



Independent Education Union of Australia NSW/ACT Branch

**HEAR OUR VOICE**

# CAMPAIGN UPDATE

## **The IEU is campaigning for better pay and conditions for teachers and support staff in Catholic diocesan schools. Here we report on progress – and next steps.**

The enterprise agreement covering teachers and support staff in Catholic diocesan schools expired on 31 December 2021. The IEU had already lodged a claim with Catholic dioceses in November 2021.

The dioceses finally came to the bargaining table on 2 February 2022, with subsequent meetings on 23 February, 23 March and 20 April. (The employers cancelled one meeting, scheduled for 10 March, for technical reasons to do with the Notice of Employee Representational Rights.) The dioceses were represented by Catholic Employment Relations (CER) and representatives of some individual dioceses at the meetings.

You can read all the background in Newsmonth#2: [publications.ieu.asn.au/2022-april-newsmoonth/news/hear-our-voice/](https://publications.ieu.asn.au/2022-april-newsmoonth/news/hear-our-voice/)

## **The union's claims**

The union's claims for the new enterprise agreements (covering members in 600 Catholic diocesan schools in NSW and the ACT) include:

- Pay teachers what they're worth (an increase of 10% to 15% over two years)
- Give support staff a fair deal
- Let teachers teach – cut paperwork
- Allow time to plan
- End staff shortages.

Further details of our claims are set out in the February NewsExtra on our website: [bit.ly/NewsExtraFeb22](https://bit.ly/NewsExtraFeb22)

## **The employers' offer**

The union received the employers' first written response to our claims after the meeting on Wednesday 6 April. The Diocesan Directors also circulated this response to employees. While the union acknowledges that the meeting

on 6 April was conducted with goodwill and that some progress was made, the employers' response falls short in almost all areas. For example:

- there is no pay offer for teachers in addition to the 2.04% increase already paid
- although dioceses have agreed in principle to increase support staff pay rates to a level comparable with the rates paid to support staff in government schools, no specific proposal has been put to the union, and the phase-in period of the new rates is also unacceptably long (new rates will not be phased in fully until 2024)
- there is no offer to improve casual teacher pay as a measure to address the teacher shortage issue
- employers have refused to improve long service leave for support staff
- employers have not agreed to additional face-to-face release other than a one-off offer of an additional pupil-free day in 2022 (to be directed by principals).

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## Speaking out about staff shortages

**In early April, the IEU released a statement to the media on how staff shortages are pushing teachers and support staff to breaking point. The same staff scarcity is happening in early childhood centres.**

Appearing on 10 News, NSW/ACT Branch Acting Secretary Carol Matthews said: "Our organisers have been in schools all over the state and territory, and they're saying members everywhere are distressed, burnt out and exhausted."

There are no quick fixes to this long-term problem, but there is a solution.

"We need to get many more teachers into the system and keep those who are already there," Matthews said.

"It's a matter of fair pay and manageable workloads, but employers have proved unwilling to move on this so far. This shortage did not come out of nowhere, governments and employers knew about it before the pandemic. A radical rethink is needed."

On Facebook we handed you the microphone and asked you tell us about your Term 1. We asked what was happening in your workplace with staff shortages, workload intensification, absences and extras. You told us it was the toughest term yet.

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## Join the IEU

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# Speaking out about staff shortages

Being exposed to COVID on a daily basis, constantly in close contact situations, but yet because we are critical workers we just had to go on like nothing was happening. Support staff having to take on core staff roles which is exhausting and dangerous when we have children who have one-to-one care needs. Staff shortage and stress but yet expectations from above have not changed; 12-week term for our preschool and eight non-contact days now over this break, during which we have to do training and catch up on paperwork. Pretty sad situation overall.

Just when we thought things couldn't get harder, staff and student absences due to COVID made teaching more challenging than the previous two years combined. Add to that school closures due to flooding on top of already unmanageable workloads, we found ourselves with a physically and mentally exhausted group of teachers and support staff. You can imagine the frustration felt when emails were received from employers that stated how grateful they are for our efforts and how much they respect us BUT they won't budge on improvements to pay and conditions. We are ready for the fight next term. Bring ... it ... on.

I'm an early childhood teacher and this term has been no better than any last year and possibly even worse. If you get sick there is almost no one to cover. We work on about 22 staff per day, and have at best two casuals to cover RDOs, holidays, sick leave and carers leave. One is leaving soon but no one answers our recruitment ads. People leave and can't be replaced. We are forced to shift children around between classes to try to make ratios work. It's stressful for staff and way off best practice for children, but that's how we're staying open. I have come to the end of my tether. I am mentally, physically and emotionally drained. Where are the staff coming from who will be expected to replace this crop of burnt-out teachers/ diplomas/Cert 3s? I fear for the entire sector. It's a crisis alright, but no one seems to care. Will the government see the issues and change the ratios to suit the meagre staff available? Will they allow services to employ untrained staff? I just cannot imagine. Please help enact change in the sector or watch it shrink to nothing. The more people who leave, the more pressure on those who stay, and the more likely they are to leave too. It's just so broken.

It was the hardest term I've ever had. I work in admin part-time. Our full-timer left and I stepped up to the role as a job share (three days) but they've struggled to fill the other

position. Essentially I've been running the admin alone for weeks. Our principal has stepped in where possible. I'm so glad for the break but I won't last the year if this continues. Such a shame as I love my job and my school.

Hard to believe it was only Term 1!

Ran out of casuals quickly. Literally no one to call now to replace staff on leave next term.

Apparently, education is doing just fine. Staffing shortages are not a real issue. If that was Term 1, what will Term 2 bring? Protected action to improve the future of education. Improvements we make now are for a better future.

It's been a term like no other. Exhaustion on every front. I've worked in school administration for 22 years but this term got me. Too much is expected of support staff with zero understanding, lack of support, zero acknowledgement and massive expectations when we are short staffed too. I handed in my resignation a month ago and the sad truth is that I'm SO relieved to not to have to go back next term.

I've got nothing left.

An 11-week term is ridiculous under the best of circumstances but this one has been especially tough with no time to regroup, planning on the hoof for half a class due to student absences or a collapsed class due to staff absences. In the UK they have a half-term holiday – 3-5 day break in the middle of a term. Wow! I'd have killed for that this term!

I love the kids but the ever-increasing workload and expectations on teachers make the job impossible.

It was hard! Hardest yet and unfortunately there seemed to be a lack of empathy for teachers from the community around us. We have a tough job and COVID made it tougher as we battled internal worries about our own health being affected and our families' health leading on from that. Workloads were not lessened and, in fact, made larger. The students are what make it all worthwhile, but the demands placed on teachers above and beyond teaching make our vocation hugely stressful. It is understandable why the teacher shortage is growing and teachers are walking away.

Was all of that only Term ONE?!

COVID, staff shortages and two devastating floods. I'd say it was one of the worst terms for teachers in the Northern Rivers.

So busy that I legit have 10 days' worth of marking to do. So my "holiday" will just be me catching up on everything I couldn't do this term.

Busy, COVID filled, large numbers of staff and student sickness, many extras, casuals like gold.

Term 1 was symbolic of education now: "Let's all pretend we're all OK and achieving everything we need to."

Longest 26 weeks of my life.

This was the most exhausting term after 22 years of teaching! Came back from having COVID and was given an extra because of staff shortages, so I taught every period that day. I still wasn't feeling 100 percent. I survived but was so exhausted.

Term 1 was like something I never want to experience again!!!

Everyone is ignoring the entire HERD of elephants in the room: COVID staff shortages; teacher exhaustion; combined classes; specialist teachers diverted. Our government ought to hang its head in shame.

I had just five kids in my Year 12 class this week. Five! Year 12! The rest were sick. We had 65 students out of 200 in Year 10 the week before. The rest were sick or isolating. We had classes not covered because casuals couldn't be found, and classes collapsed so some semblance of curriculum could be taught. This term has been mentally, physically and intellectually draining.

Beyond exhausting.

The last day of Term 1 was filled with the same excitement I have going off to the work Christmas party. It's been a sh\*tshow!

I wished everyone Happy Christmas on Zoom assembly this week! It feels like we completed a year in one term. The uncertainty leaves us all emotionally drained. I feel like we've been moving sandbags to different locations every day to plug holes. Our teaching staff are phenomenal and very weary. We all have each other's back and we need the two weeks to recover from the emotional and mental load. We are lucky to have as many casual teachers as we have. Some are in their 70s and 80s. We love learning and teaching and the young people in our care are our number one priority. Take care and rest up for Term 2.

Massive absences, lots of stress about being sick, felt totally thrown under the bus by government.



### Letter to the editor

Much is said, and rightly so, about the heavy workload of teachers, but not so much about the heavy demands made while actually teaching – the high levels of focus and concentration required for many hours. How much of the following is noticed by outsiders? The effective teacher is able to take in, analyse, assess and make decisions about a

vast multiplicity of variables and respond to a wide range of incessant and unending demands at such a fast, lighting or computer-like and almost subliminal speed, that it takes a huge mental effort to make what has happened conscious, verbal and explicit.

**Robert Hayes**  
Teacher, ACT  
IEU member since 1997





# Goodwill has evaporated – it's time to stand up for the profession

**Mark Northam**  
Secretary



**More than 540 IEU chapters in Catholic systemic schools across NSW and the ACT have decided to engage in Protected Industrial Action to push back on excessive workload and gain salary increases beyond the NSW Government's punitive 2.5% salary cap.**

## How did we get to this point?

Putting aside COVID, it's been obvious for a while that to continue as is, in terms of salary and conditions, is to erode educational quality and to make teaching an unattractive career.

The model of delivery is many decades old. Teacher preparation time must be reconfigured to capture the reality of education in the 2020s. The inexorable drift to personalised education and reporting on it demands increased professional time.

To expect different outcomes without evolving the model is an exercise in futility.

Employers in recent weeks offered one additional pupil-free day in 2022 to assuage IEU member concerns. This won't cut it. Teams of teachers working professionally and collaboratively require consistent, scheduled, additional release time.

## Pay cap unfair

The NSW Government has passed legislation limiting public sector pay rises to a maximum of 2.5%. This pay cap has now been in place

for 11 years and must be removed. Catholic school employers consider themselves bound by this pay cap in the current bargaining even though it doesn't legally apply.

The cap's existence is a constraint on the economy and IEU members view it as a blunt instrument that is incongruent with an industrial relations system that has levers to determine what are fair salaries and wages.

## Industrial action

As the IEU heads toward industrial action, it is appropriate to note that such decisions are not taken lightly. The ramifications are considerable but for matters to continue as they are is not viable.

Support staff have a very specific burr under their saddle: the reluctance of employers to match salaries paid to support staff in government schools. This is a long-standing grievance.

There is no quick fix. It takes a long time to increase the supply of new teachers. Retention rates will improve if salaries and conditions match the expectations of the profession. Governments also need to trust teachers to operate as professionals in a complex work environment.

Join your colleagues in taking protected action, support the profession, enhance educational outcomes, and gain conditions and salaries that the school communities you serve believe are overdue. It's time to restore goodwill.

