



# PARENTAL RIGHTS BILL unworkable and unsafe

## The NSW Parliament is currently considering two pieces of legislation proposed by One Nation's Mark Latham.

These bills are the Education Legislation Amendment (Parental Rights) Bill 2020 (the Parental Rights Bill) and the Anti-Discrimination Amendment (Religious Freedoms and Equality) Bill 2020 (NSW).

If passed, the Parental Rights Bill in particular will have a big impact on teaching and the work of schools.

Notwithstanding that, religious figures and some school employer representatives have leapt forward to support the Bill, without necessarily scrutinising the detail. (Catholic Education Diocese of Parramatta is a notable exception to this position, as is the Anglican Church Diocese of Sydney, for different reasons.)

Teaching unions have expressed opposition to the Bill. Both the IEU and the NSW Teachers Federation made submissions to and gave evidence before the Legislative Council Committee inquiring into the Bill.

### What is the Bill about?

The Bill has two key objectives. The first is called 'parental primacy', that is, to ensure that parents and not schools are

responsible for teaching children about core values, such as ethical and moral standards, political and social values and matters of personal wellbeing and identity, including gender and sexuality. The second objective is to prohibit the teaching of 'gender fluidity' in schools.

The Bill proposes a range of measures to achieve these objectives.

### Parental responsibility

*The Education Act* already states as a fundamental principle that "the education of a child is primarily the responsibility of the child's parents". However, the Parental Rights Bill goes much further in giving parents a key role in school curriculum in both government and non-government schools.

All schools would be required under the Bill to ensure, as far as possible, that the education provided is "consistent with the moral and ethical standards and the political and social values" of parents. Further, the education provided must respect the "liberty of parents ... to ensure the religious and moral education of their children in conformity with their own convictions".

Precisely what this means in a society where parents have diverse religious, political and social views is unclear.

**United front:** Pictured above is IEUA NSW/ACT Branch Secretary Mark Northam with Amber Flohm, Senior Vice President of the NSW Teachers Federation. Northam and Flohm were in NSW Parliament House on 21 April appearing before the Inquiry into the Education Legislation Amendment (Parental Rights) Bill. Both the IEU and the Teachers Federation strenuously object to this regressive legislation, proposed by One Nation's Mark Latham.

Does the school have a positive duty to enquire about these views and how do they ensure the education is in conformity? Do Catholic schools have an obligation to ensure their education respects the view of parents of other religions or no religion?

How are issues of climate change or the environment dealt with? How do you deal with literature or other texts that express views that may be contrary to the views of parents?

In order to implement parental primacy, the Bill requires NESA to identify those parts of any syllabus developed or endorsed by NESA, that relate to parental primacy.

**Continued on page 3**

## Union wins pay rise for early childhood teachers

### Early childhood teachers paid under the modern award will receive a pay rise of up to 10% thanks to a long legal campaign by the IEU, Journalist Sue Osborne writes.

Eight years ago, the IEU began two cases at the Fair Work Commission (FWC). One essentially argued that early childhood teachers were underpaid because the sector is female dominated. The other application argued that the modern award undervalued the work of teachers.

While the gender undervaluation argument was dismissed by the Commission due to the restrictive nature

of the legislation, they concluded "there have been substantial changes in the nature of the work of teachers and the level of their skills and responsibilities since 1996. This constitutes a significant net addition to their work value which has to be taken into account in the rates of pay in the modern award".

The pay rise of 5-10% will mainly benefit teachers in long day care centres under the modern award, but there is a smattering of school teachers employed on this award as well. Nationally, the decision will benefit approximately 12,000 teachers in about 8000 long day care

centres and also teachers in pre-schools who are paid on the modern award.

There will be significantly higher increases for some teachers if they have responsibilities as educational leaders.

The FWC Full Bench found that "the exercise of professional skills and judgement, the overall work value, involved in early childhood teaching" was the same as that of school teachers.

"The rates of pay do not recognise that teachers are degree-qualified professionals," they said.

IEUA NSW/ACT Branch Secretary Mark Northam said, "This is a significant win.

The Commission has recognised the increasing value and importance of the work of all teachers, but particularly early childhood teachers."

Northam said it was significant that the Commission had also asked governments to examine their capacity to fund the wages of early childhood teachers.

"The Commission has requested state and federal governments consider funding early childhood sector pay. The union calls on governments to recognise the key role teachers play in early childhood education and support their work."

**Continued on page 4**



# Contents

## News

1, 2, 4, 12

## Features

1, 3, 9, 13, 18

## Reports

3, 4, 6, 7, 8, 12, 16

## Member stories

5, 8, 10, 11, 15, 16, 17

## Member benefits

13, 16, 19, 20

## Letters to the editor

17

## International

16

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## A tale of three schools: Coptic Board plays favourites

**In a family of three, only two members get to enjoy the fruits of their labour. The Coptic Education Board governs three independent Coptic schools in Sydney: St Mark's at Wattle Grove; St Mary and St Mina's in Rockdale; and St Bishoy in Mt Druitt. All three are Coptic Orthodox Colleges.**

The board has honoured an annual pay rise to staff in both St Mark's and St Mary and St Mina's. But St Bishoy has been left out in the cold.

The IEU has been in negotiations with the Association of Independent Schools (AIS) since December 2019 – before the previous multi-enterprise agreements expired to deliver pay rises and improved conditions to its members in these schools.

But in an unprecedented move, the AIS abrogated its role in the negotiations, leaving it to more than 200 individual schools covered by the agreements to negotiate separately for pay rises for 2021.

When the union approached both St Mark's and St Mary and St Mina's, the Coptic Education Board granted staff at these two schools a pay rise of 2.5% – broadly in line with pay rises in government schools, other independent schools, Catholic systemic schools and Christian schools.

But in a strange twist, St Bishoy is also governed by an additional, separate board, which has declined to meet with staff and has not provided information about hard-earned pay increases.

Most staff at St Bishoy are IEU members who have, in good faith, written to the Coptic Education Board. They did not receive a response for more than a month, when the board refused pay rises. To make matters worse, when the union wrote again to the board to seek comment and ask it to review its decision, the board sent an obfuscating letter to St Bishoy staff, falsely accusing them of bullying and intimidation through their union – and again denied them pay rises.

Excuses for not awarding pay rises based on affordability fail the pub test: the Coptic Education Board only recently hired a new CEO to manage all three schools. St Bishoy is running on a surplus, government funding is increasing and enrolments are on the rise.

During the COVID-19 lockdown of 2020, St Bishoy's staff pivoted to teaching online almost overnight. They also support a substantial cohort of students from disadvantaged backgrounds. So why won't the Coptic Education Board and the St Bishoy's board award them a fair pay rise? The union will continue supporting its many members at St Bishoy to seek a just and equitable outcome.

# Chapter's collective action gets results

**By standing united, teachers and support staff at a Catholic systemic school in Sydney achieved an important result that will improve the wellbeing of both staff and students.**

For some months, the diverse learning team had been fearing for their safety due to a student with special needs.

The student's unregulated and increasingly aggressive behaviour included numerous assaults against staff and students, all of which had been documented, yet staff had been unable to get extra resources or support and the principal was at an impasse in terms of a resolution.

The matter had also been referred to the education office without an outcome on several occasions.

A member raised the issue with an IEU organiser after a chapter meeting at the school. The organiser advised the chapter that to

achieve resolute action, the matter should be raised as a work, health and safety issue.

The IEU recommended the notification be endorsed by the entire chapter, rather than the diverse learning team only.

The IEU chapter at the school acted decisively, citing Work Health and Safety legislation in a formal notification. They said they would refuse to carry out their work where there was an immediate and imminent risk to their health and safety.

The joint action of union members forced the administration's hand, leading to a solution being found that was ultimately to the benefit of not just the staff, but also the student concerned and other students at the school.

## Support staff: Don't miss out on your additional holiday

**The NSW and ACT Catholic Systemic Schools Enterprise Agreement 2020 and Catholic Independent Schools (Support Staff) Multi-Enterprise Agreements contain a long-standing entitlement to an additional holiday for general employees who work 48 weeks per year.**

This provision is found in clause 35.2 in the NSW and ACT Catholic Systemic Schools Enterprise Agreement 2020 or under Public Holidays in the applicable NSW Catholic Independent Schools support staff Multi-Enterprise Agreements.

Members approached the IEU recently to ask about this entitlement. It hadn't been mentioned in their workplace and there is a concern that eligible members have missed out on the additional holiday. This will need to be rectified and the union

has commenced the process.

If you are a general employee in a Catholic school, required to work 48 weeks per year and your employer has not made you aware of the holiday, you should request that the holiday be observed on an alternative date before the end of the 2021 school year.

Contact your IEU organiser for further clarification and assistance.





# We need to talk about wage suppression

Mark Northam  
Secretary



The Independent Education Union does not support salary outcomes in NSW of a meagre 0.3% increase. But this is what is emerging – and has already occurred.

The 2021 HSC Markers Award (a joint award with the NSW Teachers Federation and the National Tertiary Education Union) has been determined as deserving an increase of just 0.3%.

The NSW Government’s wage suppression strategy starts with public servants and will flow to the Catholic sector and in turn to the broader independent education sector.

Put simply, the NSW Government’s determination to drive down wages for public servants impacts teachers, support staff and principals in the non-government schools sector.

Catholic systemic school employers have long taken their cue from the NSW Government’s salary determinations for government school teachers. “Not a day before nor a cent more” has been the Catholic employers’ refrain since the 1990s. So NSW public sector salary outcomes translate directly into Catholic systemic teachers’ outcomes.

About 300,000 public sector employees including doctors, nurses, healthcare workers, paramedics and police officers constitute a substantial workforce. The ripple effect of wage suppression is considerable. Communities throughout NSW will be impacted.

NSW public sector workers due for pay rises after July 2020 are finding themselves in the 0.3% zone. This “austerity” campaign being waged by the NSW Government will have far-reaching consequences as the IEU continues – and enters into – negotiations with employers.

Notwithstanding drought, bushfires, the pandemic and floods, the NSW Government is determined to suppress

## Hypothetical horror: What stagnant salaries would look like

Teachers (NSW Catholic systemic)		What an increase of just 0.3% looks like	
Annual		Weekly	
Band 1	\$72,263	\$216.79	\$4.16
Band 2 (level 1)	\$87,157	\$261.47	\$5.01
Band 2 (level 5)	\$107,779	\$323.34	\$6.20
Support staff (NSW Catholic systemic)		What an increase of just 0.3% looks like	
Annual		Weekly	
Level 1.1	\$48,675	\$146.03	\$2.80
Level 2.1	\$52,998	\$158.99	\$3.05
Level 3.1	\$62,282	\$186.85	\$3.58
Level 4.1	\$63,614	\$190.84	\$3.66
Level 5	\$75,957	\$227.87	\$4.37
Level 6	\$86,321	\$258.96	\$4.97

“The NSW Government’s wage suppression strategy starts with public servants and will flow to the Catholic sector and in turn to the broader independent education sector.”

wages. The way forward is to not constrain public sector outcomes.

