



**IEU members in the Maitland-Newcastle Diocese took to the streets in December for their second round of stop work action.**

The protected industrial action is a result of a long running dispute with the diocese following the decision by the church to restructure the Catholic Schools Office.

The restructure has seen over 30 IEU members to date stripped of enterprise agreement coverage and forced onto new diocesan individual contracts, and there is a genuine fear that church representatives will force more members onto contracts in the next 12 months.

The restructure known as Many Parts, One Body, One Mission saw the introduction of a diocesan chief executive officer and the forced transfer of IEU members from the Catholic Schools Office to a new diocesan department known as Shared Services.

In reality the new CEO has used an administrative restructure to reduce employee entitlements and remove their right to collectively bargain.

The church teaches that bargaining should be conducted on a collective rather than individual basis to ensure equity and justice, but in the Maitland-Newcastle Diocese, the church is moving employees from collective agreements onto individual contracts against their wishes. The individual contracts offer less sick leave, less long service leave, less parental leave and the removal of leave loading.

**“It is understandable that union members would expect the church to uphold its own teachings and values.”**

IEU Rep Steve Newman said “we know the importance of collective bargaining in ensuring equitable outcomes, and so does the church. It is understandable that union members would expect the church to uphold its own teachings and values. Members have made it clear that they want to remain

on an enterprise agreement and church representatives have continued to ignore their pleas.”

Members employed as education officers, professional officers, psychologists and support staff have sought an assurance from the CEO that they will not be moved onto individual contracts during the three year life of the agreement.

Unfortunately the CEO has been unwilling to provide this guarantee, sending a clear message to members that their agreement will not be honoured for its entire duration.

IEU members recognise the importance of enterprise agreement coverage and have indicated that they will continue to hold the church accountable to its own teachings of justice, fairness and equity.

**Therese Fitzgibbon** Organiser



## Responding to bushfire trauma – online PD

**The air is hard to breathe, the sky heavy over the playground. The mood is subdued, the students safely inside. Everywhere is tinder dry and the town's water supply is low. In late 2019, students and staff alike were tense and worried about the possibility of bushfires. Some on the mid north coast had already begun their battles against fires in August.**

Members told the union of their feelings. They recalled times when they'd had to evacuate. They spoke about the fear in children who had already experienced bushfires, of their own anxiety on top of that.

When we developed the course, Responding to Bushfire Trauma, we weren't aware of the magnitude of what was to come. That we'd lose more than 30 lives, 35% of NSW's national parks, 1.5

billion native animals would perish, 12% of our sheep, 9% of our cattle and incur an estimated \$100 billion damage to property. We originally wrote the course for those who had been in the proximity of the fires, but it will now consider the wider impact this season has had on all of our communities.

The gravity of the ongoing situation cannot be underestimated, and everyone is exhausted. Students will be returning to schools this week, some of which are in temporary buildings, others which have been host to regional evacuation centres or rallying posts. Some children will be returning to school but have none of their clothes or belongings, or their own home to return to. Many more will have been frightened by being close survivors of a blaze, others more by what they've seen on the media.

In among traumatised students returning, staff in schools and early childhood centres will be looked at by the community as leaders of the process of returning to normal – as the providers of safe havens amongst the grief. Many of the staff being relied upon to provide that service will be survivors themselves and will be as uncertain of the future as the parents and children in their classes.

Professor Lisa Gibbs and Jane Nursey of the University of Melbourne authored the study Delayed Disaster impacts on Academic Performance of Primary School Children in 2019. It looks at the lasting impact of the Black Saturday fires in Victoria and found that children demonstrated outcomes between one to five years below their age group norm.

The PD course will outline strategies and resources that will assist schools

and early childhood centres, their staff, students and their communities towards recovery. Physical, academic and mental recovery will all be discussed.

Join us on 11 February from 4-6pm for this important union PD. The course will be online to allow participants from all over NSW and ACT to attend, 500 free seats are available to members of the union.

The course is NESA Registered and ACT TQI Accredited for two hours at Proficient.

To book, follow this link: <https://www.ieu.asn.au/event-list/event-detail?eid=3991>

If you can't attend the course on the day, a recording will be available from [www.TheIEUZone.org.au](http://www.TheIEUZone.org.au)

**Amy Cotton** Professional Officer



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## Braidwood community spirit firm in face of adversity

**St Bede's Catholic Primary School Braidwood IEU Rep Ann Monkhouse recounts her community's bravery in the face of bushfire threat.**

The fire that had been slowly burning in the Tallaganda State Forrest began impacting Braidwood on Friday, 29 November.

It began threatening homes in the hamlets of Bombay and Little Bombay. Parents arrived in the early afternoon to pick up their children after having been evacuated from their homes.

During the next fortnight, many school families were affected and school was closed seven of the next 10 days.

On the days that St Bede's was open, the students were kept inside and the children and staff were subdued, however the overriding sentiment was gratitude: for the firefighters, emergency services, our local radio station, 88.9 Braidwood FM and the community volunteers feeding these amazing men and women.

Through the adversity there was a culpable sense of community. During the

first week of fires, many St Bede's students volunteered at bushfire headquarters, helping to prepare snack packs to be sent to the fire grounds.

Many other families donated various foods and drinks to be added to these packs.

Mother Teresa Primary School in Canberra held a uniform free day and the donated funds were sent to us. This generous offer was initiated by the principal Peter Hughes, a former St Bede's principal, and his present executive.

We hope to put these funds toward a significant performance or activity for the whole school soon.

Local author Jackie French (pictured) visited our school and donated a wide selection of her award winning literature for all students and staff affected by the fires.

When the St Bede's students returned for 2020, they received a pack that contained a lunch box, drink bottle and stationary supplies.

These were put together by some of the Catholic school communities of

Tuggeranong and South Woden, ACT. They have made enough packs for all students in all fire affected schools across the Canberra-Goulburn Archdiocese.

At the beginning of the school year, counselling provided by CatholicCare was available to any student, parent or staff member who wished to use this resource.

This fire came on the back of a drought, the likes of which senior locals cannot remember.

Many families, residing outside the town centre, are running dangerously low on water.

With town on level four water restrictions, water cannot be carted from town supplies.

This means water needs to be bought from Bungendore or Canberra, an expensive exercise.

Braidwood was moved on to level four water restrictions several weeks ago, after it became unable to pump from the Shoalhaven River, which had stopped flowing.

Braidwood is a resilient community and despite the challenges, we look forward to a year where we live, love and learn from the heart of Jesus.

## Publications survey gets good results

**Our thanks go to the hundreds of members who took the time and trouble to complete the IEU's publications survey late last year.**

The results were positive with 62% of respondents saying they get most of the information about the union's activities through its publications (second only to emails at 78%).

One of the most pleasing results of the survey was the finding that 46% would recommend the IEU to a colleague or other potential member after reading an IEU publication.

Respondents were most interested in industrial news in publications, with 41% of respondents saying they read every issue of the IEU's newspaper *Newsmonth*, which is published eight times a year. The average amount of time spent reading *Newsmonth* is half an hour.

About 30% of respondents said *Newsmonth* provides useful professional and industrial advice, with 26% saying it informs on topics which are interesting.

Most (47%) still prefer to read the publications in print format, although many requested online only to save costs, especially environmental. The union offers the opportunity to opt out of receiving print publications, just email [membership@ieu.asn.au](mailto:membership@ieu.asn.au)

Many of you also requested that the IEU use something other than plastic covers for mailing publications. The publications team has investigated all options, and now uses a biodegradable plastic cover. Paper envelopes are not practical nor cost effective.

There was a request for more coverage of support staff issues. This is something our publications team is

mindful of, and we always welcome correspondence and story ideas from support staff members: email [ieu@ieu.asn.au](mailto:ieu@ieu.asn.au)

Some respondents perceived a 'left wing bias' in publications which was not reflective of their own views.

IEUA NSW/ACT Branch Secretary Mark Northam said the union would continue to fight for social justice, equity and action on climate change, saying these issues affected the welfare of all workers.

All members receive IEU publications in their letterbox, unless they have informed the membership team they wish to receive online publications only.

The IEU publishes *Newsmonth* eight times a year, it covers issues aimed at all members. The first and last editions for the year are digital only, the other six editions are in print and digital formats.

The professional journal *IE*, which carries professional articles for all members, is printed three times a year. *Bedrock*, the magazine for early childhood teachers, is mailed to early childhood members three times a year. *Bedrock* was not included in this survey.

The IEU also produces a number of enews publications aimed at specific sectors of the membership, eg principals, early childhood teachers, ELICOS staff and support staff.

All IEU publications are available to read online on the IEU website [www.ieu.asn.au](http://www.ieu.asn.au) in several formats, and links to the online version of each publication are emailed to members.







## All part of the same team

**Margaret Wade and IEU Organiser Lubna Haddad display some IEU merchandise during Lubna's visit to St Patrick's Primary School Blacktown to celebrate the achievement of 100% union membership among the teaching staff.**

Rep of two years, Margaret said she has always believed in the importance of union membership in her 25 years in Catholic primary education, and it was just a matter of having a chat with the few last remaining members not signed up to achieve her goal.

"We had a few male teachers who were not members and we had a chat about things that can happen in terms of child protection and how it was nice to have the support of an organisation like the IEU behind you, and they decided to join," Margaret said.

"It wasn't just me; all the members always invite everyone to our union meetings. It was a nice feeling to know we were all part of the same team."

## Prepare for the robot army

**Unions NSW recently commissioned YouGov to conduct a survey of 1000 Australians' feelings about automation, and it seems many are anxious about the future of their jobs.**

The survey found 81% of respondents believe automation will replace much of the work now being done by humans within 30 years. And that government is not doing enough to prepare them for the future of work.

Unions NSW Secretary Mark Morey said the research demonstrated deep anxiety about automation and a hunger for governments to intervene.

"Australians have lost faith in the promises of trickle-down economists and small government ideologues," he said.

"They know a robot army is about to invade the labour market and they want to know the government has a plan to secure their future.

"The OECD estimates more than one in three jobs will disappear within 15-20 years. Without a plan, this will unleash turmoil."

He said jobs were the main mechanism for distributing income in Australia: "Across our

supermarkets, banks, public transport and mines, robots are replacing people. This creates a direct transfer of wealth from workers to shareholders".

"Technology must serve people, not the other way around."

Respondents said they did not want to work more hours to compete with robots. In fact, the vast majority want a ban on unpaid overtime. A jobs guarantee was supported by 67% of respondents, although there has been little public debate on this idea.

Unions NSW Assistant Secretary Thomas Costa said the union movement is in an ideal position to understand the concerns of workers around job losses and job changes connected to automation and also to advocate on behalf of these workers for a fair transition that does not leave these workers behind.

"Proposals like a job guarantee and ban on unpaid overtime are part of this advocacy because they force government and business to bare some of the burden that technological change will bring as well as distributing some of the benefits to workers," Costa said.

