadership to analyse behavioural data as a part of ongoing review, and to inform consultation and decision making going forward.

What is the greatest challenge for a unionist in your sector?

Being heard and valued at a sector level. This Agreement took way too long to come to a resolution and some of the responses we received from the archdiocese certainly didn't inspire... What message does that send to school staff? What message does that send to school communities about how our governing bodies value staff where their children are educated? Why do we have to fight so hard to be heard and valued? This goes to the heart of everything that needs improving. Employers need to value the work we do, let school staff do what we do best and give us the time and resources to do it.

What are the most rewarding things about being a committed unionist?

Seeing the positive results of campaigning and working as a group to achieve an outcome. This could be at a local, sector, or societal level. In essence, it's being part of a larger voice that can

contribute to change for a better and fairer society. The sense of camaraderie amongst union members when we come together is fantastic, be it at training, council, or a bigger events.

I look back at the joint IEU/AEU industrial action during 2012, when 20,000 angry, fed-up teachers marched on Parliament House chanting 'ONE TERM TED!', or the Valentine's Day Rally in 2013 where IEU members sent a huge Valentines Day card to Ted Ballieu. There were incredibly important issues we were fighting for and the fact we were all fighting together, across sectors and unions was a moment of real strength.

What gives you the greatest hope for unionism in your sector?

Seeing young teachers, passionate about education and social justice, joining our ranks to push for better outcomes for our students and profession is wonderful. They are the continued lifeblood of our profession and the union movement, something that is very heartening.



How to make your school safer

There are plenty of resources for non-government schools to use as starting points when planning to manage violence in their schools.

The Department of Education and Training has a *Respectful Behaviours within the School Community Policy*, which sets out clear guidelines on the expected standards of behaviour for parents, carers and other adults who interact with the school community to reduce the risk and incidence of work-related violence towards school staff.

The policy defines standards of behaviours for all adult members of the school community and defines unacceptable behaviours and consequences for such behaviours.

The Department's *Work-Related Violence Policy* lays out the OHS obligations of principals, employees and Health and Safety Representatives (HSR). It requires that 'work-related violence' is entered as a hazard in the school's OHS risk register; that workplace factor(s) that contribute to the work-related violence risk in the workplace are identified and recorded; and that assessment of the level of risk associated with those factors is undertaken.

There are further steps to follow if the risk level is rated 'High' or 'Extreme' and steps to follow to eliminate or reduce those risks.

The Work-Related Violence Procedure sets out the practical step-by-step instructions for implementing the *Work-Related Violence Policy*.

For those working in Victorian Catholic schools CECV *Safe and Sound* guidelines

offer many similar structures. It states that 'Principals have a non-delegable duty under the OHS Act to institute measures to either eliminate the risk to employees or reduce the risk (of violence) as far as is practicable'.

Creating a plan to combat work-related violence

Schools must plan to control the risk of danger for employees. These plans should consider these kinds of factors:

Identifying hazards

- What is the behaviour which poses a risk to employees and others?
- Who is most at risk? Who else is exposed?
- Considering the context, what is the purpose of the behaviour? What are the known triggers? Where/when is it likely to occur? What are other contributing factors? Examples: medication, routine, medical condition, diagnosed disability.

Assessing risk

- How likely is it that the behaviour will injure others or the student themselves and how often?
- If someone is injured by the behaviour, how severe is the injury likely to be?
- What factors increase/decrease the risk? Was the usual teacher absent; is there a wet weather program; was there access to a comfort object; is there a de-escalation space; is there end-of-term fatigue?

- What other injury could occur because of an incident? For example, following an assault there can be assault, depression and anxiety.

Controlling risk

Appropriate control measures start with the highest levels of protection first. This list contains some examples; it is not exhaustive or appropriate to every situation.

- Exclude the student from activities when the risk cannot be reduced to a safe level
- Eliminate triggers such as specific noise and sensory stimuli
- Limit access to items which may be used as weapons
- Assess personal safety (employ duress alarms and mobile phones; remove items such as lanyards and scarves)
- Employ physical barriers
- Devise agreed strategies for each identified stage of behaviour – atypical, triggering, escalating and post incident – and make them available to any staff who have contact with the identified student
- Implement agreed procedures for dealing with low level behaviour which could escalate
- Additional staffing and supervision
- Shorter periods of attendance for student
- Training for staff in relation to particular disability/behaviour challenge

- Training for staff in de-escalation of aggressive behaviour
- Agreed procedures for regular handover and information exchange occurs (with employees, other agencies, parents, medical and allied health)
- Implement a workplace policy that outlines the actions which will be taken to protect employees and others from violence
- Agreed procedures for removal of student from classroom/yard if safety plan is not successfully de-escalating aggressive behaviour
- Positive behaviour promotion.

Reviewing the controls

- Regular review of safety plans *involving staff who work with that student*. What works to reduce risk? What's not working? What else could help?
- Has the risk been reduced to acceptable levels yet? If not – new controls are needed
- In some extreme situations, the risk cannot be reduced to a safe level no matter what controls have been put in place. In such cases the employer may be in contravention of the OHS Act by continuing to enrol the student and exposing employees to violent behaviour.



Australia's lamentable parental leave provisions

Australia lags far, far behind the world best-practice standard on this crucial entitlement.

In Victoria, we have seen significant improvements to employer-paid parental leave for primary and non-primary carers in new Catholic Agreements. Some independent schools are following this, whilst a notable few are setting even higher standards (see below). However, there is a lot more to do.

Sweden was the first country to replace maternity leave with parental leave (back in 1974) and is currently ranked first in the OECD for labour force participation, leaving Australia in the dust at 23rd place. Each Swedish parent is entitled to a minimum of 90 and a maximum of 480 days of flexible paid parental leave that can be distributed between parents.

The current **government-paid** parental leave scheme in Australia is half a century behind Sweden in several key respects:

- It distinguishes between 'primary' and 'non-primary' carer in an era where it is commonly acknowledged that the care of a child should be shared equitably
- It does not permit the transfer of any

leave between parents – the individual must 'use it or lose it'

- There is a significant discrepancy between the amount of leave paid to a primary (20 weeks) versus a non-primary carer (just two weeks!)
- Parental leave is paid at the minimum wage, (currently \$882.80 per week) and so does not even come close to replacing lost earnings for many parents.

The top five national paid parental leave schemes globally offer considerably more time AND money:

Country	Weeks of paid leave	Proportion of full pay
Sweden	96	80%
Finland	65	70%
Bulgaria	85	90%
Iceland	45	80%
Estonia	34	100%

It is clear that Australia's current model of 22 weeks' inflexible leave at less than 50% of the average Victorian teacher's wage is simply not fit for purpose when childcare is at a premium, workforce participation rate is too low and part-time employment often inflexible.

Employer-paid parental leave schemes in our sector are critical to mitigating the shortcomings of our federal system and topping up the government-paid scheme (which admittedly is flagged for improvement in coming years). Given the demographic of education employees, it is imperative that union members do everything possible to drag paid parental leave schemes in this country into the, ahem, 1970s.

Many independent schools have the funds to provide leadership in this area. It's time they used some of those funds to prioritise the wellbeing of employees and carers, for the good of staff and students.

The honour board! The following schools, through their IEU-negotiated Agreement, provide at least 18 weeks at full pay for the primary carer, including superannuation and entitlement accrual:

- Ruyton Girls School
- The Knox School
- Kingswood College
- Tintern Grammar (20 weeks)
- Carey Grammar (20 weeks)*
- The King David School (20 weeks)*

**Carey and King David deserve special commendation for making superannuation contributions for 46 weeks of parental leave.*

INDEPENDENT BARGAINING

Workload is an issue, regardless of sector

Bargaining in independent schools must now factor in workload improvements agreed to in all other Victorian schools.

VICTORIA

Members at **Yarra Valley Grammar** continue to wait for the NERR to be issued by the employer. The staff aim to consolidate two Agreements into one comprehensive Agreement covering all staff. Work on the Employee Log of Claims continues.

Bargaining has commenced at **Preshil** with the NERR being issued by the employer and a first meeting held to discuss bargaining protocols. Finalisation of the bargaining team is underway.

Bargaining at **North-Eastern Montessori School** is progressing well with the representatives keeping members informed of the details of their Log of Claims. The school's proposed salary increase will see all teachers above State and Catholic wages. Attention now turns to the general staff classifications and salaries. The employer's proposed 1% a year salary increase for these staff is lower than expected.

Bargaining continues at **Lauriston Girls' School** where the employer has provided a provisional salary increase of 2.5%.

Outstanding matters in the **Overnewton** bargain include teacher attendance time and after-hours activities. The employer has changed existing clauses without prior discussion or agreement and has rejected all the union's outstanding claims. Agreement has now been reached that proposed changes to existing clauses will not occur without IEU agreement.

Negotiations for the **Bayview College Agreement** are nearing completion. LSL accrual for maternity leave on the first 12 months is not yet agreed, nor is accident makeup pay improvements. TIL

arrangements for camps and excursions are still under discussion.

At **Ballarat Grammar School** bargaining has commenced and the Employee Log of Claims has been tabled.

Bargaining at **Highview College** continues with the focus on a fair wage increase for general staff. Members are considering their position if further improvements to the drafted Agreement are not forthcoming.

Flinders Christian Community College bargaining has commenced with employees presenting their claims. Our colleagues from the ANMF are present in bargaining for their members employed at the school.

Kardinia International College negotiations have commenced with the employee claim being presented.

Bargaining at **Oakleigh Grammar** has begun. Members are seeking a comprehensive Agreement in preference to the current 'slimline' version. At present the employer is opposing this.

Negotiations are continuing for a new Teachers' Agreement at **Beaconhills College**, but the school has flagged recent changes to state payroll taxation requirements as a concern. Staff bargaining Reps await the school's next move.

Negotiations are almost complete at **Newhaven**, with staff accepting proposed reductions in face-to-face teaching hours. Gendered violence and sexual harassment clauses will be included. There will also be a broadening of the terms of reference for the Consultative Committee to incorporate all school policies that affect the conditions of employees.

Shelford Girls' Grammar School bargaining is nearing completion with

minor final amendments being proposed by the employer, which include better consultation and a tweak to the salary offer.

Concerns regarding the current parental leave offer and the slimline format of the Agreement are causing employees at **Trinity Grammar School** to consider their voting position.

The **Lutheran Education** (Victorian Schools) Multi-Enterprise Agreement negotiations are continuing. Employees successfully negotiated for the inclusion of face-to-face hours being included within the enforceable MEA instead of sitting outside in the proposed Teacher Workload Guidelines. Unfortunately, the current proposal includes a 'small and rural school exclusion' which could see teachers in those schools having to teach more face-to-face time for a nominal additional remuneration. The employer also wants to maintain averaging of face-to-face hours with reference to the number of student attendance days. These positions show little regard for teachers' genuine workload concerns. IEU members are campaigning for no increases to face-to-face hours occurring without consultation and individual agreement. Discussions regarding the general staff classification structure and an increase to annual leave continue.

TASMANIA

Meetings have commenced at the **Friends' School** with Reps sharing their Log of Claims with the school. Almost all claims were rejected by the employer, although there was some interest in providing superannuation for staff on unpaid parental leave. The school

has made a salary offer of 2.5% or CPI (whichever is lower) for the life of the EA. Reps believe introducing a Consultative Committee and having no set attendance time for teachers outside of scheduled duties are no-cost items that should be included in the EA.

Bargaining continues at **St Michael's Collegiate**, and a working party continues to look at classification and salary rates for general staff. Staff want face-to-face teaching hours to be enforceable and transparent within the Agreement. Negotiations around Co-curricular arrangements also continue in the hope that workload burdens are reduced.

Approved Agreements

- ✓ Aitken College
- ✓ Bacchus Marsh Grammar School
- ✓ Beaconhills General Staff
- ✓ Billanook College General Staff
- ✓ Billanook College Teachers
- ✓ Geelong Grammar School
- ✓ Kingswood College
- ✓ Launceston Church Grammar General Staff
- ✓ Launceston Church Grammar Teachers
- ✓ Melbourne Girls' Grammar School
- ✓ PEGS
- ✓ PLC Teachers
- ✓ PLC General Staff
- ✓ St Leonard's College
- ✓ Tarremah Steiner

Victorian payroll tax rollercoaster comes to a halt

In the May budget, the State Government announced the removal of long-held payroll tax exemptions for many independent schools.

Subsequent rounds of negotiation and lobbying resulted in changes that were laid out at the end of June.

From 1 July 2024, non-government schools with an income from fees per student of more than \$15,000 will be subject to payroll tax, and the threshold will apply until at least 1 January 2029. Schools that increase their fees during this period won't be subject to the tax, but new non-government schools opening between now and 2029 will be assessed against this threshold.

The assessment of a school's income considers fees, charges, compulsory

levies, other income, fee reductions for scholarships and other financial relief provided to families in financial difficulty.

Payroll tax was first brought in over 50 years ago in Victoria. Non-government schools have previously been exempted because they are classified as not-for-profit organisations that provide an essential service. This change to the exemption was intended to bring independent schools in line with Government schools (whose funding includes recognition of the payroll tax obligation), as well as with all other public and private sector employers.

Schools affected by the exemption

have raised concerns about how they will fund the change, with some indicating they could increase fees or cut resources and programs to meet these increased operational costs, as they also face proposed increases to the WorkCover premium and the mental health and COVID levies.