“The key missing element of the recovery is wages growth,” ACTU Secretary Sally McManus has said. “It is now time for a pay rise so working people also benefit

from the recovery and are able to drive spending and consumer confidence.”

The ACTU and the IEU reject increases of just 0.3%. Such an outcome is unpalatable for teachers, support staff and principals.

Continued from page 1

# Parental Rights Bill unworkable and unsafe

Carol Matthews  
Deputy Secretary



NESA also must prepare “resources for parents” setting out the areas of syllabus that relate to parental primacy and provide these resources to schools, including non-government schools. Given the breadth of the definition of parental primacy, any syllabus that touches on ethical and moral standards, political and social values and personal wellbeing could be affected. Who will write these resources and what they will say is anyone’s guess.

The Minister for Education would be required to monitor the compliance of all schools, including non-government schools, with these parental primacy requirements two years after the legislation is passed.

### Gender fluidity

Gender fluidity is defined in the Bill as the belief that there is a difference between biological sex and human gender and that human gender is socially constructed. The Bill prohibits the “teaching of gender fluidity” in the primary or secondary curriculum, prohibits the “teaching of gender fluidity” in any syllabus developed by NESA, and for clarity, prohibits the teaching of gender fluidity in any government or non-government school. The prohibition on the teaching of gender fluidity extends to school counsellors, consultants, non-teaching staff and volunteers.

### Special provisions for government schools

Latham is particularly concerned about government schools. The Bill states that in government schools there must be “strictly non-ideological instruction in matters of parental primacy” that includes “general teaching” on these topics. This prohibition also applies to all teaching staff, non-teaching staff, counsellors and volunteers.

All government schools would be required each year to provide a summary of the content taught in relevant courses about matters of parental primacy and consult with parents about the content. Parents can object to a child receiving any instruction in matters of parental primacy.

Compliance by government schools with these requirements is to be monitored by NESA. NESA must advise the Department of any action taken against a school that has not complied. The Minister would also review compliance in the review two years after the legislation was enacted.

### Teacher accreditation

It would also be a condition for every teacher to be accredited that the teacher agrees that parents are primarily responsible for education of their children in relation to matters of parental primacy and that the teacher does not teach gender fluidity. A breach of these conditions could lead to revocation of accreditation.

### Bill is unworkable and unsafe

The union considers the Bill would be unworkable and unsafe in both non-government and government schools for the following reasons:

- The concept of parental primacy is so broad that it could impact on almost every curriculum area. Parents could object to the teaching of curricula approved by NESA for example in the area of science (evolution and geology), Shakespeare (cross-dressing, suicide and pre-marital sex), geography (climate change and the environment), modern and ancient history (religion, social movements, role of women, political beliefs) PDHPE (personal wellbeing and identity, sex, consent), to name just a few examples. While the Bill refers to the rights of parents, there is no consideration of the rights of the child, a concept enshrined in child protection legislation in NSW and the International Convention on the Rights of the Child, which has been ratified by Australia.
- Schools do not teach gender fluidity to their students but they have a duty of care to all their students, including those who may be uncertain as to their gender or who have a diverse gender identity. To seek to govern the interactions between counsellors and teachers and their students in such a heavy-handed way is to breach this duty of care (potentially exposing the school to legal liability through civil action) and put at risk the

psychological health of students, potentially leading to child protection allegations.

- The Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Abuse in its Final Report proposed mandatory national Child Safe Standards including Standard 4: Equity is upheld and diverse needs are taken into account. The Standard commits teachers to equity and inclusive practice towards lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and intersex children and young people. The Bill as proposed would make it difficult, if not impossible, for school communities to comply with this Standard.
- The requirement that government schools must provide to parents at the start of each year a summary of any courses that have content relating to parental primacy is extremely onerous, given the broad definition of parental primacy. Of course, teachers continually evaluate and adapt their teaching program and on a day-to-day basis answer any questions that students might put in the course of a lesson. It would be impossible to avoid straying from a course outline provided months earlier. In addition, the right of parents to withdraw students if such material is to be taught could be chaotic.
- Many non-government schools have a religious foundation or other well-publicised ethos. However, such schools, along with all other schools, would be required to respect the views of all parents on parental primacy issues, even if those views conflict with the views of the school. There would be uncertainty in all schools about how to meet the requirement to ensure the education provided was in conformity with views of parents.
- The red tape for schools and teachers in demonstrating compliance with the Bill would add just another complexity at a time when all parties have expressed a commitment to decluttering the curriculum and removing unnecessary compliance burdens.

The Bill is a distraction from the key work of teaching and learning undertaken in NSW schools and endangers the welfare of vulnerable children.



# Celebrating union values

**Pam Smith**

Assistant Secretary



**Union values have been a recent focus within several contexts: the Federal Government's proposed industrial relations (IR) changes; the March4Justice; Palm Sunday and refugee issues; the Uluru Statement from the Heart; and the 30th anniversary of the report of the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody.**

What are union values? Most IEU members would agree that acting collectively to support each other in the workplace is at the heart of who we are and what we do as union members.

These values of care, respect and support are also consistent with the ethos of faith-based employers.

Other union values include:

- safe and supportive work environments
- freedom from discrimination and harassment

- fair and inclusive employment, career development and leadership opportunities for all staff
- social justice and human rights at workplace, community, national and global levels.

**"I am confident my union will always stand up on our pay and conditions and will also speak out on important social issues such as discrimination and climate change."**

In a recent interview with the IEU, First Nations educator and activist Thomas Mayor outlined the connection between union values and the social justice theme of Makarrata (coming together after a struggle), righting past wrongs and living together in peace.

While protecting and advancing the industrial, WHS and professional interests of members will always be a major IEU priority, human rights and social justice issues are also a strong focus.

This includes advocating against unfair industrial laws; seeking pay equity for early childhood teachers and support staff; ending gendered harassment and violence; promoting the Uluru Statement from the Heart and the campaign for

Voice, Treaty, Truth; supporting refugees and asylum seekers; and engaging with environmental protection initiatives.

In some recent presentations to IEU members who have reached 40 or more years of membership, these members have commented on the IEU's values – the collective spirit in the workplace, a commitment to protecting and advancing the interests of members and a strong focus on justice issues.

"I am confident my union will always

stand up on our pay and conditions and will also speak out on important social issues such as discrimination and climate change," said one 40-year member.

At the 2021 IEU Activists' Conference (see page 5, opposite) there was discussion about the role of the union making a difference at work and beyond, in valuing the professional judgement of teachers, and having the time for genuine engagement with students and their needs.

Teachers and support staff focus on teaching and learning for a better world for the young people in their care. Union values are about achieving this better world through action in the workplace, in the community and at national and global levels.

*Continued from page 1*

## Union wins pay rise for early childhood teachers



*Left: IEU team, from left, Arthur Dowdle, Michael Wright, Carol Matthews and Verena Heron*



IEU Early Childhood Sector Vice President and NESA Accreditation Officer Gabrielle Connell said: "This is a wonderful result for early childhood teachers after a long and hard-fought campaign.

"The IEU has put all its expertise and resources into ensuring better wages for early childhood teachers," Connell said.

"It was wonderful to see it was won on work value recognition at last for the valuable contributions we make to education and our professionalism.

"This is the beginning of pay parity and it will also mean that we can attract and retain qualified professionals into the sector. This can only lead to better outcomes for children and families."

IEU Early Childhood Sector Council member and Teacher/Director at Goodstart Early Learning Centre Cromer Amy Martin said: "What a great win after eight years. Thank you to everyone involved who worked long and hard to get a great result in the end.

"Thank you once again for your hard work, not only that you have done for this case but the work that you do every day for the early childhood profession."

The union particularly thanks the officers and staff who drove the eight-year legal battle, including Deputy Secretary Carol Matthews, Industrial Officer Michael Wright, and the early childhood team including Lisa James, Tina Smith and Verena Heron.

Matthews said, "The energy and commitment of our staff and our legal team of Ingmar Taylor SC and junior barrister Lucy Saunders was outstanding."

The Commission has yet to determine the date of the pay rise. A further hearing will examine more submissions and evidence on the impact of the decision on the sector and how the pay rise will be phased in.

To read a summary of the FWC decisions, see <https://www.fwc.gov.au/documents/documents/summaries/2021fwcfb2051-summary.pdf>



# Activists Conference

**What is power and how do we use it? How do we create a fair post-COVID economic recovery? These questions became key themes at the IEU's annual conference, writes journalist Monica Crouch.**

About 20 members – teachers and support staff – joined IEU executive and organisers at Leura in the Blue Mountains to deepen their understanding of activism, how unions work and how they can expand unionism in their workplaces. Conference organiser Marilyn Jarvis opened with a definition of power: “I have power over you if I have the resources you need.” Employers may have the jobs workers need, she said, but workers have the labour employers need. “So unions enable people to act collectively – it's how we equalise power,” she said.

Delegates heard from two guest speakers: Secretary of Unions NSW Mark Morey; and Secretary of the South Coast Labour Council Arthur Rorris, during a packed two days from April 11-13. The union's Christine Wilkinson (pictured bottom right, standing) shared her path from PE teacher to IEU President, and a panel of four organisers told their stories of discovering unions and union values of fairness, equality, dignity and job security.

There was robust discussion in sessions covering campaigning; legal rights and significant legal decisions; equality and equity; connections between the Uluru Statement from the Heart and union values; and the recently released Gallop Report (see page 7). Also on the agenda was professional development, pressures arising from a looming new curriculum, and how workload intensification blocks excellence in teaching.

With many teachers struggling to gain pay rises for 2021 despite their phenomenal effort during the lockdowns of 2020, delegates discussed strength in numbers and the power of unity. The weekend wrapped up with a timely reminder: “United we bargain, divided we beg.”



**Arthur Rorris, guest speaker**

“You hear that unions just don't have power anymore, but we do, and it relates to the ability to take industrial action – which we say differentiates free workers from slaves,” said Arthur Rorris, Secretary of the South Coast Labour Council, which represents unions from the south coast and Illawarra region. “Every police officer has a gun, but not every police officer uses it every day. Simply having the right to withdraw your labour does not mean you're going to withdraw your labour at every opportunity. In fact, we often find the opposite: if the employer knows you can withdraw your labour, they're more likely to come to the table and negotiate because they know you've got a countervailing sanction on them.”

**Mark Morey, guest speaker**

“The best way to stimulate growth in the economy is to disperse money throughout that economy,” said Unions NSW Secretary Mark Morey (Unions NSW is the peak body representing 600,000 union members in NSW.) “So if teachers get a 2.5% increase, what are they going to do? They're not putting it in the stock exchange. They're not buying islands overseas. They're spending it in their local economies. This is not about unions being greedy – it's about simple, straightforward, sensible economic policy.”