# Join IEU now and enjoy a discount

**Thank you to all our members who returned their 2020 renewal. Also, a big thank you to those automatic payers for taking the time to check their details. More than 3000 members have already taken advantage of our annual discount rate. If you would like to pay the discount rate but can't meet the deadline due to website access issues or are experiencing financial hardship due to the bushfire crisis, contact [membership@ieu.asn.au](mailto:membership@ieu.asn.au)**

Remember our annual discount rate is available until 10 February 2020 so you still have time to take advantage of the upfront payment discount.

Just a reminder to payroll deduction payers if you want to pay the discount rate you need to advise your employer directly to stop deductions and then contact the union to make payment. If you need assistance to renew, membership staff are happy to help. Simply call us direct on 8202 8900 (press 1) or email [membership@ieu.asn.au](mailto:membership@ieu.asn.au)

We also offer rates for casuals, retirees and those taking maternity leave or leave without pay.

If your workload has changed in 2020 and you wish to update, contact us.

To offer you the best shopping discounts and a range of lifestyle benefits, we will continue our arrangements with Member Advantage and Union Shopper in 2020.

All current members will receive an activation email direct from Member Advantage in February 2020. To access not only discounts and benefits but also your electronic 2020 membership card, you will need to open the email and follow the instructions provided.

You can download a printable version of your membership card from the Member Advantage website or add an electronic card to your smart phone wallet.

To access the discounts available from Union Shopper you can visit their website at [www.unionshopper.com.au](http://www.unionshopper.com.au) to set up an account or phone them directly on 1300 368 117.

We will send our annual membership update to chapter reps in February 2020.

As we continue negotiations for agreements in Catholic schools and move towards negotiating new agreements in AIS schools, it is vital that member information is current.

We ask all reps to take the time to check the details we have for your chapter and return the update. If you are lucky enough to have more than one rep in your chapter, work together to complete the form but return only one copy. All reps who return the update will receive a gift in appreciation for what we hope is a simple and quick task.

We are pleased to report that the NSW/ACT Branch of the IEU grew by 1% in the 12 months leading up to October 2019. We thank all reps and members who spoke with a colleague and encouraged them to join their union.

While we grew across most of our types of membership classifications it is worth noting that there was a slight decline in membership among our support staff member classification.

Remember to invite support staff employees to join the IEU so that we can continue to pursue better salaries and conditions for all employees from a position of strength.

Thank you for your support  
Membership team





# The clock is ticking

**Carol Matthews**

Deputy Secretary



**The clock is ticking on negotiations in Catholic systemic schools. The last pay rise was January 2019 for teachers in NSW Catholic schools and support staff in NSW and ACT Catholic schools. Teacher colleagues in NSW government schools have already received a 2.5% pay increase from the beginning of January this year. Support staff in NSW government schools received substantial pay rises in September 2019, not yet matched by Catholic employers.**

The union has scheduled meetings with the Catholic Commission of Employment Relations (CCER) in February and March. Although CCER has agreed on behalf of the dioceses in principle with some of our claims – such as a better deal for casual teachers – key issues are outstanding.

The outstanding issues include improved pay progression for teachers on unpaid parental

leave, greater clarity of the rights of temporary teachers to paid maternity leave and improved access to permanent positions for temporary teachers.

The union does not yet have a response to our claim for additional release time for primary and secondary teachers.

Negotiations are also continuing on the pay rises for support staff to match the government support staff pay rises and improved long service leave for support staff.

Issues such as caps on meeting times and other measures to address work intensification are being discussed directly with dioceses. The union has also been meeting with the Archdiocese of Canberra and Goulburn to discuss the implications of the settlement for ACT public school teachers for teachers in ACT Catholic schools.

**Carol Matthews** Deputy Secretary

## Union supports member to get job back in protracted unfair dismissal case

**An IEU member has won the right to return to work after the IEU supported him through a protracted case before the Fair Work Commission (FWC).**

In this case the FWC considered the duty of care owed by teachers to students in their care.

The decision of the Full Bench of the FWC was handed down just before Christmas. It was the final stage of a protracted unfair dismissal case following the dismissal in June 2018 of a PE teacher employed by Catholic Education Archdiocese of Canberra and Goulburn (CE).

### Background to the 'kayak case'

The teacher was dismissed in June 2018 following a practical kayaking class, part of a Year 9 Physical Activity and Sport (PASS) course. The class was conducted in November 2017 in a river close to the ocean. During the class students got into difficulty after a number of kayaks capsized because of wave action and students were forced to swim or kayak back to shore. Emergency services were called but the students and staff were able to return to shore without requiring their assistance.

After the incident, CE conducted an extensive investigation and interviewed the students in the class, the teacher and a trainee who had accompanied the class.

Following the investigation and considering the responses of the teacher, CE dismissed the teacher for failure to meet duty of care obligations and failing to act in a professional manner. CE sustained

four specific elements of the alleged misconduct. CE held that the class was conducted in an environment that was unsafe (deteriorating weather, tidal runout and high sea swell); there was a failure to conduct sufficient safety checks of helmets and life vests; the teacher deliberately lead the class into an a dangerous wave zone and finally a general failure by the teacher to follow CE policies and procedures.

### The first FWC decision

The case was heard in late 2018 by Deputy President Dean of the FWC. Evidence was taken from witnesses including students and staff of the school. The Deputy President also inspected the river where the class had been conducted.

In July 2019, the Deputy President Dean ordered the CE to reinstate the teacher, finding there was no valid reason for the dismissal. She found that on the evidence, the teacher had adequately assessed the risks and had had appropriate consideration for the safety of students in his care. She found he did not recklessly lead the students into a dangerous wave or current area. Finally, she concluded as a result, there was no breach of CE policy.

### CE appeal

CE challenged the reinstatement and lodged an appeal to the Full Bench of the FWC. CE argued the Full Bench should hear the appeal because it raised important issues relating to the duty of care of teachers and student safety.

In a decision handed down in December, the Full Bench agreed that there were important issues about child safety to be considered. However, they rejected the appeal, describing the legal arguments put on behalf of CE as

“A scattergun approach whereby the Archdiocese is prepared to attribute fault to any element of [the teacher’s] conduct on 17 November 2017 if it can assist in sustaining the conclusion that [the teacher] was wholly culpable for the incident which occurred on that day”.

The Full Bench of the FWC held that the main cause of the incident was that some students did not follow the teacher’s instructions in the class and instead diverted on a course that was closer to the ocean in order to catch waves.

This exposed them to a risk of capsizing and placed them in a location where the current was stronger. Other students went to rescue the students in difficulty, contrary to the teacher’s instructions to return to shore. The FWC also considered that the weather conditions were not relevant to the cause of the incident.

### Employer responsibility

The FWC criticised the legal argument of CE as trying to shift the full responsibility of risk assessment of the PASS class from the school to the teacher and then seeking that the teacher bear sole responsibility if anything went wrong. The FWC said there must be an established and safe system of risk assessment in place so that employees

may then operate within that framework. The fact that the risk assessment process was inadequate was the fault of CE and the teacher did undertake steps to assess and control the risk.

As the FWC commented “difficult judgments about the conduct of outdoor sporting activities in the prevailing weather conditions are required to be made by teachers and members of the community day in and day out”.

The approach of the FWC provides comfort to teachers conducting outdoor activities that involve some risks. The effect of the decision is that provided you act within the risk assessment process established by the school/employer and you take reasonable care of students you should not face disciplinary action just because things ‘go wrong’. This is particularly the case when a factor in things going wrong is the failure of students to follow a teacher’s instructions.

### IEU support

The IEU provided strong support for the member throughout the process. This support involved representation and advice from the organiser and other officers throughout the investigation and representation by a barrister throughout the FWC proceedings.

**Carol Matthews**  
Deputy Secretary



# 2020: What's coming up for IEU members?

**Mark Northam**  
Secretary



**Bushfires have impacted a considerable number of members. Sadly this has included the loss of houses and other property such as vehicles and outbuildings.**

The union will be providing support to these members.

Specifically, the most recent bushfires have affected the following towns in the Canberra-Goulburn Archdiocese: Batehaven, Moruya, Broulee, Bega, Pambula, Bombala, Cooma, Batlow, Adelong, Tumut, Braidwood and Gundagai. All Saints Primary School Tumbarumba in the Diocese of Wagga Wagga was also affected. All of the schools in these towns were however operational for the commencement of the school year.

The Scots College Glengarry Campus in Kangaroo Valley suffered damage to staff residences and student dormitories and the school is relocating the program in Term 1 and early Term 2 as a result. St Peters Anglican College Broulee is another independent school that was affected.

In terms of specific assistance, the union will be providing professional development – Responding to Bushfire Trauma. The course will deal with wellbeing for members and importantly to provide assistance to students recovering after a bushfire. Details of this professional development are on the IEU website.

## Catholic negotiations continue

Negotiations for Catholic systemic schools enterprise agreements (EAs), Catholic independent schools and independent schools multi-enterprise agreements are underway.

Negotiations commenced in late 2019 across the three groupings of schools. Catholic independent schools (Model B and C) discussions will continue

with the Catholic Commission for Employment Relations (CCER).

The union is claiming up to five days paid leave per year for employees unable to attend work because of natural disasters, in line with conditions applying to employees in Queensland Catholic schools.

## Catholic independents

While indicating that pay rises for Catholic independents will be equivalent to those (yet to be agreed) in Catholic systemic schools, CCER (on behalf of the schools) has indicated that they won't agree to regulate any aspect of teacher workload, for example, limiting the number of 'extras' per term and the number of meetings per term. The union will be pressing for such developments.

Catholic systemic negotiations (both teachers and support staff) in the 11 Catholic dioceses across NSW and ACT will resume in early February.

Teacher workload and its impact is the key feature, as is long service leave equity for support staff. Additional time release is part of the solution. The union is having some success in enhancing RFF in primary schools and seeking a day's release per term for professional duties in secondary schools.

The union notes the practice of a day's release was in operation in the second half of 2019 in the Wagga Wagga Diocese and is already part of Victorian agreements.

A positive of additional release would be the opportunity to create meaningful temporary year long positions for those teachers providing the additional release.

## Independent schools

The existing Multi-Enterprise Agreements (MEAs) do not expire until 31 January 2021. Meetings are scheduled with employer representatives in Term 1. Additional information and the development of a comprehensive claim will be sent to members in due course.



## Principals at the forefront

**The IEU takes this opportunity to thank principal members for their support for the union and we hope that principals, their families and school communities were able to enjoy some rest and renewal at Christmas and the New Year. Very best wishes for your return to school for 2020.**

We are mindful, however, that many schools and their communities have either been directly impacted by bushfires or affected by the smoke which covered Sydney, Canberra and many other areas for a long period.

As well as the ongoing drought, which was featured in the December issue of *Newsmonth*, schools have also been affected by recent dust storms, hail storms and other extreme weather events.

The union is engaging with employers as appropriate in relation to support for members in workplaces affected by the fires or other recent weather events.