Some schools are already using the proposed exemption removal as an excuse to argue against salary increases at the bargaining table. The IEU's position is that all these fees are the cost of doing business as an education provider in Victoria and they must not under any

circumstances be used as an excuse to minimise wage increases.

As teacher shortages hit and the cost of living soars, schools that fail to provide competitive wages and conditions will fail to attract and retain quality staff. Paying dedicated staff fairly should be the first thing factored into school budgets. Such an approach benefits teachers, students, and schools.



Teachers, workload reforms and the Victorian independent sector

In every education sector, there is a shortage of teachers because of excessive workloads, lack of teacher autonomy, and inflexible work patterns.

In response to these poor work conditions, staff have voted for Agreements in the Victorian Catholic and state education sectors which featured long-overdue reductions in scheduled class time (SCT) for teachers and new models for the management of teachers' workload. In the recent 'Workload Agreement' in Victorian Catholic schools, this workload arrangement is known as the 30 + 8 model.

In the Victorian independent sector, some schools engage with the IEU on reforming the terms and conditions of staff, but others remain reluctant to take action to reward employees beyond the minimum standards afforded by their Award.

However, the changes in other sectors are having a positive effect on independent schools.

The 30 + 8 workload model includes 30 hours for scheduled teaching and teacher-led work such as planning, collaboration and assessment and 8 hours which are

employer-directed, including 5 hours during 'attendance time' for lunch breaks, supervision etc and 3 hours adjacent to attendance time which can include two one-hour meetings.

This model aims to reduce burgeoning workload demands on teachers and 'fence off' their core duties, including preparation for classes, from ever-increasing administrative tasks.

The independent sector has usually had higher co-curricular and extra-curricular expectations of its staff than other schools, including more provision of individual support in non-class time, offsetting these higher demands with increased wages. At one time, this might have been fair enough – but over time, expectations of staff have become so excessive any benefit has been diminished.

The recent changes in the Catholic and State sectors are bringing renewed scrutiny of rampant workloads in independent

schools. Bargaining in many independent schools now includes specific claim items that aim to align these schools more closely with the rest of the state.

That includes definitions of SCT (in some schools SCT is still, shockingly, set 'at the Principal's discretion'), and limits on meetings per week, co-curricular requirements and extras in an attempt to quarantine teachers' time like the 30+8 model does in Catholic schools. It's long past time that class sizes were also seriously considered when considering teacher workloads in all schools – more students means more classroom management stress, and more time spent marking and preparing classes.

Some wealthy independent schools remain reluctant to adopt measures to mitigate excessive workloads, despite recording large surpluses and regularly increasing already high fees. It's time appropriate teacher to student ratios

and respected, well rested, and properly prepared staff were considered as valuable as glittering infrastructure.

Meaningful action on staff workloads is desperately needed in the independent sector, and this is why the examples of workload measures enshrined in the current Catholic Agreements are vital.

These processes take time and we need the support of all members, across all sectors, to achieve better working conditions in all schools.



Photo: Mark Munro

Xavier College – A most difficult negotiation!

After 14 meetings, bargaining at Xavier College collapsed with the school determined to put their proposed deal to the ballot.

After extensive work by the IEU sub-branch explaining the problems with the school's non-union Agreement proposal, the staff vote came in with 70% opposing the deal, sending the employer back to the bargaining table!

Staff at Xavier are aware that most teachers in Victoria are now working a prescribed 38-hour week with any directed work outside this accruing time in lieu. As part of the Xavier claim, teachers and support staff are seeking fair compensation for all overtime including penalty rates for weekend work.

All the hours of unpaid co-curricular activities like Saturday sport, early morning swimming supervision, school musicals, and Friday night homework clubs mean Xavier teachers spend significantly more time supervising students than their colleagues across most other Victorian schools. Because this work is not considered to be 'face-to-face teaching', in a school without

enforceable limits such as those in the Catholic sector's '30 + 8 model', it simply means that too much teacher time is chewed up in supervision. This results in an unsustainable amount of marking, planning and preparation being pushed to evenings and weekends. This situation is typical of workload excesses that occur when staff time is not properly valued.

So, what next, and what is a PABO anyway?

Protected Action Ballot Orders (PABOs) involve the Fair Work Commission scrutinising the types of protected industrial actions a group of employees (teachers in this instance) want to use to get a difficult negotiation moving.

No longer can workers easily down tools and strike; the process is now more complicated and involves the local Union branch voting on a list of potential actions. If there is a majority YES vote of over 50%, the negotiation returns to the Fair Work Commission.

There, staff and the union engage with a Commissioner in a last attempt at a negotiated resolution with the employer. If that fails, union members can take protected action. The employer cannot punish staff for taking part in such legal industrial action.

Staff at Xavier are aware that most teachers in Victoria are now working a prescribed 38-hour week with any directed work outside this accruing time in lieu.

How big is the pie?

Often during negotiations with independent schools we're told the

school is just holding things together 'on a shoe string'. Meanwhile staff can see a new full size football oval with an underground carpark and a new multi-story building built 'as cheaply as possible' with wood imported from Italy and wonder, 'where do they get the money for all this?'

In this case, Xavier sold its Kostka Hall for \$100 million and also made significant cost savings from redundancies that followed that sale.

Staff and union members at Xavier are owning their power and starting to understand that we all have a right to take actions that will improve our work / life balance.



Do we need this? New education initiatives need to be tested

IEU members know all too well the fight to reduce workloads, and staff in most Victorian schools have recently won provisions aiming to curb 'administrivia' and excessive non-core tasks.

Often, time consuming tasks derive from noble or high-minded ideas. But the lack of input from staff adds even more tasks to an overflowing timetable, and leaves teachers being asked to do too much with too little.

Often, the big idea is fine on paper, but the reality of its implementation is ignored.

This is why the IEUA has demanded that any new education initiative or project be subject to a Teacher Workload Impact Assessment (TWIA).

The call for TWIAs came in the IEUA's statement on the National School Reform Agreement (NSRA).

The National Teacher Workforce Action Plan requires that all NSRA outcomes are subject to a Teacher Workload Impact Assessment (Action 20).

The IEUA goes further, stating that 'all government and employer initiatives should be subject to the same test'.

'Unless a proposal is neutral in terms of workload impacts, or includes confirmed workload offsets, it should not proceed.'

Like new workload provisions in Victorian Catholic schools, where teacher working hours are strictly 'fenced off' and anything over and beyond incurs time in lieu, ideas that heap more of a burden on overworked teachers must get a hard NO.

An example of an idea that may sound appealing but has obvious issues was a recent *Herald Sun* article which argued that 'children are being 'let down' by teachers unable to recognise the early signs of learning disorders', and that teachers would be able to do this if they

were taught it during their tertiary studies.

In a litigious age where teachers are vilified on social media, lack autonomy in workplaces and have to continually fight to achieve respectful and decent work conditions, we need to take pause and properly assess every new idea for its impact on education staff.

It takes qualified, expert professionals to properly diagnose serious learning disabilities correctly; a run-through in a handful of classes at uni does not suffice.

And the IEUA warned that dedicated wellbeing staff are not always present in schools.

'In reality, such specialist responsibilities are often added to already overloaded classroom teachers or leaders who are not necessarily

equipped or able to provide such support. Targeted funding to improve access to allied health and wellbeing support is needed...'

Data collection for the NCCD is another example – having better information to inform policies and leadership decisions around disabilities seems a no-brainer. But when it is incorporated without thought for the foot soldiers who must carry it out, it turns teachers into clerks, constantly struggling for time to prepare for their main duties in the classroom.

For a decade under coalition governments, the IEU and other education unions – the voices of our profession – were excluded from think tanks and important governing authorities like the Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL). It meant that the big ideas were tacked on to workloads with less concern for how they impacted teachers, and therefore, students.

In a litigious age where teachers are vilified on social media, lack autonomy in workplaces and have to continually fight to achieve respectful and decent work conditions, we need to take pause and properly assess every new idea for its impact on education staff. We need to stop creating reasons for teachers and would-be teachers to leave or avoid education.

'IEU members continue to highlight the driving factor behind staff shortages and record levels of teacher burnout – unsustainable workloads and work intensification continue to

force dedicated teachers from their profession. Our teachers need a circuit breaker to reset work expectations and end the flow of additional tasks and add-on duties. The first step is to ensure that any new initiative or project is subject to a teacher workload impact assessment.' – IEUA



Reps receive the gift of time

Every now and again a story comes out of a school which uplifts all who hear it, and reminds us that solidarity is alive and well.

In mid-August, two Organisers visited a college in Melbourne's east to talk with members and interested staff about bargaining.

A member who had to leave asked, 'Can I say something before I go?'

Our Organisers fretted that their meeting, proceeding well, was about to be 'hijacked'.

What happened next made them cry.

The member went on to say that staff knew how hard it had been at the bargaining table over the past 12 months, and how staff bargaining Reps faced negativity and suspicion for sticking their necks out on behalf of others over and above their day jobs at the school.

The rank and file knew that everything these Reps were doing was to improve the Enterprise Agreement for everyone at their school. The members discussed how they could express their appreciation for all the

selfless work of the bargaining team.

Our Organisers say, 'They had thought of gift vouchers but instead committed to giving each bargaining Rep 50 hours of duty coverage between now and the end of the year.'

'The members realised the gift of time is the ultimate expression of their gratitude for their colleagues.'

'Wow.'

'It's not often Organisers are rendered speechless, but we had no words.'

'The Reps cried, we cried, the members in the room cried, and one of the bargaining Reps, in his usual understated way, but with a huge smile, just said, 'You guys...'

'It was amazing to see solidarity in action and be reminded of why we do this job and who we do it for.'

The member who co-ordinated the 'gift of time' said, 'since June last year the

bargaining Reps have sacrificed much time and effort to get the best possible workplace conditions on behalf of all of us.'

'The members realised the gift of time is the ultimate expression of their gratitude for their colleagues'

'I am sure that at times this would have been a gruelling and frustrating process. Meetings can drag on for many hours and there is much preparation and follow up. Nevertheless our representatives have been very dedicated, professional, and persistent.'

'We thought the gift of time would be a suitable and symbolic way to give our thanks. Possibly, many of us could step up and cover a yard duty on one occasion each as a token of our gratitude. I'm confident it would be a boost to those negotiating on our behalf to know they have such support and appreciation.'

It says everything about how overworked staff are that time is the best and most meaningful gift.

We wish the dedicated bargaining Reps and their imaginative and generous members all the best in their negotiations!

CEMEA 2022

Making it work: Reps on the deal

Three experienced IEU Reps share their experiences of implementing CEMEA workload reforms.



Christina Staunton-Burke, from Antonine College (Cedar Campus) Coburg East, is confident the new Victorian Catholic Agreement will work in her school.

'With the 30 + 8 model we've had a look at it, and it seems to be pretty clear about the 30 hours of directed time. We've had the opportunity to go through it. But of course it's like anything, until it's ratified and you have the piece of paper and how it's working... we have the regular consultative meetings which keep us on our toes...'

Those meetings are strictly run at her campus.

'They're very well organised and it's been very clear you're just there for an hour and there's no running over time. It's all professional because that's money, that teacher's time too.'

Christina knows that good leadership is vital to create a healthy workplace.

'I've worked in eight different schools, and there are those who are supportive and those who are not. It's treating people as professionals. I'm a professional, so you expect me to be prepared and to do my job and to do it properly.'

Leaders who provide the opportunity for employees to 'talk and be listened to and feel valued' get the communication channels opened and run harmonious schools.

'If you're there for the wellbeing of staff it then flows on to the wellbeing of the children and the community...'

She says the new workload model will take time to get consolidated, but already has valuable 'built-in structures' covering meetings and workload expectations.

'I think there might be little hang-ups but the very fact you've got the 30 plus 8 means people know what they're expected to do.'

'It's like any implementation, you'd expect you'd have to make a few little adjustments - we would expect that.'

Keshia-Lee Dean, St Anne's College, Kialla is optimistic about the roll-out of workload changes under the new Agreement.

'Staff are really interested to find out about it and get more detail, it's nice to be able to talk to them about the ins and outs of it and what the details look like and provide some more clarity.'

After such a 'long, drawn-out, protracted process' leading up to the

Agreement vote, Keshia-Lee was also hopeful that discussions about the new workload provisions would attract interest among non-member staff.

'I feel like I'm in a school where the principal really does care and was implementing the 30 plus 8 workload changes prior to the Agreement being voted on. We were already proceeding as if it had been passed.'

'Some of them will want to find out more, come to some meetings and have some conversations about it and hopefully some members come out of that as a result.'

She found it very useful to talk with Reps about the new workload model and learn 'what their schools were doing, what was working well for them and what challenges they were facing'.

'It looks slightly different with every school in terms of where they're up to in the process and whether there's still parts to work on but for the most part it sounds like most schools are trying to work to the 30 plus 8 and adjust as needed.'

'It's been good listening to these guys because they have talked about how their school is implementing it and there's some who are implementing it quite differently and some who are actually quite similar to us.'

'And the discussions they've been having with their schools is helpful for me because it's giving me ideas about how I can have those conversations with leadership in my school around how we implement it in a successful way... it's great to have those anecdotes to be able to say 'another school is doing this'...'