**Nardin Hanna**

“I wanted to network and find out what happens in other schools,” said Nardin Hanna, who teaches Year 5 at St Bishoy Coptic Orthodox College in Mt Druitt. “At my school we got zero increase for 2021. I wanted to get inspired and take that back to my school and share it with the teachers so we can really join together as a collective.”

**Nicole Downey**

“There's quite a significant difference in pay scales between support staff in Catholic systemic schools and government schools,” said Nicole Downey, Finance and Office Manager at St Mary's Catholic Primary School, Orange. “I wanted to learn more about the union, what it does and how it can support us, and how I can take that back to members so we can move forward and make good decisions for us all.”

**Stewart Grant**

“I've been teaching for about 14 years and the demands of the job have gotten harder every year,” said Stewart Grant, who teaches HSIE to Years 7-12 at Mount St Patrick College, Murwillumbah. “I'm interested in the union movement as a whole and I think organised labour needs a voice – it's good for schools, for teachers and for politicians and leaders to have that dialogue and respect the opinions of people in the workforce.”



**Mark Northam, IEUA NSW/ACT Branch Secretary**

“Members come to the conference to learn and network, and they return to their schools as ambassadors of the union throughout their careers,” said IEU NSW/ACT Branch Secretary Mark Northam. “It's a recipe for strong workplaces and a successful union.”

**Peter Criticos**

“Even in the short time I've been teaching, the amount of administrative and planning work and dealing with child protection issues has increased incredibly,” said Peter Criticos, who teaches Business Studies and Legal Studies at St Joseph's High School in Aberdeen. “How do we get more density, how do we get more involvement? I want to learn more so I can bring this back to other teachers – not just at my school but the whole Hunter Valley area.”

**Roxanne Kent**

“Union activism is really important in this day and age,” said Roxanne Kent, who teaches Year 3 at Emmanuel Anglican College in Ballina. “Teachers are the backbone of our society and we need to protect them and help them every step of the way to get the pay they deserve. They need wider community recognition for what they do and the many hours they put in.”

**Taran Fazio**

“The amount of work teachers do outside the classroom is overwhelming and leads to burnout,” said Taran Fazio, who teaches Year 5 at St Luke's Catholic Primary School in Revesby. “I wanted to learn more – anything to help me help teachers is something I'm really interested in right now.”

**Natalie Grant**

“The union helps make sure we have good conditions and pay,” said Natalie Grant, a Science Technician at Mount St Patrick College, Murwillumbah. “The main issue for support staff is validation of our qualifications – the work we do can be quite undervalued.”



# Activists get active

**Chris Wilkinson**  
President



**Welcome back to Term 2. I am sure it will be a productive and successful one. Always a busy term with exams, reports, parent teacher conversations, carnivals and classroom teaching.**

The Activists Conference was held at Leura during the break and once again a tremendous success (see page 5). Participants were keen to discuss and share ideas to take back to their workplaces to recruit new members, talk to staff, upgrade notice boards and generally increase the image of the IEU.

A huge thank you to IEU staff Marilyn Jervis and Maria Nestoras who organised the agenda and presenters, to Helen Gregory for her wonderful work arranging accommodation and the comfort of all and to the IEU executive for their support and last but not least, the participants, who were amazing.

They shared, questioned, took notes, were energised and from all reports thoroughly enjoyed the conference.

Term 2 sub branch meetings will be held throughout May. Everyone is welcome and if you have not yet attended a meeting, I urge you go along, get involved and become more active in the union.

The new Lismore IEU office has been officially opened after a delay due to COVID. A wonderful facility and space for both organisers and members.

Great news for our early childhood teachers. The Fair Work Commission handed down a decision supporting pay rises of up to 10% for early childhood teachers. This is a result of eight years of action and submissions by the IEU. Thanks must go to all involved in this case, especially Industrial Officer Michael Wright and the early childhood team.

Enjoy the term, stay well and continue to support one another.

## Teachers and educators stand up to employer pressure

**“Members reported that SDN also threatened that if employees voted against the proposed EA they would not receive a pay increase for five years.”**



**Voting closed for SDN children's services proposed Enterprise Agreement on 13 April. The enterprise agreement (EA) contained pay increases of 9.75% over four years, an Educational Leader's Allowance of \$3000 per year and up to 12 weeks Paid Parental Leave.**

However, it removed paid lunch breaks from the EA, effectively forcing full-time teachers to work an additional 100 minutes per week.

Teachers employed in SDN early learning centres already work eight hours per day, 48 weeks per year, so this change was perceived as a significant reduction to their current working conditions.

In addition, SDN demanded no time limitations on their ability to employ teachers in temporary positions, contrary to the maximum two years for specific purposes allowed in the Modern Award.

SDN continues to use the Practicum Supervision allowance to purchase new equipment for their centres, instead of paying the allowance directly to the Supervising Teacher.

In addition, SDN failed to advise bargaining representatives or employees that they had made a change to the draft wording to allow them to require teachers to attend meetings, undertake professional development and other directed activities during their allocated programming time.

Members reported that SDN also threatened that if employees voted against the proposed EA they would not receive a pay increase for five years.

Teachers and educators refused to be pressured into voting in favour of the EA and it was voted down by 63.6% of employees who voted.

### **Integricare: Positive progress**

A new Integricare EA has been approved by Fair Work Commission and there are a number of improvements to current conditions.

The EA includes annual increases to salaries and allowances of 2%, the Educational Leader allowance has been almost doubled to \$1 per hour and one hour per week will be provided to full-time Room Leaders to undertake critical reflection and room planning.

Teachers are entitled to two hours of programming time for up to 15 children or four hours for 16 or more children, with the ability to negotiate an additional hour per week as needed. In addition, teachers will be provided with up to eight hours per year non-contact time to prepare Transition to School Statements.

Integricare will pay the cost of up to 10 hours of NESA accredited training per year and teachers will accrue up to 10 hours time in lieu (TIL) for attendance at training.

### **WSU Early Learning – disappointing outcome**

The Fair Work Commission recently approved the new WSUEL EA, which includes low annual increases to salaries and allowances of just 1.5%. WSUEL introduced unpaid lunch breaks, effectively forcing full-time employees to work an additional 150 minutes per week.

Study leave was increased to six days per year and paid parental leave increased from a maximum of six weeks at minimum wage to 10 weeks at minimum wage.

The IEU is disappointed that an employer who trains early childhood teachers and who should be advocating for pay parity sought to reduce working conditions significantly in exchange for poor annual increases.

### **Save the date**

The IEUA NSW/ACT Branch annual early childhood conference We are all in this together: Support, Resilience, Recognition will take place on 7 August at Aerial UTS Centre, Level 7, Building 10, 235 Jones Street, Ultimo, Sydney. It's back to a face-to-face event this year after last year's Zoom conference. Keep an eye on the union's website and publications as further details are revealed.



# Gallop inquiry

## Why teachers are worth way more

The Gallop Report into the teaching profession was co-authored by former IEU Deputy Secretary Patrick Lee. He spoke at the IEU's March Council meeting about its findings. Journalist Monica Crouch was there.

"Valuing the teaching profession – an independent inquiry", published in February 2021, was commissioned by the NSW Teachers Federation to investigate how changes to the profession have impacted the workloads of teachers and principals.

The inquiry was chaired by Emeritus Professor of the University of Sydney and former West Australian Premier Geoff Gallop. He was joined by former Justice of the NSW Industrial Court and Deputy President of the NSW Industrial Relations Commission Trish Kavanagh, and Patrick Lee, who is also the former CEO of the NSW Institute of Teachers.

The panel received more than 1000 submissions from teachers and schools, academics, professional bodies, economists and education experts.

### Reviews mean business

Reviews of the teaching profession have been conducted every decade or so since the 1970s through teachers' unions taking work value cases to the NSW Industrial Relations Commission. These cases assessed where the profession sat in relation to the rest of the community and the changing nature of teachers' work. Each time, judges backed considerable catch-ups.

In 1970, it was a 21% to 24% salary increase; in 1980, it was 9.5% over nine months; in 1991, it was 9% to 13% and for principals and deputy principals it was 20% to 29% over seven months. In 2003-04, it was 12% to 19.5%.

There has not been a review since 2004 because in 2011, the NSW Liberal government under Premier Barry O'Farrell stripped the NSW Industrial Relations Commission of its autonomy: it no longer had the power to award pay rises above the state government's salary cap. This effectively scrapped work value cases and capped public sector teachers' wages, to which salaries in the independent sector are closely tied. So this latest review is long overdue.

The Gallop Report recommends a 10% to 15% increase to teachers' salaries over the next two years.

### Time and workload intensification

"There almost wasn't a teacher who came before us or wrote a submission that didn't go quickly to the clash between the time available to do the work teachers do and the other stuff you've been asked to do," Lee said.

Teachers know what all this "other stuff" is, but let's spell it out: excessive documenting of programs; data collection prioritised over teaching time; and implementing school or system initiatives such as data walls. And that's before we get to curriculum churn, with another reform in the pipeline to be rolled out in an unmanageable timeframe.

Lee referred to the personalisation and "datafication" of learning, with teachers being required to upload data at every turn. If only this great trove of data were being used to shape resourcing for meaningful public policies such as supporting students with disability or closing the gap for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, Lee said, "but that's less evident".

Australian teachers are consistently judged against overseas standards; however, Australian teachers are not afforded the same teaching conditions as their international colleagues – far less time for planning and collaboration with other teachers is provided for.

"In Singapore, the teachers work hard, but there's much more time built in so they can work with each other, plan and monitor," Lee said. "So the face-to-face teaching they do is more productive, more carefully prepared for – in other words, better teaching – because of that other work."

The Gallop Report recommends at least two more hours of release time for both primary and secondary teachers, to be introduced over the next two years. It also recommends the NSW Government abandon its unreasonable plan to introduce a new curriculum for all students by 2024.

### Toll of technology

The most dramatic change the profession has experienced in the past two decades is the rapid evolution and adoption of technology.

"There almost wasn't a teacher who came before us or wrote a submission that didn't go quickly to the clash between the time available to do the work teachers do and the other stuff you've been asked to do."

It's not just the learning management systems and 'datification', Lee said. "It's the bring-your-own-device policy, which brings the opportunity for lots of students to come in with lots of different devices and platforms.

"And that's when the student actually has a device and you don't have to spend your time in the classroom trying to find one, and you end up teaching to the lowest common denominator because that's the only way you can get through the class."

The almost overnight shift to online learning during the pandemic lockdown of 2020 intensified teaching workloads, but this has not been recognised in salaries or conditions, and in some cases has been met with a pay freeze.

### Accreditation agonies

Throughout Australia, institutes of teachers or colleges of teachers were established around 2004, along with teacher accreditation schemes in NSW.