# Catholic independent school staff in limbo

**Carol Matthews**  
Deputy Secretary



**The IEU has been unsuccessful in achieving new enterprise agreements for teachers and support staff in Catholic independent schools.**

## Model A schools

Negotiations for new enterprise agreements have stalled with a group of eight schools, called Model A Catholic independent schools, following the expiry of the existing Model A enterprise agreements in December 2020.

The schools are Brigidine College St Ives; Mater Dei; Mount St Benedict College; Our Lady of Mercy College Parramatta; St Vincent's College (teachers only); St Scholastica's College Glebe and St Joseph's College Hunters Hill. Santa Sabina College is seeking its own enterprise agreement (EA) but is negotiating together with this group of schools.

The employer representing the schools in bargaining is Catholic Employment Relations (CER).

The union consulted with members in February and March concerning the new teacher and support staff enterprise agreements proposed by CER. CER offered pay rises broadly in line with those that were agreed in mid 2021 for Association of Independent Schools (AIS) independent schools enterprise agreements.

The proposed increases were 2.28% in 2021 (already paid), 2.04% in 2022, 2.04% in 2023 and 2.04% in 2024. Members indicated they were unhappy about the pay rises, which are lower than the increases the union is claiming for members in Catholic systemic schools. The proposed increases are also well below the rate of inflation that is currently predicted over the life of the agreements.

The IEU provided detailed feedback to CER concerning the draft agreements and advised CER of members' views on the pay rises. As an alternative, the union suggested a one-year agreement. Santa Sabina College, however, proceeded in the first week of April to put both the teachers and the support staff enterprise agreements (which would remain in place until December 2024 if endorsed) to the vote of their employees.

Support staff at Santa Sabina College endorsed the support staff enterprise agreement by a narrow majority but teachers rejected the teachers enterprise agreement by a margin the college has refused to reveal.

The union is seeking the resumption of negotiations for an improved outcome for both teachers at Santa Sabina College and teachers and support staff in the other Model A schools.

## Model B and C schools

This group of approximately 30 Catholic independent schools issued Notices of Employee Representational Rights, the formal start of bargaining for new enterprise agreements, in February this year. The union then wrote to CER with a detailed claim that had been endorsed by members in the Model B and C schools in February.

However, no negotiating meetings have been held, despite a request by the union that bargaining commence.

The union was advised that schools were considering making an interim payment (as occurred in systemic schools), but this has not been confirmed.

The union will continue to push for the commencement of negotiations as soon as possible.





## Making it easier for dads and non-birth parents to take parental leave

**Pam Smith**

Assistant Secretary



**The IEU's claim in the Catholic systemic sector for increased parental leave for fathers and non-birth partners is part of an ongoing campaign to recognise the realities of contemporary work and family.**

In seeking new enterprise agreements (EA) for staff in systemic schools, the IEU has claimed parity with a new NSW public sector entitlement for an additional 12 weeks of paid parental leave for non-birth parents who become the primary carer for the child in the 12 months following the birth, provided the mother is not taking parental leave at the same time.

This move in the direction of greater flexibility for parents taking leave is also reflected in the 2022 federal budget announcement that the two weeks 'Dad and Partner' pay is being merged with the 18 weeks paid parental leave (at the federal minimum wage rate) to create 20 weeks paid parental leave to be accessed by parents within two years of the birth or adoption. A single parent will also be eligible for the full 20 weeks of paid parental leave.

In its 2022 Data Snapshot from the 2020-2021 reporting period, Australia's Workplace Gender Equality Agency (WGEA) noted that paid primary carer's leave was becoming increasingly available to both

women and men but that initiatives are needed to increase the take-up rate for men. On the data for the reporting period, only 12 percent of men had accessed parental leave.

The ACTU is continuing to advocate for 26 weeks of paid parental leave and with superannuation to be paid on the national paid parental leave amount.

Australian women currently retire with significantly lower super balances than men and payment of super on paid and unpaid parental leave would be a major step in reducing the retirement income gap.

WGEA has indicated that only seven percent of employers in 2020-2021 paid superannuation on both employer funded and government funded parental leave.

In a new enterprise agreement negotiated with the IEU, Life Education NSW/ACT has agreed to pay superannuation on up to 12 months of parental leave for all employees who access such leave. This has been welcomed by the IEU as a positive move in addressing superannuation inequities arising from parental leave.

As part of a fair and inclusive society, both employers and governments have vital roles in supporting parents to take the leave they need to care for babies and young children.

The IEU's current EA claim for the Catholic systemic sector and other union campaigns are important in recognising the practical realities of balancing work and care for contemporary families.

## IEU pushes to progress Sydney Adventist Teachers' Enterprise Agreement

**During the Greater Sydney Adventist Schools' Enterprise Agreement negotiations in 2021, the IEU welcomed the active input of members via chapter meetings and Zoom gatherings.**

Greater Sydney Adventist teachers indicated to the IEU they were not happy with the employer's offer of 2.25% annual increases over four years from 2022 to 2025 and the rejection of several other working conditions claims.

Of particular concern was the low pay rise offer over four years and the failure to move to the standards model pay structure as in other sectors, the limited improvement to leave entitlements,

and the lack of recognition of a range of workload and wellbeing concerns.

Ultimately, there was a 'no' vote for the EA and the IEU has sought further discussions with the Greater Sydney Adventist Conference to advance EA negotiations.

The IEU thanks reps and members in Sydney Adventist schools for their ongoing engagement and activism during the EA negotiations and looks forward to working with them to achieve an EA which protects and enhances their remuneration and employment conditions.

**Pam Smith** Assistant Secretary

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# CAMPA



Australian Council of Trade Unions (ACTU) Secretary Sally McManus supports the Hear our Voice campaign with IEU Organiser Charles Wheeler at the Secure Jobs Community Forum on the Central Coast on 11 April.

In terms of teacher pay rises, the employers have said they will "at least" match the percentage increases paid by the NSW and ACT Governments but have not given any specific commitment to pay any additional amount. This means a maximum pay rise of 2.04% for teachers in NSW, including the increase already paid. The ACT Government's position is not yet known.

The employers have also cited the NSW and ACT Governments' position as the basis for rejecting the union's claim for improvements in release from face-to-face teaching. They have indicated they would agree to "at least" match any improvements in the public sector, but again have not made any commitment to a reduction if there is no reduction in face to face teaching in the public sector.

The union and its members consider the employers' response to be unacceptable.

### Protected Action Ballot Order

Almost 540 IEU Chapters have advised us they want the right to take protected action in support of our claims for your new enterprise agreement.

Accordingly, the union filed an application with the Fair Work Commission for a Protected Action Ballot Order, which was approved by the Commission on 14 April.

This means IEU members who work in schools that voted to participate in the ballot will be able to vote for the right to take protected action. Voting will open on Wednesday 11 May at 6am and close on Tuesday 17 May at 5pm.

The ballot will ask you to vote Yes/No to authorise two types of protected action:

- A potential stoppage of work
- The possibility of wearing or displaying union slogans promoting the campaign and the provision of information concerning the campaign to members of the community (including parents and the media).

There are still some technicalities. For the Protected Action Ballot to be carried, two requirements must be fulfilled:

- half the members eligible to vote must participate in the ballot
- more than half of those who vote, must vote yes.

For this reason we urge all members – including casuals – in schools that voted to be part of the ballot, to participate.

This campaign is a once-in-a-decade opportunity to gain improvements in teachers and support staff pay and conditions. Be part of this campaign for the future of the profession and our schools.

We will communicate the result to members of the ballot as soon as it is declared, which is likely to be soon after the ballot closes.

### What you can do

- Keep a close eye on your email for updates and info
- Vote in the Protected Action Ballot
- Urge other members to vote.



# campaign update



**Chris Wilkinson**  
President, IEUA NSW/ACT Branch

"The union brings everyone together – we're working together for better pay and conditions. I joined the union over 40 years ago and I encourage all new teachers to join. What you get out of the union is what you put in – you are the union. Together we can make change. We're running the Hear our Voice campaign because teachers' workloads are intensifying more and more, and teachers are not getting paid what they should be paid for the hours they work. We're looking for a decent pay rise. The Gallop Report recommended increases of 10% to 15%, which is fair for the work teachers do [see *Valuing the teaching profession: An independent inquiry*, 2021; commissioned by the NSW Teachers Federation; download here: [www.nswtf.org.au/inquiry](http://www.nswtf.org.au/inquiry)]. At the moment, young graduates are not going into the teaching profession because of the pay and workload. When I talk to my Year 12 students, not many of them these days want to go into teaching – it's just not an attractive career for most young people today. So workload reduction and pay increases are what we're looking for in this campaign. We want you to hear our voice, especially for the younger ones coming along behind us."



Independent Education Union of Australia NSW/ACT Branch

## HEAR OUR VOICE

It's time to

- Pay teachers what we're worth
- Give support staff a fair deal
- Let teachers teach – cut paperwork
- Allow time to plan
- End staff shortages

Let's fix this together

**IEU**

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## HEAR OUR VOICE

It's time for a fair deal for teachers and support staff

- Join the IEU
- Stand with your colleagues
- Vote for the right to take protected action

Let's fix this together



Join the  
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**Carolyn Collins**  
Vice President, Support Staff, IEUA NSW/ACT Branch

"I work in a primary school in a diverse learning unit for children from Year 1 to Year 6. I love my job – this is my 36th year. I joined the union because I've always believed in justice. I've come from someone who sat outside with children to teach them reading in the hot or the cold. Then I decided to do a Diploma in Social Science. Any course that comes along, I will do it to increase my knowledge of working with children. I just love my children. I am their school grandmother and I just love, love, love my job. This year is going to be the most significant and historical year for support staff. So we need more support staff to join – we can't just leave it up to a few to fight this battle. This battle is huge, and while we walk beside teachers, we still have to do it for ourselves. We are professionals. Our roles are as valuable as those in government schools – so we need to achieve their pay increase and not sell ourselves short. We need to have collegiality with one another and the pay that equates to it. It's wonderful we get all these lovely platitudes. But my response is 'don't just say it, pay it!' We need to be heard. We want more support staff to join the union and fight the good fight. So hear our voice!"





# Working with Children Check

## Renew now to avoid delays

**There are delays in processing applications and renewals of the Working With Children Check (WWCC) as advised by the Office of the Children's Guardian.**

The process that formerly took days is in some cases now taking weeks or months.

Expiry of a WWCC results in immediate suspension of a teacher's accreditation, until such time as the new due date is issued by the Office of the Children's Guardian. A teacher may not work at a school during the suspension

and is not entitled to any paid leave during that time.

A pending application for renewal is not sufficient. The process must be completed.

It is essential that NESAs have the correct contact details for all teachers. The first notification should be emailed to a teacher three months before their WWCC due date.

We encourage all members to renew promptly to avoid any issues due to a delayed application/renewal process.

## Extra help for early learning centres impacted by floods

**In April, thanks to pressure from the Northern Rivers Preschool Alliance, supported by the IEU, State Education Minister Sarah Mitchell announced additional funding for flood-affected early education services.**

The IEU wrote to Mitchell in late March. The letter said in part:

"In the aftermath of the devastating floods in Northern NSW, many of our members who work in this region have been significantly impacted in their places of work. Up to 15 community preschools have been rendered inoperative due to the damage caused by flood waters.