Keshia-Lee says the new workload regime is going to take time and that it won't be perfect overnight.

'We're going to find these little things



we're tweaking twelve months down the track, and we'll be asking how that applies to our school specifically and how does that apply across the whole state?'

Maureen Vitetta, Antonine College Moreland, says teaching has become 'a struggle'.

'You're working every night and it takes a toll. It's a tough gig and you get to the point where you say I could actually do something easier...'

Maureen says there needs to be a 'mind shift' about teaching.

'We're always being taught, it's your vocation. But vocations don't pay the bills! I think we need to really focus on people looking after their own wellbeing and there being a system in place where it's really recognised that teacher wellbeing is important. Everybody is spread thinly, including principals.'

Maureen's words carry extra power because she is happy with the leadership at her school.

'I feel like I'm in a school where the principal really does care and was implementing the 30 plus 8 workload changes prior to the Agreement being voted on. We were already proceeding as if it had been passed.'

'I feel my leadership team and principal are going to implement whatever the EBA says. I'm not at a school where there's a meanness there. They are reasonable. There's a willingness to work with people.'

'But I think that the nature of the job has changed. I think we've lost the opportunity to be instinctive teachers where you meet kids where they need to be...'

She says 30 plus 8 will be good for her and help her be 'more assertive' about workload demands.

'Once it's been operating for a while I think everyone will know what's not acceptable and you'll be able to plan around it a bit better.'

Maureen says dedicated teachers 'need a bit of work-life balance'.

'But we don't have enough staff. Schools are paying agencies to get staff, they don't fulfill their contract, leadership has to step in.'

When trainees yet to graduate are given special permission to teach, they are being 'thrown in the deep end' and experienced teachers still end up



marking their students' work.

'It's a shame because I just feel like I'm in my stride. But it's just too much, it's affecting my family, affecting my relationships with my children, my husband, my wider family.'

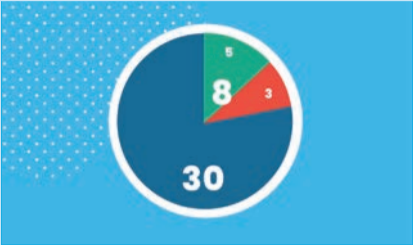
Maureen says it's hard to have 'real, substantive change' in an environment where educators are 'time-poor, they're tired, and you get to the point where you're trying to do what you can before you need to get to the next thing'.

She says many teachers of her generation are 'always stepping in and making things work'. 'You're making things work for kids in your care, you're making things work for your school.'

'I know that I need more time off, but to take time off, it's going to put more pressure on other people. I'm a coordinator and one of the VCE coordinators and if I'm not there...'

'There's behavioural issues with kids in schools, and if I take time off, I know when I go back, there will be a whole lot of stuff to deal with.'

CEMEA 2022 Know your Agreement: important changes you might have missed



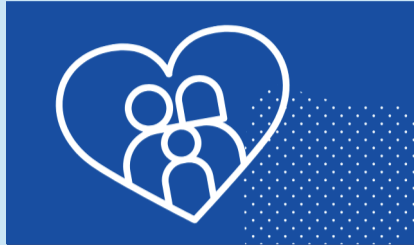
The 30 + 8 teacher workload model (Clause 59.2)

This represents the biggest change to the regulation of teacher working hours in decades. It puts fences around the working week, and protects professional autonomy.

Under this model, 30 hours of a full-time teacher's 38-hour week are allocated for scheduled teaching and teacher-led work including planning and assessment. Teachers cannot be 'directed' in this time, and have the professional autonomy to determine how they use it.

The other 8 hours are 'employer-directed' - these include 2.5 hours of paid lunch breaks, 2.5 other hours during the normal 7-hour 'attendance time' for duties, student supervision, directed collaboration etc, and 3 hours adjacent to attendance time (which can include two one-hour meetings). Teachers retain the right to leave the workplace when they do not have scheduled duties.

This is a big change and will take getting used to, but we are already seeing in many schools how this reduces pressures on teachers and ensures they have time within their working week to complete their core classroom-related work.

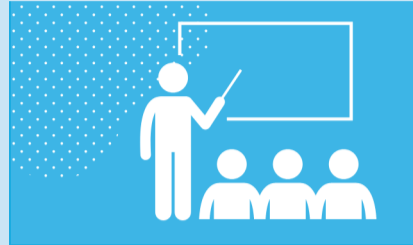


Parental leave: super and service recognition (Appendix 1, Clauses 8 & 9)

On top of big improvements to paid parental leave entitlements, this Agreement introduces important provisions to help tackle the gender pay and retirement wealth gaps: new entitlements to superannuation payments and recognition of service for the first 12 months of parental leave for the primary carer.

Australian women are retiring on average with 47% less super than men, in significant part because for many their accumulation of superannuation savings is interrupted by significant periods out of the workforce with young families. In an industry like education where employment is based on incremental pay scales, longer breaks in service also result in lost earnings over many years as a result of being 'held back' from progression up the pay scale.

This Agreement for the first time ensures that in their first year of leave a primary caregiver is not disadvantaged in terms of superannuation or career progression.



Reductions in Scheduled Class Times (Clause 61.3 – 61.4)

The Scheduled Class Time (SCT) reductions of one hour in 2023 and a further half-hour in 2024 are the biggest changes to SCT in decades.

This reduction, combined with the 30 + 8 model, does something unprecedented – it provides teachers with real, substantial time within the working week to get their teaching-related work done. That's a real relief to teachers accustomed to taking home piles of marking to do after dinner or over the weekend.

From next year, a primary teacher will have 9 hours per week 'quarantined' for them to use at their discretion for class-related work such as planning, preparation and assessment. For a secondary teacher this will be 11.5 hours per week. This time must be available in 'usable blocks' (ie. not 10-minute windows between classes and duties!) and cannot be directed by their employer.

In addition, extras are being phased out in secondary schools – down to a maximum of 5 hours across all of 2024 and gone altogether in 2025.

And, finally, scheduled assemblies are now included in the calculation of SCT.



ES and SSO classifications (Appendices 5 & 6)

Alongside across-the-board salary increases for Education Support Staff and School Services Officers, there have been some very important changes to the lower end of the classification scale – in particular the reclassification of all ES staff at Level 1 to Level 2.

This follows the work done over the last two Agreements to improving the middle of the range, and ensures that ES staff at all levels now have a meaningful career structure, with salary progression that better recognises their skills and experience.

Those higher up the scale also now receive the same 1% annual Position Allowances as teachers.

There is also a new ES stream, called health and wellbeing services, which applies to first aid officers, nurses, speech pathologists, and psychologists, ensuring that these employees are correctly and consistently classified and paid according to their qualifications, experience and roles.

School Services Officers have also had a significant salary increase, backdated to December 2021.



Meetings limits (Clause 60)

Fewer meetings, more efficiently run. Every educator wants that. And this Agreement delivers the means for that outcome through the 30+8 workload model.

Under that model, only 3 of the 8 hours set aside for employer-directed tasks can fall outside the normal 7-hour 'attendance time'. Two of these hours can be used for meetings, but no more than one hour on any day unless otherwise agreed at the Consultative Committee.

The remaining third hour is intended for other purposes, such as before- and after-school duties or student supervision, collaborative learning, PD, directed planning, or compliance training.

Furthermore, the Consultative Committee must be given the opportunity in Term 4 to make recommendations around the efficient use of staff meeting times for the following year.



Accident make up pay (Clause 50)

The CEMEA increases accident make-up pay entitlements to a maximum of 39 weeks, up from 26 weeks under the previous Agreement.

Employees who are injured at work and as a result unable to safely perform their duties will in most cases receive WorkCover payments – but these payments are not made at the worker's full pre-injury salary. The accident make-up pay clause in this Agreement requires that the employer 'top up' the balance for 39 weeks to ensure that the employee suffers no drop in their income – the last thing anyone needs when incapacitated through their work.



Flexible leave (Clause 30.4)

Here's a new provision that may have sneaked under the radar: staff in Catholic education are now entitled to take a day of personal leave each year as 'flexible leave' for any purpose.

Under this Agreement, personal leave is no longer limited to days when you are unwell or caring for a sick family member – you can now take a day for that special event, to move house, or simply to have a day off when you need it.

For a workforce so tied to the shape of the annual school calendar, this little bit of extra flexibility is a welcome change!



Time in Lieu

(Clause 59.3)

For the first time, this Agreement accounts for and acknowledges the many hours of employer-directed work undertaken by teachers in Victorian Catholic schools outside of normal working hours.

This will make a big difference to teacher workloads over the long term.

As part of the new package of provisions to tackle workloads and better regulate their working week, teachers now accrue time in lieu (TIL) for any required attendance at structured activities (including camps, parent-teacher interviews, information nights, graduations, open days, excursions and sport) which occur outside of their normal hours of attendance.

Time in Lieu works alongside the new 30 + 8 model of a teacher's working week.

While Education Support Staff and School Support Officers have long been entitled to time in lieu, all too often these entitlements have been overlooked – the 'normalisation' of time in lieu accrual in schools will help to ensure that everyone's additional hours of work are properly acknowledged.

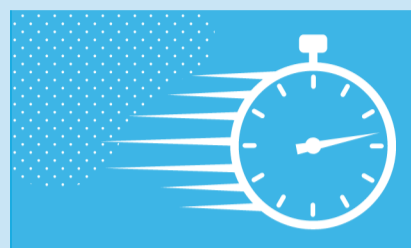


Fixed-term employment improvements

(Clauses 11.2 - 11.6)

Too many workers understand all too well the problems associated with precarious employment – whether it's the growing anxiety towards the end of a contract, the distraction from core work in the hunt for a back-up-plan, or the reaction when applying for a bank loan. In our sector, Education Support Staff and early career teachers are particularly likely to find themselves in fixed-term employment, often on very flimsy pretexts and sometimes for many years.

The CEMEA builds on the work of previous Agreements to further tighten the rules around fixed-term employment, ensuring that all staff are afforded secure, ongoing positions except when there is genuine operational need for fixed-term employment.



Minimised spread of hours for part-time teachers

(Clause 61.3 – 61.4)

For the first time, Victorian Catholic employers have a positive obligation to minimise the number of days part-time teachers are required to work. This will make a big difference for many who know too well that there's little benefit from working fewer hours if those hours are scattered across a full-time working week.

There are further advantages for part-time teachers thanks to improved divisors used to calculate time fractions, resulting in increases to their salary per hour in the classroom of 8.1% for secondary teachers and 16.7% for primary teachers, over and above the across-the-board salary increases in this Agreement.

Part-time teachers should make it clear to their principal what their preferred spread of hours is when they submit their 2024 intentions!



Domestic violence & sexual abuse survivor support

(Clauses 33 & 34)

The CEMEA increases the entitlement to paid family and domestic violence leave to up to 20 days per school year for ongoing and fixed-term employees, and includes a new entitlement for up to 10 days' paid family and domestic violence leave for casual employees.

These provisions reflect increasing awareness of the toll taken by such horrible situations and the resources required to rebuild. It takes money and time to escape dangerous domestic situations, and to re-start your life.

This Agreement also introduces up to 20 days of paid leave for survivors of historical sexual abuse. Eligible employees can access this leave in connection with attending and preparing for legal proceedings, accessing support services, or other approved activities.



'The Commitments'

(Clause 9.3)

While much of the focus of this Agreement is on better management of workloads at a local level, we know that there is a real need to tackle this systemically – to look at ways of avoiding duplication, providing resources, encouraging best practice, and finding efficiencies to better support the work of teachers and principals across the state.

That's why we negotiated the inclusion of seven 'commitments' agreed between employers and the IEU. This will help them share teaching resources, streamline NCCD data collection, review administrative work so teachers can focus on teaching and learning, and plan calendars to better manage workloads at peak periods.



Casual Employment

(Clause 11)

This Agreement improves salaries and conditions for CRTs:

- Emergency Teachers and Casual Relieving Teachers are combined into a new category, 'Casual Relief Teachers'
- Casual Relief Teacher pay has been significantly improved, with loading increased from 20% to 25% and a daily rate of \$448.58 (as of July 2023) – significantly higher than rates paid in Victorian government schools.
- A Casual Relief Teacher working for over 30 consecutive days in one school must be converted to ongoing or (if permissible) fixed-term employee, and will be entitled to leave accrual and other conditions.



Know Your Agreement online

We know there's a lot to take in with this Agreement.