"It was done poorly in a number of ways," Lee said. He describes teacher accreditation authorities as "artificial entities that are in effect employer authorities".

Now, he says, besides the NESA requirements, employers overlay their own processes, complicating the work in schools for teachers – "and this was something that didn't happen in any other state".

Progress from Graduate Teacher to Proficient Teacher is problematic thanks to excessive casualisation and temporary appointments. Some teachers have reached their fifth or sixth year of teaching without having progressed, and the delay has significant salary implications.

"In one case, a teacher who was giving us evidence said the loss of time was worth almost a deposit on a house for her," Lee said.



The IEU has spoken out many times about how the accreditation system needs reforming, and the Gallop Report is unequivocal: "We've made a recommendation for the abolition of Teacher Accreditation Authorities," Lee said.

### Health and wellbeing

Schools are not separate from their surrounding communities. Marriage breakdowns, family law issues, unemployment, poverty, and an alarming spate of student suicides all take their toll on students, teachers and support staff.

The petition instigated this year by a former Kambala student has lifted the lid on sexual assault among students in Sydney independent schools.

In the face of this, there is a "heartbreaking" shortage of school counsellors, Lee said. He talked about one counsellor in a regional area who was spread so thin across five schools that he couldn't do his job. The path to burnout grows ever shorter.

The Gallop Report recommends an urgent increase in school counsellors and calls for a ratio of one counsellor to every 500 students by 2023.

### Caps off

A substantial pay increase for teachers, in recognition of the intensification and changing nature of their work, is a key recommendation of the Gallop Report.

IEUA NSW/ACT Branch Secretary Mark Northam drew attention to the figure of 0.3%, the meagre raise granted to public sector workers, including HSC markers, for 2021.

"We get caught in the same net," Northam warned. "If it persists, that will be the signal it's time for unions to act."



# Union survey highlights data overload

**The IEU has recently concluded an action research study into the effects of the Nationally Consistent Collection of Data (NCCD) process on teacher workloads, and the delivery of support to students and classroom teachers in schools.**

Teachers and support staff across the state alerted the IEU to serious concerns during early and mid-2020. In response, the IEUA NSW/ACT Branch formed a working group of members involved with the NCCD process in schools, and engaged the services of Michael Elphick and Associates to develop a widespread survey that was distributed across NSW and the ACT in September 2020.

The Report on the Nationally Consistent Collection of Data (NCCD) process in NSW and ACT schools is the result of that survey. You can find the full copy of the report on our website.

Nominated learning support teachers in 330 schools registered to participate in the research. In addition to providing quantitative data, the participants volunteered over 830 comments, describing the difficulties within the process that intensify workload to unsustainable levels and impact negatively on practical support for students with additional learning needs.

After being approved by the IEUA NSW/ACT Branch Executive on 6 March, the report was launched at the Term 1 IEU Council meeting on 20 March. Council unanimously endorsed the report and the subsequent follow up actions.

The recommendations from the report are as follows:

- Measures should be taken to staff the NCCD process appropriately at the school level.
- Staffing ratios need to be sufficient to allow the core role of learning support to take place.
- Release time should take into account the workload impact of the NCCD process, in addition to regular programming and assessment responsibilities.
- Exemplars to be provided and published on the NCCD website to provide clarity around the evidence template requirements and avoid layering of expectations.
- Schools and systems to review documentation and processes to ensure that they are not exceeding the requirements of the NCCD.
- The school's information or learning management system would ordinarily contain the necessary student information for the NCCD, and other purposes, for both classroom teachers and learning support staff. Any requirements to provide additional documentation, eg personalised planning tools, are superfluous and contribute to unnecessary workloads.
- Eliminate or substantially reduce the requirements associated with eternal reporting on students in the quality differentiated teaching practice (QDTP) category.
- Evidentiary requirements should be streamlined across all categories. In particular, the annual and recurring evidentiary requirements for students likely to remain in the NCCD Extensive category should be subject to review.

- Refine the evidence management process and improve the efficiency of the digital platform in order to reduce the need for ongoing and extensive PD related to the NCCD. This should allow learning support staff to concentrate on PD that relates to their core role of supporting students with disability.
- Ensure that any necessary system or version upgrades to the digital platform are minimal and are enacted prior to the point when users will be expected to engage with the platform. The capacity to allow the bulk uploading of data should be facilitated.

Work is underway to engage with government agencies and employer groups to advance the recommendations of the report. There have been numerous meetings between the union, Department of Education and Catholic authorities during the past 18 months, with more planned this year.

We will be compiling a database of responses from various employers and agencies in order to track any improvements or otherwise in the process, and will look at the possibility of conducting a follow up survey later in the year with the intention of tracking changes.

**Veronica Yewdall** Education Co-ordinator  
Professional Officer

## Present tense Vaccine chaos

**Australia's international student sector is on life support and is waiting desperately for a sign that Australia's international borders will re-open to overseas students soon. A key element of the borders opening is the COVID pandemic getting under some semblance of control, and the most vital element of this is widespread vaccination.**

All of which makes Australia's increasingly botched vaccine roll out all the more problematic for the post-secondary education sector. As of mid-April, there had been around 1.2 million vaccine doses administered, well short of the promised 4 million by the end of the March, and it is now almost certain the planned population-wide vaccination target of October will not be met, and that many Australians will remain unvaccinated well into 2022.

This is in stark contrast to some of Australia's competitor countries in the international education field, such as the US and the UK, both of whom have vaccinated numbers greater than Australia's entire population in the opening months of 2021 (admittedly both those countries had disastrous COVID outcomes through 2020 and still have far higher case numbers than Australia).

As long as Australia's own vaccination roll out remains in the slow lane, it will be difficult to begin to re-open our borders to the world, trapping residents at home, overseas-based citizens abroad, and cutting off any opportunity for the international student sector to recover.

The mooted mass vaccination centres are a good start, but Australia really needs to get a move on if we don't want the world to pass us by – our post-secondary education sector is relying on it.

### Legislative changes

In late March, the Federal Parliament passed amendments to the *Fair Work Act*, and while some of the more draconian changes didn't get through the Senate, there were a few things that did, some of which will have a big effect on workers in the post-secondary education sector.

The most important changes relate to casual employment. The amendments to the Act tighten up the definitions around casual work, undermining the principles laid out in the court decisions of *Rossato v Workpac Ltd* and *Skene v Workpac Ltd*. These cases established that long-term and regular casual employees could claim that they were not in fact 'casuals', as defined by the Act, and are thus entitled to some of the benefits of ongoing employment, such as paid leave.

The changes to the Act now allow for any casual loading paid to such casuals to be off-set against any backpay claim for annual leave, and the likelihood is that this would largely soak up any underpayment that may otherwise be due. Furthermore, the amendments have tweaked redundancy provisions so that previous casual service for now permanent employees cannot be counted for the purposes of redundancy.

These changes are detrimental to workers in the post-secondary sector (an industry that relies heavily on widespread use of casual employment), and go to the heart of the attitudes of the Morrison Government towards workers in precarious employment.

### Minimum wage decision

The Fair Work Commission will soon announce its decision in the annual National Wage decision, the increase to the national minimum wage, and as a flow-on, the rates in all awards. As the vast majority of employees in the post-secondary education sector are reliant on award conditions, the minimum wage increase is a crucial moment, as it informs the award increase that will apply across the sector.

In 2020, the increase was comparatively low (due to the pandemic), at 1.7%, but in the years prior to this, increases have been greater than 3%, and generally higher than the Wages Price Index, the standard measure for pay increases across the whole economy.

The ACTU is pushing for a 3.5% increase in 2021, while the government and business interests are lobbying for a sub-inflation increase, or no increase at all. The end decision will almost certainly land in the middle of that range.

The decision will be announced in late May, and it will take effect from 1 July.

**Kendall Warren** Organiser



# Professional engagement update

# PRIORITY AREAS TOO RESTRICTIVE



“The IEU strongly asserts that any NESA requirement insisting PD courses be a minimum duration of 90 minutes is unreasonably limiting and demonstrates a lack of trust in the profession.”

## **The union has been in ongoing discussions with NESA regarding the recent policy changes which came into effect late last year.**

The union asserts that the four priority focus areas are too restrictive to allow all teachers access to no or low cost PD, especially as the majority of providers have been excluded from endorsed provider status. We are hearing that employers are reluctant to accredit the PD they are delivering in staff meetings.

From the middle of the year the union, along with other professional teacher organisations, will be able to develop new accredited PD courses. We are cautiously optimistic we will have our endorsed provider status reinstated at some stage later in the year.

In the meantime, the IEU will concentrate on ensuring the processes around PD requirements do not become too onerous for teachers. Some of the concerns we have voiced to NESA are outlined below.

### **Sustained duration**

There are currently no courses with interim NESA accreditation shorter than 90 minutes duration, with NESA indicating all accredited courses would need to be at least 90 minutes long to meet the ‘sustained duration’ principle of effective professional learning criteria.

This would effectively exclude employers from accrediting staff meetings dedicated to critical professional learning activities, such as NAPLAN or RAP analysis. The union is monitoring to see if there any moves to adjust current industrial arrangements to accommodate this unwarranted PD restriction, for example, by shifting to 90 minute staff meetings.

The IEU strongly asserts that any NESA requirement insisting PD courses be a minimum duration of 90 minutes is unreasonably limiting and demonstrates a lack of trust in the profession. Teachers or school learning communities should be able to select PD activities of an appropriate duration to suit their particular circumstances.

### **Teachers don’t do homework**

The union maintains there should be no out-of-course component (homework) required for PD.

If a teacher chooses to enrol in a course with additional out of course hours, those hours should count towards the total accredited or elective hours. A range of out-of-session activities should be available and any additional tasks should comply with current school/system policies/workload protocols.

### **Elective PD requirements**

The union has advocated strongly to NESA that the capacity for teachers to upload elective PD should be simple, streamlined, and should not contribute to additional teacher workload.

### **Maintaining your accreditation**

Any members completing their 100 hours of PD this year (either accredited or elective) will have completed all the requirements for their maintenance of accreditation, regardless of the maintenance of accreditation due date.

If you do not complete your hours by the end of 2021 you will be required to complete at least one course from one of the priority areas in order to satisfy the PD maintenance requirements.

To that end, members are encouraged to complete their hours as elective PD using the on-demand suite of PD available from the IEUZone.

### **NESA Teacher Time Survey**

As part of its NSW curriculum review, NESA invited the IEU to provide a submission to the consultations around teacher time commitments with respect to compliance and contemporary issues content.

The IEU stressed in its submission that unnecessary documentation, often carried out in the name of compliance, is largely responsible for the ever increasing workload demands on teachers. We suggested that,

as all documentation is written by and for education professionals, the increasing level of micro-detail being requested by employers, for example program annotations or teacher reflections, should be solely at the discretion of the teacher.

We further made the observation that, in general, the increase in compliance creep has been a result of a commensurate diminishing of respect for the professional judgement of teachers.