"These teachers have been actively involved in securing assistance for the clean-up, repair and relocation of their services so they can continue to provide quality education and care.

"The families rely on the preschools to provide care for their children while they attempt to rebuild their lives. The children need the security and routine from their trusted educators to enable them to recover from the trauma of this disaster in a caring familiar environment.

"The IEU urges you as Minister and your department to urgently direct adequate resources to support these teachers and their colleagues to rebuild their early education services. Currently these services are relying on volunteers for cleaning and donations of resources to enable them to operate.

"The union is concerned about the ongoing effect this disaster will have on these teachers, particularly regarding burnout and fatigue which will exacerbate the current teacher shortages. We believe that teachers should have access to funded counselling, if they request it, to be able to continue to perform their jobs in this difficult situation.

"The IEU urges your Department to:

- Expedite approvals for temporary venues and staffing waivers so services can continue to offer education to all children.
- Continue financial support needed for teachers whose services have been interrupted so they continue to get paid.
- Enable (temporary) extensions to the number of approved places for services that are operational.
- Provide counselling for affected staff.
- Guarantee funding to repair damaged preschools and replace those that were destroyed."

On 5 April Mitchell announced that schools, early childhood education services and vocational training services across the northern rivers and north coast areas would receive \$67 million to help their recovery from the floods.

The package includes \$9.5 million psychology and counselling for school and early childhood staff and trauma training so they can support students and \$9 million to help services rebuild.

## Principals Sub Branch: Tackling staffing shortages with better pay and conditions

**The IEU thanks principal members for their support and hopes that the Autumn school vacation provided some time for rest and renewal.**

Our thoughts continue to be with those school communities affected by the devastating floods in the northern rivers area and by extreme weather events in other areas.

The IEU is also aware of the ongoing impact of COVID on many schools and the stress this has often placed on staffing.

A Zoom update meeting was held on 5 April for IEU principal members in NSW and ACT Catholic systemic schools, with a focus on the enterprise agreement

negotiations for teachers and support staff, as well as on the specific claims for principals.

To address staff shortages, principals at the meeting emphasised the vital need to attract and retain teachers by improving pay, addressing workload issues and enhancing the status of the profession.

The current workload pressures on principals have been illustrated by the recent report of the 2021 Australian Principal Occupational Health and Wellbeing Survey in which many IEU principal members participated (see page 16).

The results of the 2021 survey confirm concerns about the impact of staffing shortages, the need for

more time and support for school middle leaders, and the importance of counsellors and other resources to address student and family wellbeing and mental health issues.

The Term 2 IEU Principals' Sub Branch meeting is planned for 7 May at the IEU Parramatta office with a Zoom option. Principals are most welcome to contact the IEU if they would like to participate in the IEU Principals' Sub Branch and/or in IEU diocesan or sector activities for its principal members.

**Pam Smith**

Assistant Secretary/Principals' Organiser



# New to the profession? What is the IEU and why you should join

## How unions work

- Unions are groups of workers
- Workers organise themselves into unions to solve problems that individuals can't solve themselves
- Unions exist because groups have more power than individuals
- Power is the ability to force employers to do things they otherwise wouldn't do
- Union power is based on the threat of collective action to solve problems
- Not everyone has the same problem at the same time
- To operate, unions need solidarity. Solidarity means 'I will support you when you have a problem on the understanding that you will support me when I have a problem'.

The Independent Education Union is the union for teachers and support staff in non-government schools; that is, Catholic schools and other independent schools. It also covers degree-qualified teachers who work in early childhood centres, and teachers who work in English language colleges (ELICOS).

For those in Catholic systemic schools, it's crucial to be a member right now, so that you can participate in the Hear Our Voice campaign for better pay and conditions.

In NSW and the ACT, there are about 32,000 IEU members. In Australia as a whole, there are more than 75,000 members. The more IEU members there are at your

workplace, the stronger the union's voice becomes.

IEU Council is the key decision-making body of the union. The IEU is divided into geographical branches, each of which elects delegates to Council every three years. Council meets four times a year, with an Annual General Meeting in October.

Delegates are elected by a postal ballot of all members in their geographical branch. Schools and centres are part of 'chapters' or a group of schools and centres in a geographic area that meet regularly with their assigned organiser.

When you join the union, you have access to a union representative (rep) at your school if you work in one. This is a member of staff who has volunteered to help the union. Or you can contact the union's organiser who is assigned to your chapter. Reps and organisers can give you advice on issues relating to your employment contract, your pay, leave entitlements, problems with bullying, child protection allegations or performance issues.

Union membership also comes with other professional benefits such as publications sent directly to your home, enews, free online professional development courses and other events.

Most importantly, being part of a union means you add your voice to a collective that gives you more power at the negotiating table, so that when it's time for your enterprise agreement or award to be updated, or there are issues with your

health and safety at work, the union can be a powerful voice on your behalf.

It's no surprise that people who belong to unions generally earn higher wages.

In 2018 ACTU Secretary Sally McManus said: "A weakening of workplace rights in all industries over the last 30 years has created record inequality, insecure work and record low wage growth. All Australians suffer when union membership declines. Australia needs a strong trade union movement."

The union is also an advocate to government making decisions about education issues that affect your day-to-day work life, and the children you care for.

If you're not a member of the union, you can't access its support if a problem arises suddenly. Like insurance, you need to have been a member for a while to access help from the union.

Samuel Gompers, one of the founders of the labour movement in America, said "the trade union movement represents the organised economic power of the workers. It is in reality the most potent and the most direct social insurance the workers can establish".

## Here's what some IEU members say:

### Amy Mead, teacher

"It's so important to be part of the IEU. It's the best way to protect your career and know your rights in the workplace. It's great to have somewhere to turn, to ask discreet questions."

### Carolyn Collins, IEU Vice President, Support Staff

"Support staff can be quite vulnerable and are often casuals, so they need the union more than anybody."

### Sarita Baidya, early childhood teacher

"The union has supported me in many ways and helped me to work out any issues I've had. I'm a union member because it gives me a sense of security so that if something happens, I have the union backing me."

### Sidonie Coffey, principal

"Over the past 10 years, the changes to principals' work and workload have been extraordinary. The IEU provides us with an opportunity to raise our concerns."

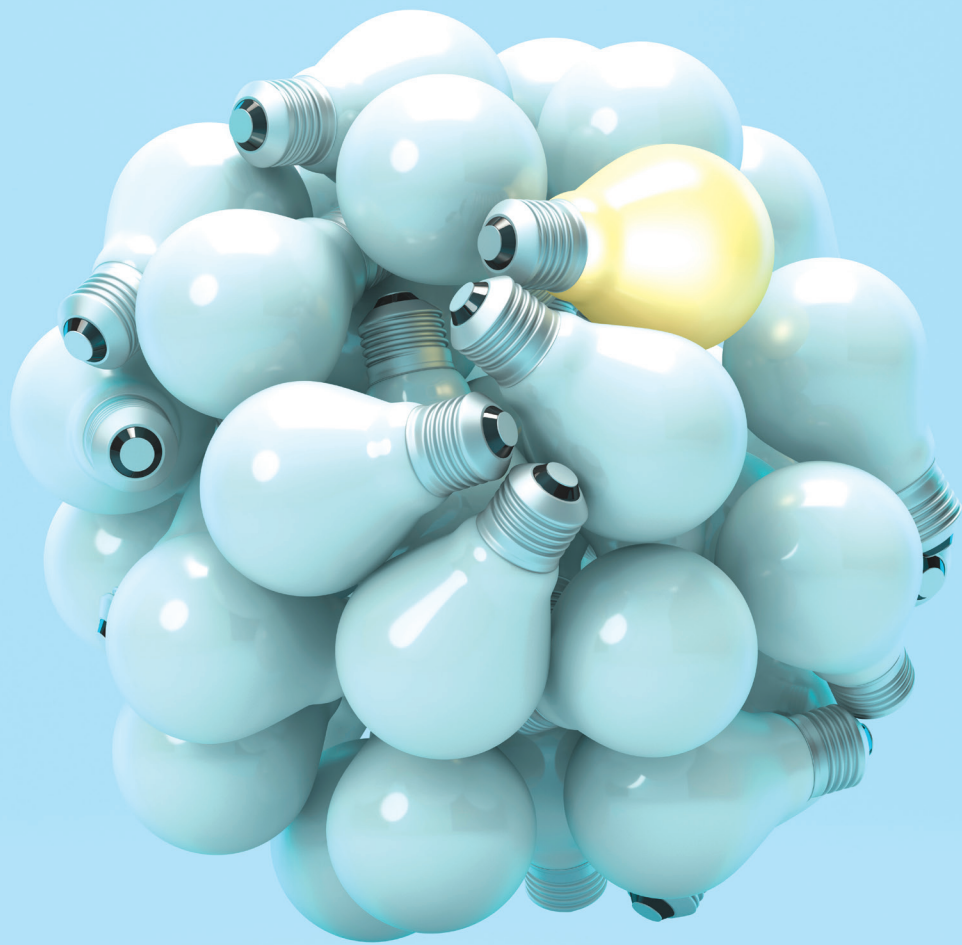
### Peter Blankevoort, ELICOS teacher

"I'm a strong believer in unions. When my employer was reluctant to negotiate for a new enterprise agreement, my colleagues and I got organised – we joined up members and asked previous members to rejoin. The result? A workplace and union chapter much better equipped to face an employer reluctant to negotiate."

**Find out more by talking to your rep; visit the IEU website [www.ieu.asn.au](http://www.ieu.asn.au); or call us on 8202 8900. We always welcome new members.**

**Sue Osborne** Journalist





# Professional engagement

## The IEU's latest news on PD and accreditation

### Professional development sessions

**Behaviour matters:** During Term 1, the IEU provided eight hours of accredited Professional Development (PD) to members through the Behaviour Matters modules presented by Dave Vinegrad.

Entitled Getting it right; Keeping it right; Making it right; and Upholding the right, the sessions proved so popular we re-ran all four. A combined total of more than 500 members attended each module.

We plan to deliver all four courses again in Term 3. Keep an eye on our publications and website for details.

**Early childhood:** The IEU ran unique sessions for our early childhood members to learn more about the accreditation process as it applies to their profession, and changes to the *Educational Services (Teachers) Award 2020*.

In the first of the sessions, IEU Senior Industrial Officer Michael Wright explained changes to the award and the impact on an early childhood teacher's pay for achieving Proficient status.

Three senior NESA officers were online in the second session to answer members' accreditation questions. The sessions covered all aspects of the accreditation requirements for teachers working towards Proficient status or maintaining their accreditation at the Proficient level.

**Nationally Consistent Collection of Data:** We held online briefings on the new NCCD Evidence Fact Sheet in March and April, providing an opportunity for members to become familiar with the information in the Fact Sheet and to ask questions about its practical applications in schools.

**Note:** We will be exploring a number of options in both Accredited and Elective PD in Term 2. Members can keep up to date through the IEU website.