In Term 4 of 2019 the union valued the opportunity to meet with IEU principal members at a range of regional gatherings, including in Canberra, Lismore, Wollongong, Forbes, Bathurst, Sydney Southern Region and with Armidale Diocese principals by phone.

A phone meeting was also held for independent sector principals. The IEU

looks forward to opportunities for regional principals' gatherings in the year ahead.

With regard to the Catholic systemic enterprise agreement negotiations, the IEU has sought meetings at the earliest opportunity in 2020 with the Catholic Commission for Employment Relations (CCER) to progress bargaining and is also seeking specific discussions with Sydney Catholic Schools. Further updates will be provided as soon as possible.

2020 will also see multi-enterprise agreements (MEA) negotiations for teachers and support staff in independent schools. Many independent sector principals have the teachers' MEA as the basis of their remuneration and core employment conditions.

The next Principals Sub Branch meeting will be on Saturday, 15 February. Meeting dates for 2020 will be confirmed then, but the proposed dates for this year are 2 May, 8 August and 7 November.

Principals are most welcome to contact the IEU if there is anything they would like to discuss. In particular, the IEU congratulates new principals on their appointment and warmly invites them to engage with IEU principals' activities.

**Pam Smith**

Assistant Secretary/Principals Organiser

## Things can only get better

**A very warm welcome and warm it is. As I write this message, it is 39 degrees in my living room, and I would suspect that it is even hotter in other parts of the state.**

I would like to pass on my sincere thoughts and prayers to all our members, families, friends, students in our schools, and to school communities who have lost homes, property, loved ones and treasured memories as a result of the horrific bushfires that swept through the eastern states late last year and during the New Year.

I happened to be on the mid north coast during the holidays and drove through the remains of the bushfires that devastated the bushland and homes around the Taree area. Absolutely heartbreaking. I am thinking of you all and only hope that as the year progresses things will start to get better and you can move on.

I wish all members a good start to the New Year and also a 'warm welcome

home' to all the exchange teachers who have experienced a year teaching in many parts of the world.

I hope you had a fantastic time and were able to travel to some exciting new places. Also to the teachers who are here with us for the next 12 months on exchange, welcome and I wish you all a happy and worthwhile time working alongside members who I am sure will make you feel valued.

2020 should be an exciting year as negotiations continue and early settlements can be reached.

I welcome Mark Northam, Carol Matthews and the new leadership team of our union and wish them every success in their new roles. I have no doubt that the IEU will continue to be your union and we look forward to working with you throughout the year.

**Chris Wilkinson**  
President





# Start of school checklist

## 1 Join your Union

A union is a group of workers who have agreed to collectively use their strength and pool their resources to give people a voice in the workplace and fight for fair pay and conditions. Union membership is your greatest resource in helping you navigate the world of employment and is there to assist you should you encounter any difficulties in your employment.

The Independent Education Union is the union that represents teachers and support staff in your school. With over 30,000 members across NSW and ACT alone, the IEU is well resourced and equipped to deliver positive outcomes, improvements and advice to our members.

## 2 Double check your pay and conditions

Check your letter of appointment/contract that lays out many of your conditions of employment, for example, whether your job is temporary or permanent, your hours of work etc. It should also refer to the enterprise agreement (EA) that applies, and if there is no EA, then to the relevant award.

Make sure you agree with the classification specified in your letter of appointment and that you have provided all documentation required by your employer (such as statements of service, copies of your qualifications, etc).

If you are not familiar with the classification, check the rate of pay and the definition in the EA to ensure there are no misunderstandings.

## 3 Update NESA/TQI with your employment details?

It's important that your teacher registration body knows your current contact details and place of employment. Your teacher registration body is either NSW's NESA or ACT's TQI.

Take some time to change your contact email and postal addresses if they have changed and give them your best phone number to reach you on. If you change your legal name, make sure that you let NESA or TQI know too.

Any time you change your job, make sure that you log in and update that as well. If you're working casually, there is a category for that. Chat to the appropriate person within the school with which you have the best professional relationship to let them know you're selecting their school as your major place of work as a casual teacher.

## 4 Investigate what PD opportunities are available to you

As a first year teacher, you don't need to complete mandatory set hours of PD (until you reach Proficient level), but you should look around for what is available to you. Many schools offer networking opportunities for first year teachers, as does the union, professional teaching associations and TeachMeets. Sometimes, that PD is free!

The IEU provides free professional development on a range of topics including accreditation at Proficient, voice care, behaviour management, anxiety and safety. Visit [www.ieu.asn.au](http://www.ieu.asn.au) today for upcoming events, or check out [www.TheIEUZone.org.au](http://www.TheIEUZone.org.au) for on demand PD.

## 5 Clean up and lock down your social media profiles

A recurring issue that affects even experienced teachers is their personal social media accounts becoming public knowledge. Fair or not, past posts and comments can be dredged up and personal, controversial, or inappropriate statements may be used against you.

This isn't to scare you away from using social media, as there are numerous professional networks and resources available across all platforms, including a number facilitated by the IEU.

You may wish to create a 'professional profile' that you use to participate in these forums and keep your personal posts to a separate profile – possibly under a pseudonym. Even then, it's still recommended that you be cautious when posting online, particularly with regards to sensitive or employment related topics where you or your employer could be identifiable. Remember, whatever you post online can be there forever.

## 6 New teacher? Find out what kind of induction program your school has put in place for you

As an early career teacher, you should expect your school to have a structured induction program in place to assist you in your transition into the workplace. It is important that you are provided with an overview and timetable of the induction process.

This program should be developed and sufficiently resourced according to your needs.

You should be allocated a mentor teacher who is able to commit to regularly meet with you throughout the year to provide support and help guide you through your induction process.

You should be provided clear employment-related information. This should include and may not be limited to: duty statement, documents relating to ethos and mission of the school, superannuation entitlements and options, union coverage and benefits, salary and conditions entitlements, provision of training in school policies, procedures and general expectations, duty of care, mandatory reporting responsibilities and teacher/parent communication.

## 7 Find out whether you can access time as a first year teacher

If you have picked up a permanent or temporary role, many employers allow you time off class to work on your programming, attend PD, participate in coaching or mentoring or to complete your accreditation. Some even allow time off for your mentor.

Your entitlement will be set out in policies or, in Catholic systemic schools, in your work practice agreement. Don't miss out on what has been achieved for you by not knowing it was available!

## 8 A final word

Keep all your documents in a safe place, filed on a device as well as a filed hard copy.

Every workplace is different, so speak to your IEU rep about what provisions are in your EA or email [ieu@ieu.asn.au](mailto:ieu@ieu.asn.au)

## Position Vacant IEU Organiser Sydney

**The union is currently seeking applications for a full time Organiser to be based in one of our Sydney offices (Ultimo or Parramatta). The commencement date for the successful applicant would be negotiated but preferably no later than the beginning of Term 2.**

### Duties

Organiser's duties include school visits, industrial representation of members and the implementation of IEU campaigns. Familiarity with issues affecting teachers at all stages of their career and the current educational agenda as it impacts on teachers is highly desirable. Some weekends and evening work will be required. Overnight travel may also be necessary and a current driver's licence is essential.

In addition to the above position, the Executive may appoint a second Organiser, based in Ultimo, who in addition to the usual organising duties, will also have a role in the union's professional development program. Duties will include the design and delivery of PD and using social media to engage with members.

### Conditions

The successful applicants will be appointed under contract by the Executive of the union and accountable to the Secretary in the first instance.

Salary will be in accordance with the IEU Officers' salary scale that has links to the Sydney Catholic Schools teachers' rates. Starting salary is usually one incremental step above that which a member would earn in 2020.

IEU Organisers retain their membership of the union and are non voting members of IEU Council.

### Appointment

Applications must be made in writing, setting out background, experience and other relevant material, including union involvement, that might support the application and forwarded to:

The Secretary  
IEUA NSW/ACT Branch  
GPO Box 116  
Sydney NSW 2001  
Email [helen@ieu.asn.au](mailto:helen@ieu.asn.au)



Independent  
Education  
Union of Australia  
NSW/ACT Branch

All applications must be received by Monday 24 February. For further information and a role description outline, please contact Helen Gregory on 8202 8900 or 1800 467 943 or [helen@ieu.asn.au](mailto:helen@ieu.asn.au)



# Present tense

# Shaping up for another wild ride

**Welcome back to another year of Present Tense, your window into the world of English, Business and VET post secondary colleges. We hope you've had some rest over the summer, because 2020 is shaping up to be another wild ride!**

## The industrial basics

Do you know your basic rights? Employment in the post secondary sector is largely governed by the provisions of the industry award, the *Educational Services (Post-Secondary Education) Award 2010*.

Like all awards, it covers your basic entitlements of pay, leave, and hours of work. Award annual permanent salaries range from \$50,591.71 at Level 1 to \$66,218.05, while casual employees are also entitled to a loading of 25% (all pay rates are adjusted each July). As of last year, there is also a casual conversion clause, allowing casual employees to convert their employment to ongoing.

Many colleges routinely underpay award rates (how many times have you been informed at a new college that they 'only pay Step 4?'), but the legal position is that you are entitled to be paid the correct award wage, and indeed, it is unlawful for parties to 'contract out', or agree to be paid less. Of course, in practice, it can be hard to insist, so make sure you keep all your pay slips –

underpayments may be claimed for up to six years after the fact, and the IEU regularly claims back payments on behalf of members worth thousands of dollars.

Other sources of your employment rights come from the *Fair Work Act* and the National Employment Standard (which sets the minimum standards for all jobs across a range of areas), as well as the provisions of any individual employment contract that you sign. Remember, though, that your conditions of employment cannot legally be lower than what is laid out in the NES or in your award – so know your rights!

## Enterprise agreements

Many employers also offer improved pay and conditions in an enterprise agreement. Agreements substitute for the award and must offer arrangements that are 'better off overall' than the award for the employees that come under it.

Your union has negotiated enterprise agreements with around 15 different colleges, and these agreements provide for pay that is around 8% to 20% higher

than the rates in the award, as well as better conditions for leave, hours or work, casual conversion, and limits on insecure work.

The IEU is currently negotiating with several colleges, including WSU the College, SELC, and Navitas English ACT, and we have recently finalised agreements at Navitas English Services, and EC English (formerly Embassy English).

The *Fair Work Act* includes provisions pertaining to 'good faith bargaining', under which an employer can be compelled to bargain when it can be demonstrated that a majority of their employees (or group of employees, such as teachers) wish for that to

happen. To find out how this might work at your college, contact your union on [kendall@ieu.asn.au](mailto:kendall@ieu.asn.au).

## Unfair dismissal

Another area where your union is kept busy in the post secondary sector is in the field of unfair dismissal. Job security is often precarious in the industry, with casual contracts and other forms of

insecure work common. However, even casual and temporary employees can be eligible for unfair dismissal protection, so long as they have been employed for at least six months, can demonstrate 'regular and systematic' work, and can reasonably have expected the work to continue.