Any assurances NESA can provide that reduces principal anxiety about inspections and compliance requirements in general, would allow schools to re-focus on their core role of providing high quality education to the students in their care.

While we had no specific suggestions with what they are referring to as ‘contemporary Issues’, we did suggest that a name which acknowledges and includes the relevance of the contemporary issue unit of work to the school or the school community would be helpful in order to broaden the potential scope of what might be covered.

When considering whether or not to include a suggested contemporary issues topic in the curriculum, NESA should consult with the profession and key professional and community organisations, including the IEU.

### **Educational Issues Committee – call for members**

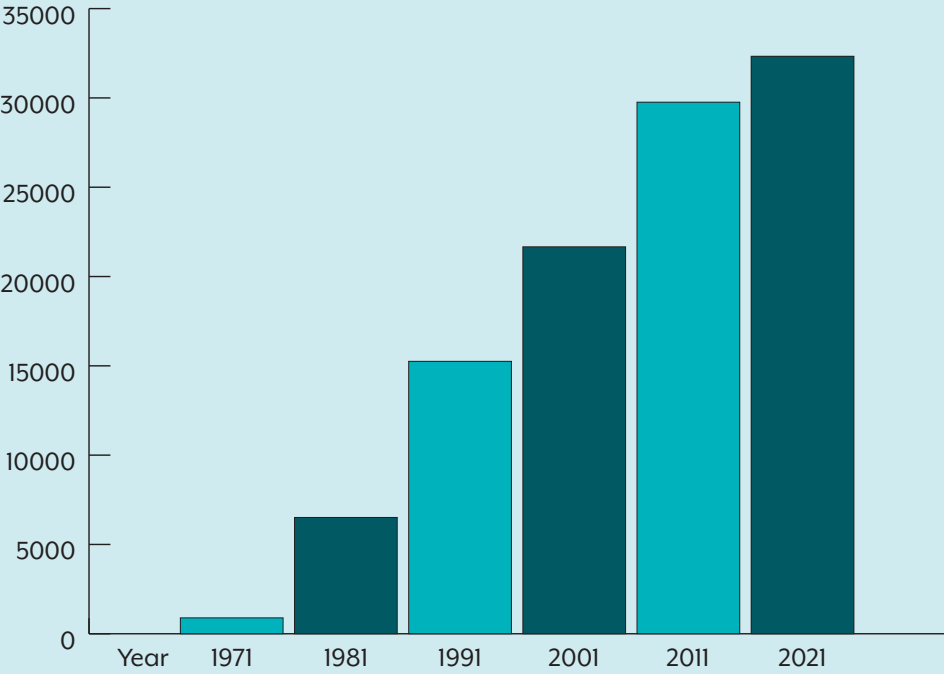
Are you interested in staying up to date with current developments in the education space? The IEU’s Educational Issues Committee meets online once per term and addresses a range of issues, from NESA policy changes to emerging trends in education which are likely to impact members in their work environment. We would welcome your active engagement and input.

Contact the committee co-convenors, Veronica Yewdall or Pat Devery to register your interest.



# On the rise: Membership

(End-of-year figures except for 2021 which is current to 14/4)



# THANKS for you

In 2013 the IEUA NSW/ACT Branch began acknowledging members with 30 years of continuous membership with a commemorative badge. Since that time we've presented hundreds of long-serving, loyal members with badges at chapter meetings, sub branch meetings and morning teas.

Local celebrations of loyal members help to remind members, old and new, of our collective achievements over the years. They also emphasise to potential members the importance of belonging to the union.

In 2021 the IEU is expanding this program to recognise the significant milestones our members reach as they progress through their careers and working lives.

Members who reach 40 years of continuous membership will receive a gift. We have already presented many of these: the IEU is proud to have 327 members who have been with us for four decades.

We're still presenting 30-year badges. We'll also send certificates to those members who have clocked up 10 years and 20 years of membership this year, so

## TIMELINE 1971 - 2021

### 50 years ago: 1971

- International Year for Action to Combat Racism and Prejudice
- IEU was called the Assistant Masters and Mistresses Association (AMMA)
- AMMA seeks a variation of the Award stating that sweeping classrooms is not a normal teaching duty
- Prime Minister: John Gorton; William McMahon; NSW Premier: Sir Robert Askin
- Federal Education Minister: Nigel Bowen; David Fairbairn; Malcolm Fraser; NSW: Charles Cutler
- Australian of the Year: Tennis champion Evonne Goolagong
- NSW Rugby League Premiers: South Sydney Rabbitohs
- *Patton* took out Best Picture at the Academy Awards
- V S Naipaul wins the Booker Prize for *In a Free State*
- David Bowie releases *Hunky Dory*; Joni Mitchell releases *Blue*
- Nobel Peace Prize awarded to West German Chancellor Willy Brandt for 'Ostpolitik' – embodying a new attitude towards Eastern Europe and East Germany

### 40 years ago: 1981

- International Year for Disabled Persons
- In the ACT, the Independent Schools Staff Association (ISSA) was registered to cover teachers in non-government schools
- Teachers gained a 6.8% pay increase, including a Work Value Increase
- Prime Minister: Malcolm Fraser; NSW Premier: Neville Wran
- Federal Education Minister: Wal Fife; NSW: Paul Landa; Ron Mulock
- Australian of the Year: Sir John Crawford, economist
- NSW Rugby League Premiers: Parramatta Eels
- Prince Charles and Lady Diana Spencer marry in July
- *Chariots of Fire* takes out Best Picture at the Academy Awards
- Salman Rushdie wins the Booker Prize for *Midnight's Children*
- The Rolling Stones release *Tattoo You*; Mondo Rock release *Chemistry*
- Nobel Peace Prize awarded to the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees for its effective and continuous work on refugees

### 30 years ago: 1991

- International Year of the World's Indigenous People
- AMMA (see 1971) now known as the Independent Schools Teachers Association (ITA) in NSW
- General strike: more than 50 per cent of teachers in Sydney and 80 per cent in Melbourne walked out of the job in October to protest against the Industrial Relations Bill
- Enterprise bargaining is legislated into NSW law – the union urges members to consult before signing.
- Prime Minister: Bob Hawke; Paul Keating; NSW: Nick Greiner
- Federal Education Minister: John Dawkins; NSW: Virginia Chadwick
- NSW Rugby League Premiers: Penrith Panthers
- *The Silence of the Lambs* wins Oscar for Best Picture
- Ben Okri wins the Booker Prize for *The Fam*
- Nobel Peace Prize awarded to Myanmar leader Aung San Suu Kyi for non-violent struggle for democracy and human rights



Kieran Kelly and Greg Struck of St Pius X High School, Adamstown, receive their 40-year membership gift from IEU Secretary Mark Northam (centre)



40-year membership presentation to Gerard Gough with Fr Greg Bellamy at Catherine McAuley Primary School Orange



IEU Rep and Executive member Suzanne Penson of Mackillop College, Port Macquarie, presents a 40-year gift to Rod Paton from Macauley Catholic College, Grafton



Richard Droz and Michael Gill of St Edwards College, East Gosford receive their 40-year membership gifts from IEU Organiser Jim Hall (centre)



IEU Assistant Secretary Pam Smith makes a 40-year membership presentation to Kerry Giumelli of CEDP office at Parramatta



# Our LOYALTY

Keep an eye on the post if you joined in 2001 or 2011. We're delighted there are so many of you. If you've already passed your 10-year or 20-year anniversary, please let us know (membership@ieu.asn.au) and we'll gladly post you a certificate.

The IEU is incredibly proud to have 12 members who have reached 50 or more years of continuous membership. These members originally joined the Assistant Masters and Mistresses Association (AMMA) which then became the Independent Teachers Association (ITA) before it became

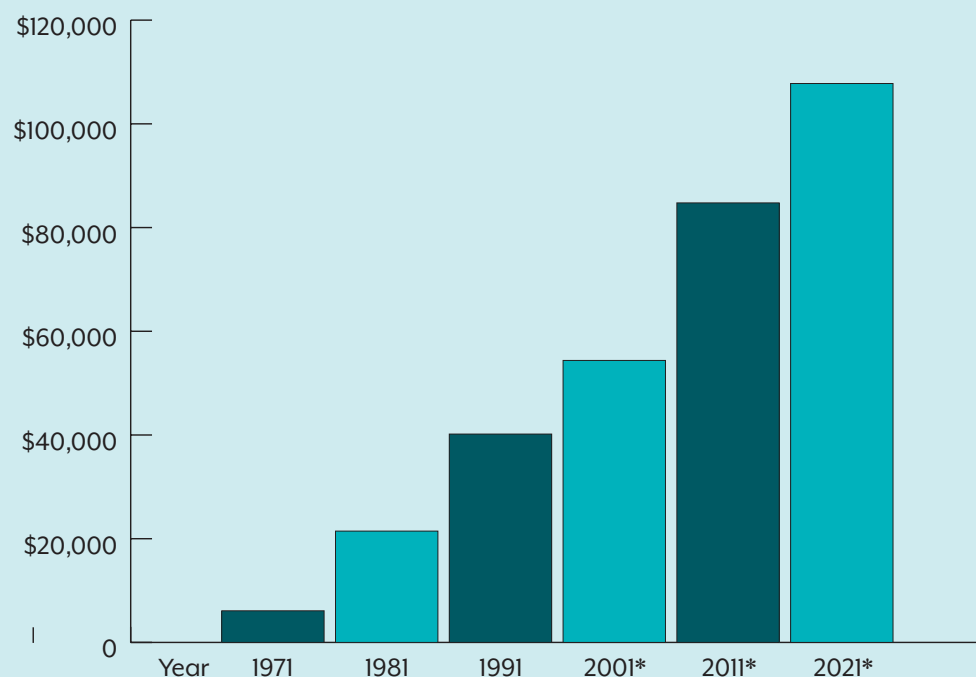
the Independent Education Union (IEU). We will announce how we'll honour these members at our IEU Council in June and in a future *Newsmonth*.

Keep an eye on upcoming editions of *Newsmonth* for more photos celebrating our loyal members.