### Accreditation

#### Pre-2004 teachers: Submit early or take advantage of the extension

In 2020, NESA approached the union to discuss the anticipated impacts on Teacher Accreditation Authorities (TAAs), supervisors, principals and NESA's systems due to the large number of full-time teachers with the same due date of 31 December 2022.

The submission period has now been expanded. Pre-2004 teachers can:

- submit early: from 26 April 2022 (Day 1, Term 2); or
- extend their final submission date until 31 December 2023.

Your maintenance of accreditation anniversary will be reset this once only, with your new five-year cycle starting on completion of your first submission.

#### All teachers due in Term 2 or Term 3 2022

NESA has recently announced a further extension. See our website for further information.

### When should I submit?

This is a personal decision, but members may wish to consider the following factors:

- Professional development hours cannot be carried from one maintenance cycle into the next. If you have completed your 100 hours (check your eTams) and you are planning to undertake a course that will provide a significant number of accredited hours, you may wish to submit early so as to include the PD course hours in your next maintenance cycle.
- Alternatively, external influences, including anticipated career breaks or retirement plans, may mean you'd prefer submitting closer to the final due date in December 2023.

We invite you to contact your organiser or the IEU's Professional Engagement team if you need more advice.

#### PD requirements: For pre-2004 teachers and all teachers submitting in 2022

If you have received the green tick on your eTams account, you do not have to complete any further PD hours. This applies regardless of when you decide to submit and finalise your current maintenance period.

If you plan to submit or must submit this year and have not obtained the 100 hours green tick on eTams, you must complete at least one accredited course in one of the four priority learning areas (Curriculum; Student Mental Health; Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education; and Students with Disability) as part of the 100 hours.

The balance of the PD hours can be made up in Elective PD.

This arrangement may only apply for 2022, so if you are planning to submit, or must submit in 2023, consider completing your 100 hours this year.

Professional Development hours are subject to scrutiny by your attestor, usually your principal. Be sure to allow enough time to replace any Elective PD hours challenged by your attestor.

Teachers who are not part of the pre-2004 cohort cannot make a submission for maintenance of accreditation earlier than three months before their due date.

#### Changes to the Teacher Accreditation Act

The IEU broadly supports recent changes to the *Teacher Accreditation Act 2004*. One practical implication for teachers in schools is that NESA will become the decision-maker for accreditation applications at all levels. The IEU anticipates this will result in more consistent and equitable accreditation processes across independent schools and Catholic schools.

The policies to enact the changes will be developed through an extensive consultation process. As a stakeholder, the IEU will be engaged in a series of meetings with NESA over the next few months.

Some of the areas of change that NESA will focus on during the consultation process include:

- transferring accreditation decision-making powers to NESA and decommissioning the Teacher Accreditation Authority guidelines
- developing clearer structures around documentary guidelines for evidence submission when applying for Proficient accreditation status
- finalising the public register of accredited teachers, taking into consideration various professional and privacy issues
- developing provisions that will define suitability to teach
- creating a new category of accreditation for non-practising teachers.

Members can find NESA's summary of the changes here: <https://educationstandards.nsw.edu.au/wps/portal/nesa/about/initiatives/teacher-accreditation-reform>

#### NCCD update: Members welcome NCCD Evidence Fact Sheet

The Department of Education, Skills and Employment (DESE) NCCD Evidence Fact Sheet, developed over months of consultation with officers of the IEU, became official at the end of November 2021.

Member principals and teachers in many schools have reached out to the IEU to express their appreciation of the clarity provided by the Fact Sheet. It is particularly pleasing to hear from members that their school has actively engaged with the NCCD Evidence Fact Sheet. We have received many reports of schools streamlining processes and eliminating duplication in light of the Fact Sheet, thereby allowing teachers to restore time and energy for the actual support of students.

You can download the full NCCD Evidence Fact Sheet here: [bit.ly/nccd2021](http://bit.ly/nccd2021)

The IEU will continue engaging with DESE throughout 2022 to provide feedback on the reach and impact of the Fact Sheet and the alignment between this document and the Census post-enumeration verification process (sometimes referred to as an audit).

We encourage members to provide feedback to the IEU, either on the implementation of the Fact Sheet at your school, or experiences with the post-enumeration verification process (audit) in 2022.

Direct feedback from members is very helpful in our ongoing consultations with DESE. All comment will be aggregated and de-identified. If you wish to provide feedback, we invite you to contact your IEU Organiser.





Support Staff Day celebrations last year at Hennessy Catholic College Young

# World Support Staff Day

**This year we celebrate support staff and their work on Monday 16 May.**

This will be the fifth World Education Support Personnel (ESP) Day, as organised by Education International, of which the IEU is a member.

On World ESP day, we call on the government to invest in the education workforce and ensure the rights and decent working conditions of all support

staff, in line with Education International's Resolution on Education Support Personnel.

We also call on governments to ratify International Labour Organization (ILO) Convention 190 – Violence and Harassment which recognises “the right of everyone to a world of work free from violence and harassment, including gender-based violence and harassment”.

We invite you to join us in defending the rights and status of education support personnel everywhere.

We encourage you to organise an action in your school or workplace to celebrate and recognise the role of support staff – you may wish to use this as a recruiting opportunity to talk about some of the key battles the union is fighting for and alongside our support staff members.

Many members organise a morning tea or similar event. It's a chance to get together and talk about what matters in your workplace.

The more support staff union members you have in your school, the stronger your voice and claim becomes.

To join: Call us on 8202 8900 or complete the online form: [www.ieu.asn.au/join-page](http://www.ieu.asn.au/join-page)



## A voice for support staff

**IEU Rep Anthony Leon Downs is determined to make sure the support staff perspective is never overlooked.**

Anthony started his career straight from school as an IT trainee at the Catholic Education office, Diocese of Parramatta.

Upon completion of his two-year traineeship, he started work full time at Oakhill College Castle Hill as an IT Support Officer and studied for his university degree at the same time.

For the last five years he's been at Our Lady of Mercy College (OLMC) Parramatta, where his role has expanded. He's now Assistant IT Manager – Infrastructure, managing projects and back-end systems that the school relies on.

Two years ago, Anthony took on the added responsibility of IEU Rep for support staff. His mother is an IEU Rep at another school; having seen what she's achieved for her colleagues over the years, he was inspired to put his hand up to become a Rep.

“At meetings with the principal and other Reps, I can see there are a lot of interests coming from different perspectives: the students, parents and (P&F), teachers and support staff, the board, AISNSW, and the religious aspect of the school,” Anthony said.

“It's important the employee (especially support staff's) needs are raised among all of those competing voices.”

Anthony said support staff often don't know about their MEA (multi-enterprise agreement) and aren't clear on their rights, so he spends time talking to them about these issues.

“Membership has increased since COVID. People want security, reassurance, and stability.

“Historically, this school has a strong chapter and some reps have recently retired, so I want to make sure it stays strong into the future.”

Sue Osborne Journalist



# Present tense: Federal election

**And we're off! As most members would know by now, the federal election will be held on 21 May. The IEU is not affiliated with any political party, but that does not mean your union is apolitical, and so the result of the coming poll should be of prime importance to IEU members.**

Actions taken by the Morrison government and its predecessors over the last decade have had a detrimental effect on the post-secondary education sector, with a 'benign neglect' approach leaving the industry ill-equipped to handle the unique challenges brought on by the pandemic.

In 2020, the Morrison government moved swiftly to close Australia's international borders, and while that may have provided a useful protection against the spread of COVID-19, they were kept closed for too long, which meant that colleges reliant on international students have been left to wither, and to rely on online offerings to survive. Many did not.

The Labor Party is making much of its proposed reinvigoration of the TAFE sector, and while this is not IEU territory, a stronger TAFE can only help improve standards generally across the post-secondary sector.

Most importantly, Labor has committed to reforming Australia's outdated Fair Work industrial system, in particular focusing on wages, workloads and insecure work, while also strengthening the bargaining provisions of the *Fair Work Act*.

The Morrison government, by contrast, has run out of steam after nearly a decade in office, and does not appear to have much of an agenda for anything should it win a fourth term. It's clearly time for change.

## High Court developments

In February, the High Court brought down judgements in two cases, with significant implications for labour law in Australia. The two cases, *ZG Operations & Anor v Jamsek & Ors*, and *CFMMEU v Personnel Contracting*, were about the definitions of employment vis a vis contracting. In essence, the cases were seeking to define, under law, when a person is more properly considered an employee (and therefore entitled to the protections of the Fair Work Act) or an independent contractor (who is not).

These considerations are important for the post-secondary education sector, as it is common for less reputable colleges to require an ABN from prospective workers before offering work. Such colleges are, in effect, making engagement as an independent contractor a condition of work, which allows those colleges to avoid normal employment obligations like award wages and superannuation.

The thrust of the High Court decisions in the two above cases was that the status of the employment relationship is largely determined by what is in the contract between the parties. In short, the Court is saying that the employment contract is whatever it says it is, regardless of previously understood notions of 'work tests' to determine the proper characterisation of employment.

Members should therefore be hyper-vigilant about exactly what is in employment contracts at the time they are signed. If a worker signs on as a contractor, even in ignorance of any alternative, then it may be very difficult to get this changed after the fact.

**Kendall Warren** Organiser



## Activism on the big screen Dare to Struggle Film Festival

**Stories of struggle and hope lit up the screen at the Dare To Struggle Film Festival which took place in April. Inspired by the legacy of Jack Munday, a union and environmental activist who led Sydney's Green Ban Movement in the 1970s, the festival kicked off with films depicting workers' struggles.**

Opening the Festival, Patron Judy Munday congratulated the film makers and spoke about the importance of standing with refugees in detention. General Secretary of the NSW Teachers Federation Maxine Sharkey talked about the importance of film and how it can change lives. "[Film] creates different

possibilities, different ways of looking at what's happening around us. We can use film to build our movement. To tell our stories. The Dare to Struggle Film Festival is a new way to do that."

*Addressing Unfinished Business* took out first prize. The film outlines the role of the union movement in supporting the Uluru Statement from the Heart and highlights how author and activist Thomas Mayor reached Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities and audiences across the nation. The Film Festival celebrates the stories and struggles of individuals, groups and communities trying to improve the world and create a fairer and more just society.

# Election candidate falls foul of section 44

**In the previous issue of *Newsmonth*, we introduced you to Peter Tsambalas, IEU rep and the ALP's candidate for the southern Sydney seat of Hughes in the federal election.**

Due to section 44 of the Australian Constitution, which spells out who is eligible to run for Parliament, Peter has been forced to withdraw his candidacy.

Despite being born in Australia and having Australian citizenship, Peter acquired dual citizenship via his migrant parents.

This is sufficient to trigger section 44 of the Constitution, which says a person is ineligible to

run for federal parliament if they are "under any acknowledgment of allegiance, obedience, or adherence to a foreign power".

Peter told *The Guardian* on 7 April: "My team and I put every effort into resolving the citizenship question but it is clear we will not get there in time.

"I want to thank all those who have supported me to this point. We spent several months working hard on the campaign and I believe I would have taken the fight up well in Hughes.

"However, I now look forward to giving whatever assistance I can to the successful Labor candidate in this important election."