Most unfair dismissal applications are resolved well before the matter reaches a full legal hearing, and most members express satisfaction with the outcome. You might think that this will never happen to you, but in truth, there are many dodgy employers in the post secondary college world, and you never know when your time is coming.

## Union membership

The IEU is greatly restricted by union rules from giving assistance to non members, or to new members who have joined with problem that arose prior to joining. It can be instructive to think of union membership like insurance – if your house burns down, you won't be able to get insurance for it the day after, and the same principle applies for unions. What's more, there are many broader benefits to IEU membership, and union fees are tax deductible. So don't take the risk – join your union today! [www.ieu.asn.au](http://www.ieu.asn.au)

**Kendall Warren** Organiser

**“Your union has negotiated enterprise agreements with around 15 different colleges, and these agreements provide for pay that is around 8% to 20% higher than the rates in the award.”**

## 20 Professional Development

**Tuesday 11 February**

Responding to Bushfire Trauma – Online

**Tuesday 18 February**

PIP Work Hoarse Voice Care – Online

**Wednesday 26 February**

Supervising Accreditation at Proficient 1 – Online

**Tuesday 3 March**

Supervising Accreditation at Proficient 2 – Online

**Wednesday 11 March**

Supervising Accreditation at Proficient 3 – Online

**Monday 16 March**

Beginning to Proficient Teacher – Online

**Wednesday 25 March**

PIP Maintenance of Accreditation – Online

**Wednesday 1 April**

IEU Book Club – Online

**For more information and bookings go to [www.ieu.asn.au](http://www.ieu.asn.au)**



# Bushfire support helplines and information

**Schools and early learning services play a critical role in supporting communities to respond and recover from the bushfire crisis, whether they have been directly or indirectly affected by fires.**

While the physical impact of the bushfire crisis is obvious, the mental health impact may not be. To support educators in looking after themselves and those in their care Be You has developed a Bushfires resource pack. For individuals and communities directly affected by the bushfire crisis, a range of financial relief and support services are available. Listed below are some of the major relief packages available. This list is not comprehensive, and additional programs may be available to you.

## **Bushfire response: Resources for educators**

Provider: Be You, a national initiative from Beyond Blue, for educators to promote and protect positive mental health in children and young people. <https://beyou.edu.au/bushfires-response>

## **Disaster Recovery Allowance**

Funding Provider: Department of Human Services  
Amount: See below  
Closes: 1 July 2020  
Short term payment to help if a declared disaster directly affects your income. You can be eligible for up to 13 weeks to the equivalent of Newstart or Youth Allowances.

## **Disaster Recovery Payment**

Funding Provider: Department of Human Services  
Amount: See below  
Closes: 5 July 2020  
One off payment if a declared disaster directly affects you and your family. Payments can be made up to \$1000 per adult and up to \$400 per child under the age of 16 years.

## **Red Cross Emergency Grants**

Funding Provider: Red Cross  
Amount: Up to \$5000  
Closes: 30 April 2020  
Grants available to those who have lost their homes in bushfires from 1 July 2019 to 28 February 2020. You must provide evidence of identity, proof of residence and details for a financial transfer.

## **NSW Disaster Recovery Grants (Bushfires)**

Funding Provider: Rural Assistance Authority  
Amount: Up to \$15,000  
Closes: Various depending on listed Local Government Areas – 18 June, 23 June, 24 May and 2 July 2020.  
Grant program open to help small business, primary producers, sports clubs and not for profit organisations, following the Declaration of Natural Disaster by NSW Government. Ensure your Local Government Area (LGA) is listed and eligible for this program.

## **NGS Super**

NGS Super will be able to assist members impacted by bushfires via financial hardship and early release of funds, benefit payments and insurance claims.  
NGS has extended their Grief Counselling service to encompass bushfire-affected members as well, regardless of whether members are making a claim. Call Grief Support Service on 1300 820 733 for a confidential discussion.  
Contact Customer Relationship Manager on 0438 092 990 or via email [ktomita@ngssuper.com.au](mailto:ktomita@ngssuper.com.au) for assistance.

**For more information about any of these resources follow this link <http://bit.ly/ieubushfiresupport>**

## **HESTA (Superannuation Fund)**

See: <https://www.hesta.com.au/campaigns/bushfire-support.html>  
Call 1800 813 327 if you have any questions about your super at this time of crisis.

## **Members Equity Bank (ME Bank) Financial Hardship Assistance**

See: <https://www.mebank.com.au/support/financial-hardship/>  
ME has activated its natural disaster hotline to support ME customers affected by bushfires, particularly if you have suffered loss of property, employment or are experiencing financial difficulties.  
Call 1300 500 520 to discuss how ME can assist members with their circumstances and needs.

## **Teachers Mutual Bank (TMB) – Bushfire crisis response**

See: <https://www.tmbank.com.au/bushfires>  
TMB is offering a range of relief measures to assist you if you have been directly impacted. Members who have suffered losses in the bushfires to contact them on 13 12 21 and they will provide you with assistance for your circumstances.

## **Teachers Health (Health Fund) Bushfire Assistance Package**

See: <https://www.teachershealth.com.au/about-us/news/teachers-health-bushfire-assistance-package/>  
A Bushfire Assistance Package is available for eligible members, providing relief on health fund premiums during this difficult time.

## **NAB Disaster Relief Fund**

Funding Provider: NAB Bank  
Amount: \$2000 plus other benefits to NAB customers  
Closes: Ongoing  
\$2,000 emergency grants are available for NAB customers. NAB are also providing additional support for loans, business and agribusiness.

## **Commonwealth Bank Bushfire Recovery Grants**

Funding Provider: Commonwealth Bank of Australia  
Amount: Up to \$50000  
Closes: 31 March 2020  
Grants for a large range of community groups including fire services, schools, sports clubs and non government organisations. Grants help replace or repair facilities damaged by fire.

## **Westpac Disaster Relief**

Funding Provider: Westpac Bank  
Amount: \$2000 plus other benefits to Westpac customers  
Closes: Ongoing  
Grants are available up to \$2,000 to provide support for temporary accommodation, food and clothing; assistance given to customers with home loans, insurance, business accounts, insurance, etc.

## **ANZ Bushfire Relief Package**

Funding Provider: ANZ Bank  
Amount: Various for ANZ Customers  
Closes: Ongoing  
Various support is available for ANZ customers to support those affected by fires. This includes suspension on repayments of loans, interest rate relief, etc. Contact ANZ on 1800 149 549 or [www.anz.com/hardship](http://www.anz.com/hardship).

## **Dioceses support bushfire affected school communities**

### **Canberra and Goulburn**

Union officers met with the Director, Ross Fox, and other staff of the Archdiocese of Canberra and Goulburn Catholic Education (CE) on 21 January to discuss the support being provided to staff and school communities of the 12 schools affected by the recent bush fires. At least 20 staff and members of the school communities have lost houses and many more families will have been significantly impacted economically by the fires.

The IEU was pleased with the CE response in what is a very challenging situation. CE has been proactive in supporting staff, students and parents. CE has been focused on enabling the schools to return to normal to the extent possible as soon as possible.

The support provided includes:

- additional staffing to allow affected staff in schools additional leave and additional time off class if required
- additional counselling support for staff, students and families
- fee relief for parents for 2020 for any family who has been significantly affected by the fires, and
- a discretionary fund for each school principal to meet school needs arising from the bushfire. This may include school uniforms, school lunches for displaced families etc.

The union understands significant additional relief staffing has been allocated to the schools. CE is also prepared to make special pay arrangements for staff experiencing financial hardship because of the fires. Any staff requiring support should contact their principal in the first instance.

There has been much practical assistance offered by staff and members of the community to the affected schools. If you would like to offer practical support to the schools, CE is requesting that you contact them directly rather than the individual schools to assist in the coordination of these efforts.

### **Wagga Wagga**

The school community of All Saints Primary at Tumbarumba, in the Diocese of Wagga Wagga, was also severely impacted. The school is tiny (only 55 students) and at least 12 families experienced major losses. The diocese is providing counselling support for students and staff and fee relief for affected families and other extensive support.

**Carol Matthews** Deputy Secretary



## **South Coast bushfire drive**

**St Thomas the Apostle Kambah Principal Ursula Jamieson and IEU Rep Anna Barbic collected goods for a drive to provide students in the bushfire affected south coast region with back-to-school backpacks.**

"It's one thing less for the parents to worry about. Some of them have lost their homes," Ursula said.

If you would like to support the communities affected by bushfire, they are in need of gift cards which they can spend on groceries or petrol rather than material goods now. Any school in the area can act as contact point.





# Understanding and responding to trauma following a natural disaster – advice for early childhood teachers

Community Early Learning Australia (CELA) recently published advice for dealing with bushfire trauma, including self care for early childhood teachers and ways to address the needs of young children who may have experienced trauma. The checklist includes information on the following:

- 1. Self care in times of trauma
- 2. Limit exposure
- 3. Be self aware
- 4. Reconnect to your body
- 5. Connect with your community
- 6. Give yourself permission for time out
- 7. Be informed

- 8. Helping trauma affected children in our care
- 9. Maintain routines
- 10. Contain conversations which encourage fear
- 11. Use your relaxation spaces and encourage mindful activities
- 12. Monitor symptoms over time
- 13. Name and acknowledge feelings
- 14. Share helpful stories
- 15. Find some great books to share.

For advice under these topics and the full article go to: <https://www.cela.org.au/2020/01/14/responding-to-trauma/>



## Buy from the Bush

Buy from the Bush is an initiative that encourages consumers from cities all over Australia to buy from rural and regional communities that are struggling through long and devastating drought.

Started on 16 October 2019, it began as an Instagram account showcasing beautiful local crafts and products available to buy from rural communities and called on city friends to look to the bush for their Christmas shopping.

In just seven weeks, the page had grown to over 130,000 followers and increased rural postage figures by 40%, providing a much needed direct cash injection into struggling regional communities.

Buy from the Bush Instagram and Facebook pages now have over 208,000 and 187,000 followers respectively and show no sign of slowing down.

The success and positive community impact of the campaign is evident, with its beneficiaries extending beyond the creators and makers selling their wares through the network.

Reports are coming through that creators are developing new relationships with wholesalers and stockists, as package parcels sell out in post offices from increased demand. Small businesses are employing casual staff to support the increase in sales, which in some cases have been 660% over the previous year.

Grace Brennan, the creator of the Buy from the Bush campaign, became the first woman from regional

Australia to deliver the Australia Day Address and says she wanted her speech to tell the story of the bush. She talks of the dignity, strength and independence of Australian rural communities, and as she describes it “Buy from the Bush is less about crisis relief and more about sustainable support for rural communities in the long term. It is not about charity. It is about investment.”

“There was a very clear need,” said Brennan, “The need to attract cashflow to declining communities. The need to create work. To inject dollars and also hope. To allow people to feel visible and valued. The need for both symbolic and real support from the city to the bush.”

As devastated rural and regional communities across Australia start to rebuild, the Buy from the Bush campaign will likely continue to grow as consumers from across the country look to how they can assist communities left reeling from these climatic disasters.