That's why we've collected everything on our website at: www.ieuvictas.org.au/vca23resources

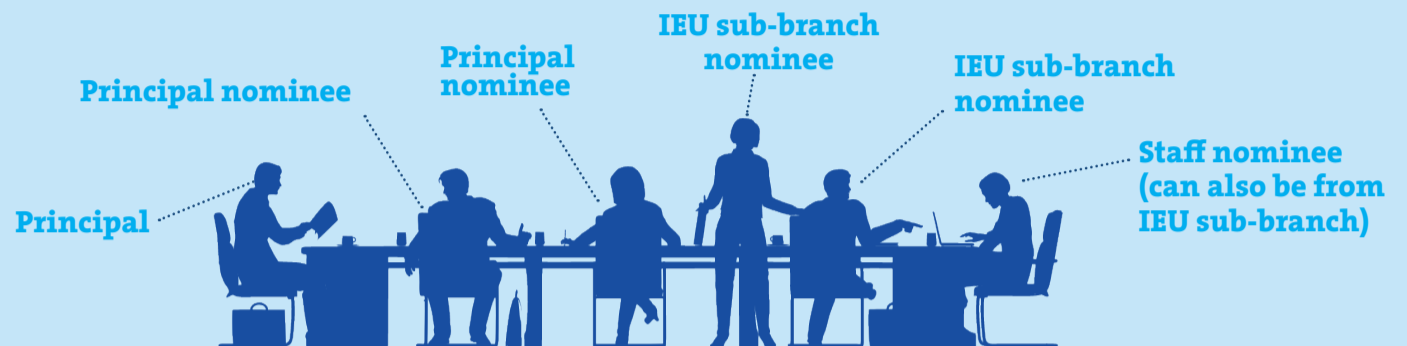
It includes articles on all the topics discussed in this newspaper, plus:

- An explanation of all changes to the Agreement
- A video explainer of the deal
- Frequently asked Questions
- Dedicated articles to all the main topics
- Implementation success stories.

CEMEA 2022

How does a consultative committee work?

Consultation is crucial to the operation of the new Agreement. The key vehicle for consultation in your school is the Consultative Committee.



Regular, productive meetings of your school's Consultative Committee ensure better decision-making, greater engagement, better management of workload issues, and higher morale. It allows staff to develop new ways of working and to actively participate in improving the culture of their school.

There are some important changes to strengthen consultation in this Agreement:

- A formal recommendation can be made by three members of a six-member Consultative Committee - and if it is rejected reasons for this must be provided to all staff in writing. This removes the potential for 'deadlock' between staff and employer representatives.
- Consultative Committees are now able to consider workload issues for all staff, including Education Support Staff, School Services Officers and Deputy Principals.
- Consultative Committees play a key role in planning the calendar for the

accrual and acquittal of time in lieu.

- Union and staff Consultative Committee Reps are now entitled to a day of paid leave each year to attend IEU training.

What is consultation?

The Agreement is explicit about the importance of consultation, defining it as 'a serious attempt through a fair exchange of views... in order to reach an understanding and consensus'.

The Agreement aims to 'establish workplace consultative arrangements that ensure the principal's responsibility, as the Employer's representative, is to make school-based decisions carried out in a framework that enables staff to have input into decisions that affect their working life'.

What does your Consultative Committee do?

Your Consultative Committee is a forum where recommendations can be made on matters including:

- **Teacher workloads**, including

planning for time in lieu, class sizes, the implementation of the 30 + 8 model, practical classes, duties, responsibilities, administrative tasks and anything else impacting on teacher workloads.

- **Workload issues for staff other than teachers**, including Education Support Staff, School Services Officers and Deputy Principals.
- **Positions of Leadership**, including the structure of positions, their nature and role, tenure of appointment, allowances, and time allocations.
- **Efficient use of staff meeting times.**
- **Email and communication protocols;** both internal and external.

Who is on the Consultative Committee?

Unless there is agreement between the principal and the majority of staff, the Committee should comprise:

- The Principal and two nominees
- Two nominees from the IEU sub-branch
- One staff nominee elected by and

from the total staff (who may also be a member of the IEU sub-branch).

When does a Consultative Committee meet?

A regular calendar should be set in advance, and additional meetings can be called at any time by the principal or by any three members of the Committee.

The Agreement requires that the Consultative Committee meets in Term 4 to discuss the scheduling of meetings in the following year, with a focus on maximising the efficient use of meeting times. It also requires that planning for time in lieu is undertaken via the Consultative Committee before or at the beginning of the school year.

Every school must have a Consultative Committee.

Consultation is a workplace right, and the provisions of the Agreement are legally binding. If you don't have an effectively operating Consultative Committee at your school, please contact the IEU office for advice and support.



Making it work: More Workload Agreement success stories

Maria Bonso says St Joseph's School Springvale has implemented all the new workload arrangements from the beginning of the year – and that the changes have been of great benefit for her and her colleagues.

'Having taught for 26 years and having experienced the many changes in workload expectations over the years, I feel that this new Agreement is a step in the right direction.

'Having less meetings and time spent at meetings, getting TIL for attending camp and other out of school events, less face-to-face teaching time, not having meetings on weeks where there are other things happening, such as parent/teacher interviews, has made this job more manageable and created a better work/life balance. I no longer have three meetings a week until 5pm like I did before this new Agreement.'

She says the best thing about CEMEA for her has been finally getting recognition for out-of-hours work via TIL.

'Of course, I still work many hours over

the 38-hour model but that is my choice and I do it for the students because I want to, not because I'm told to. Schools can no longer have the expectation that you will attend endless meetings or turn up to events at nights or weekends without TIL!'

Maria says she can now get back to the job she set out to do – to plan and prepare for lessons so her students get the best outcomes possible.

'Is it perfect? No, but it goes a long way towards lightening the workload and making teaching enjoyable again.

'My advice to all principals is to get on board with these changes and start implementing them because it is in their best interests to keep their staff happy, and less stressed and overworked, which ultimately leads to better teacher retention rates and happier schools!'

Exemplary implementation

An Organiser has shared a document prepared for staff at a Catholic secondary school which she described as an 'exemplar' of how to implement the new Agreement. The document lays out exactly what activities will be covered by TIL and is guided by a mission statement which aims for a 'just, fair, and equitable adherence to the fundamental principle of the Agreement – the reduction of teacher workload'.

The document had been discussed in the school's Consultative Committee and presented to staff on platforms where they were invited to ask questions, give feedback, and offer suggestions – anonymously if required.

Key aims of the document were 'to ensure staff at the College know their

work is valued and appreciated' and to preserve the amount of 'extra-curricular offerings provided for students.

The Leadership Team and Consultative Committee at this role model institution set a benchmark of 80% agreement with their approach before finalising their policies.

'Votes will be taken to ascertain the level of agreement from teaching staff; if the vote is below this threshold we will continue to work until it is reached.'

WOMEN AND EQUITY

Unions Tasmania Women's Conference

On Friday 4 August Unions Tasmania held their annual women's conference and IEU members Anita, Sarah, Kim, Kelsey, Nina, and Katie were enthusiastic participants.

ACTU secretary Sally McManus opened the conference, and the focus of morning sessions was on winning improvements for working women. After lunch, participants discussed how they can actively campaign for the Voice to Parliament, and the day finished with a speech from inspiring Olympic Gold Medalist and GWS Giants player Chloe Dalton.

Quotes from our attendees included: 'Being here with so many Union sisters reminds me what the word Union means – solidarity.'

'Listening to the talk about family and domestic violence I understood that this is a workplace issue and Union business.'

'Women's issues are everyone's issues.'
'Unions are about fairness and making sure no one is left behind. This is why I am voting YES for a Voice to Parliament and will make sure everyone in my circle understands why.'

Tasmanian IEU women who are interested in becoming part of our Tasmanian Women's network should contact their Organiser or email info@ieuvictas.org.au

Bargaining to close the gender pay gap

The IEU continues to win provisions in Enterprise Agreements that help close the gender pay gap. In the new Victorian Catholic Agreement and in the Sale Diocese Agreement, this includes improved parental leave, with better paid leave entitlements and superannuation paid on (and service recognised for) the first 52 weeks of leave for the primary carer. A provision to minimise

the spread of hours of part-time workers will limit how many days staff are required to attend school, and employment security will improve because of limits on the use of fixed-term contracts. We are beginning to see these changes affect bargaining in the independent sector, with similar measures finding their way into Agreements. In addition, we are claiming for better provisions around payment of superannuation (payday super), reproductive leave, and improved flexible work provisions.

Un-Equal Pay Day, 25 August 2023

And speaking of the gender pay gap...

In 1969 Australian women won the right to equal pay for equal work – but something is still missing, as women still earn less. Friday 25 August was chosen for Un-Equal Pay day because it is 56 days from the end of the financial year, and that's how many additional days it takes the average woman (working full-time) to earn the same as the average man.

Workplace Gender Equality Agency CEO Mary Wooldridge says, 'for some people, the gender pay gap is hard to understand or does not seem relevant to their everyday lives. But for women in Australia the dollars and cents represent the value placed on their skills, labour and time. It represents missing money that could be spent to meet everyday costs of living.'



Invaluable resources for Victorian unionists

Victorian Trades Hall Council drives campaigns of crucial importance for every worker, and especially every unionist.

Go to www.weareunion.org.au for details of every Trades Hall campaign, training opportunity, and event.

Upcoming events include:

- Unions for Yes to the Voice to Parliament events
- Injured Workers Support Network social hangouts
- Anti-NDA activist meetings
- Women's Rights at Work events
- Trades Hall tours
- Online media training for activists
- Our Future Our Work Youth Fest Conference.

Major campaigns being run by the Hall include:

- Voice to Parliament
- Ending NDAs
- Safe apprenticeships
- Ending pay secrecy.

Unions for Yes campaign

Trades Hall is supporting the Voice to Parliament campaign in the leadup to the referendum by co-ordinating pro-Yes events all over Victoria. If you want to get involved with promoting the cause, go to the website for details. You can pledge Yes to receive updates and information about volunteering opportunities.

Trades Hall tours

A visit to Trades Hall, the Worker's Museum and Paddy's Gallery is fascinating and eye-opening. (see the *Labour History story on page 22*). You can take a virtual tour online to get a taste of what's on offer, then book an in-person visit through the website. The gallery is currently showcasing works from the VTHC collection highlighting union arts activities of from the 70's, 80's and 90's.

Arts venue

Trades Hall is also a key arts venue where you can discover short films, radio plays, and other screen art from the Melbourne Fringe Festival archive screening on a rolling basis in the Fringe Common Rooms (old Ballroom).

Women's Parliament Day focuses on Non-Disclosure Agreements

The union movement is campaigning for legislation to restrict the use of NDAs in cases of workplace sexual harassment.

'sweeping the problem under the rug' using NDAs.

Here are some of the stark facts about NDAs:

- 1 in 3 workers report being sexually harassed in the workplace over the last 5 years. This is significantly higher for women and young people. (Australian Human Rights Commission Safe@Work Report 2022).
- Close to 70% of women report to have been the victim of gendered violence in the workplace (VTHC Survey).
- Victims say that they regret entering into an NDA post settlement with most experiencing feelings of regret between 3-6 months later. ('Can't Buy My Silence' campaign).
- Victims who did not file a formal complaint say that concerns about being forced to sign an NDA were a major factor

('Can't Buy My Silence' campaign).

'We are calling for legislation to ban the misuse of NDAs in cases of workplace sexual harassment, other than where they are expressly requested by victim-survivors to protect their own privacy,' says Wilhemina.

You can find fact sheets about NDAs and details of the campaign against them at the Victorian Trades Hall Council website: www.weareunion.org.au/end_ndas

Sign the petition at megaphone.org.au to support state government legislation to restrict the use of NDAs: www.megaphone.org.au/petitions/2022-ndas



On Thursday 22 June, 65 women visited Victorian Parliament to share their experiences with state MPs, and to call for change. The delegation met with Parliamentarians of all stripes and informed them about the horrendous effect of NDAs upon victim/survivors. As Trades Hall reminds us, 'Workplaces can only improve when workers are free to openly discuss their shared concerns. Workers, and particularly victim-survivors of sexual harassment, must feel supported to raise safety concerns so that action can be taken to eliminate or control workplace hazards.'

Wilhelmina Stracke, Assistant Secretary of Victorian Trades Hall Council, is spearheading the campaign for legislation from the Victorian Parliament to end the misuse of NDAs.

She says, rather than dealing with sexual harassment and gendered violence in workplaces, Australian businesses are

GREEN SCHOOLS

Wild At Art threatened species art competition for kids



Teachers, here's an opportunity for your students to demonstrate their love for our wildlife and express their concern for vanishing species.

Entries for Wild at Art, Australia's biggest wildlife art competition for children aged 5-12, are open until Threatened Species Day on Thursday 7 September.

Children from across the country are invited to create an original artwork of one of Australia's many threatened native animals or plants, along with a short written piece.

Free lesson guides available for teachers enable them to incorporate the environmental messages underlying the competition into classroom activities.

They are designed to be flexible so that educators can adapt them to their students' varied needs and levels.

The competition is run by the Australian Conservation Foundation, which believes 'kids should be heard on issues that affect them' – including the extinction crisis.

'Wild At Art is an opportunity for primary school children to learn about Australia's threatened wildlife and speak out for a future where plants, animals and people thrive.

'The beautiful artworks and moving written explanations demonstrate the depth of concern and love that children have for our vanishing wildlife. Through the competition, many children feel empowered knowing that by raising awareness, they can make a difference.'

For entry details and to download the free lesson guide, go to: <https://rb.gy/icgpm>



Teachers for Peace put technology in education under scrutiny

Teachers for Peace, a national organisation launched in 2022, is asking teachers to consider the growing role of multinational weapons companies in Australian STEM education.

Here is what they say: 'The importance of STEM education is well established: technology can help provide solutions to some of our biggest social challenges. But equally, technology can be used to do harm. How technology is used, and for whose benefit, deserves our attention.'

'Teachers might be surprised to learn that some of our most popular STEM programs – like the National Youth Science Forum (NYSF), or the FIRST LEGO League – are sponsored by some of the biggest weapons companies in the world.'