**David Towson** Organiser

## Steady increases: Top rates of pay

(For a classroom teacher in non-government schools; \*Catholic systemic schools)



### 20 years ago: 2001

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- International Year of Volunteers
- NSW Government establishes Institute of Teachers
- IEU members stop work with others across the state to protest weakening of the workers' comp scheme
- IEU elects its first Vice President Support Staff, Carolyn Collins, who holds the position to this day
- September 11 terror attacks in the US spur attacks on local Islamic communities; staff and students in Catholic schools send letters of support to Malek Fahd Islamic School; the IEU leads Workplace Harmony campaign
- Prime Minister: John Howard; NSW Premier: Bob Carr
- Federal Education Minister: David Kemp; Brendan Nelson; NSW: John Aquilina; John Watkins
- NRL Premiers: Newcastle Knights
- *A Beautiful Mind* wins the Oscar for Best Picture
- Australian author Peter Carey wins the Booker Prize for *The True History of the Kelly Gang*
- Kylie Minogue releases *Fever*
- Australian of the Year: Lieutenant General Peter Cosgrove, Chief of Army
- Nobel Peace Prize awarded to the UN led by Kofi Annan

### 2011: 10 years ago

- International Year of Chemistry
- David Gonski concludes the landmark Federal Government Review Into School Funding
- Catholic schools were moved into the Federal industrial relations system
- NSW Liberal government strips the Industrial Relations Commission of its independence, meaning it can no longer award pay rises above the public sector cap. It was the last year a pay rise for teachers exceeded 2.5%
- Prime Minister: Julia Gillard; NSW Premier: Kristina Keneally; Barry O'Farrell
- Federal Education Minister: Peter Garrett; NSW: Verity Firth; Adrian Piccoli
- NRL Premiers: Manly Warringah Sea Eagles
- *The Artist* takes out Best Picture at the Academy Awards
- Booker Prize: Julian Barnes for *The Sense of an Ending*
- Geoffrey Gurrumul Yunupingu releases *Rrakala*
- Australian of the Year: Simon McKeon, philanthropist
- Nobel Peace Prize: Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, Leymah Gbowee and Tawakkol Karman for their non-violent struggle for women's and the right to participate in peace building



**Principal Catherine Rey (far left), IEU Rep Daniel Burns and IEU Organiser Berna Simpson (far right) celebrate Stephanie O'Meara's 30-year membership at John Paul College, Nicholls, ACT**



**IEU Organiser Richard Ryan (centre) celebrates 30 years of membership with teachers John Gorman and Luke Melenhorst of Xavier Catholic College Skennars Head**



**Garry Osborne of O'Connor Catholic College Armidale receives his 40-year membership gift from IEU Organiser David Towson (right)**



**IEU Organiser Richard Ryan (left) honours 30 years membership for Principal Murray Deeps of Holy Family Primary School, Skennars Head**



**Rodney Fish of Lumen Christi Catholic College, Pambula Beach, celebrates 30 years membership with IEU Organiser Berna Simpson (second from left) and colleagues Simon Fraser and Eileen Reckford**



# Maintenance of accreditation for early childhood teachers

**Experienced early childhood teachers who were deemed Proficient in 2016 are due to finalise their maintenance of accreditation in 2021 if they are employed full-time or in 2023 if they are employed part time (unless they have taken a leave of absence during their maintenance cycle).**

## Finalising your maintenance

The process for finalising your maintenance differs slightly depending upon your employment situation.

If you are employed in an early learning service run by a school then you should follow the usual process as per your teacher accreditation authority (either the school or the AIS).

For early childhood teachers working in early learning or other services not run by schools the following options apply:

## I work in a licensed early childhood service and am able to nominate an attestor

Log on to e-TAMS and check your employment details and Maintenance Proficient Teacher due date are correct. If your employment details are incorrect update them. If your due date is incorrect contact NESA.

Ensure you have completed and evaluated 100 hours of Professional Development, hold a current Working With Children Check and are up to date with annual Teacher Registration Fee.

Nominate an attestor (full name and NESA number). Your attestor must be accredited at Proficient Teacher or higher and be employed by in the same approved provider as yourself and have seniority/oversight over your work.

Declare that you have met the requirements for maintenance of Accreditation at Proficient.

Your nominated attestor makes an attestation about your practice.

A NESA authorised delegate makes an accreditation decision.

## I work in a licensed early childhood service and am able to nominate a professional referee

Log on to e-TAMS and check your employment details and Maintenance Proficient Teacher due date are correct. If your employment details are incorrect update them. If your due date is incorrect contact NESA.

Ensure you have completed and evaluated 100 hours of Professional Development, hold a current Working With Children Check and are up to date with annual teacher registration fee.

Nominate a professional referee (full name and NESA number). Your professional referee must be accredited at Proficient Teacher or higher and may or may not work in the same organisation as yourself and does not have seniority/oversight over your work but is familiar with your practice.

Write a reflective statement of up to 300 words describing how you have continued to maintain each of the seven Standards at Proficient. Include an example of your teaching practice that demonstrates how your practice has impacted on children's learning.

Declare that you have met the requirements for maintenance of Accreditation at Proficient.

NESA will make an attestation about your practice.

A NESA authorised delegate makes an accreditation decision.

## I work in a non-service based role such as early intervention

Contact NESA directly. You will need to provide a position description and statement from your employer that demonstrates how your role relates to the APST including duties relating to any of the following:

- the development/ implementation of the Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF)
- the learning and wellbeing of children in early learning centres
- curriculum teaching and learning in early learning centres
- early childhood lecturer or tutor in a higher education institution
- an educational consultant for early childhood centre.

Log on to e-TAMS and check your employment details and Maintenance Proficient Teacher due date are correct. If your employment details are incorrect please contact the IEU. If your due date or full/part-time status is incorrect contact NESA.

Ensure you have completed and evaluated 100 hours of Professional Development, hold a current Working With Children Check and are up to date with annual teacher registration fee.

Nominate either an attestor (who is accredited at Proficient Teacher or higher and is employed by in the same organisation as yourself and has seniority/oversight over your work) or a professional referee (who is accredited at Proficient Teacher or higher who may or may not work in the same organisation as yourself and who does not have seniority/oversight over your work but is familiar with your practice).

Write a reflective statement of up to 300 words describing how you have continued to maintain each of the seven Standards at Proficient. Include an example of your teaching practice that demonstrates how your practice has impacted on children's learning.

Declare that you have met the requirements for maintenance of Accreditation at Proficient.

Nominated attestor or NESA will make an attestation about your practice as applicable.

NESA authorised delegate makes an accreditation decision.

## I have been nominated as an attestor or professional referee

If a teacher nominates you as an attestor or professional referee you will receive an email from NESA prompting you to log in to your e-TAMS account.

Open the Maintenance of Accreditation task assigned to you on your dashboard and review the information provided by the teacher.

Attestors identify the service-based processes that form the basis of their judgement and make an attestation about the teacher's practice. Professional referees verify whether the teacher's declaration is correct and identify the practices that informed their decision. Submit the attestation or verification.

NESA will be alerted that they need to make an accreditation decision for the teacher.

If you would like a more in-depth explanation of the process I recommend watching the Maintenance of Accreditation for Early Childhood Teachers workshop that was recorded and uploaded to IEU Zone [www.theieuzone.org.au](http://www.theieuzone.org.au).

Email [pd@ieu.asn.au](mailto:pd@ieu.asn.au) for an IEU Zone account if you do not have one already.

If you are experiencing specific issues with your NSW accreditation or eTAMS account please email NESA: [ECTaccreditation@NESA.nsw.edu.au](mailto:ECTaccreditation@NESA.nsw.edu.au)

If you are in NSW and would like advice or assistance from the IEU regarding your accreditation or have questions that have not been addressed in this article, please email your accreditation questions to [pd@ieu.asn.au](mailto:pd@ieu.asn.au) or [lisa@ieu.asn.au](mailto:lisa@ieu.asn.au)

## Restrictions lift, but pressure on principals remains

**As the 2021 school year unfolds, and COVID restrictions begin to lift, principals and their staff continue to face the challenges of workload, their wellbeing and that of their students, as well as dealing with the many social and economic issues which affect families and communities.**

Unfortunately, principals were not surprised by the results of the 2020 annual Australian Principals' Health and Wellbeing Survey which showed that school leaders worked an average of 54.5 hours per week and that during school terms 22.1 percent of school leaders worked more than 60 hours per week. Again unsurprisingly, this workload often resulted in reports of anxiety, depression, sleep disorders and other physical symptoms. This heavy workload also has an impact on teachers and support staff, especially in regard to meeting the compliance demands on schools.

Principal members have expressed their support for the IEU's efforts to address workload and other concerns associated with the Nationally Consistent Collection of Data (NCCD) for students with disabilities and also in relation to shortages of casual teachers and the effect on school operations and workloads.

The IEU is also engaging with NESA's consultation on the impact of compliance on teacher time, including reference to work intensification associated with NSW curriculum and also NCCD issues.

Thank you to the IEU principals' reps in the Catholic Archdiocese of Sydney for arranging an IEU meeting via Zoom on 31 March with a focus on issues for the next enterprise agreement negotiations. The Sydney principals' chapter meeting also acknowledged the significant appointment of Silvana Rossetti as principal of systemic boys' school Marist College at Eastwood and of Vittoria Lavorato as principal of St Patrick's College, a Catholic independent boys' school, at Strathfield. Within the context of current debates around gender and consent, the IEU has valued the perspectives of many principals who are addressing these issues with their students.

It has been a great pleasure to acknowledge recently some principal members for their 40 or more years of IEU membership and there are more such presentations to come. The IEU deeply appreciates the loyalty and commitment of these principal members and the contributions they have made over four decades as teachers and leaders in their schools and communities.

IEU Principals' Sub Branch meetings are scheduled for 1 May, 7 August and 6 November at the union's Parramatta office but also with a Zoom option.

**Pam Smith**

Assistant Secretary/Principals' Organiser





WRONG < > RIGHT

# Respect@Work still a work in progress

“The ‘Roadmap’ stops short on delivering real rights to women at work enshrined in legislation. Without these institutional mechanisms in place, the ‘Roadmap’ will achieve little more than window dressing.”



**Amidst intense public pressure, the government has announced it is taking action on workplace sexual harassment with a plan that raises concerns over what has been left out, writes journalist Angus Hoy.**

Fifteen months after receiving the Respect@Work: National Inquiry into Sexual Harassment in Australian Workplaces report from Sex Discrimination Commissioner Kate Jenkins, the Prime Minister Scott Morrison and newly appointed Attorney-General Michaelia Cash government has announced a commitment to accepting most of the 55 recommendations of the 900-page report.

The ‘most’ in that sentence is doing a lot of work. The government’s Roadmap to Respect expresses agreement (either in full, in part or in principle) or “notes” the recommendations in the Respect@Work report – leaving plenty of room post-announcement for the government to fall short of community expectations.

## Respect@Work report

The IEU contributed to the Respect@Work inquiry by directing our members to relevant surveys, as well as through our significant engagement with the Australian Council of Trade Unions (ACTU), Unions NSW and Unions ACT in the development of their input.

The Respect@Work report found that the current legal and regulatory system is “simply no longer fit for purpose” to address workplace sexual harassment. It recommends a new evidence-based, victim-focused model that is framed through a gender and intersectional lens. It would improve the coordination, consistency and clarity between the anti-discrimination, employment and work health and safety legislative schemes already in place.

Importantly, the new model would require transparency, accountability and leadership from employers as it shifts from the current reactive model, that requires complaints from individuals, to a proactive model, which would require positive actions from employers.