You can follow Buy from the Bush #buyfromthebush <https://www.facebook.com/buyfromthebush/> <https://www.instagram.com/buyfromthebush/> Watch Grace Brennan’s Australia Day address <https://www.facebook.com/AustraliaDay26/videos/108997547197464/>

Angus Hoy Journalist



## On Fire

By Kevin Smith

On a hot day  
something went wrong. My brother  
cleaning up a paddock  
pushed fallen timber into piles with a tractor.  
Under the sun  
the machine laboured on.

Deep beneath  
the hood a greasy gloom, a spark somewhere,  
a sudden fire  
divining reservoirs of oil and diesel,  
hydraulic  
lines wet with fluid.

Liquid flame  
spilled across the engine block  
and the cabin filled with smoke. Exploding tyres  
boomed through clouds  
and cleared  
the trees of crows. Burning plastic sickened

the air. His wife  
working another paddock  
looked up  
and saw the black smoke rising. She fixed  
her eyes on it  
while the boys clambered into the ute.

‘What is it?’  
Her face shut like a gate.  
From the brow of a hill they saw the tractor burning,  
no husband  
in sight—no father.  
They came on, the last yards hardest; the chance

of him appearing  
slipped away.  
Was that a blackened shadow in the cabin?  
Heat pushed her back.  
Rounds of wire hung loose on rims like bracelets  
on a wrist stripped

of flesh. She gripped  
the boys—but could not speak  
his absence.  
And what was that written on her children’s faces  
that flung them  
into whorls of silence?

O god, let it not be so.  
The sky leaned close—a ghostly breath.  
Cockatoos  
ran up the white flags of surrender. And there  
—he came  
strolling over pasture. The boys broke

and ran—crying—into his arms.  
Yet the landscape  
—spare and silent—  
held fast the awful tract she’d yet to cross—to feel  
his living  
flesh pressed against her flesh.

Kevin Smith is a retired teacher who has taught acting and drama in secondary schools, colleges and universities, facilitating drama workshops at state and national conferences. He has worked professionally as an actor, dramaturg, director and writer. Kevin wrote this poem recently while on his brother’s property in the Canberra – Tumut area, where it was tinder dry and fire waits for any opportunity.





# Supporting students' futures: New online PD from Newcastle University

**What did you aspire to be when you were young? What do your students want to do when they leave school?**

Unpacking these questions and more is a new, free, registered online professional development course, designed to support teachers and school leaders in understanding and nurturing students' career and educational aspirations.

The rigorous research underpinning the course, Aspirations: Supporting Students' Futures, has shown just how important schools and teachers are in supporting the futures of our students.

Following an Australia wide trial, a resounding 94% of participants are planning to incorporate their new knowledge in their teaching.

Commissioned by the Australian Government Department of Education, the course was developed by researchers from the University of Newcastle and La Trobe University.

It brings together important information from a significant body of research investigating student aspirations (across Years 3-12), as part of the Aspirations Longitudinal Study and related studies (2012-2018), led by Laureate Professor Jenny Gore, Director of the Teachers and Teaching Research Centre at the University of Newcastle.

The course is relevant to teachers across all year levels and in all states and territories. It comprises a suite of digital resources, videos, interactive activities, data, and links to reading and further information, in an online, self-paced environment.

Teachers participating in the course have the opportunity to:

- learn key concepts for talking about aspirations with students, parents/ carers, and colleagues
- explore why understanding aspirations is important
- examine trends in aspirations for different educational and career pathways
- explore key factors that influence aspirations (including academic achievement, gender, socio economic status, Aboriginality and location), and

- consider the powerful role of schools and teachers in shaping and nurturing students' futures.

Lead researcher Laureate Professor Jenny Gore said the research has shown that aspirations begin to form from the early years of schooling.

"Our research produced some surprising results and really emphasises the importance of schools and teachers," Gore said.

"This course can really help teachers in understanding and nurturing their students' aspirations."

The course has been trialled and evaluated by teachers in all sectors and all states and territories. It was strongly endorsed, with teachers reporting impact on their knowledge and beliefs, attitudes and dispositions:

- 94% plan to incorporate what they have learned into their teaching
- 90% have an increased understanding of strategies to support students' aspirations
- 88% believe insights from the course should be incorporated into their school plan; and
- 90% recommend the course as valuable professional development for teachers at their school.

Teachers involved in the trial commented:

"It has opened up a world of research and ideas and changed the way I interact, teach, and support my students and their families." (Cody)

"Fantastic! Really emphasises the important role that teachers play in shaping the aspirations of all students." (David)

"So positive! As a teacher you can forget how important your role is in shaping the next generation." (Felicity)

For teachers in NSW the course is NESA registered for 10 hours of professional development at the Proficient level. For those in the ACT, it is TQJ accredited for 10 hours of professional learning.

To enrol in the course, visit [www.aspirations.edu.au](http://www.aspirations.edu.au)

# NSW Reportable Conduct Scheme

**The new *Children's Guardian Act 2019 (Act)* will commence on 1 March 2020 and will consolidate legislation that currently governs the existing functions and responsibilities of the NSW Children's Guardian, also expanding their functions to include the NSW Reportable Conduct Scheme (transferred from the NSW Ombudsman).**

As a result, the NSW Children's Guardian will oversee the head of an organisation's (called a 'relevant entity') response to a reportable allegation or a reportable conviction, ensuring the response has met the legislative requirements.

## The new Act includes

- clarification of the definition of reportable conduct (a sexual offence, sexual misconduct, ill treatment, neglect, assault offence under 43B or 316A of the Crimes Act 1900 and behaviour that causes significant emotional or psychological harm to a child)
- a requirement that relevant entities will have seven business days (instead of the current 30 days) to provide notification (online report) to the NSW Children's Guardian with details of an allegation of reportable conduct or reportable conviction (penalties may result if this does not occur)
- a requirement that relevant entities must conduct an investigation and make a finding into an allegation of reportable conduct
- a requirement that an interim report must be provided to the NSW Children's

Guardian if the relevant entity is unable to complete an investigation into an allegation of reportable conduct within 30 calendar days (penalties may result if this does not occur)

- a narrowing of the definition for sexual misconduct: crossing of professional boundaries as it will not amount to sexual misconduct unless there is a sexual element
- a new avenue of appeal to the NSW Civil and Administrative Tribunal for an administrative review of a NSW Children's Guardian initiated investigation decision, and
- a provision for the NSW Ombudsman to receive any complaints on the handling of the NSW Reportable Conduct Scheme by the NSW Children's Guardian.

In the lead up to the commencement of the *Children's Guardian Act 2019* on 1 March 2020, the NSW Reportable Conduct Scheme will continue under the current legislative (*Ombudsman Act 1974*) and operational arrangements and requirements of the NSW Ombudsman.

Any questions about the current scheme can be directed to the Reportable Conduct Team at the NSW Ombudsman on (02) 9286 1021.

If anyone has any questions about the scheme's transfer to the NSW Children's Guardian, contact them at [RCStranition@kids.nsw.gov.au](mailto:RCStranition@kids.nsw.gov.au).

**Russell Schokman** Policy Advisor

## New research reveals Aussie students' vision for the school of the future

**Six out of 10 students hope to see IT and computers as a core part of the school curriculum within the next 10 years.**

Around 65% of school students said they have an interest in learning coding in school, with one in three students saying they haven't had the opportunity to do this.

Over 50% of students consider computers and IT to be the subjects most important to their future careers.

New research, commissioned by Microsoft Store Australia, has highlighted the growing student demand for tech-based tools and skills in school.

The research reveals that Aussie kids are excited to learn via advanced technology and are prioritising STEM based education to get themselves ready for the jobs of the future.

The research reveals that 65% of students aged 10-16 years old in Australia have an interest in learning more STEM focused skills, like

coding in school, with one in three students saying they are not taught this currently.

Further to this, the research showcases Aussie kids value STEM based subjects as the most relevant to their jobs in the future, prioritising computers (61%), IT (63%) and science (57%) over traditionally preferred subjects, such as PE (45%), English (51%) and music (44%).

The research results also indicate that Aussie kids are excited about new learning tools and experiences in the classroom of the future.

Twenty-one per cent of students say they would like more opportunities to learn outside of the physical classroom, 42% of students say they would like to interact more with classroom computers via touch screen, and 27% would like to be able to interact with computers via voice command.

Microsoft Store Australia



# IEU member reaches final stage of ‘world’s most dedicated teacher’ award

Learning Coordinator Helen Comerford has been named a finalist in Cambridge University Press’ annual search for the world’s most dedicated teacher, thanks to her “love and concern for every student”.

Helen Comerford is the Learning Enrichment Coordinator at Lumen Christi Catholic College in Pambula, a role in which she “is uncompromising in advocating for students with disabilities and has created a truly inclusive environment.”

She also has over a decade of experience as a secondary science teacher and is currently studying for a Master of Education – Inclusive Practice at the Australian Catholic University.

## Here is Helen’s nomination

“Helen is our Learning Coordinator who daily models a love and concern for every student that comes to her door (and the ones who don’t, but really need her).

“From supporting a student who has struggled with their sexuality to counselling students after the loss through suicide of a close friend, Helen walks with students through every difficulty they face and every celebration they share.

“She is uncompromising in advocating for students with disabilities and has created a truly inclusive environment for the students.

“Helen follows up with the resources and know-how to make changes, recently introducing a course for students to improve their skills for social and academic success. She also facilitated a course for teachers and learning assistants to learn more about behavioural management from a positive and proactive perspective, bringing opportunities for restorative justice in student-teacher relationships. Helen has the rare ability to fuse vision with practicality.”

Other finalists include Tiffany Cavanagh, Trident College Solwezi, Zambia; Stanley Manaay, Salvacion National High School, Philippines; John Nicko Coyoca, University of San Jose-Recoletos, Philippines; Patricia Abril, New Cambridge School, Colombia and Meera Rangarajan, RBK Academy, India. You can read all the 2020 finalists’ stories online at [dedicatedteacher.cambridge.org](https://dedicatedteacher.cambridge.org)

This year, over 6000 award nominations from 97 different countries poured into the Press, each detailing an inspiring story about an extraordinary teacher. A panel of expert judges selected their six finalists from the shortlist released in December, which included two further teachers from Australia, based on whether nominations met the awards criteria. Among the criteria, the judges looked at whether a teacher demonstrated innovative practices, provided fantastic pastoral care and prepared students for their futures beyond school.

The six finalists have won a host of prizes, including class sets of books or digital resources. They will also feature on a thank you page at the front of every new Cambridge University Press Education textbook from May 2020 and receive an invitation to the Cambridge Panel, an online community of specialists that help to shape the Press’ education publishing.