'Lockheed Martin, which makes more money from warfare than any company on earth, is the NYSE's major partner. Lockheed Martin has been associated with corporate misconduct and poor diligence on human rights and is involved in the production of nuclear weapons.'

'BAE Systems, a major sponsor of the FIRST program, sold US\$24 billion in arms in 2020. Human rights groups have named BAE in a dossier submitted to the International Criminal Court, seeking an investigation into the contribution of BAE executives to serious violations of international humanitarian law in Yemen that may amount to war crimes.'

'Both companies use their partnership with STEM programs to provide experiences that create positive brand association in children, families, and teachers, in order to attract the 'best and brightest' to careers in the weapons industry.'

'At the NYSE, according to participants, high-achieving students have a 'speed-dating' careers session with Lockheed Martin engineers who promote

opportunities for women and the chance to work on cutting edge technology but say nothing about Lockheed's core business.'

'The proliferation of weapons is well recognised as a barrier to progress on peace and global cooperation. Consider that global military spending exceeded US\$2 trillion in 2021, with no real increase in peace and human security. And at a time of an escalating climate crisis, last year the world's richest countries spent 30 times more on their militaries than on climate finance for vulnerable nations. The big winners are the weapons companies, while critical human needs go unmet.'

'A number of Australian education departments agree that weapons companies shouldn't advertise to children. Victoria, Queensland, and NSW have added weapons manufacturers to the list of industries that can't partner with schools – a list that includes other harmful industries like junk food, tobacco, and gambling.'

'The independent sector can play a vital role in removing harmful influence in STEM education. Unions, education offices, and schools can adopt policies on the issue, and ask their favourite STEM programs to reconsider their association with weapons companies. And by becoming members of Teachers for Peace, sector educators can supercharge our work for peace and disarmament.'

Teachers for Peace describes itself as a professional non-profit group, and a member of the Global Campaign for Peace Education, 'working to promote peace and disarmament', formed 'in response to the growing normalisation of war in Australia and beyond'.

Its three key goals are to:

1. Identify policies that education departments can adopt to promote peace
2. Identify and remove weapons industry influence on school STEM curricula
3. Educate students, colleagues, and communities on the costs of war and the benefits of peace and disarmament.

To learn more about Teachers for Peace, go to: teachersforpeace.com.au



EDUCATION SUPPORT STAFF AND SCHOOL SERVICES OFFICERS

Getting a fair deal for those who keep our schools running

There is no doubt that the work of many categories of Education Support Staff has changed dramatically over recent decades. Long gone, for example, are the days of Learning Support Officers and aides being the staff equivalent of parent helpers – these days they are expected to develop tailored learning plans, contribute to NCCD data collection, liaise with specialists and much more – and in many cases they will have specialised experience, qualifications, and expertise to match.

In each new Agreement in Catholic and independent schools, the IEU seeks to reflect

and acknowledge this in classification structures and role descriptors to ensure that our vital support staff have career structures and salaries that match their work, duties, expectations, experience and qualifications.

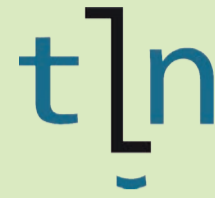
This is a complex process in independent schools, where in our regular negotiations for individual Agreements in well over 100 workplaces we work to ensure that general staff receive fair pay increases and have access to transparent reclassification processes based on contemporary role descriptors.

Over the last decade in the Victorian Catholic sector, we negotiated overhauls

of the middle and upper levels of the ES scale, opening up new salary bands for experienced staff and ensure that the descriptors they would rely on when seeking reclassification were clear and reflected the actual work being performed in schools.

In the latest Agreement, the focus was on 'lifting the base' by ensuring that Level 1 salary rates were only applicable to those undertaking a formal traineeship, and lifting everyone else up to the higher pay rates and greater number of experience-based classification steps in Level 2. We also

Building a community for learning



Teacher Learning Network

Dr Michael Victory offers a way to re-engage with a class you think you have lost.

Most teachers have had at least one experience where they failed to connect with a class of students.

My experience came with a group of Year 7 students in a regional school in NSW. I was teaching ancient history (Egyptians, Greek and Romans). That year it all went wrong; the students did not connect with the content, I failed to build any meaningful relationship with the students, and the Year Level Coordinator was overworked by my 'problem students'. There was a lot of teaching going on but not much learning.

They weren't a troubled or badly behaved group of students, and they were fine with other teachers, and it wasn't the curriculum, which is a topic of fascination for most 12- and 13-year-olds. The problem was that my focus was elsewhere (on teaching senior classes) and I didn't work to create a community for learning for this group. As a teacher with some experience, I felt I could just walk into the classroom and the magic would happen.

If you've followed this sequence of articles in *The Point* you know I draw on research into the establishment of early learning communities by Paul of Tarsus, who called his communities *ekklēsia*. In more contemporary times, Paolo Freire also promoted communities for learning or dialogic education. He railed against 'the 'banking' concept of education' in which students were empty containers to be filled with teacher controlled knowledge.

Using this research and lived experience, how would I now create a community for learning?

1. Define the classroom as a space where we learn together

Crossing the doorway into a classroom is a gateway to a unique experience. It's not hanging out with friends, it's not the playground, it is a unique space set aside for learning together. As a teacher I need to think about rituals that show the movement into that learning space. It can be a special greeting as students enter the classroom. Writing up a teaching/learning intention is another. I also need to set up the room to show that it is a space for learning: what are the sounds, smells, and visual cues that tell me this is a learning space? Within the space there needs to be accepted rules of behaviour about how students and teachers go about the process of learning together.

Teachers moving into that space need to be ready to learn with that particular group of students, not the last group, or the next group. We all know that's a big challenge, especially for overworked secondary and specialist teachers.

2. Define the students as learners together

Our students are often ready to learn from one another before they are ready to learn from us. As teachers we cannot hope to be masters of all the content that is available to us and our students; but we must be masters of how learning occurs for every student and the creation of the environment in which they learn.

Ideally, rather than the teacher being the centre of knowledge, learning becomes everyone's responsibility; we create the conditions where all students can learn.

I encourage all readers to familiarise

themselves with pedagogies which enable that model, such as play-based learning, Socratic Circles, Yarning Circles (see courses by Al Fricker in the IEU Learning Hub) and 8ways (<https://www.8ways.online/>).

3. Re-focus the learning on how we are growing as people

This is a challenging concept. Curriculum content can appear meaningless to students. I use quadratic equations as an example. I have never encountered a quadratic equation since I left school. There are billions of people who have lived rich and meaningful lives who have never encountered a quadratic equation. So what is the purpose for teaching each child about this formula?

It helps to slightly re-think our approach to curriculum. The curriculum brings the teacher and student into a relationship. The relationship with content occurs, not through a mathematics textbook, but through interaction with a community of learners who are engaged with mathematics in a way that enhances their life experience. The teacher carries responsibility to make that a generative and creative relationship for the student. Quadratic equations may be needed for a future qualification; to build problem-solving skills; or, to be more adventurous, to reveal mathematics in the same way as we see art or music, not always for its function, but for aesthetic pleasure and beauty.

4. Connect the students with a wider world of learning

When I was teaching that Year 7 class they were predominantly the sons and daughters of farmers and service workers

in the local town. They looked at their lives in the context of their community, perhaps the wider region, and maybe, if there was a big sporting event, the state. But they didn't connect to a wider world of inquiry and experience.

Our challenge as teachers is to encourage students to see themselves as part of a wider world in which learning is a constant and enriching experience. It is not confined by the walls of the classroom, or the gates of the school, nor the geographic boundaries in which they live, but it connects them with all people in the present, in the past and in the future. Learning is universal.

This seems easier with internet access and portable devices. Students have a world of knowledge in the palm of their hand on their phones, but have we taught them to see that technology as a universal experience of learning?

To the IEU Learning Hub

Some of your colleagues are doing brilliant work with student engagement. If you have never logged in, go to www.ieuvictas.org.au/webinars. You will find a community for learning.

Michael Victory
TLN Executive Officer
mvictory@tln.org.au

There is no doubt that the work of many categories of Education Support Staff has changed dramatically over recent decades.

negotiated a whole new classification stream called Health and Wellbeing Services, which applies to first aid officers, nurses, speech pathologists, and psychologists employed within schools. This will ensure that these employees are correctly and consistently classified and paid according to their qualifications, experience and responsibilities.

The Victorian Catholic Agreement also acknowledges the increasing professionalism of those further up the salary scale by granting them the same annual Position Allowance payments as teachers.

At the same time, we negotiated a very significant salary restructure for School Services Officers backdated to December 2021, which delivered an average 12% increase to salaries before the six-monthly increases across the life of the Agreement.

In recognition of the increasing demands on non-teaching staff, for the first time the new Agreement dictates that their workload issues should be discussed and considered in the same way as teacher workloads – through the school's Consultative Committee. We will be working with Consultative Committee

Reps to ensure that this new provision leads to genuine change across our sector.

The work of ensuring that job descriptions and salaries match the reality of the work performed by all staff in schools cannot stop now. We're on the front foot, about to commence in-depth surveying and focus group work with Education Support Staff and School Services Officers in the Victorian Catholic sector so we can approach the next round of negotiations with a comprehensive claim around classification structures and salaries.

Keep an eye out for our communications around this survey and please take the opportunity to have your say, tell us about your work, and let us know what your priorities are.



CASUAL RELIEF TEACHERS

There's no substitute for respect

An international study has confirmed what many casual and relief teachers already know: 'substitute teachers are an essential part of the teaching workforce...'

The study, *An Exploration of the Experiences of Substitute Teachers: A Systematic Review* published in the *Review of Educational Research*, concluded that 'substitute teachers play an important role in the education of students, yet little is known about who substitute teachers are, the nature of their work, and how they experience substitute teaching, including the types of supports provided and other supports they might need'.

This is illustrated by the fact that by the time a student completes primary and secondary education they will have spent the equivalent of one school year with a casual or relief teacher.

Yet, despite the importance of their role, CRTs are widely 'deemed to be of lesser value and regarded as... 'second class citizens' or 'babysitters'.

Lead author of the *Review*, Professor Andrea Reupert of Monash University, says CRTs are an important component of the teaching workforce 'yet their teaching conditions and experiences are worrying, exacerbated by a lack of targeted support'.

Though CRTs are widely considered to be private contractors, the review found their work 'tenuous' and 'precarious'. It documented teachers 'who are reluctant to say no to job offers, and who feel beholden to the schools which employ (or do not employ) them, in a temporary, ad-hoc manner'.

'It appears that the temporary nature of their teaching, and how they are consequently treated by students, colleagues, and school leaders, promotes feelings of marginalisation within the school communities in which the substitute teachers work.'

IEU Victoria Tasmania on CRTs:

- Schools should ensure they have a proper induction process for CRTs as they do with permanent staff, and establish a pool of CRTs they use regularly
- CRTs should be included in staff meetings and professional development activities at the school level
- CRTs who work a minimum of 15 days in a school year in a Diocese of Sale school now receive two paid days for professional development. We welcome this commitment to CRTs by the Diocese of Sale in their new Agreement.

Professor Anna Sullivan, co-author of the *Review*, says CRTs are 'often deemed 'less than' the teachers they are filling in for...' And this can be 'hugely demoralising'.

The *Review* found some of those who choose CRT work regard substituting as 'a positive experience' due to the flexibility it offers over permanent teaching.

However, for many substitute teachers, the demands made on them 'adversely impact their sense of agency and autonomy, paradoxically the very opposite of the supposed flexibility that draws some into substitute teaching positions'.

CRTs want to work in schools where they are 'supported, feel connected, and are respected by students, staff, and administrators'.

School leaders acknowledged that the support provided to CRTs has an 'informal, ad-hoc nature'. For example, some substitute teachers were provided with professional learning and mentoring,

while others were not.

Often, leaders said substitute teachers were welcome to attend a school's training sessions, 'but no specific accommodations were made for them'.

There was also widespread uncertainty about who should take responsibility for CRTs and how to manage their transition from work site to work site.

Another major issue is when CRTs are also early career teachers, with the teachers' transition to the profession confused with induction into a specific workplace.

The *Review* noted one study which recommended CRTs be known as 'invited teachers' rather than 'casual' to transform the 'discourse of inferiority' surrounding them, and said such distinctions of language are as important to the CRTs themselves as to students, parents, other teachers, and school leaders.

'Even though the short-term nature of the work is undoubtedly a feature of this temporary role, the lack of stability and support afforded to the teachers is not, we would argue, inevitable.'

The *Review* also discussed the need for reform of substitute teaching by 'reducing the amount of work undertaken by teachers in insecure casual employment, and especially the amount of substitute work done by early career teachers'.

'Additionally, substitute teaching needs to be professionalised to improve the quality of teaching and to make this form of employment more attractive – especially to experienced teachers who are often better equipped to manage the complexity of this form of work.'

The *Review* called for education systems and schools to better support CRTs, starting in initial teacher education programs and continuing across the teaching career.

It wants all substitute teachers to receive 'a quality induction, professional learning opportunities, and mentoring'.

'To build a stable, strong workforce, policy needs to consider substitute teachers' salaries and working conditions, including appropriate teaching loads and resources.

'Schools can ensure that they provide orientation and onboarding, and a collegial environment, with teachers having access to the resources they need.'