# UNION SNAPS



## Take notice!

Here are some great union notice boards from St Michael's Primary School Nowra; Trinity Catholic College Regents Park Campus (Years 7-8); and Trinity Catholic College Auburn Campus (Years 9-12).





# PALM SUNDAY

## Talk peace – war creates refugees



IEUA NSW/ACT Branch Acting Secretary Carol Matthews with Amber Flohm, Senior Vice President, NSW Teachers Federation



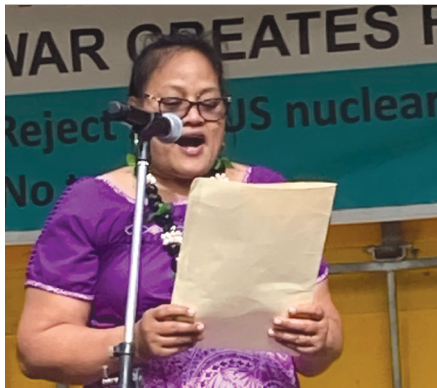
Anastasia Radievska from Ukraine



Arezoo Narimani, refugee from Iran



Aunty Rhonda Dixon Grosvenor presents the Welcome to Country



Maria Tiimon, Pacific Calling Partnership, Edmund Rice Centre



Glenn Kolomeitz, Director, GAP Veteran and Legal Services, centre, with members of the Refugee Action Coalition

### After months of rain, the sun was finally shining for this year's Palm Sunday Rally and March in Sydney on 10 April.

IEU members and friends joined a committed crowd that was smaller than in previous years – but this neither detracted from the event's importance in the lead-up to the federal election, nor the rally's impact on supporters and bystanders from Belmore Park to Victoria Park.

Watching the daily news of destruction of lives and the country of Ukraine means war is engaging everyone right now. And a huge consequence of war is millions of displaced people who become refugees.

The rally had a strong emphasis on peace, the human

aftermath of wars, the effects of global warming, the disillusionment of soldiers who fought Australia's war in Afghanistan then felt forced to abandon the Afghan allies who helped them; the Morrison government's failure to address climate change; its brutal treatment of refugees in detention; and its lack of support for migrants on temporary visas.

We thank Ruby Wawn for being the MC and NSW Police for keeping everyone safe.

For more information and videos: [www.facebook.com/PalmSundayRallySydney](https://www.facebook.com/PalmSundayRallySydney).

Ann-Maree McEwan Organiser

“

#### Nick Deane, Independent and Peaceful Australia Network

“War profits a few multinationals and benefits countries like the US when their rival Russia is weakened. Australia gets caught up spending money buying nuclear submarines. We need passion for peace. War is the enemy.”

#### Maria Tiimon, Pacific Islands Outreach Officer, Edmund Rice Centre

“Our islands [Kiribati] have been collateral damage for a distant colonial power in the past and it's the same with climate change – which we didn't create. We are the lowest emitters of greenhouse gases in the world, yet climate change is destroying our culture and livelihoods. War and climate change need leadership and dialogue which we are not seeing with the present government.”

#### Assistant Bishop Richard Schwedes, Sydney Lutheran Parish

“Palm Sunday brings us Jesus riding a donkey into Jerusalem. Both Jesus and the donkey are symbols of humility and peace. The mission of Jesus is peace with humanity and showing love and peace in our relationships with each other.”

#### Glenn Kolomeitz, Director, GAP Veteran and Legal Services; veteran of the war in Afghanistan

“From the 20 years of war in Afghanistan there are thousands of Afghans seeking asylum in Australia. Were we as soldiers misled when we went to Afghanistan to protect its people? Australians and veterans want to help their mates from Afghanistan. The government can and should speed up the processing of visas for those still in Afghanistan.”

#### Arezoo Narimani, Iranian refugee

“I speak from the refugees' side of the traumatisation from detention on me and my children. I've been trapped on a temporary visa now for 10 years after detention with so many rights denied. I can't enrol for my PhD. My health is suffering and I am not allowed to have relatives come to Australia to give me an organ donation. We have to stop this cruelty.”

#### Anastasia Radievska, Legal Observers NSW, Ukrainian activist

“Our hope is when you are confronted by the suffering of the victims of state-sanctioned violence this pain becomes a ground of truth and clarity about the system that causes it and the alternate futures we can bring into the present through collective action.”

#### Amber Flohm, Senior Vice President, NSW Teachers Federation

“I thank Aunty Rhonda Dixon-Grosvenor and her people for welcoming migrants to Australia for centuries. Standing with refugees is union business and has been so since 1918. The Teachers Federation condemns the Russian invasion of Ukraine. Teachers have watched as children are bussed in and out of detention centres to attend school; and teachers have watched children duck for cover when a car backfires. We know the history and we will not repeat that history on 21 May. It's time to vote them out!”

”





# Early childhood education Major parties reveal policies

## Gabrielle Connell

Vice President Early Childhood Services



### The federal election is just around the corner. What are the major parties offering for early education and care?

Early in April I attended a pre-election forum which was facilitated by Community Early Learning Australia, Community Childcare Co-operative (Victoria) and Early Learning Association Australia.

Speakers included acting Minister for Education Stuart Robert (Liberal); Shadow Minister for Early Childhood Education and Development Amanda Rishworth (Labor) and Senator Mehreen Faruqi (Greens).

As part of the advocacy work leading up to the election, the three peak bodies named above collaborated on a six-point plan to strengthen the early childhood education and care sector:

- two days a week of funded early education and care for all children from birth to school
- a commitment to the inclusion of all children
- mandatory National Quality Standard assessments and ratings at least every three years
- creation of a national industrial instrument for the education and care sector to provide educators with fairer levels of pay

- a national children's education and care workforce strategy
- properly funded infrastructure and sector support. Participants had the opportunity to complete polls ranking what they considered the most important issues. High on the list were staff shortages and pay rates.

We all need to look carefully at each party's policies before the election and decide what we think is best – not only for children and families but for us, the early childhood teachers. So, what did the politicians have to say?

#### Liberal

Acting Education Minister Stuart Robert sent an apology and a statement about the Liberals' past achievements in early childhood.

There was little about the future should his government be re-elected, apart from reducing fees for middle-income and low-income families who have more than one child in early childhood education, and boosting the number of educators through the job trainer program and apprenticeship schemes.

There was nothing for early childhood teachers.

#### Labor

Shadow Minister for Early Childhood Education and Care Amanda Rishworth said Labor will:

- lift the maximum childcare subsidy rate to 90 per cent for families for the first child in care
- increase childcare subsidy rates for every family that has one child in care and the family earns less than \$530,000 in household income
- keep higher childcare subsidy rates for the second and additional children in care
- extend the increased subsidy to outside school hours care. Rishworth also said Labor would make funded preschool programs available for three-year-olds so all children would receive two years of early childhood education before starting school. But there was nothing about teachers and educators.

#### Greens

Senator Mehreen Faruqi said all children aged 0-5 should receive an early childhood education. The Greens aim to make all early childhood services not-for-profit and phase out all for-profit services.

The Greens also recognise that increased pay rates and improved working conditions for teachers and educators are vital. They state that free TAFE and university places for teachers and educators should be offered to those thinking of a career in the sector.

Saturday  
13 August

# SAVE THE DATE

IEUA NSW/ACT Branch 2022 Early Childhood Conference

## Reconnect | Recharge | Restore



# TIME CAPSULE 1982

In a semi-regular column, we delve into our archives to find out what was happening in the union, the education sector, politics and culture – this issue, we rewind 40 years to 1982.

In 1982, the Independent Teachers Association (as the IEU was then known), had a total membership of 8316. Today it is more than 32,000.

In 2022, we are proud to acknowledge that of the 630 members who joined the ITA in 1982, 81 are still IEU members and still teaching. We will be presenting compendiums to these members to recognise their unwavering commitment to their union and their profession.

## Politics and culture

A look back at politics tells us that in 1982, the Prime Minister was Malcolm Fraser and the NSW Premier was Neville Wran. The Federal Education Minister was Wal Fife followed by Peter Baume, and the NSW Education Minister was Ron Mulock.

On the global stage, it was the International Year of Mobilizations for Sanctions Against South Africa. The nation's harsh, institutionalised policies of racial segregation were finally terminated in negotiations that took place from 1990 to 1994.

The Nobel Peace Prize was awarded to Alva Myrdal and Alfonso Garcia Robles "for their work for disarmament and nuclear and weapon-free zones". The world was on its way to a digital future, reflected in the Times Person of the Year, which in 1982 was "The Computer" (denoted as "Machine of the Year").

In the cultural sphere, Best Picture at the Academy Awards went to *Gandhi* (played by Ben Kingsley) and Australia's Thomas Kenneally was awarded the Booker Prize for *Schindler's Ark*.

On the home stage, Australian of the Year was Sir Edward Williams KCMG KBE, former judge of the

Supreme Court of Queensland and Chairman of the 1982 Commonwealth Games, held in Brisbane.

The Gold Logie went to Bert Newton (who passed away in October 2021); the most popular drama series was *Prisoner*; and at the Countdown Australian Music Awards, best album went to *Time and Tide* by Split Enz (at the time, Australia claimed the Kiwi band as its own); and Moving Pictures took out best single for What About Me? In sport, the Parramatta Eels won the NRL premiership.

## Teaching and education

The top rate of pay for a four-year and five-year trained teacher in non-government schools was \$24,322. A one-year trained teacher received a maximum salary of \$15,265

A new award, the *Teachers (Non-Government Schools) (State) Award* was negotiated in 1982 – the first in eight years; and the ITA ran an Hours of Duty case.

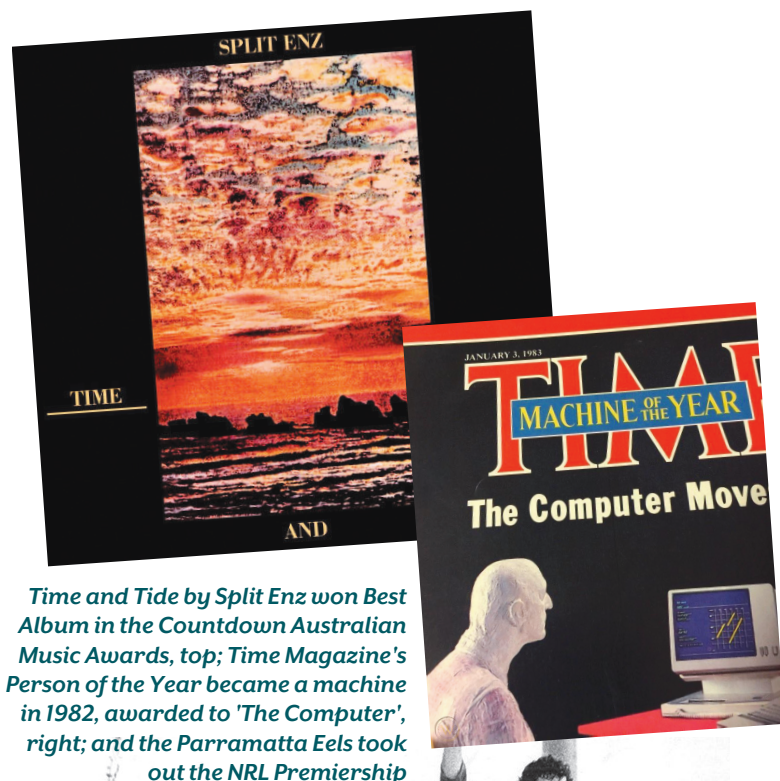
The ITA supported recommendations to abolish the School Certificate (undertaken by students in Year 10, who could then leave school).