## Government’s ‘Roadmap’

The government’s ‘Roadmap’ has specifically ignored the recommendations by the Commissioner for stronger

powers to investigate, new regulations under Work Health and Safety laws, and changes to the *Fair Work Act*.

The Roadmap commits to important education, training and awareness, but stops short on delivering real rights to women at work enshrined in legislation. Without these institutional mechanisms in place, the Roadmap will achieve little more than window dressing.

IEU Assistant Secretary and Co-Convenor of the IEU Women and Equity Committee, Pam Smith, expressed her concerns with the government’s belated response to the Respect@Work report.

“The Government does not at this stage recommend any enforceable protections for workers experiencing sexual harassment or violence or any positive responsibility for employers to ensure safe, harassment free workplaces,” said Smith.

The government has rejected a number of the report’s significant structural recommendations, including the recommendation to amend the *Sex Discrimination Act* to explicitly prohibit sexual harassment, arguing that other legislation contains adequate provisions.

The government has also failed to accept the recommendation to change the *Fair Work Act* to explicitly prohibit sexual harassment, preferring instead to continue using the current ‘stop bullying order’ provisions in the context of sexual harassment.

The government has also specifically knocked back the request by the Sex Discrimination Commissioner for greater scope and powers to commence investigations.

In its foreword, the government’s Roadmap says one of their five key guiding principles is that “prevention must be our focus.” However, the government has rejected the report’s recommendation that the onus be placed on employers to take steps to prevent sexual harassment in the workplace.

“There is a need to strengthen the *Fair Work Act*, the *Sex Discrimination Act* and Work Health and Safety laws, as recommended by the Respect@Work report,” said Smith.

“Sadly, unless these legislative changes occur, the burden of making complaints remains on the victim and not on the employer for a safe work environment.”

## Criticism from advocates and unions and the way forward

The failure of the government to fully implement the recommendations of the report has prompted criticism from the union movement and advocacy organisations. The ACTU has laid down a series of minimum actions and solutions that they say the government must implement to make meaningful change:

- Stronger work health and safety laws to make sure that employers are obliged to tackle the underlying causes of sexual harassment at work.
- Better access to justice for workers in our workplace laws by prohibiting sexual harassment in the *Fair Work Act* and providing a quick, easy, new complaints process, and providing 10 days paid family and domestic violence leave as a national minimum employment standard.
- Stronger powers for the Sex Discrimination Commissioner to make her own decisions to investigate industries and workplaces which are rife with sexual harassment, and positive duties on employers to take steps to eliminate sexual harassment.
- Ratification of the 2019 ILO Convention on the elimination of violence and harassment at work.

The government must intervene directly in the systems and structures that enable gender-based violence in our communities, our homes and our workplaces.

Education and awareness raising is important, but ultimately won’t result in a safer future for women if the federal government fails to take decisive action on prevention, resourcing of services and accountability mechanisms, law reform, and workplace sexual harassment.

The IEU cautiously welcomes the government’s initial commitments insofar as they address the recommendations in the Respect@Work Report, and call on the government to go further in pursuit of real, substantive change. Enough is enough.

## MEMBERSHIP news

### A big thank you to those chapter representatives who returned their membership update.

You should have received your compendium by now as a small gesture of our gratitude for your efforts in completing this update.

If you have completed the update and are yet to receive the compendium, please contact your IEU organiser.

We only have a limited number of compendiums available so if you haven’t completed and returned the membership update please do so ASAP.

The update ensures we retain the correct data for members in your chapter. This is useful to members for voting and election eligibility purposes, and it helps to ensure members are not

overcharged. It also allows us to keep members informed on issues that relate to their chapter or sector.

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

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

Best wishes for the term ahead.

Jody Clifford and Syeda Sultana Membership team  
Proud to be union





## Parental leave

# Knowing the ‘must, should and could’

### Congratulations! You’re having a baby!

Now comes the exciting task of sharing the news with your family, friends and your employer.

Preparing for the arrival of a new family member is an exciting and at times overwhelming life event for you and for your family on a personal level. As you prepare for the change this will have on your personal life you will also need to consider how the change will impact on your working life.

Here’s a checklist of things you must, should and could do to get you started.

### The musts

You must know what your rights are with your employer under the Fair Work Act and your workplace agreement or award. Under the Fair Work Act you are entitled to access up to 12 months of unpaid parental leave provided you have completed 12 months of service with your employer before you are due to commence the leave.

You may also be entitled to paid parental leave through your workplace agreement as well as access to the government Parental Leave Payment.

At least 10 weeks before starting the leave you must provide written notice to your employer of your intention to take parental leave including how much time you will be taking and the start and finish dates of the leave.

Four weeks before starting leave you must provide written confirmation of your intention to take the leave as notified earlier. If your circumstances have changed you should tell your employer ASAP.

Once your leave is confirmed the union recommends you confirm any entitlement to paid parental leave with your employer and contact the Department of Human Services to confirm eligibility for the Parental Leave Payment.

### The shoulds

Even though the new arrival has yet to arrive, start thinking about your plans for when your parental leave ends. At the end of your leave, the right to return to the position you held before starting the leave is clearly established.

Your right to request an extension of your leave or a flexible work arrangement is not so clear cut.

Things you should start thinking about include:

- When are you planning to come back?
- How does this fit with the organisation of the workplace?
- Will you want longer than 12 months? Less than 12 months? Are you unsure?
- Will you want to return part time?
- How will childcare influence your ability to return to work after leave?

I can hear you saying, seriously? The baby is still a peanut! It might seem that these decisions are way off in the future, but in our experience your employer will be asking what your intentions are well before your sleep deprivation has subsided.

### The coulds

The checklists above are the tip of the iceberg when it comes to navigating the brave new world of managing life with young children.

While preparing for the new arrival you could explore the information online. For your legislated entitlements go to the Fair Work Ombudsman website. For everything related to government support go to the Department of Human Services

Check out the IEU Guide to Parental and Personal Carer’s Leave on the Members Only Resources section of our website [www.ieu.asn.au](http://www.ieu.asn.au). Contact your IEU Organiser to discuss any questions related specifically to your personal circumstances but heads up, we can’t help with the sleep deprivation.

# ‘Excellent’ teacher claims she was fired by her employer Morling College for being gay

**A Baptist college in Sydney has sacked a gay teacher after years of employment seemingly as a result of an email sent from a member of the public, describing her as ‘demonic’.**

Karen Pack told the ABC’s 7:30 that she was sacked by her employer Morling College in 2020 for being openly gay, despite being open about her sexuality throughout her employment. Pack had recently announced to her colleagues that she was getting married to her long-time partner Bronte Scott.

Morling College disputes these claims, saying Pack decided to leave the school because she could “no longer adhere to a key Morling value” about the “nature of marriage” as being solely between a man and a woman. Although the couple disputes the claim that Pack chose to leave rather than being sacked, the firing is nevertheless legal under current Australian law.

Under current provisions in the Sex Discrimination Act, religious institutions have a particular exemption that allows them to discriminate on the basis of someone’s sexual orientation. Similar laws are in place

in NSW, South Australia, Victoria, Western Australia and the Northern Territory.

Following the same sex marriage vote, the Federal Government promised to review laws protecting freedom of religion. In 2019, the government started drafting a religious discrimination bill that would further enshrine the right for religious schools to dismiss gay staff that have different beliefs to the organisation. The IEU is publicly and actively opposed to such legislation.

Currently in NSW there is legislation passing through the NSW Parliament for a series of amendments to the Discrimination Act, proposed by One Nation MP Mark Latham. The proposed amendments were recently endorsed by a parliamentary committee, with the Committee Chair, Gabrielle Upton urging the recommendations be adopted and laws introduced by the end of the year.

The IEU was a signatory to a joint statement from a coalition of prominent of NSW health bodies, women’s organisations, unions, faith-based groups and LGBTIQ+ community groups criticising the Joint Select Committee

Inquiry report into One Nation’s NSW Religion Bill, saying many concerns regarding the Bill have been ignored.

IEU Organiser Patrick Devery said, “the recommendations of this Committee would entrench the ability for faith-based organisations to continue to discriminate against workers who have different beliefs, no matter how well they can do the job required of them, even where religion is not relevant to the role.”

This means teachers in faith-based schools would remain vulnerable to losing their jobs, simply because they have different beliefs to their employers”

Promoting any single right, untethered from the broader suite of human rights, is untenable, and the IEU believes these issues are best handled under existing employment law. The One Nation Religion Bill is seeking the unfettered ability to discriminate openly against the LGBTQI community, and the IEU strongly opposes this, believing LGBTQI rights to be human rights.

This story has gained a lot of public attention, including on the union’s social media channels. See a selection of what

your colleagues had to say below.

**Cheryl** - So basically they knew she was gay when they hired her and didn’t have a problem with it until a “member of the public” emailed and complained two years after she was hired. But then they claim they didn’t sack her but she prayed on it and left of her own will. Really, I think the employer has no morals.

**Wendy** - It was only a matter of time! Time to now stand up and oppose this in the strongest possible terms!

**Kathy** - I can’t believe this, it really upset me that this still happens.

**Louise** - She was working at a Christian faith-based school you have to abide by their faith.

**Adam** – Nothing Christian about this!

**Simon** – I wonder about the reaction from the Catholic sector, but I also hope for reason and compassion to prevail.



# Palm Sunday: Inclusivity unites us all



**IEUA NSW/ACT Branch Secretary Mark Northam addressed the Palm Sunday rally in Sydney on 28 March. Here are some excerpts from his speech.**

Union values spring from a collective view of society. How can a society be progressive and inclusive? How can we take care of each other?

The pandemic is yielding opportunities for a cultural shift: for an Australia that has reflected on its past and, having learned from that past, gained the confidence to create a better, more progressive and inclusive future.

After World War II, Australia made a public policy decision to expand its population by 6 million people. New ideas emerged that we now recognise as the principles of multiculturalism. By the mid-1970s, we had begun embracing diversity.

Think back to 1976, when the first Vietnamese refugees arrived by boat in Darwin. Australian fishermen greeted them and gave them coins so they could “ring

someone” to let them know they were here. Our instinctive response was inclusivity.

Think back to 1989 and the Tiananmen Square massacre: on national television, then Prime Minister Bob Hawke offered asylum to some 42,000 Chinese nationals in Australia. Again, our instinctive response was provide safe harbour – and it translated into workable policies.

Why have we now discarded this?

**Hope in humanity**

In the 2020 lockdowns, union members in schools pivoted almost overnight to teaching online. This same ‘can do’ spirit of cooperation emerged in all professions and industries throughout Australia. Acting collectively is the foundation of the trade union movement and a core Australian value – but one we seem to have lost sight of in recent years.

As one of the world’s wealthiest nations, that Australia makes a conscious choice to withhold support to refugees is a national

shame. But we are also withholding justice from hundreds of people who’ve fled violence and persecution and sought our help, only to suffer dehumanisation at the hands of our brutal offshore detention program.