Pay increases

The recent Annual Wage Review by the Fair Work Commission has seen the rates of pay in the *Educational Services (Teachers) Award 2020* increase by 5.75% from 1 July 2023. Thanks to a significant improvement to the calculation of CRT rates in the new Catholic Agreements, the result of this increase is that a Casual Relief Teacher in a Victorian Catholic school is now being paid over \$447 a day, up from \$423 – almost \$40 a day more than daily rates in a Victorian Government school. This Award increase flows into bargaining in many independent schools.

Maintaining professional development hours for teacher registration can sometimes be challenging for CRTs. The IEU Learning Hub provides an excellent suite of professional development activities free for members. Check it out at: www.ieuvictas.org.au/webinars.



Teaching young people how work 'works'

The Young Workers Centre, a joint initiative of the Victorian Union movement and the Victorian Government, addresses the issues that young workers face when heading into the workplace for the first time.

When starting your first job, there's excitement and newfound independence. There are also many potential hazards.

Young workers are statistically more vulnerable to exploitation, harassment, and workplace injury than any other cohort of the workforce. If something goes wrong, do they know what to do? Will they have resources to draw on? Will they even know if they're allowed to talk to someone?

Unfortunately, young workers can't rely on their first employer for accurate information about their rights at work or how to address safety issues. It is common, in fact, for employers to misinform their young staff members.

The Young Workers Centre equips young people with a basic understanding

of how work 'works'. The staff are young people themselves with lived experience of workplace problems and have collectively visited around 50,000 students in schools since the Centre was established in 2016.

The YWC's education and outreach program is specifically designed to address the issues that young workers face when heading into the workplace for the first time, including:

- Rights at Work
- Workplace safety
- Bullying and discrimination.

Other modules relate to social movements and campaigning for change, and the history of the union movement in Australia.

The questions students raise in Rights at Work sessions are often cause for serious

concern. Outreach organisers are asked about racism and sexual harassment, verbal and physical abuse on the job, wage theft, and apprentice exploitation.

'We had one young worker who told us she was having money deducted from her pay for every sip of water she took from the tap. Another was told to only record a fraction of their working hours.'

'One young person was told by their manager that they should chase an armed robber out of the chemist where they work to recover the stolen goods!'

'These kids know they're being ripped off and made unsafe, but often they don't have the knowledge, confidence or support to fight back.'

- Young Workers Centre Outreach organiser

At the Victorian Trades Hall office, the Young Workers Legal Centre supports the outreach team's educational efforts, providing young law students with experience supporting young workers' legal queries and cases. The Centre has recovered over \$2million in unpaid wages and super already.

As well as visiting schools, outreach organisers run sessions at the spectacular heritage Trades Hall building in Carlton which combine information about workers' rights with a guided history tour of Trades Hall and the workers' museum.

Find out more about the Young Workers Centre at www.youngworkers.org.au, or book an outreach session or tour for your students via youth@vthc.org.au



WOMEN AND EQUITY

IEU members inspired by Anna Stewart experience

IEU members Ash Meagher and Rebecca Long say their two weeks spent as part of the Anna Stewart Memorial Project in May were 'an incredible source of inspiration and learning'.

The Anna Stewart Memorial Project is a two-week leadership training and development program designed for women who want to step up as leaders and to encourage greater participation of women in their unions.

It honours the memory of Anna Stewart, a journalist and active Victorian union official who tragically lost her life aged 35.

Participants complete formal training at Trades Hall for one week of the program and are placed with a union for another week.

Ash and Rebecca say the Project allowed them to step away from their classroom and immerse themselves in 'the world of trade unions and their own union'.

They gained 'profound insights' into the crucial roles played by unions, the exceptional female leaders within them, and 'the ongoing struggle to safeguard the rights of workers in the education industry'.

'Our time at the Trades Hall proved to be immensely valuable, providing us with a range of informative and empowering activities alongside other resilient union

women from across Victoria.

'Among the highlights was a comprehensive occupational health and safety session, equipping us with practical knowledge to support our fellow educators. This session shed light on the pivotal role of Health and Safety Representatives in ensuring safer working conditions for our members.

'Notably, we discussed the pressing issue of gendered violence, which has gained increased attention in the wider community. It is noteworthy that employers now carry a positive duty to proactively address gender violence in the workplace, following the introduction of new regulations last year.'

Ash and Rebecca found the feminist tour of Trades Hall was 'captivating', introducing them to influential women such as Zelda Z'Aprano and Gwen Goedecke, who made significant contributions to the union movement.

(A sculpture honouring Zelda's ground breaking work was unveiled at the front of Trades Hall on Lygon Street 30 May).

'Their stories served as a wellspring of inspiration, fostering our collaboration and commitment to organising 'Women's

Parliament Day' in June.'

Ash and Rebecca also attended a thought-provoking women's panel, which featured just-retired IEU General Secretary Deb James and Erin Aulich, Victorian Secretary of the Australian Education Union.

'Listening to their experiences was profoundly inspiring, solidifying our belief that women belong in leadership positions within the education industry.'

Ash and Rebecca say their time at the union was equally invaluable.

'We gained insights into diverse approaches and strategies employed to address various workplace issues. We owe our gratitude to the exceptional Organisers who guided us throughout this journey.'

'It is evident that there has been a significant shift in recognising the challenges faced by educators in terms of workload, and we are pleased to see agreements and Enterprise Bargaining Agreements now incorporating improved workload provisions for staff members.'

'We extend our sincere appreciation to the IEU, particularly Marit and Therese, for facilitating school visits and imparting valuable knowledge on effective bargaining

practices and consultative measures for union representatives to aspire to.

'Undoubtedly, when we stand together, our collective strength knows no bounds.'

The next intake of the project will be split over two periods: 4-8 September and 9-13 October. If you are interested in participating, contact the IEU via 03 9254 1860 or info@ieuvictas.org.au



MEMBER PROFILE

Kim Merhulik, Tarremah Steiner School, Tasmanian Council

Kim, Deputy President of the IEU's Tasmanian Council, has been a unionist since 2004.

Kim was originally a member of TISTA (Tasmanian Independent Schools Teachers Association). When TISTA amalgamated with the IEU in 2014, she continued her membership with the newly formed IEU Victoria Tasmania.

'Soon after, our staff were going through some difficult times, and I was encouraged to become the Representative for our school. We had fantastic support from IEU and some great advice from Kylie Busk who helped us formulate correspondence with the school's management. We have progressed greatly as a school since then as there is much more transparency and consultation with staff.'

Kim is pleased that teachers at her school have achieved pay parity with other sectors after 'many years of salaries that were substantially below our contemporaries in Department schools, and two years without salary increases due to financial hardship'.

'We have just finalised our latest EBA and one of the great clauses that the school agreed to enforce is Cultural and Religious Leave, which a staff member has already been able to take this year. Unfortunately, we didn't come to an agreement to include a Step 13 on the teachers' salary scale, however it is a clause which we will pursue next time round.'

Five years ago, Kim joined the IEU Committee of Management as 'Member Resident in Tasmania' and last year replaced Paul Mannion as Deputy President of the Tasmanian Council.

She says her first COM meeting was 'a bit daunting' with so many matters to consider, but now she 'really enjoys engaging with other COM members, listening to issues as well as some wins at other schools, and sharing ideas on how to grow and improve the IEU for everyone'.

'It is a great privilege to be part of such an energetic and passionate group of unionists. I find it rewarding to

network with others in the IEU as well as comrades in other unions.'

'Reproductive leave would allow workers to take paid leave to cover IVF, endometriosis, hysterectomies, and any pain, discomfort or treatments associated with menstruation and menopause.'

Tasmania's May Day March and the Unions Tasmania Women's Conference provide Kim with annual sources of 'hope and inspiration'.

'It is my wish to see women fairly recognised in their workforce as unfortunately even though there has been so much work done in this area, we haven't quite got there. Some unions have managed to win Reproductive Leave in their Agreements and I would love to see this become a regular and accepted clause in EBAs across all sectors.'

'Reproductive leave would allow workers to take paid leave to cover IVF, endometriosis, hysterectomies, and any pain, discomfort or treatments associated with menstruation and menopause.'

Kim is one of the most valuable cogs of the IEU and a crucial presence in Tasmania. Here's to her next 20 years in the movement!



KNOW YOUR STAFF

Carolyn Monk, IEU Industrial Assistant – and former Matilda!

Carolyn is a committed unionist and a passionate football follower who took a keen interest in the Women's World Cup.

But Carolyn is much more than a superfan. She made her debut for Australia in 1989 and won the Victorian Soccer Federation's McQuarie Rocco Award for Most Valuable State Team Player during her storied career.

However, growing up in the 60s and 70s she wanted to play AFL!

'Unfortunately, in those days the only sport available to girls was netball. At 17, a school friend introduced me to football and that's when I fell in love with the world game, a love which has lasted a lifetime. I played for six club sides and was lucky enough to be recognised with a national call up in 1989.'

Carolyn's sporting peak occurred in an era where elite women's sport was all but ignored. Even playing for Australia (not rebadged as the Matildas until 1995) was a labour of love.

When Carolyn played in the Futsal National League in 1989, there was

sponsorship which covered travel and accommodation expenses.

'However, during that time, a pilot strike forced us to drive to Sydney and back most weekends so we could compete in Futsal League matches on Saturdays and rush back to play for our local clubs on Sunday.'

'That was the first and only sponsorship I ever received; players usually covered all expenses themselves.'

More than once, Carolyn had to choose between work and sport, despite being one of the nation's elite players.

'While working at the Victorian Institute of Secondary Education I requested two weeks of annual leave to compete at the national titles but despite having accumulated enough leave, my request was declined due to the busy schedule at work. Quitting my job and competing in the tournament was not an option, given I needed to support myself.'

Despite such challenges, Carolyn played at the top level for over ten years. She then continued to compete socially until her body 'eventually said no more'.

Committed to social justice, Carolyn said working in the union movement was a 'natural progression'. Currently, she works in the industrial team assisting the Industrial Officers in advancing and protecting the pay and working conditions of IEU members.

She says the main benefit of playing sport is 'the opportunity to come together as a cohesive unit and work towards a shared objective, developing lifelong friendships along the way'.

Such unity is also a core value of the union movement.

'The determination to work with people who shared my outlook has influenced both my football and work career. It is far easier to achieve together when you are working alongside people who share a

common world view.

'Work, life, and football are all similar – if we all work together, we share in the hard work, but we share in the rewards and can achieve anything together. Work hard and success will come.'

Despite missing out on fame and fortune as a national representative, Carolyn is not envious of modern players. She's rapt by the progress of her sport.

'The game has come a long way and it's wonderful to see the recognition today's players receive. I feel privileged to have played in the early years.'

Asked which current player she'd most love to play alongside, Carolyn's response reveals her values.

'Katrina Gorry – she's tenacious, works so hard covering all the pitch, she never stops and provides the foundation for the higher profile players to shine.'



LABOUR HISTORY

Victorian Trades Hall: The People's Palace

Victoria's grandest 19th century buildings are hard to miss. The 'biggest and most extravagant' structure in most towns and cities in the days before stadiums and skyscrapers were Town Halls, and most are still imposing in the 21st century.

These structures were often neoclassical in style – think dramatic, large-scale structures keen on Greek columns – and they were built for the public. Town Halls maintained birth, death, and marriage records, housed public servants, and hosted most important public events.

The Victorian Trades Hall building on Lygon Street Carlton is the Town Hall of the working class. It's the world's oldest continually functioning trade union building, dating back to 1859.

Its genesis lay in the riches brought by Australia's gold rushes, which inflated the population from 437,665 in 1851 to 1,168,149 in 1861 and made Melbourne one of the world's most wealthy cities. The University of Melbourne Archives reports that during the resulting construction boom 'great buildings including Parliament House, the State Library, Customs House and the Melbourne Town Hall were planned and built astoundingly rapidly, fuelled by the price of gold and the influx of migrants looking for work at any cost'.

Many of those new migrants were British and Irish radicals 'experienced in labour organisation (and) protest techniques, who began to campaign for solidarity' among what they called 'the true pioneers of the colony... the producing classes.'

'Often forced to work twelve- or fourteen-hour days, these labourers united to achieve better working

conditions, first in the construction industry and then farther afield.

'Even before the eight-hour day was achieved (1856), unions were beginning to consider producing a building, for healthy recreation and education for the labouring men, and for meetings of the trade unions.'

On 3 June 1858, a major event raised funds for the construction of that building, intended to be 'a place where workmen may their minds engage, to useful purpose o'er the printed page... (a) people's palace... built and own'd by hardy sons of toil.'

Completed in 1859, Melbourne's original Trades Hall, the first in the world, was a 'modest' timber building, financed by workers and built by their own labour, using local materials where possible. It served rallying point for the labour movement and 'a place to educate workers and their families'.

The spectacular stone building we see today began construction on 26 January 1874 and expanded throughout the 1880s as unions continued to grow.

Following the 1882 tailoresses strike, with women organising in 'amazing numbers' in their own unions, the Trades Hall built the Female Operatives Hall on Lygon Street. Eventually, these unions merged with the men's unions.

Trades Hall construction continued in ten stages, mostly between 1876 and 1925. The Female Operatives Hall was demolished in 1960. A multi-story extension was added

in 1961. Since 2016, the structure has been undergoing extensive and painstaking refurbishment and restoration. The heritage value of the Hall, and the associated 8 Hour Day Monument, were recognised by their inclusion on the Register of the National Trust and the Historic Buildings Register.