Last year, the 2019 Dedicated Teacher Awards saw maths and accounting teacher Ahmed Saya from Cordoba School for A-Level in Karachi, announced the winner from just under 4000 nominations from 75 countries around the world. *Cambridge University Press*



**Mark Turl has been a member of the IEU for 38 years and counting and has served as both rep at Our Lady of Mercy College (OLMC) Parramatta and President of the Cumberland Sub Branch.**

Mark’s years of service were honoured at a Cumberland Branch chapter meeting recently, as Mark is now on well deserved extended leave, after 40 years of service to OMLC.

Mark (pictured with IEU Organiser Aiden Anderson) was a co-ordinator of Human Society and Its Environment until his late wife Paula became unwell about 18 years ago.

More recently he has concentrated on teaching Geography, which has evolved due to the increased use of digital technology.

“Nowadays I can just put up the daily weather maps from the Bureau of Meteorology online and relate them to weather changes outside the classroom. The kids just love that,” Mark said.

“But the feedback I get is that they still like the traditional discussions that we have, exchanging ideas and opinions about geographic issues, rather than doing individual research online working alone with a screen.”

Mark said the other big change in his career has been the gradual reduction in the number of nuns at the school.

“When I started in 1980 the presence of nuns was very strong, especially in Music and Religious Education of course.

“That started to dwindle in the late 80s and 90s and it was just the principal until 2004. Now there are none.”

Mark said the school has a wonderful culture influenced by the tradition of Catherine McAuley and the nuns.

“The kids are fantastic, as are my co-teachers, all salt of the earth people.”

Motivated by a desire for justice in the workplace, Mark said joining the union was a natural thing for him.

“There are always lots of issues in schools, whether for individuals or the collective. Work intensification has been growing for 20 years, but in the last five years it’s really started to bite, and finding that ‘sweet spot’ in which there is a genuine work-life balance has become increasingly challenging.

“My second wife Anne cannot believe how hard teachers work. She ran a health food business for 20 years and thought that was hard work until she married a teacher.”

At OLMC there is not just one rep, Mark was part of a committee of three that shared the responsibilities. He’s happy to be leaving knowing there are good people to replace him. He will be a member of the union even in retirement.

“I’m looking forward to receiving my 40 year union membership badge. I think continuing to support the union movement is the right thing to do.”

He’s also looking forward to spending quality time with his new wife, who he met four years ago at grandparents’ day at the school, his mother and mother in law and their 13 “bonza” grandchildren.

**Sue Osborne** Journalist

**“I’m looking forward to receiving my 40 year union membership badge. I think continuing to support the union movement is the right thing to do.”**



## IEU Rep Peter Tsambalas Getting down to business

**As a teacher of Economics and Business Studies, IEU Rep Peter Tsambalas is acutely aware of how important industrial legislation is to people’s lives.**

It’s no surprise he’s been the IEU rep at Aquinas Catholic College Menai for four years, considering his heightened awareness of the need for legislation to protect workers from employers’ unscrupulous behaviour.

“I see it as a way of protecting everything about education, not just industrial rights,” Peter said.

## History behind it

“There’s a lot of history behind the conditions we have but there’s still a lot more that we have to achieve.

“I find it rewarding personally to help people, students and adults. There’s a real sense of achievement from working on social justice issues.”

Peter is looking forward to working closely with support staff at his school to make sure the claim for the new enterprise agreement for Catholic systemic schools provides equitable and realistic conditions.

## Protecting members

“Coming to our union’s Council meetings and seeing the amount of work and effort that goes into protecting members and how it raises awareness of important issues for society, such as superannuation, is a great thing.”

Peter said having a chance to meet teachers from regional areas through union networking was a great eye opener.

“IEU is well aware of finding common ground to aid the greater good, rather than niche or targeted staffing areas. It is truly a union of many different groups supportive of each other, in the truest sense of the word union.”



# Australia’s leaning tower of PISA: Reflections of a Canadian exchange teacher

**The 2018 report by the Programme for International Student Achievement (PISA) has distressed many Australians given the nation’s dismal results.**

PISA, which in 2000 began measuring maths, science, and reading literacy among 15 year old students in its 79 participating countries and regions, provides an internationally agreed upon framework to track student performance.

The test is taken by approximately 600,000 students from such diverse places as Denmark, France, Indonesia, Morocco, and the Philippines.

The test is administered every three years and focuses on a student’s ability to apply their learning to solve problems. Results of the report influence national priorities, policies, and practices on assessment, curriculum, and performance targets.

My interest is based on my experience as a high school science teacher, and as a scholar. As a Canadian, I have participated in two teaching exchanges, in Melbourne in 1999 at a co-ed public school and now 20 years later, here in Sydney at a Catholic girls’ college.

In addition, I also hold a doctorate in Comparative and International Education from the University of Alberta, in Edmonton, where I currently live and teach with Edmonton public schools.

My PhD, and ongoing related research, examines education and socioeconomic development in Arctic indigenous communities.

As such, I have a unique vantage point, especially given that the PISA report’s release coincided with the end of my exchange in Sydney.

My observations are also informed by the many stimulating conversations I have had with other Canadian teachers on exchange, as well as my valued Australian colleagues.

The PISA Report highlights significant differences in math, science, and reading literacy as noted in the two country’s international rankings:

Country	Math	Science	Reading
Canada	12	8	6
Australia	29	17	16

At the provincial or state level, the learning gaps are even more pronounced. Alberta’s results in math, science, and reading place it in the top tier, scoring third in the world in reading, fourth in science, and second highest in math in Canada.

Conversely, the steepest declines in state performance occurred in NSW. According to one report, NSW students are about three quarters of a school year behind Canada’s in reading, maths and science.

Another report laments that Australian students are “among the worst in the world” for class discipline, ranking 70th out of 77 participating nations as measured by PISA’s index of disciplinary climate.

PISA’s results has sparked a flurry of explanations (and solutions) by experts, ranging from the state of teacher training, parental involvement, classroom discipline, curricula, and socioeconomic divisions.

While these factors impact student success, I believe they are mostly symptoms, rather than underlying causes. A more careful analysis involves unearthing foundational aspects of schooling – particularly those relating to assessment and graduation requirements.

Depending upon their level of achievement in Grade 9, students in Alberta are streamed into either academic or non academic courses in Grade 10, which they then must pass before being granted entry into specialised senior level courses.

For instance, a student taking Grade 10 Science must receive a pass of 50% before enrolling in a Grade 11 Science course otherwise the course must be retaken (often the following semester). High school diploma requirements must include credits in senior Mathematics, Science,

English, and Social Studies, with the option to either pursue an academic or non academic stream.

In my Canadian classes, performance feedback is both ongoing and cumulative, with students usually being evaluated each week.

Whereas some assessments receive little weighting and are designed primarily to provide formative feedback, exams or major assignments are weighted heavily and represent summative evaluations.

By the end of a five month semester, students will therefore have completed and received feedback from approximately 15 to 20 assessments that cumulatively contribute towards a final numeric grade.

Regular assessments provide clear benchmarks to continually track progress, as well as opportunities to consolidate learning and closure once a topic is completed.

Regular feedback also drives pedagogy, teachers know whether or not students have mastered a concept.

Both class awarded marks and external diploma exams are then used as a significant (if unspoken) component for principals to assess teacher performance; in turn, school averages are then used to track school performance within a district.

The case in Australia is radically different. NSW graduation requirements include compulsory units in English (and Religion in Catholic schools), with the remainder of the units to be fulfilled through optional courses.

In terms of assessment, students must complete a minimum of three (and maximum of four) assessment tasks per course, over a 10 month school year (compared to the 15-20 or so evaluations my Canadian students receive over a five month period).

In my experience, teachers are reluctant to spend time developing and grading informal assessments, as students do not adequately prepare for them because they know their grade does not count.

Opportunity to provide crucial feedback (particularly in courses like Mathematics and Science where concepts build) is sporadic at best.

Formative evaluations therefore remain ineffectual and unenforceable aspirational platitudes by educational authorities who are far removed from the day-to-day realities and pressures of classroom life.

At the same time, lax graduation requirements conspire to create a downward pressure on student motivation and achievement for courses students do not wish or see themselves taking in their senior years.

What the PISA data fails to illuminate is the inordinately high attrition rates occurring in both Mathematics and Science during this pivotal transition into the senior years – an attrition that has significant implications for adult literacy, not to mention the need to procure skilled labour from overseas in the STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math) related fields.

It is not too much of a stretch to link these challenges with the discipline problems being reported, as motivation on the part of students and teachers alike is continually eroded by a system that conspires against those who strive to deliver or receive a good education.

To end on this depressing note, however, would paint a skewed picture. What the PISA results also fail to capture are the many outstanding learning opportunities occurring in Australian classrooms.

Here, I am referring to the long term assessments that emphasise project, inquiry based learning. In both Melbourne and Sydney, my senior Environmental Studies and Biology students engaged in partnership with a local university (Melbourne), and environmental organisation (Sydney), where they were required to gather empirical data and secondary sources into a detailed report.

Similarly, Grade 8 students in Sydney, undertook a remarkable and highly successful, 10 week interdisciplinary STEM project on sustainable housing.

The benefits gained from such rich learning opportunities are not easily measured by a one time snapshot of data gathered from paper and pencil testing.

As a Canadian exchange teacher, I have certainly come to value and appreciate the growth these learning opportunities have on students and teachers alike, as well as their impact on school culture. Indeed, the challenge will be to return home to a system where the pressure to ‘teach to the test’ conditions both teacher and student motivation.

Despite their limitations, PISA reports help countries link the local context of teaching and learning to international empirical results.

Here, I am reminded of the sociologist Seymour Lipset’s dictum: “An observer who knows only one country knows no countries. Without comparison, there is no way of knowing whether a particular practice or behaviour is unique to the society in question or common to many” (cited in Fukuyama, 2012, p. 18).

The question then is not then so much: Which system is better? But rather: How can we learn from best practices occurring across nations? As I have argued, a balance must be struck between delivering regular and meaningful assessments, while also providing rich learning opportunities.

However, this balance cannot occur without consideration of the institutional context, whereby, realistic, attainable and stringent graduation requirements are needed to put students on solid ground.

If a radical restructuring of schooling is to realign this leaning tower of PISA, it must first confront the bureaucratic inertia embedded in the very institutions responsible for making changes. Otherwise, I fear that Einstein’s definition of insanity: doing the same things over and over and expecting different results will be reaffirmed in three years time with PISA’s next report.

**Andrew Hodgkins**  
**Do you agree with Andrew’s assessment of Australian education? Write to us at [newsmonth@ieu.asn.au](mailto:newsmonth@ieu.asn.au)**

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# Labour bites



## Pension protests persist

Faced with historic and unrelenting protests against proposed reforms to France's pension system, President Emmanuel Macron's government has temporarily withdrawn the proposed changes that would have seen the full benefit retirement age raise from 62 to 64, among other significant changes. Unions claim this means people will be made to work longer for lower pensions, and that weakening France's pension system now will leave it open to further diminishment in the future.