In 1982, the Victorian Government banned corporal punishment in schools, promoting increased discussion about this damaging and outdated practice in NSW, where it was not officially banned in government schools until 1990 and in non-government schools in 1995.

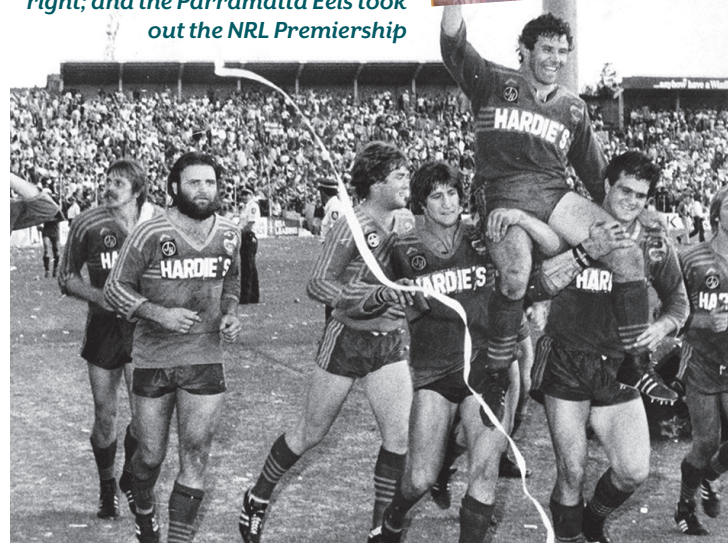
New copyright laws created frustration and confusion for teachers over what they could and could not photocopy for students.

And the NSW Government announced that schools would move from three to four terms in 1984.

**David Towson** Organiser  
**Monica Crouch** Journalist



*Time and Tide* by Split Enz won Best Album in the Countdown Australian Music Awards, top; Time Magazine's Person of the Year became a machine in 1982, awarded to 'The Computer', right; and the Parramatta Eels took out the NRL Premiership



Your low rate,  
**your perfect home,**  
Your Way Plus home loan.

- ✓ No establishment fees
- ✓ Apply via video chat
- ✓ Choice of variable, fixed or both
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# MEMBERSHIP news

## Are your details up to date?

It's hard to believe we're starting Term 2 in what looks to be a busy year industrially, especially for our members in the Catholic sector.

To all our renewing members thank you for staying with us and a warm welcome goes to the 1354 members who have joined us since the beginning of the year.

A big thank you to chapter representatives who returned their membership updates. It is vital that we hold current data for our members to allow us to communicate regarding union activities and campaign information.

All members should be able to utilise the full range of union benefits, including the right to participate in protected industrial action.

IEU electoral roll criteria must be current, this includes workplace information. If you are unsure if you are attached to the correct chapter, please contact us direct at [membership@ieu.asn.au](mailto:membership@ieu.asn.au)

Please include your membership number. If you don't know it, include full name, date of birth and workplace.

We keep members up to date via email, text, and our website. If you have not been receiving correspondence from us, please make sure your contact details are up to date.

If your circumstances have changed, or if you are unsure of your membership status or the contact details we hold for you, please contact us by phone (8202 8900 – press 1) or via email: [membership@ieu.asn.au](mailto:membership@ieu.asn.au)

We extend our very best wishes for the term ahead.

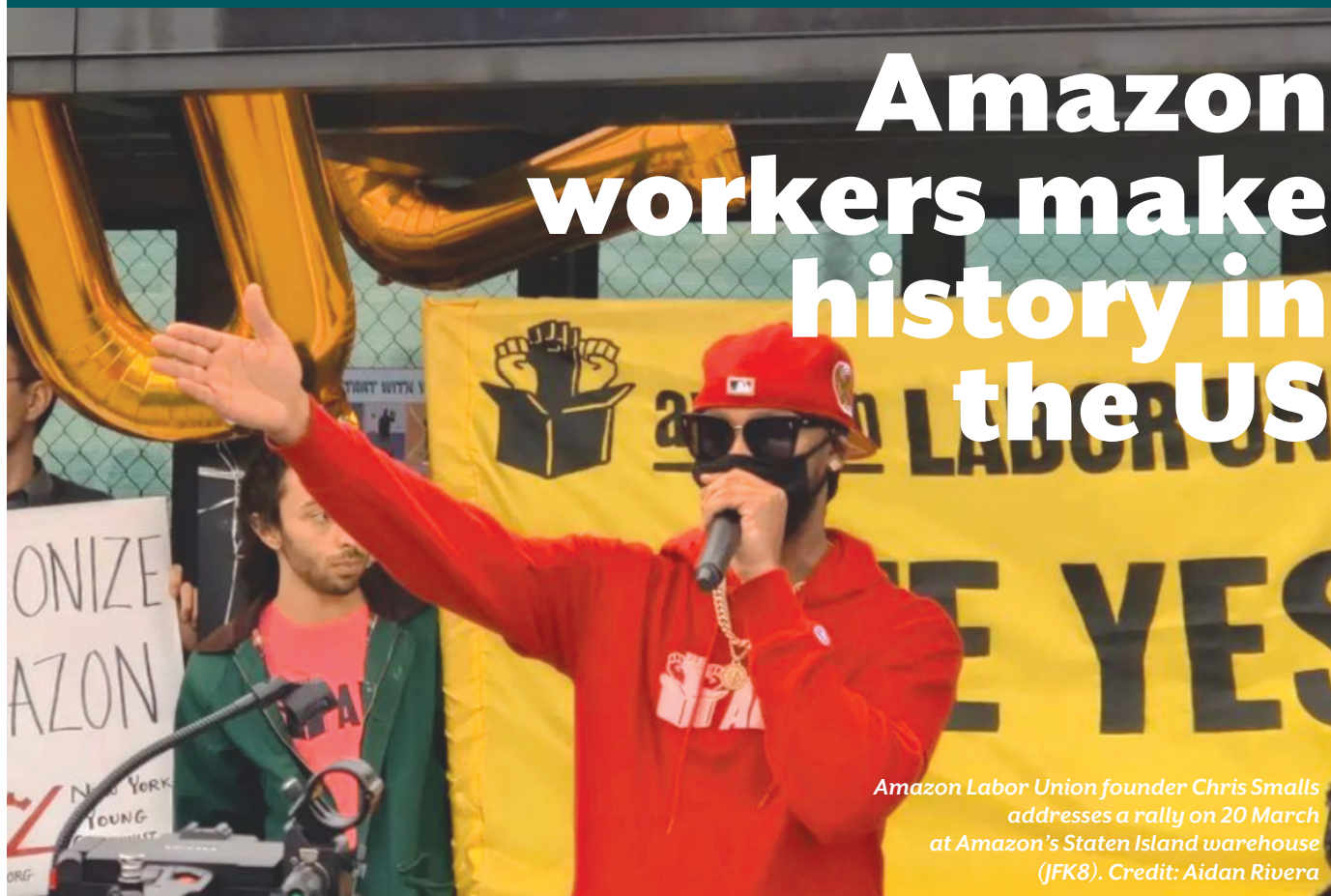


## Join the IEU



# Around the Globe

Around the Globe brings you international news about injustices and workers' rights. If injustice exists anywhere, it exists everywhere.



**On 1 April 2022, Amazon workers at the JFK8 warehouse in the borough of Staten Island, New York, made history. They voted to join the Amazon Labor Union (ALU), an unthinkable victory against the second largest employer in the United States. Amazon has almost 1 million workers in the US and its market capitalisation is about \$US1.7 trillion.**

The ALU describes itself as a “worker-led movement to put power back in the hands of Amazon employees and establish our right to negotiate for a better, safer and more equitable workplace”. It was formed by former Amazon supervisor Christian Smalls, who was sacked in 2020 for organising a protest highlighting insufficient COVID-protection measures.

The ALU has five demands:

- union pay, \$30/hour minimum wage for Tier 1 workers
- job security
- abolish mandatory overtime
- humane working conditions, longer breaks and workers to have access to their phones
- real time off – Amazon currently offers no sick leave and barely any paid time off.

Amazon will not take the formation of unions within its warehouses lying down. The online retail giant is challenging the outcome at JFK8 and filing objections to overturn the vote that formed the first union in the company's history.

Amazon claims that the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) and the ALU suppressed voter turnout. It also alleges that organisers supplied cannabis to workers ahead of the vote in a bid to firm up support for the union.

ALU's Vice-President of membership, Connor Spence, said, “We urge Amazon to cease these childish legal games, respect the voices of their workers, and engage in behaviour that is more becoming of ‘Earth's Best Employer.’”

Countering Amazon's objections, the ALU has laid out 21 objections of its own including claims of intimidation, retaliation, and surveillance of workers.

ALU may have won the first battle but the real fight – winning a collective bargaining agreement – is yet to come. Assuming the objections filed by Amazon are all cleared, the ALU will become formally certified to represent workers.

Next, bargaining will begin for the ALU and Amazon to come up with and agree on a contract. The weakness of US labour laws is

set to play into Amazon's favour as the company will go to great lengths to bust the newly formed union.

Amazon has unlimited resources and will use whatever tools it has at its disposal to delay or stall contract bargaining. The law provides it with a path to draw out negotiations and push the date out as far as possible. Amazon will be hoping to bury the union in bureaucratic tape and stall negotiations so the union loses momentum.

Politicians including Senator Bernie Sanders and President Joe Biden have both come out in support of Amazon workers. In a Tweet, Sanders said “Without the workers, there would be no Amazon.” White House Press Secretary Jen Psaki has said Biden believes “every worker in every state should have a free and fair choice to join a union”.

In what has been described as a David and Goliath battle, the formation of Amazon's first union highlights how just one person can make a difference. When Christian Smalls decided to set up a tent outside the JFK8 warehouse, many doubted him. Yet he persisted.

His supporters on the inside organised and spoke relentlessly about the value of forming a union and how it could help them collectively lift wages and improve job security and conditions. Now the ALU is launching a nationwide campaign organising and empowering workers to unionise the more than 110 Amazon workplaces in the US.

In the wake of the victory at Staten Island, Smalls made an iconic celebratory remark that went viral on social media. He said, “We want to thank Jeff Bezos for going to space because while he was up there, we were organizing a union.” On 25 April, workers at a second Amazon warehouse on Staten Island, LDJ5, will vote on whether to form a union.

Union membership in the US has been in decline for decades. Yet thanks to the formation of the ALU and the recent move by nine US Starbucks stores voting to organise, momentum is building. The worker-led organising crusade by the likes of Christian Smalls and others could see a seismic shift in the US labour movement. The formation of the first Amazon union shows workers throughout the US – and around the world – just how powerful grassroots, worker-led organising can be. How Amazon responds and how it treats its workers will also send a signal to consumers. Watch this space!