Melbourne University Archives say the 'great stone building hosted events that would shape Australia's history': massive industrial strikes in the 1880s; anti-conscription campaigns during World War One; anti-immigration agitation in the 1890s and 1940s; and ongoing fights for better working conditions and wages.

'The Victorian Trades Hall from its inception stood at the centre of the Victorian labour movement: a headquarter for the unions, a launching point for parades and protests, and a location for culture, the arts and education to flourish.'

It has hosted discussion of the Harvester decision of 1907, which established a living wage; the creation of the first Minister for Labor and National Service (later Employment) in 1940; and the establishment of universal health care under the Whitlam Labor government in 1975.

The Worker's Museum at Trades Hall opened in 2019. It highlights the diverse history of the building, including installations on the minimum wage; strikes and protests; equal pay for women; the communist party; and the fight for fair work during the Great Depression and World

War II. The museum reminds us that Trades Hall is the birthplace of organised labour in Australia, the Victorian Labor Party, and the Australian Council of Trade Unions (ACTU).

These days, Trades Hall continues its role in arts and culture as an important venue hosting events from the Melbourne International Comedy Festival and Melbourne Fringe Festival.

But Trades Hall secretary Luke Hilakari says it remains an 'organising space'.

'That's union language for the work we do bringing workers together talking about the issues that matter and figuring out as a collective what we're going to do about the problems that we're all facing.'

'Workers having been having discussions here since 1891.'

In a recent farewell interview, Deb James, the just-retired IEU General Secretary and Trades Hall President said seeing a meeting at Trades Hall on a school excursion planted the seed for her later involvement in the union movement.

'I was absolutely blown away by the vibe of the place, the significance of what they were doing, the business that they were conducting... that experience really had an impact on me,' Deb said.

To see what Deb is talking about, go to the Worker's Museum or take one of the regular Trades Hall tours. For details, go to: www.weareunion.org.au/vthc



REP PROFILE

Belinda Wrigley, St Francis Xavier School, Ballarat East

Sub-branch Rep Belinda is a stalwart unionist, and an IEU delegate to Ballarat Trades Hall.

How did you first get involved with the IEU?

I first joined the IEU when I was a second-year teacher at St Joseph's Primary School in Warrnambool. Another teacher spoke to me about becoming a member and I have remained a member ever since. I took on the role of union representative at my current school towards the end of 2019.

What is the biggest issue facing you and your colleagues at your school?

Any issues are worked through the sub-branch and in consultation with the principal. The Consultative Committee meets at least once a term and is working effectively to address key planning for the school. As the union representative I am kept informed regularly by the IEU, our school's union Organiser and the union's Learning Support Officer.

What is the biggest win or improvement you've experienced at your school?

IEU members can work with school leadership to raise any issues and discuss any improvements that could be made.

What is involved in your role as a delegate at Ballarat Trades Hall?

As an IEU delegate to Trades Hall, I attend a monthly meeting and I will sometimes give an update about the progress of the IEU's EBA negotiations. Delegates are supportive of other unions and their campaigns for better conditions for their workers. Currently, I am supporting the 'YES' campaign for the Voice to Parliament by joining others to hand out fliers for people to read. Delegates attend an annual Labour Day Dinner and this year I spoke at that event about the IEU's wins in the past twelve months.

What is the greatest challenge in being a committed unionist?

The greatest challenge in being a committed unionist is having the time to put into the many aspects of being the IEU representative such as attending meetings, meeting with people, following up emails and ensuring that members have the information they need so that they know their rights and responsibilities.

What are the most rewarding things about being a committed unionist?

I have had the opportunity to work with many wonderful people from the IEU and at Trades Hall that are out there in workplaces and the community trying to create opportunities for their members. They are making sure that their workplaces are safe, and that workers are receiving their entitlements. I am rewarded by the people whom I work with putting their trust in me, as a representative, to listen to their concerns

and to see if I can help them. I am inspired by other unionists who are brave enough to speak up about big issues so that everyone is free from discrimination, bullying and intimidation.

What gives you the greatest hope for unionism?

I hope that more people will join the IEU and other unions. At the first Labour Day Dinner I attended I was amazed by how many unions there are and the work the representatives and organisers do to better the conditions for the workers. Unions have a strong history in Australia, and it is only through their advocacy that better pay, and conditions have been achieved.



**Free and fun
education
resources**



Get rid of the ATAR and Exams? Be careful what you wish for

Students sitting exams and receiving an ATAR is a far from perfect system, but we must be mindful of the consequences of doing away with it.

The Term 2 issue of *The Point* contained a member-written article calling for exams and the ATAR system to be abandoned as the means of determining university admissions.

Whilst the submission wasn't specific in terms of alternatives, it did suggest a 'holistic' approach which would consider things such as coursework, volunteering, extra-curricular activities and socio-economic status. The submission expressed concern about social inequities caused by the status quo, but the suggested alternatives must be viewed with caution.

Moving to a model which rewards participation in extra-curricular activities and volunteering would likely widen equity gaps. A student from an advantaged background is likely to have the time, connections, and financial means to dedicate to these pursuits that a disadvantaged student does not. A disadvantaged student who has to work part-time to support their family or help

raise younger siblings would be further disadvantaged by such a system through no fault of their own.

Is it really fair to institute an arms-race of participating in as many extra-curricular activities as possible when access to such opportunities is largely determined by privilege?

How can we objectively assess the merits of a student whose parents could afford to send them on that overseas volunteering trip over the summer holidays against a student who had to pick up extra shifts over the summer to support their family?

Another aspect to carefully consider is the authenticity of a student's work. Educators know that assessing coursework which is not completed in a supervised setting is becoming increasingly difficult. Artificial intelligence is real and prevalent. What's to stop a student from simply using ChatGPT to write that brilliant application letter and how would assessors even know?

It is true that many students do

perform better when the pressure of an exam is taken away, but unless such high-stakes assessment is conducted under exam conditions, how can anyone be sure of the authenticity of the work? Surely, we can't be pinning our students' futures on such uncertainty.

A student's socio-economic status on its own is, however, a factor that could be further considered. Perhaps the tertiary admission authorities could find ways to better connect with existing university special entry schemes to better account for this disadvantage?

Yes, it is not ideal that many students who see their hopes and dreams tied to their results are stressed by end-of-year exams. Educators can do more to sell the merits of pathways that don't include university study. We can also do more to assure students that not getting their desired ATAR usually means they just need to take a different route to get to where they want to go.

As educators, we naturally want

the best for our students and want to address what we perceive to be unfair. Abandoning the ATAR and exams might appear to be in our students' interests, but doing so would only increase unfairness.

- Connor Bourke, IEU member and Head of a Humanities Department

We welcome member submissions on any issue related to education, employment, unionism or social justice – reach us at thepoint@ieuvictas.org.au

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CAREER CORNER

Don't just SEEK! Link(ed)In!

Job hunting in the Education sector is a bit like food shopping in a traditional market: You have to look in different places depending on what you need.

In Australia, not only does each State and Territory have its own recruitment processes, but each sector also has totally different recruitment providers.

In Victoria alone, when job hunting, you must keep abreast of the following:

- Government Schools – Eduweb (Recruitment online): www.education.vic.gov.au/hrweb/careers
- Catholic Schools – Depends on the Diocese, but nominally: www.ccv.catholic.edu.au/Positions-Vacant
- Independent Schools – Seek and Independent Schools Victoria. There are others though, such as TES online, Smart, and teachers on net.

For the Catholic and independent sectors, you can also visit the employment page of individual schools' websites, but there's no simple way to get alerts or updates from these, so you will have to keep coming back to check!

In addition, many schools are increasingly outsourcing recruitment

of leadership positions to established agencies, and there are now dominant players in that market, so you must become known to these agencies to maximise your reach and minimise your workload.

That means leveraging your networks online, and the best way to do this is on LinkedIn, where not only are recruiters actively looking for suitable candidates (including those who are not even looking to move!) but schools are advertising and people within education – union Organisers for example! – are posting jobs advertised by trusted schools in their networks.

You might already have a LinkedIn profile, but you must tend to it regularly or it quickly becomes obsolete. This is because of the site's algorithms, which permit recruiters to search key words across people within a sector, regardless of whether they have a first degree connection with that person. You can search by workplace or job title to compile a list of people you want to know. Send

such relevant decision makers a message with contact details and if they accept your request to connect, you will be able to message them directly.

On LinkedIn, you can also register a job alert with certain criteria – e.g., location, job title, salary – and get opportunities sent straight to your inbox. And you can 'follow' certain schools and companies so you get alerts when they post something.

It's the modern-day equivalent of buying the *Saturday Age* and sifting through the employment supplement without having to change out of your slippers!

Once you've tidied up your profile, including the heading, professional photo, bio, and recent history, you can start to make connections. These will likely in turn lead to face-to-face meetings with various agencies, then interviews, then – bingo!

The tone of LinkedIn exchanges tends to be more civil and professional than other social media as it is considered 'work-focused' – and many senior people in organisations will converse with you there,

even if they keep a low profile elsewhere.

The IEU is considering running some training for members interested in exploring LinkedIn in more depth. If interested, let us know at training@ieuvictas.org.au

Good luck with your search!



Jessica, Teachers Health member

Great value health cover to support you in and out of the classroom

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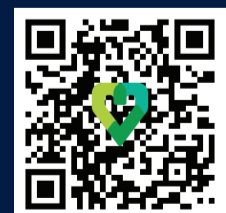
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INTERNATIONAL UNION ROUND UP

Nothing to see here: Locals support striking Hollywood comrades

In the United States, the Writers Guild of America has been on strike since May and the Screen Actors Guild and the American Federation of Television and Radio Artists (SAG-AFTRA) since mid-July.

It means a halt to production on many of the TV shows and films Australians consume.

In Australia, Media Entertainment and Arts Alliance (MEAA) Chief Executive Erin Madeley says the issues that SAG-AFTRA members are striking over – primarily fair compensation from streaming services and constraints around the use of artificial intelligence – apply to writers and actors around the world.

'Streaming services are raking in billions of dollars in revenue and earnings as their audiences continue to grow but these profits are not being shared fairly with actors,' she said.

'Although series budgets are increasing, that increase is not being reflected in the share of the money going to performers. Residuals – payments for the reuse of their work – are also much smaller on streamers compared to broadcast TV rates.

'In addition, artificial intelligence poses a new threat to the livelihoods of actors around the world and there need to be agreed rules around its use.

'Writers and performers in Hollywood

are at the forefront of holding the line of the essential role of people in storytelling, and we must stand with them.'

Erin said a 'small number' of productions currently underway in Australia may be impacted by the strikes.

'MEAA representatives are in dialogue with the producers of those productions and will advise crew and performer members of their rights if work is interrupted by the strikes.'

The MEAA has asked its members to submit group photos and take other actions to show solidarity with our international colleagues.

The ACTU Executive has passed a resolution of solidarity with the striking creatives, which states, 'The business model across the entertainment and media industries has been transformed through digitisation and streaming.'

'It is only fair that the conditions that apply to workers who deliver creative products changes too. We commend the actions of our international comrades who are calling for a fair share of the profits generated by the work of creative people.

Creative workers are taking on the struggle that all workers are facing or will soon face in the rise of AI technology.'

SAG-AFTRA says, 'We're up against a system where those in charge of multibillion-dollar media conglomerates are rewarded for exploiting workers.'

Gloomy Global Rights Index figures

The 10th edition of the Global Rights Index shows that violations of workers' rights have reached record highs.

'From Eswatini to Myanmar, Peru to France, Iran to Korea, workers' demands to have their labour rights upheld have been ignored and their dissent has been met with increasingly brutal responses from state forces,' it reports.

The 10 worst countries for working people in 2023 are: Bangladesh, Belarus, Ecuador, Egypt, Eswatini, Guatemala, Myanmar, Tunisia, the Philippines, and Turkey.

Record high levels of violations include:

■ 9 out of 10 countries violated the right

to strike. Working people in Canada, Togo, Iran, Cambodia, and Spain faced criminal prosecution or dismissal following their decision to strike.

- 77% of countries excluded working people from the right to establish or join a trade union.
- The right to free speech and assembly was restricted in 42% of countries, often resulting in protesting workers facing police brutality.
- 8 out of 10 countries violated the right to collective bargaining.

■ 73% of countries impeded the registration of unions or banned them. International Trade Union Acting General Secretary Luc Triangle said the Index results provide 'shocking evidence that the foundations of democracy are under attack'.

'There is a clear link between workers' rights being upheld and the strength of any democracy. The erosion of one amount to the degradation of the other.'



NATIONAL UNION ROUND UP

Same job, same pay campaign

The union movement is backing proposed legislation that would ensure labour hire workers are paid the same as other employees doing the same job.

The laws, due to be introduced later this year, would require that labour hire workers 'be paid at least the same as directly engaged employees doing the same work'.

In response, employers claimed they would 'have to pay workers with little knowledge or experience exactly the same as workers with decades of knowledge and experience'.

However, both workplace pay deals and Awards contain job classifications that ensure more experienced or more skilled workers are paid more.