The government's concession, on 11 January, came after teachers, nurses and lawyers joined the marathon transport strike that had been crippling the country for the previous five weeks. Electrical unions have used their considerable power and influence to express solidarity with striking workers, with strategic power outages affecting facilities in the lead up to Christmas, including the infamously anti-worker employer Amazon. The strikes have also touched upon France's cultural exports. The Louvre – the world's most visited museum – was targeted by strikers, who prevented visitors from entering the museum. Ballet dancers from the Paris Opera Ballet, opera singers, technicians, and artisans also joined the strikes, as the proposed changes prove themselves to be almost universally unpopular.

The rail stoppage, which began on 5 December, is France's longest strike since 1968, and the longest continuous train strike since the creation of the national rail service in the 1930s. Unsatisfied with the proposal's temporary withdrawal, union leaders urged workers to remain strong and the strike has continued, with protestors demanding the pension reform plan be scrapped entirely, rather than be placed upon the shelf to be reintroduced at a later time. While it is unclear if they will be successful in the total abolition of Macron's broad reform plan, these historic strikes have managed already to extract major concessions from the French government, including pay rises to teachers equalling around \$1000 a month. (Source: New York Times)



## Gig bill a big deal

A new law in California is challenging the ways technology has upended the nature of work, by seeking to reclassify what it means to be an employee.

Known informally as the gig economy bill, or AB5, the new law went into

effect on 1 January, seeking to compel all companies – but notably those like Uber and Lyft – to treat their workforce as employees. The bill has already inspired similar legislation in New York, New Jersey and Illinois, and has received the formal support of Democratic presidential candidates Elizabeth Warren and Bernie Sanders.

The roots of the bill emerged from a 2018 California Supreme Court ruling, that redefined the distinction between employment and contracting in a decision written for a case filed by a delivery driver. The driver argued that he performed all the same tasks as an employee, despite being classified as an independent contractor. The court agreed and established a new standard to make it harder for companies to classify workers as independent contractors as a means of cutting labour costs.

The test, commonly called the ABC test, said workers could only be classified as an independent contractor if they can prove that the worker is free from the company's control; is doing work that isn't central to the company's business and has an independent business in that industry. If they don't meet all three of those conditions, then they must be classified as employees and entitled to all entitlements and provisions that classification includes.

The bill faces powerful opposition from a number of Californian businesses. Lyft, Uber, and DoorDash have warned they are ready to spend around \$110 million on a ballot initiative to overturn AB5, with Californian labor unions vowing to fight back in support of the bill. The new law will also reportedly benefit the state of California, which estimates it loses \$7 billion in tax revenue each year from companies that misclassify employees. (Source: Vox)



## Important lesson at UC Berkeley

For the past several years, the University of California, Berkeley, has been relying on undergraduates to teach a majority of classes in the Electrical Engineering and Computer Sciences (ECCS) department, oftentimes for little to no wages, claims United Auto Workers 2865, the student employee union at the University of California.

In 2017, the union filed a grievance against the university for their hiring practices and, on 14 January, an arbitrator ruled that the university owes the workers more than \$5 million in restitution payments, with some individuals eligible for over \$20,000 in tuition remission.

The university has signalled they will abide by the ruling, which applies across all nine University of California campuses covered by the union's employment contract. In a tweet, the union said "This is why when we bargain collectively, we have more power. The university would prefer to divide us by campus and by job title." (Source: UAW 2865 UC Berkeley)



# A year of expectations surpassed

**As I was preparing to leave for my teaching exchange in Canada, I wasn't quite sure what to expect, but I knew that it would be a wonderful experience. I had always wanted to spend time teaching overseas, so for me, an exchange was the perfect opportunity to teach in another context, while being able to return to my school in Australia at the end of the year.**

As my time in Canada is drawing to a close and I'm preparing to head home, I can't believe how this year has surpassed my expectations in every possible way.

I have spent the year living in London, Ontario. Teaching in an elementary school in Canada has been filled with experiences that would be hard to come by in Australia. I've learnt that yard duty and outdoor gym can actually be surprisingly pleasant in subzero temperatures.

Throwing boomerangs in the snow with my class, going to the local ski hill for a field trip and introducing the staff and students to the joys of Tim Tams, fairy bread and ANZAC biscuits will become memories that I will cherish for many years to come.

Many people have commented that I've been able to see more of Canada

and the USA in one year than they have in a lifetime. Only having one year to see everywhere has really encouraged me to make the most of my weekends and the long summer holidays.

This year has taken me to places like New York, Nashville, Kentucky, Vancouver, the Canadian Rockies, Alaska, Quebec, New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island and Nova Scotia. Going skiing after school, kayaking among icebergs in Alaska, seeing moose and bears in the wild, canoeing along glacial lakes and rivers, ice skating on the Rideau Canal in Ottawa, ice fishing and camping in some of the most beautiful places have all contributed to making 2019 the adventure of a lifetime.

I am extremely grateful to the people who have made this exchange possible, including my principal in Australia, Helen Gregory from the IEU, my exchange partner, and my Canadian colleagues. I have really valued this professional experience and have been able to gather new ideas and strategies that I'm looking forward to implementing in my teaching in Australia.

**Alice Glyde** Junior Teacher, St Luke's Grammar School, Dee Why

# Be a climate activist



**This late spring and summer season have seen challenges we have never thought would come our way.**

The sound of sirens continues to alert our senses to danger, as does that red glow in the sky, dust clouds, strong erratic winds and the sight and smell of smoke.

The dark clouds do not offer any relief, as they rarely contain rain, but dry thunderstorms or hail. The impact of these fires and weather events has been catastrophic. Yet, out of such challenging times the spirit of Australians has shone. Forever in our hearts will be those who lost their lives defending people's lives (often strangers), their homes and our communities. Heartfelt thanks to them is insufficient!

To those who have lost their homes, whether owning or renting, it is unimaginable to comprehend the trauma you are going through. The Federal Government has created a Bushfire Recovery Access Program, which can be

accessed for immediate and ongoing free counselling and support to families, individuals and emergency workers.

On behalf of the IEU school support staff and teaching staff we would like to extend our immeasurable gratitude towards our brave volunteers, especially the RFS, of which we are proud to say includes many IEU members. Of course, thanks to the many organisations and individuals, who have reached deep, to support struggling communities, not just financially, but by giving their time and energy. Kudos to social media and local media for keeping us updated and informed.

Unions are at the frontline, supporting members who have lost their livelihood because of the fires. Local dioceses and school systems are proving to be proactive with issuing bushfire tool kits and advice to assist parents and students. It is remarkable how the whole community has rallied together.

Our country cannot take any more blows like this, especially on top of the drought. Even though we have squandered decades of opportunities for change, hopefully it is not too late. Please take the time to write to our elected members stating your concerns. We need to come together and call out climate criminals.

How can we accept future generations knowing our remarkable animals only through books? With over a billion animals destroyed, recovery may be impossible.

Be kind to yourself, stay safe and become a climate activist. It is the only planet we have!

**Carolyn Collins**  
Vice President Support Staff



# Super health check

**As a new school year begins with all the associated pressures and responsibilities, now may be a good opportunity to set aside a little time for number one, to check how your super is set up. I have outlined a few areas for you to consider, but the points below do not constitute personal advice (as we don't know your personal circumstances). It's product information only for you to consider.**

## Salary sacrifice

Pre-tax super contributions attract a 15% tax which may be lower than your current marginal tax rate. The cap for salary sacrifice is currently \$25,000 per financial year and this amount includes your employer contribution. So for example, if your employer is contributing \$13,000 there is still an opportunity for you to contribute another \$12,000 at a 15% tax rate. NGS Member On-Line provides an account of your salary sacrifice and employer contributions so if you are hoping to maximise this benefit, it may be prudent to check the contributions around early April. You can then either pull back or top up your contributions to hit the \$25,000 mark.

## Binding Death Nomination

A valid binding death nomination gives you the peace of mind of knowing that the trustee of your superfund is legally obliged to pay your benefit to your nominated beneficiaries or your estate. A valid binding Death nomination removes any discretion the Trustee may have in distributing your super. NGS Super now offers a three-year binding Death nomination which must be renewed or a perpetual binding Death nomination.

## Investment Choice

The vast majority of NGS Super members remain with the Diversified MySuper Option which is a growth option featuring approximately 70% growth investments and 30% defensive investments. However, there is a range of other options which you may wish to consider. Before selecting an investment mix you may wish to consider your objectives, your risk tolerance, and how long you plan to remain in the workforce (investment time horizon). Limited advice from your super fund can also be useful before making an investment switch. Defensive assets include cash and term deposits, government bonds, social impact bonds, corporate bonds, property income and bond alternatives. Growth assets usually contain a mix of Australian shares, international shares, property, infrastructure and growth alternatives. The Fund offers these investments in mixed options such as Moderate Growth, Shares Plus or Balanced as well as sector-specific options such as Australian

shares, property or international shares. You can download the NGS Super Investment guide for more detailed information.

## Insurance

Have you checked your most recent member statement or NGS Super member on-line for your levels of death/total and permanent disability and income protection insurance? NGS Super provides default cover for eligible members, but it is up to you to ensure that the default level is suitable to you. For example, if you are earning more than \$80,000 per annum and have not topped-up your IP cover, the top part of your salary (over \$80,000) will not be covered for income protection. As an illustration, a teacher on an annual salary of \$102,000 would have a maximum default cover for a salary of up to \$80,00 and so could be eligible to claim a maximum IP benefit of only \$72,000 per annum (90% pf \$80,000, not 90% of \$102,000). See "Your Cover in Practice" in the NGS Insurance Guide for more information. The opposite could occur where a member working full time moves to part time reducing salary by 50%. This member may be overinsured as the Fund is unaware of employment statuses. It is up to this member to reduce the cover if necessary by advising the Fund and filling in the form. Likewise, Death cover decreases with age, so you may wish to check that your Death cover is adequate. Financial planners usually recommend enough cover to pay off the mortgage as a minimum. You can apply for extra units of Death, TPD or IP and acceptance by the insurer is based on the medical evidence provided. It is not automatic.

## Is your super adequate?

Talk to a financial planner to help you track your super or use the calculator on the NGS Super website. It's a simple way to find out how much super you will have at retirement and you can change the contribution rates to see how that affects the final balance!

Our best wishes for a successful, fulfilling and exciting 2020!

*(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 personal 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.)*

**Bernard O'Connor** NGS Super Company Secretary/Manager Insurance and Complaints

## Giveaways



### Mrs Whitlam

Author: Bruce Pascoe

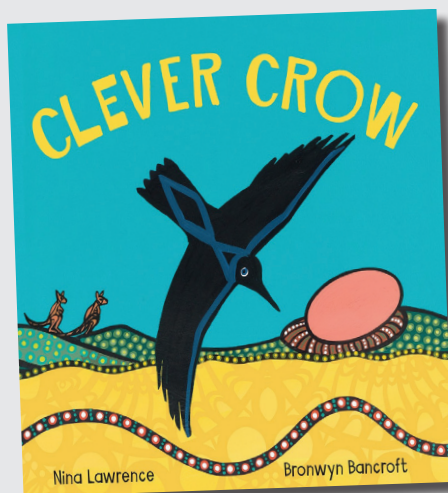
Published by: Magabala Books

Three copies to give away

Marnie Clark of Curdie Vale can ride but she doesn't have a horse.