**Katie Camarena** Journalist



# Survey finds principals suffering high rates of burnout

Every year since 2011, the Australian Catholic University has partnered with Deakin University to survey principals on their sense of wellbeing at work. Unfortunately, the findings have repeatedly shown principals are under stress, and the situation is not improving.

The ACU's Institute for Positive Psychology and Education's (IPPE) Australian Principal Occupational Health and Wellbeing Survey 2021, found brutal workloads, critical staff shortages, lockdowns and COVID-19 have hit principals hard.

Last year's survey found the highest burnout rates in a decade for Australian school leaders. Twenty-nine percent were deemed "at risk" for mental health and self-harm.

But on the plus side, 82 percent of principals reported increased connection with their school families.

"While confronting in many ways, school leaders have been champions of resilience, professionalism, and unyielding commitment to their school communities," IPPE co-chief investigator Dr Theresa Dicke said.

"In times of crisis, they deliver, but for how long? Principals play a vital role in communities, so our overriding message is for the shameful treatment of our overburdened educators to stop," Dicke said.

Co-chief investigator IPPE Professor Herb Marsh said the soaring demands on principals were unsustainable. "Principals and their deputies worked on average at least 55 hours a week," Marsh said. "A quarter of those reported working more than 60 hours a week so it's unsurprising the sheer quantity of work is the top stress factor."

The compounding stresses could be addressed by a more inclusive and empathetic approach to policy development, the survey authors said.

## What you said

Here's what one principal said about her working life: "I've been a principal for 17 years and have over the years been subject to some very angry parents. One mother told my secretary she was coming down to 'take my f\*\*\*\*\* head off' – after a tense discussion she left my office realising her son was in the wrong and she supported me.

"Another time I had a mother say, 'you don't want my husband to have to come down and speak to you' – equally intimidating.

"I've had several phone calls where parents have yelled at me down the phone. One mother told me I was 'nothing more than a f\*\*\*\*\* c\*\*\*' and when I said, 'I beg your pardon?' she hung up.

"I had one dad really tear into me but apologised the next day – that is rare that you get an apology. I've had a father want to see me after I'd been to the family law court and given evidence against him. That was frightening.

"COVID doubled my workload initially. I did not get to spend one day working from home as we have a high number of frontline worker parents.

"I was constantly working on updates to families and checking in with teachers and managing a million complaints and queries. The fatigue and stress of COVID has meant much less resilience in student and staff behaviour.

"We are inundated with problems that should not be problems. Students came back to school and had to learn how to socialise again. Staff came back and had to learn how to manage the behaviour of students who would not normally give them problems. It has been a very tense two years and everyone is fatigued.

"My connection to my school community has grown but so has the expectation that I will fix every little problem.

"We need employers to see the holistic education we provide and celebrate everything, not just Band 6s. NAPLAN is not the only measure of a child's worth – triangulate the data and take off the pressure to home in on one data set to solve every child's learning needs.

"The job description of a principal would rival that of a CEO of any company, yet the salary is not indicative of the hours worked each week and the level of responsibility held."

## Key findings

- 44 percent (5.7 times more than the general population) of school leaders were subjected to threats of violence
- 39 percent (10.1 times more than the general population) were subjected to physical violence
- Burnout (physical and mental fatigue) and cognitive stress levels were the highest since the survey started in 2011.

## Looming shortages

Another principal with decades of experience told the IEU that government and employers have known (or should have known) for the past decade about the looming staff shortages but have done little or nothing about it.

She said casuals are almost impossible to obtain and she is fearful of not being able to fill a temporary maternity leave position at her school.

When a staff member tells her that they are pregnant, she wants to be able to react with delight, but her underlying feeling is fear at not being able to find a temporary replacement.

## Leadership issue

Another recently retired principal from a Catholic systemic school said:

"I often look at these reports with a mixed response – on the one hand it validates what most principals know about their work; while on the other, you know there will be deflection and redirection of accountability by systems and central offices, with the implication that the responsibility for principal resilience and ultimate health lies with the individual.

"What other workers are required to take full responsibility for their own health and safety irrespective of the work they do? If a principal appears to be struggling, often it is seen as a leadership and management issue, not a wellbeing concern.

"The issue for most principals comes down to the irreconcilable duality of their work. Foremost, you are

challenged to be the inspirational, collaborative, creative leader driving the learning and change agenda within your school, but always present is the pedantic, time consuming deadline driven compliance in all manner of areas.

"I once received a most urgent demand from central office requiring an immediate response regarding garbage collection services used by the school! This was sent to the principal for response! This duality across the work of principals is misplaced, frustrating and not sustainable.

"Often systems will attempt to do something to assist; for example, principal retreats and professional development events or providing a small amount of additional staffing to cover the needs of the principals.

"Most appreciated the gatherings but knew that urgent work awaited them at school.

"A significant problem now and moving forward is that many outstanding candidates for principalship look at the current workloads and arrangements and see the toll it can take and ask themselves 'is it worth the effort?'.

"Employers have a problem attracting quality candidates for schools especially in difficult and challenging areas and resort to "shifting deck chairs" by moving established principals from other schools into these positions.

## Mentoring needed

"We need mentoring – both formal and informal. Principals and employers need to develop a comprehensive support and mentoring plan. Not just a tick a box or fill in the 'How are you going' form but rather regular time out to discuss issues and seek support.

"Principalship can be a lonely and confronting position and most principals would benefit from non-judgemental accompaniment and companionship. Currently, support is often provided as remediation not prevention.

"We should continue to explore new models of principalship such as co-principals, cluster groupings of principals and principals in residence.

"Periodic time away from the role to reflect and discern on goals and aspirations would be good. Principals need the 'mental' space to be able give attention to their resilience and to endorse their continuing commitment to the role.

"Principals need the resources, space and confidence to make decisions based on the principles of subsidiarity, not just in line with broader system policies, derived accountabilities, structures or budgets.

"Principals do a remarkable job for little monetary return. The report highlights the challenges of principalship and provides practical avenues of redress. Let us hope employers and systems explore these avenues, otherwise we shall see shortages and a failure to provide the quality leadership needed in contemporary schools."

Sue Osborne Journalist



# Hear our voice We will not be silent

**Bernadette Baker**  
Vice President Systemic



**The campaign to achieve our log of claims has begun. Our actions will send a message to our Catholic systemic employers that teachers and support staff are serious about improving working conditions and salaries. Change and improvement is long overdue.**

Employers may hide behind COVID regulations and government guidelines, but this does not reflect the reality for those of us on the ground.

Staff in schools are exhausted. Words of appreciation from our employers are not enough. Appreciation must be demonstrated through proper remuneration, improvement in working conditions and respect, which includes proper negotiations with the IEU.

For your participation in the Protected Action Ballot and possible industrial action, it's crucial the union has your

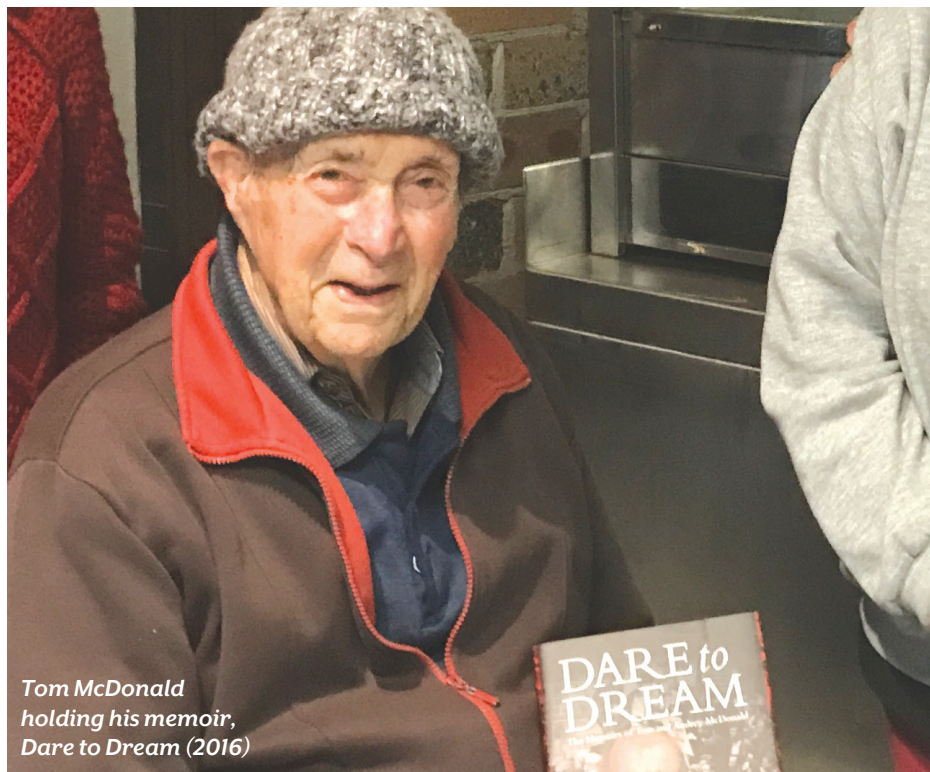
correct details. Your name, workplace, email address and phone number must be consistent on IEU records and on your employer's records. If you're unsure, please contact the union.

School staff are not superheroes, even though we're expected to act like them sometimes. Proper acknowledgment and respect for our work will be reflected in the actions of employers and how they go about these negotiations. Anything less than absolute commitment to support teachers and support staff is not acceptable. A full-day strike may be needed to demonstrate our commitment.

- check your details
- talk to your colleagues and encourage all staff to join the union – there is power in numbers
- attend sub branch meetings and rallies
- invite your organiser to visit.

Stand strong. Hear our voice. We will not be silent! We will not go quietly!

## Vale Tom McDonald



**Tom McDonald**  
holding his memoir,  
*Dare to Dream* (2016)

**The IEU was deeply saddened to hear of the loss of union elder Tom McDonald, who passed away peacefully at Gosford Hospital in late April.**

Tom was the National Secretary of the Building Workers Industrial Union (BWIU) and the Vice President of the ACTU. He was a driving force in the formation of the CFMMEU.

Tom fought hard for and helped achieve many rights enjoyed by working people today. We can thank Tom for his brilliant advocacy on universal superannuation, workers' compensation, long service leave and the minimum wage system that still supports millions of Australian workers today.

Tom will be fondly remembered by many a trade unionist as the movement's greatest ever mentor. He gave his time freely and willingly to help develop and foster young activists, unionists, organisers and union officials, shaping the way they think about unionism and politics. Addressing the ACTU Congress in 2018, Tom gave a rousing speech. He told delegates from around Australia to be proud. "If you put the totality of our achievements together, we have created a much better Australia," he said. "And in everything that is good about Australia, you will see the hand of the trade union movement."

Deeply principled, Tom dedicated his life to working people. He believed in collectivism and solidarity. Tom not only fought for the rights of workers in Australia, but he also stood alongside workers globally, playing a significant role in establishing Union Aid Abroad – APHEDA. Tom and his family were strong supporters of the anti-apartheid movement and helped establish the office of the African National Congress in Australia. His legacy will inspire future generations of workers to keep up the good fight for better conditions and rights for working people.