ACTU secretary Sally McManus said it was 'crazy and bizarre' to claim the reform meant less skilled workers would be paid the same as more skilled employees.

The ACTU said, 'Wages are going backwards and have been for 10 years. Add to this the cost of living and the housing crisis and many people are really struggling.

'Too many jobs have been contracted out or made insecure.

'Australia's workplace laws need updating to protect workers from loopholes used by some big business to drive down wages and conditions.'

The ACTU says labour hire - when a 'host' employer hires a worker from a labour hire agency - was initially used by employers to fill short-term gaps. But

over time, employers used it as a way of outsourcing workers rather than directly hiring employees and it became a loophole that large corporations use to skirt around wages and conditions set in Awards or Enterprise Agreements.

'A report from the ACTU has found that big business is outsourcing workers in Australia at rapidly rising rates. At least 600,000 workers are employed through labour hire.

'Big businesses use loopholes in our current laws to get out of paying proper wages and entitlements, such as sick leave and annual leave - some 84% of labour hire workers do not have paid leave and most have no guaranteed minimum hours.'

Sign the petition to close the labour hire loopholes and keep wages moving here: <https://rb.gy/urawt>

New law would be a permanent fix for 'casuals'

The ACTU has welcomed the prospect of legislation that would give casual workers who have worked regular hours over a significant period stronger rights to convert to permanent employment.

As of May 2023, there were more than 2.6 million casual workers in Australia, a little under 1 in 4 of the Australian workforce. This means there are too many workers

with no job security and without access to basic entitlements like sick leave.

'Big businesses use loopholes in our current laws to get out of paying proper wages and entitlements, such as sick leave and annual leave - some 84% of labour hire workers do not have paid leave and most have no guaranteed minimum hours.'

The ACTU said, 'Casual work was designed for short-term needs for labour and for employees whose availability for work varied period to period. It wasn't intended for people working regular shifts for long periods of time - that's what part-time work is for.'

'Despite this, most casual employees

work the same hours, week in, week out.

'ABS data shows that 59% of casuals (1.5 million) say they work the same hours each week.'

Over half (51.7%) of casuals have been with their employer for more than a year and 15% report having been with their employer for longer than 5 years.

Sally McManus said, 'What the Government is proposing is sensible and fair, it will put the decision in the hands of workers - do they want to remain casual or not? Right now, too many workers are working jobs that are casual in name only, denying workers both pay and rights.'

Unions win minimum wage rise

As of 1 July 2023 the national minimum wage increased by 8.6% and Award wages increased by 5.75%. The ACTU called this 'a huge win' for the union movement, which fought hard for this pay increase for 2.67 million workers.

At the same time, it was reported that executives at some of Australia's biggest companies have recorded pay increases of 15 percent over the last year. That's on top of salaries that already start at well over an average of one million dollars.



UNION AID ABROAD/APHEDA

APHEDA's unique global contribution

Union Aid Abroad-APHEDA supports people struggling against poverty and injustice across the globe.

In 2015, Sharan Burrow, then General Secretary of the International Trade Union Confederation, summed up the importance of APHEDA when penning the foreword to the book, *Livelihoods and Liberation Struggles: 30 Years of Australian Worker Solidarity*.

Burrow called APHEDA a 'model for union solidarity' for the global union community.

'APHEDA is the only international development agency in Australia, which is owned, run, funded and accountable to the trade union movement,' she wrote.

APHEDA 'works on the basis of practical solidarity' to fund education and training 'by and for local people', instead of just providing handouts.

It has developed and delivered programs in work skills, adult basic education, community leadership, organising workers' rights, gender equality, media, health, food production, environment, and human rights.

There are many current projects which exemplify the ongoing importance of this

unique, now 39-year-old organisation. This edition, we draw your attention to the prevalence of **asbestos-related diseases in Indonesia**.

Australians know too well the lethal dangers of asbestos. It's much more dangerous if the illness it causes isn't properly diagnosed.

APHEDA reports that over 115,000 tonnes of asbestos fibre are imported into Indonesia each year, mostly to make roof sheets.

The World Health Organization estimates that 1,661 people die from asbestos disease in Indonesia every year, including 1,368 lung cancer cases and 225 mesothelioma cases. Yet, official statistics record no asbestos deaths and just six asbestos compensation claims.

In June, APHEDA supported a pilot training program with the Asbestos and Dust Diseases Research Institute, the Asbestos Safety and Eradication Agency, Local Initiatives for Occupational Health and Binawan University in East Jakarta.

The three-day intensive clinical training

brought together 164 students and health specialists, and 51 doctors and other specialists from across Indonesia.

APHEDA reports that over 115,000 tonnes of asbestos fibre are imported into Indonesia each year, mostly to make roof sheets.

This first-of-its-kind project aimed to start building the capacity of medical practitioners to diagnose asbestos-related diseases and educate students and staff.

It's another example of the 'practical solidarity' which makes APHEDA irreplaceable.

You can buy *Livelihoods and Liberation Struggles: 30 Years of Australian Worker Solidarity* from the APHEDA shop online at: <https://rb.gy/6dqaz>

All funds from the sale of the book go to support the work of UNION Aid Abroad APHEDA

To join APHEDA, go to: www.apheda.org.au/join/



NATIONAL IEU ROUND UP

Qld Catholic employers warned over 5-minute strike wage deductions

Queensland Catholic employers have been warned not to make major wage deductions of employees' pay over a five-minute before-school stop work action undertaken by thousands of Queensland Catholic school teachers and support staff on 15 August.

Independent Education Union – Queensland and Northern Territory (IEU-QNT) Branch Secretary Terry Burke said employees were taking 'lawful protected action', which meant the employers were obligated to withhold pay for only the time employees were not working.

'In this case – that is five minutes.

'Instead, Queensland Catholic school employers have threatened to withhold employee pay of up to a full day.

'Such action should only occur if employees were taking unprotected industrial action – which they're not.

'These employees have followed the law and are legally authorised to take protected industrial action.

'They have done so as the only recourse available to them given the employer failure to address critical concerns as part of negotiations for a new agreement.

'Employees are taking the action as part of a campaign to address the workload crisis that is seeing teachers leave the sector in droves.'

IEUA Secretary Brad Hayes said urgent reforms were needed to end 'punitive employer responses to lawful industrial action'.

'The loss of a day's pay for taking even minor work bans of a few minutes'

duration is manifestly disproportionate and excessive.

'It's essentially a 'lockout' threat being used by employers to intimidate staff from taking lawful action.'

WA launches first multi-bargaining case

The IEU WA Branch has applied for the first ever Single Interest Multi-Employer Bargaining Authorisation under new federal laws that came into effect in June this year. The Fair Work Commission began hearing the application Thursday, 20 July.

The IEU's WA branch lodged the application to compel 10 employers to negotiate on behalf of thousands of general and education support workers in 163 Catholic schools.

WA Branch Secretary Rebecca Collopy said despite the union's 'multiple requests' to start bargaining for support workers, the employers said they would only do so once bargaining for teachers had concluded.

While Catholic school teachers in WA are already engaged in bargaining, their support staff colleagues don't have an Agreement. School support and operational staff are predominantly female workers with many stuck on insecure short-term contracts – these members can now pursue

greater job security and wage outcomes through bargaining.

NSW: Backpay coming for Support Staff in Catholic systemic schools

Most support staff in Catholic systemic schools in NSW are receiving backpay following pay rises resulting from the IEU's negotiations with their employers.

Another 4% pay rise is also coming to school support staff, after the NSW Public Service Association (PSA), which covers public servants in NSW, voted to accept a 4% pay rise (plus 0.5% superannuation) from the Minns State Government.

IEU support staff members have been proudly sporting stickers which say: 'We got a pay rise! Ask me for a form and join our union'.

The union campaign included the Joint IEU/Employer Support Staff Working Party that met throughout 2021; two full-day stop works, and a one-hour stop work in 2022 by IEU teacher and support staff members; media and social media coverage; numerous meetings with dioceses throughout 2022 and 2023, and a dispute notification in February this year by the IEU to the Fair Work Commission.

SA: 'Class Action' survey exhibits member concerns

The IEU SA has conducted a major survey to better understand member awareness of Enterprise Agreements and to identify and answer their most pressing questions. The results will inform the union's communications with members during bargaining campaigns.

Unsurprisingly, workload and Support Staff classifications were key findings.

On workload, the union explained that Catholic and Lutheran Enterprise Agreements set out 'maximum Student Contact Time, the amount of meetings you can attend and the amount of extra-curricular activities you can be asked to do'. While some independent schools have workload 'written in school policy; others do not formally state workload'.

To Support Staff, the union said, 'Getting re-classified is important if you believe that you are doing tasks which are higher than the grade for which you are currently employed and being paid.'

They then explained the difficult process of proving one's classification.

'Your claim needs rigorous evidence and unfortunately members often start the process before contacting us for advice and fail to achieve the reclassification.'

IEU LEARNING HUB

**TUESDAY
12 SEPTEMBER**
10:00am to 3:00pm

Indigenous pedagogies - Yarning circles and 8 Ways

IEU LEARNING HUB

**WEDNESDAY
20 SEPTEMBER**
10:00am to 11:00am

Time Management tools

IEU LEARNING HUB

**WEDNESDAY
20 SEPTEMBER**
11:30am to 12:30pm

Working with disengaged students

Coming up at the IEU

Thursday 31 August

- [PD Webinar](#) - Maths games to engage students and enhance learning (primary)

Wednesday 6 September

- [PD Webinar](#) - Steps to Reconciliation - Uluru and the Voice (primary)

Thursday 7 September

- [PD Webinar](#) - Steps to Reconciliation - Uluru and the Voice (secondary)

Friday 8 September

- Regional Rep Training - Bendigo

Tuesday 12 September

- [PD Webinar](#) - Indigenous pedagogies - Yarning circles and 8 Ways

Wednesday 20 September

- [PD Webinar](#) - Time Management tools
- [PD Webinar](#) - Working with disengaged students
- [PD Webinar](#) - Technology used responsibly for ES staff

Friday 22 September

- [PD Webinar](#) - Application writing for ES Staff
- [PD Webinar](#) - Managing challenging conversations with colleagues

Thursday 28 September

- [PD Webinar](#) - Managing challenging conversations with parents
- [PD Webinar](#) - Managing challenging conversations with students

Thursday 12 October

- [PD Webinar](#) - Using AI positively in the classroom

Wednesday 18 October

- HSR Initial OHS Training Course (also 19, 20 October and 2, 3 November)

Thursday 19 October

- [PD Webinar](#) - Literacy programs for lower primary students

Thursday 26 October

- Level 1 Rep Training

Monday 30 October

- Regional Rep Training - Ballarat

Events and training updated regularly. To find out more and register head to

www.ieuvictas.org.au/all-events-training

UNION QUIZ *provided by the good folk at Eltham College*

- General Secretary David Brear first joined the Union as a graduate teacher in what year?
 - 1985
 - 1987
 - 1989
 - 1990
- Which AFL football team won the VFL Grand Final in the same year that General Secretary David Brear first joined the union?
 - Collingwood
 - Hawthorn
 - Essendon
 - Carlton
- Before becoming General Secretary of the IEU, David Brear played for which Northern Football League Club?
 - Heidelberg
 - North Heidelberg
 - Heidelberg West
 - Ivanhoe
- The Australian Council for Trade Unions is the peak body for how many affiliated unions?
 - 42
 - 52
 - 32
 - 62
- Which union is the largest union in Australia with approximately 322,000 members?
 - Independent Education Union
 - Australian Nurses and Midwifery Federation
 - Construction, Forestry, Maritime, Energy Union
 - Transport Workers Union
- The AMIEU is an Australian Trade Union representing abattoirs, butchers and small goods manufacturers. But what does AMIEU stand for?
 - Australasian Mail Industry Employees Union
 - Australasian Meat Industry Education Union
 - Australasian Meat Industry Employees Union
 - Australian Meat Including Eating Union
- When did the first nation-wide meeting of unions in Australia take place?
 - 1879
 - 1889
 - 1890
 - 1990
- In what year was the eight-hour work day initiated?
 - 1869
 - 1865
 - 1860
 - 1856
- In 1970 the tireless work of unions led to what major change?
 - Four weeks of paid annual leave
 - 12 weeks of paid maternity leave
 - The introduction of sick leave
 - The introduction of long service leave
- As this trivia was written by the amazing IEU members at ELTHAM College. How many IEU members are there at this private Independent school in the northern suburbs?
 - 32% of all staff
 - 43% of all staff
 - 60% of all staff
 - 53% of all staff

PAY IT FORWARD TO ANOTHER SCHOOL

Eltham College's Quizmeisters Dean Haydock and Terry Huddy have nominated Maree Shields and the members at St Bernard's School Coburg to provide 10 questions for the next edition of the quiz and to then pay it forward to another school!

PICTURE THIS

Which quotes belong to Fran Drescher, striking US union (SAG-AFTRA) president, and which belong to her character Fran Fine, from the 90s sitcom *The Nanny*?



- 'My mother had three rules. Never make contact with a public toilet; never, ever, ever cross a picket line, what was the third one? Oh yeah - never wear musk oil to the zoo.'
- 'Capitalism has become another word for Ruling Class Elite!'
- 'Too bad we didn't have this conversation in the garden. The plants would have loved the fertiliser.'
- 'Share the wealth, because you cannot exist without us.'