She dreams of owning one and having the whole world to ride it in. Before too long Marnie is gifted Mrs Margaret 'Maggie' Whitlam, a beautiful, big Clydesdale – bold, fearless and able to jump anything.

From the very first ride, Marnie and Maggie get more adventure than they bargained for. Soon Marnie is learning to negotiate newfound friendships, pony club and how to stand up for what she believes in. Will her friendship with George Costa, another outsider, make being accepted harder? Or will being true to yourself be the hardest decision Marnie makes?



### Clever Crow

Author: Nina Lawrence

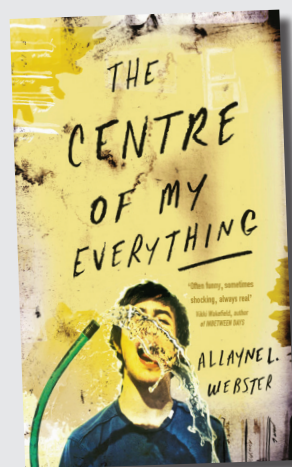
Illustrator: Bronwyn Bancroft

Published by: Magabala Books

Three copies to give away

Age range 4 to 8

Clever Crow is an endearing and witty tale that follows the exploits of a hungry and very clever crow. Crow searches in the bush for food but he can find none. It is only when he comes across people preparing for a ceremony that his luck changes. Crow spots a big turtle egg waiting to be cooked, and he cries out, <Yummy, food for me!> But it is not an easy task stealing a turtle egg – even for a clever crow. Crow has to be more clever than he has ever been before! Children will love Bronwyn Bancroft's distinctive illustrations, and how the Djambarrpunu language translation - Yolnu language from North East Arnhem Land – is woven into the design.



### The Centre of My Everything

Author: Allayne L Webster

Publisher: Random House Australia

One copy to give away

Justin's back, and wants to put the past behind him. Corey's a footy hero and high school dropout who can't even find work picking fruit.

Tara wants to be loved. But if her mother doesn't care, why would anyone else? Margo wants out, and she has a plan to get there.

Plans change. Life happens. Some secrets won't stay buried. Peace isn't as simple as laying bones to rest. A story about love and loss. About tragic secrets and the lengths people will go to hide them. About intergenerational pain and desperate attempts to break the cycle. And about yearning for love and finding it where you least expect.

Email entries to [giveaways@ieu.asn.au](mailto:giveaways@ieu.asn.au) with the giveaway you are entering in the subject line and your name, membership number and address in the body of the email. All entries to be received by 13 March 2020.



# Letter to editor

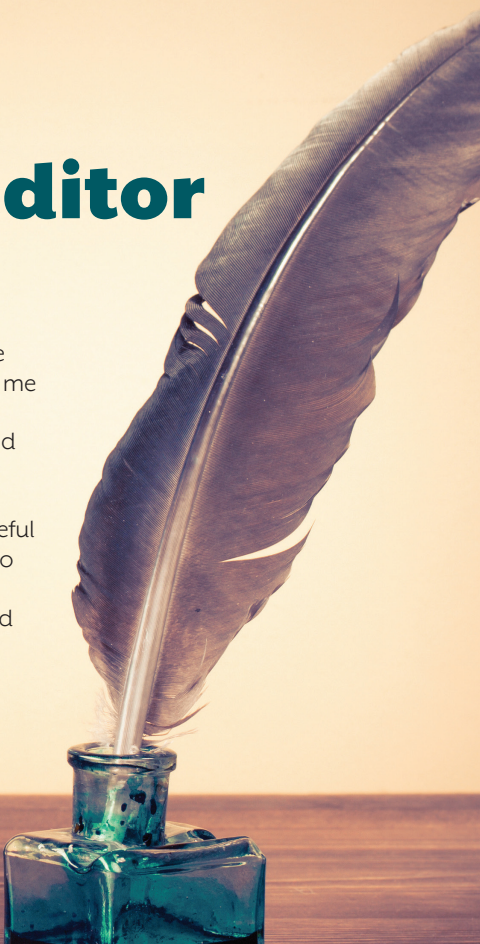
## Efforts second to none

Thank you to Aidan Anderson and the IEU for securing the rightful payment for me at the conclusion of my position.

Aidan's advice and efforts were second to none, and his calm and reasoned approach to the matter was highly successful. I am both humbled and grateful to Aidan and the Union for their efforts to protect my rights.

Thank you to Aidan, his colleagues and all at IEU for your work - you should be extremely proud of what you do.

**Marion McMullen** IEU member



# Stand strong, stay union

**Welcome back to the school year. I hope that you all had a restful and relaxing break.**

I am adjusting to the heat, smoke and windy weather as I return from my exchange at Dr Hamman Elementary School in Taber, Alberta. The temperature difference was often more than 60°. Best wishes for returning exchangers as they settle back into their schools, and welcome to the new exchangers – hopefully I will get to catch up with you during the year.

Many of our school staff have been affected by the bushfires this season. Some members have lost their homes. The IEU is providing support services for members. Details are available on the website or

contact your local IEU officer who will be able to direct you efficiently.

The 2020 school year will continue to be challenging as the union continues to clarify work practice agreements. Members need to continue to inform your organiser of the implementation process in your workplace. I encourage you to attend your chapter and sub-branch meetings to keep up to date and keep others up to date.

If you have new people starting at your workplace, direct them to your union rep so they can update records and join up if they do not belong to the IEU.

**Bernadette Baker** Vice President

## NSW Exchange Teachers League 90th Anniversary Dinner

100 years of Department of Education Exchanges 35 years of Independent Education Union exchange

**Venue Grand Central Room**  
**• Mercure Hotel • 818 George Street • Sydney**

**Saturday 21 March 2020**

**Pre-dinner drinks from 6.30pm**

**Dinner from 7.15pm**

**Cost \$80.00 per person includes:**

2 course dinner • complimentary drink on arrival • soft drinks and two bottles of wine per table • tea, coffee and anniversary cake • bar service available PAYG

Accommodation

Bookings can be made with The Mercure Sydney

For a special event rate either phone 9217 6797 or email H2073@accor.com by 1 March 2020 and quote the booking code NSWTEACHERS20.

Other nearby accommodation includes Sydney Central YHA

The venue is close to Haymarket and Darling Harbour south.

Raffle (with all proceeds to be donated to Stewart House) Lucky door prizes

For a booking form please contact etlnsw@yahoo.com.au



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Anna Luedi

Amy Mead

Libby Lockwood

Suzanne Penson

John O'Neill

Helen Templeton

Jeff Pratt

Simon Goss

Phoebe Craddock-Lovett



### Reps Training

#### Friday 14 February Reps

#### Training Course – 9.30am - 3.30pm

West's New Lambton Bowling Club, 1A Tauranga Road New Lambton. Contact Veronica on veronica@ieu.asn.au

#### Friday 21 February Beginners Course

#### Reps Training – 9.30am - 3.30pm

IEU Office, 485-501 Wattle St Ultimo.

Contact Maria on maria@ieu.asn.au

### Wednesday 26 February

#### Advanced Course Reps Training – 9.30am - 3.30pm

IEU Office, 485-501 Wattle St Ultimo.

Contact Maria on maria@ieu.asn.au

## Advertising rates 2020

Newsmonth is a tabloid-style newspaper with a NSW/ACT circulation of around 28,000 education professionals. They include teachers, principals, administrative support and technical staff and early childhood teachers working in independent and non government schools and post-secondary colleges including ELICOS.

**Quarter Page** (125mm x 170mm) .....\$680.00

**Half Page** (250mm x 180mm) (landscape).....\$1240.00

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with Professional Development and Reps Training

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# HAVE YOU CHANGED SCHOOLS OR CENTRES FOR 2020?

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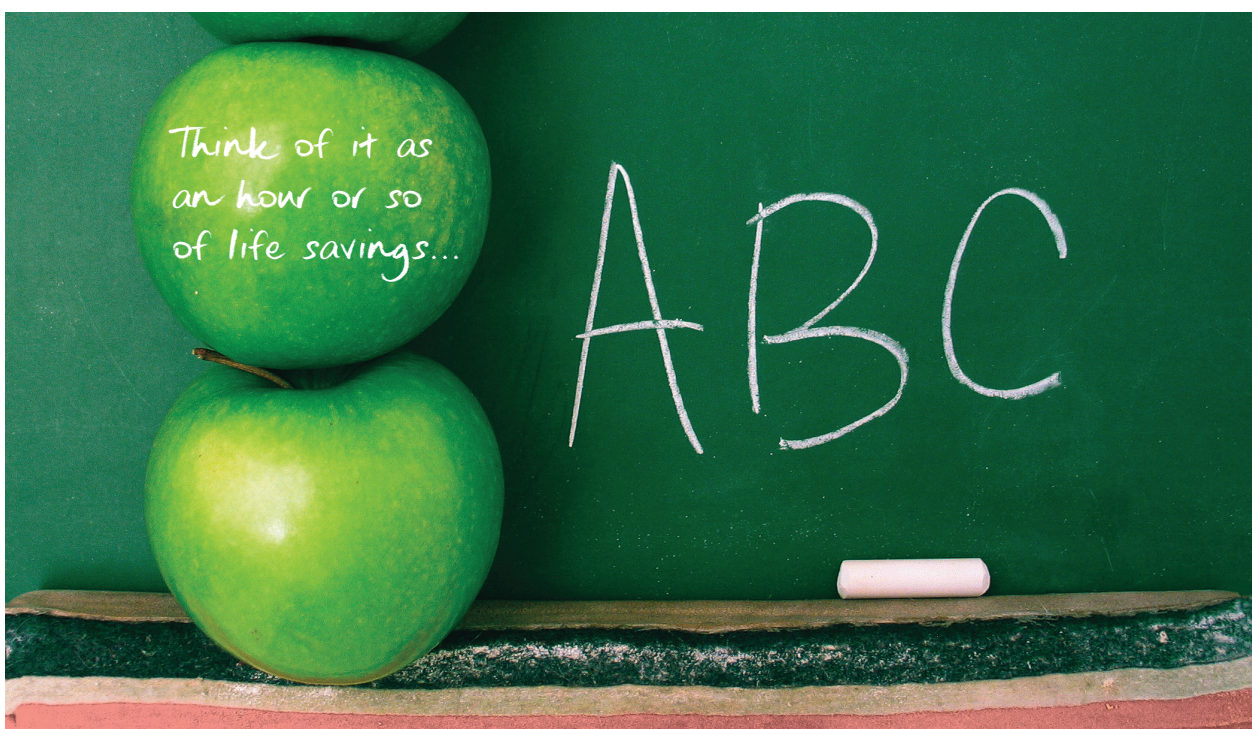
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