The IEU extends its sincere condolences to Audrey (Tom's soulmate and partner for 62 years), Daren, Nivek, Casey; Tom's comrades and to the whole Australian union movement. Our country has lost a great Australian and our movement has lost one of its greatest elders and mentors. Vale Tom McDonald. Solidarity forever.

## Celebrate World Education Support Staff Day

MAY

16

**Carolyn Collins**

Vice President Support Staff



**As schools around the globe celebrate World Education Support Staff Day on 16 May, we must draw attention to the injustice arising from lack of pay parity between support staff in government schools and non-government schools, particularly Catholic systemic schools.**

Support staff need solidarity with the current campaign – and this can only come with numbers. Without numbers we cannot influence employers, create change and achieve the justice we deserve. If the employers perceive lack of commitment the ranks of school support staff, they'll negate everything we're asking for.

I encourage all school support staff to join the union – and the campaign. It's inequitable when non-members accept the benefits hard won by the few.

It's disheartening to celebrate such a special day as World Education Support Staff Day with this cloud of injustice hovering over us due to the lack of fair dealing from our employers. Justice is all we want. Surely, that is not too much to expect.

Please do what it takes to support our campaign for pay parity, a commitment to sustainable working hours, and equity in long service leave.

Above all, have a wonderful World Education Support Staff Day. All school support staff deserve it – and more! (See also page 9.)

## Supporting the independent education community

# JOIN THE IEU TODAY

The Independent Education Union of Australia represents the industrial and professional interests of staff in non-government schools, colleges and early childhood centres.

### The union offers members:

- a professional voice through representation and advocacy
- industrial advice and support
- expert negotiations for your pay and conditions
- payment recovery: in the past year alone, the IEU recovered \$2.7 million for members
- a strong network of industrially and socially aware teachers and support staff in your workplace, region, state and/or territory.



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# Why do we celebrate May Day?

**The first of May has long been a day of celebration for the international workers' movement. Why do we celebrate May Day?**

The May Day protests grew out of the struggle for the eight-hour day.

Stonemasons in Melbourne and Sydney had won the eight-hour day as a general industry standard in 1856, setting an international benchmark. In the decades to come, workers campaigned to extend the right to other industries.

In 1886, unions in the United States planned a massive general strike for the

eight-hour day on 1 May. Somewhere between 300,000 to 500,000 workers took strike action on that day.

On 4 May, a protest was interrupted when an unidentified figure threw dynamite from the crowd. Mass repression of the labour movement followed.

In 1889, the Congress of the Second International – which was the big organisation of working-class political parties – determined to hold a global day of protest to mark the anniversary of the 1 May strikes in the United States.

The first day of protest began in 1890.

Australian workers already celebrated the eight-hour day, and campaigned for its extension, on our own day of commemoration, so May Day was not a major event that year.

The Shearers' Strike of 1891 changed this, and the first recorded May Day protests in Australia took place that year. In Barcaldine, Queensland, over 1300 workers took part (with around 600 on horseback) with union banners and carrying the Eureka Flag.

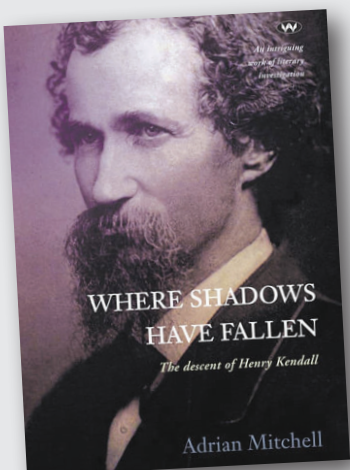
The original May Day protest was supposed to be just that, one protest. But it quickly grew into something much more:

a global celebration of workers and our movement.

It is a day when, around the globe, as working people we commemorate our defeats, celebrate our victories, and dream of a better world still to come.

**Source:** Australian Council of Trade Unions Institute: [atui.org.au/union-history-blog/why-do-we-celebrate-may-day](http://atui.org.au/union-history-blog/why-do-we-celebrate-may-day)

## Giveaways



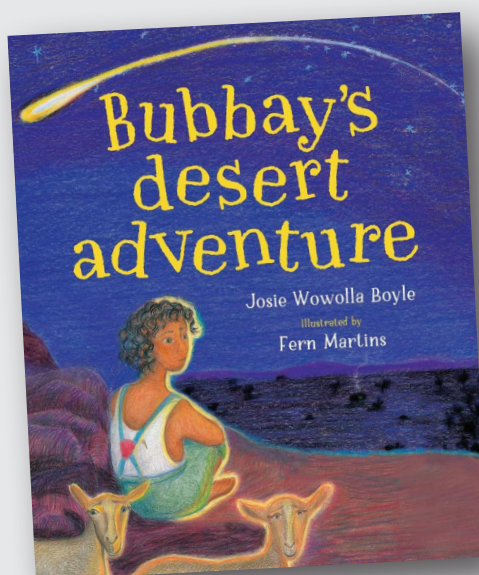
### Where Shadows have Fallen: The Descent of Henry Kendall

Author: Adrian Mitchell

Publisher: Wakefield Press

Henry Kendall was once regarded as Australia's finest poet, compared favourably with Wordsworth. His poetry was romantic, sentimental in its celebration of the Australian bush he loved. But he was more Henry Lawson than John Keats: a self-pitying wife deserter, cadger and drunkard. And it ran in the family.

In this intriguing work of literary investigation, celebrated author and historian Adrian Mitchell delves deep into Kendall's storied life and uncovers a dark past that casts new shadows on his legacy. He discovers that this habitually self-effacing poet had good reason to keep himself and his family out of the limelight. This is the true story of Henry Kendall, his parents and his grandparents – and he had every reason to dread it being made public.



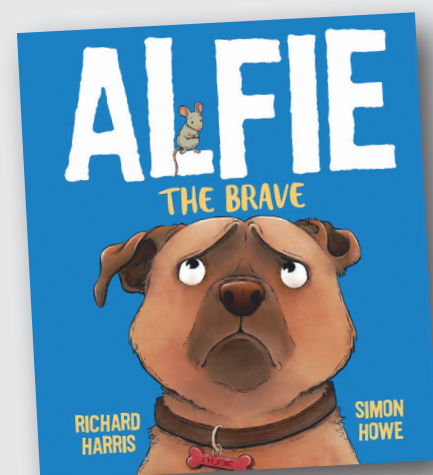
### Bubbay's Desert Adventure

Author: Josie Wowolla Boyle

Illustrator: Fern Martins

Publisher: Magabala Books

Bubbay is lonely, with only the stars as friends. He lives in the desert tending his goats and sleeps under the stars. One night, Bubbay wishes for something he has never had – the stars hear him and, with the help of the magical Gubarlee and kangaroo, emu, crow and bower bird, Bubbay begins a quest to make his wish come true. A story full of magic, combined with richly textured illustrations.



### Alfie the Brave

Author: Richard Harris

Illustrator: Simon Howe

Publisher: Puffin Books

A delightful picture book about a dog called Alfie who longs to be bold and brave like other dogs. But bravery doesn't always come naturally.

Alfie was a fine-looking dog. His coat was sleek and shiny like an otter. He was the son of champions. But Alfie didn't feel like a champion. Alfie feared ... everything! Could Alfie ever be bold and brave like other dogs?

This charming book is by 2019 Australian of the Year Dr Richard 'Harry' Harris, a key member of the cave-diving team that rescued the Wild Boars soccer team in Thailand.

It is illustrated by the talented Simon Howe, who perfectly captures the emotional ups and downs of the adorable and expressive Alfie.



Email entries to [giveaways@ieu.asn.au](mailto:giveaways@ieu.asn.au) with the title of the book you would like to receive in the subject line. Write your name, membership number and postal address in the body of your email. All entries must be received by 16 June 2022.



# How the federal budget impacts super



**As we prepare to vote in the federal election, it is important to consider superannuation and the policies, both historical and current, espoused by the major parties.**

Fortunately, this year's budget contained minimal changes to super, unlike the previous Coalition budgets. Significantly, however, there were no direct measures in the budget that addressed the gender gap to improve women's financial position at retirement.

The primary lens through which super policies should be viewed is this: the sole purpose of super is the provision of retirement income for fund members and their dependants. The original vision, as legislated by the Keating government, was that super should not be used as a tool for governments to dip into – as happened with the massive drawdowns during COVID lockdowns, or for any other economic crisis governments face.

**So, what were the major elements in the budget in relation to super?**

First, both major parties agreed to increase the Super Guarantee (SG) rate to 10.5% as at 1 July 2022, progressively moving up to 12%.

This is welcome news after the long delay to the increase by the Abbott government and successive Coalition governments that resulted in lost earnings and employer contributions for members. This freeze was based on the argument that employers could not afford the increase.

Previously, no super was paid to low-income earners who earned less than \$450 a month. This threshold for eligible SG contributions will be abolished and all workers who receive employer payments will be paid super. This measure has been supported by industry funds for years and has finally come about to ensure greater equity in SG payments.

The work test for those aged 67 to 74 will be removed for voluntary employer, salary sacrifice and non-concessional super contributions. This is a positive measure that will allow older Australians to top up their super prior to retirement.

Previously those aged between 67 and 74 had to be gainfully employed for at least 40 hours over 30 consecutive days during a financial year before concessional or non-concessional contributions could be made into super.

Members who are receiving an income stream were required to draw down a certain prescribed amount from their

pension annually with the required amount increasing with age.

The reasoning behind this measure was that super was meant to be used for retirement income, not estate building or for passing money onto family members. For example, a 72-year-old receiving income stream payments was required to draw down at least 5% of their total balance.

With the advent of COVID and investment markets losing value in 2020, the government decided to halve the required drawdown to avoid depleting balances when the markets were declining. So the same 72-year-old was now required to draw down at least 2.5% of the overall balance only.

Critics of maintaining the measure in this budget have argued that markets have recovered and there is no longer a need to reduce the required drawdown. They have further argued that this measure allows those with significant wealth to keep more money in a tax-free super environment rather than drawing it down as retirement income.

The expansion of the First Home Super Saver Scheme has increased from \$30,000 to \$50,000 for eligible participants.

The Downsizer Scheme has been expanded to allow those aged 60 (previously 65) who sell their home after 1 July 2022 to make a one-off \$300,000 contribution to their super outside the concessional contribution rule. Eligible couples will be able to contribute \$300,000 each.

The APRA Performance test has been extended to Trustee Directed Products from 1 July 2022 and APRA is to complete performance tests based on fund returns to 30 June 2022.

Other measures previously legislated under Your Future, Your Super reforms included changes to the default system to allow 'stapling' to the first fund a member signs up to, a YourSuper comparison tool and a performance test for MySuper products.

Let's hope any future reforms to super are well-considered and based on clear benefits to members, not on narrow political ideologies or agendas.



*(Important information: the information in this article is general information only and does not take into account your objectives, financial situation or needs. Before making a financial decision, please assess the appropriateness of the information to your individual circumstances, read the Product Disclosure Statement for any product you may be thinking of acquiring and consider seeking professional advice. Past performance is not a reliable indicator of future performance. Any opinions are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the view of NGS Super.)*

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