To meet our international obligations and rebuild community acceptance of refugees, Australia needs to readopt union values of dignity, inclusiveness and respect.

**Biloela builds union**

Dignity, inclusiveness and respect are the values of Biloela, from where Priya and Nades Murugappan and their daughters, Kopika (5) and Tharnicaa (3), were taken and placed into detention more than 1000 days ago. They are still on Christmas Island now. One day in mandatory detention is too many; any longer is utterly unconscionable.

The Biloela community has acted in ways familiar to union members. They’ve built campaigns and petitions that have reached right across the country. This regional community has built the kind of strength

and power that no individual could ever hope to achieve on their own.

Theirs is a just plea for humanity in the face of inhuman institutional power and violence – again, themes that ring true for the union movement.

**Strength in citizens**

The Murugappan family’s plight represents the torture the Australian government inflicts upon refugees. The united Biloela community represents the compassion of the Australian people.

We can all unite and demand to free all the refugees and close the camps. We can demand permanent visas for refugees – not restrictive conditions that condemn them to poverty. We create peace, we can reject racism, we can be inclusive. We can achieve great things by acting in unison.

We call for all refugees in detention to be set free. We call for justice for refugees.

**Monica Crouch** Journalist



## Call for freedom for refugees

IEU member Adrian Gomez (centre) teaches Religion and History at St Leo’s Catholic College in Wahroonga. He is pictured here on Palm Sunday with his friends Thanush (left) and Ramsi (right) who are refugees from Sri Lanka. Both were detained on Manus Island for eight years. They were only released in January this year.

“I attended Ramsi’s 30th birthday in February, his first in freedom since he was 22,” Adrian said. “I invited Thanush

to speak at a St Leo’s Catholic College assembly in March to share his story with our community. I was proud to stand with Thanush and Ramsi on Palm Sunday to call for freedom for their friends and all refugees who are still unjustly detained. ‘I was a stranger and you welcomed me’ is at the heart of the Christian message.”

If your school or community wants to help: the Jesuit Refugee Service in Parramatta and the Asylum Seekers Centre in Newtown always welcome support.



# Labour bites

Major industrial news from Australia and around the world, bringing you the latest in the struggle for workers justice. Compiled by journalist Angus Hoy.



## Amazon’s brutal anti-union campaign

Amazon won the majority of ballots cast in the union election by the company’s warehouse workers in Bessemer, Alabama, in a major setback in the fight to organise one of the most powerful corporations on the planet.

In an election in which around 5800 workers at Amazon’s Bessemer, Alabama warehouse were eligible to vote, the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) received 3215 mail-in ballots. Amazon secured a majority of ‘no’ votes on the question of unionising with the Retail, Wholesale and Department Store Union (RWDSU). Were they to unionise, these workers would have become the first unionised Amazon employees in the United States.

The union has announced that they will file objections with the NLRB over Amazon’s conduct during the election process, claiming the employer “created an atmosphere of confusion, coercion and/or fear of reprisals and thus interfered with the employees’ freedom of choice.”

Amazon was able to hold “captive audience meetings,” mandatory sessions where workers heard management tell them why they shouldn’t unionise, where they are able to misrepresent facts with little to no penalty. The company texted workers several times a day to urge them to vote no, and covered bathroom stalls with anti-union flyers.

That Amazon can do any of this is evidence of how existing labour law favours employers.

Notably, none of these actions would be legal under the PRO Act, a labour law reform bill that recently passed in the United States House of Representatives. In a press conference the RWDSU’s president, Stuart Appelbaum said as much, stating, “We have to work hard for labour-law reform.”

Source: Jacobin



## #UNIONWIN for workers in Melbourne

On the evening of 7 April, after almost six weeks on strike, United Workers Union members at McCormick voted to accept a new offer from the company. For five years McCormick has worked to slash hard-won conditions and offered

a 0% pay rise. After almost six weeks on strike, McCormick workers have managed to retain all the conditions and won a fair pay rise.

The offer includes a 9% pay rise across three years, retaining all previous conditions the company wanted to remove including a four-day week roster, and a \$5000 sign-on bonus.

McCormick is a multi-national corporate giant, with a market capitalisation of \$US24 billion, and boasts over \$5 billion in annual sales across 160 countries and territories. The company’s wage cutting drive at the Melbourne plant is part of an international restructuring offensive against its global workforce. In other words, this unlikely to be the end of the struggle for workers at the Melbourne plant and elsewhere.

Source: United Workers Union



## Palestinian workers in Israel and the settlements

A new report released by the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC) has revealed the scandalous exploitation of Palestinian workers who work inside Israel and in the illegal Israeli settlements on Palestinian land.

High unemployment in the West Bank and Gaza is leaving Palestinians with little alternative to taking jobs in Israel and the settlements. More than 130,000 people try to earn a living in this way.

The report exposes the reality of low wages; poor occupational health and safety; the humiliation of having to queue at border crossings to enter Israel; gaps in social protection; and the oppressive labour broker system that many workers are still forced to use, even though the system has been removed by the Israeli authorities in the construction sector.

Key recommendations in the report include: a complete end to the exploitative labour broker system; respect for the fundamental rights of the workers, in line with the floor of labour protections guaranteed in the ILO Centenary Declaration including an adequate minimum wage; occupational health and safety and maximum limits on working hours; labour inspection; social protection; due diligence requirements on employers.

“On top of the injustice of occupation, Palestinian workers in Israel and the illegal settlements face injustice at work as well. Israel must fulfill its obligations under international law,” said Sharan Burrow.

Source: International Trade Union Confederation

# Happy World Support Staff Day

Carolyn Collins

Vice President Support Staff



**Support staff throughout the world celebrate World Support Staff Day on Sunday, 16 May. This was a day for us, and our school communities, to recognise and celebrate the work that each and every one of us contributes to our workplaces**

This is a momentous time for school support staff in Catholic schools to gain parity with state schools’ counterparts. Through the work of the Catholic Employment Relations/IEU Support Staff Joint Working Party, we hope to gain recognition of the crucial role we provide to quality education. The mainstay of this push is to receive a just and equitable monetary recognition, which reflects our status, and contribution to quality education.

## Read Gaining Ground

I urge all staff to read the IEU enews for support staff, *Gaining Ground*, which

recently landed in your inboxes. It’s invaluable in communicating our agenda. In particular, please go into *El Declaration* on the Rights and Status of ESP. It is so worth a read! Scroll down to Declaration on the Rights and Status of Education Support Personnel, which talks eloquently about the role of support staff.

I urge all support staff to celebrate, in whatever way your school deems fit, our day! It’s a Sunday, so pick a day close to it. Celebrate for a day, a week or the whole month, we are worth it! Please take photos and send to [newsmonth@ieu.asn.au](mailto:newsmonth@ieu.asn.au). Enjoy and celebrate World Support Staff Day!

Recruit any support staff who are not members of the union in your workplace. It is easy! Go to [www.ieu.asn.au](http://www.ieu.asn.au) and follow the prompts. The more support staff members we have, the greater our voice becomes and the more benefits we can gain.

# Step-by-step guide to buying property

**The process of buying a new home can be both exciting and overwhelming. Becoming familiar with the following steps can help reduce any stress involved in the buying process.**

- 1. Budget**  
Decide how much you can afford to spend, keeping in mind all the additional costs associated with buying a home.
- 2. Research**  
Research the market in the area where you want to buy. Look at local infrastructure and amenities such as public transport, educational facilities and shopping centres.
- 3. Pre-approval**  
Having pre-approval means you can move quickly when you find your dream home. When applying, you’ll need to provide employment history, income and expenses, assets and liabilities and some personal details.
- 4. Inspections**  
Your solicitor or conveyancer can recommend what property inspections to undertake. You should check with local council and state government about zoning issues and future developments that may affect your home.
- 5. Offer and approval**  
Once your offer has been accepted, a holding deposit needs to be paid. The following ‘cooling off period’ is a set number of days specified in the contract in which you can walk away from the agreement to purchase the property.

**6. Contract deposit**  
If paying the contract deposit from your own funds, you can generally use a personal cheque or a bank cheque. If part of the contract deposit is coming from your home loan, you may need to use a deposit guarantee.

**7. Contracts and legal work**  
Do your research and find a reputable conveyancer or solicitor that meets your needs. Ask them to explain the contract so you understand the contents before signing. Your conveyancer or solicitor will then organise for you and the vendor to sign contracts and pay your contract deposit.

**8. Settlement**  
This is when you take legal ownership of your new home, usually four to six weeks after contracts are exchanged. The balance of the purchase price will need to be paid. Your solicitor or conveyancer will arrange this with your lender, then advise the real estate agent to give you the keys.

**Looking for all the information on home buying in one place?**  
At Teachers Mutual Bank, we’re aware there are many factors to consider when choosing a home loan. Discover more about getting started with buying a home with our helpful resource centre at [www.tmbank.com.au/home-loans/resources](http://www.tmbank.com.au/home-loans/resources)



*Disclaimer: The information contained in this article is of a general nature only and should not be taken as financial or legal advice on any of the topics discussed. Always consult a financial adviser before making any investment decisions.*



# Mobile early childhood services under extreme pressure

## Letter to the editor



**I work in a mobile preschool, working with about 40 children a year. There is about 150km between our two outermost venues. I have a number of children at risk of falling into that 22 percent that start school developmentally vulnerable.**

We have worked hard to develop transportation to move children between venues, so that they can access the recommended 15 hours per week of preschool education. Many of our children require speech or occupational therapy but cannot access regular services.

The barriers we face in our everyday operation are enormous. We work in five venues across the week:

- a school library (so cluttered with resources and not really a good space for our 15 students)
- a church hall that contains asbestos (so the pressures of checking for maintenance and even obtaining the documentation is challenging)
- a town hall, that is not at all suited to preschool – so we venture into the community to create the needed experiences
- a CWA room, that is reasonably well suited with the exception of the toilet location and no office space, and
- an old town hall supper room, that is very challenging to work with and again, contains asbestos.

We bring our equipment, travel long distances (three hours driving for me each Wednesday) and have to do our own cleaning. It is tough – very tough.

We have to deal with five different management groups, think about vermin control and fire extinguisher tests and ensuring we have the documentation for each venue, as well as do five lots of transportation risk assessments, just to get to the venues and then more risk assessments to go anywhere – which we need to do often because our facilities are so poor.

We have five lots of ambulance subscriptions to pay \$800 per year, compared to one centre subscription for the same number of children.

I still teach three days a week.

We have created a wonderful learning environment, with an excellent program and the children are doing well. Parents are happy. But I am exhausted and will leave the position shortly.

What is expected of me is not realistic. The requirements of the National Quality Framework are huge. Then there are the different bodies that we are asked to deal with. I deal with J at the capital works team. I deal with C from a regulatory perspective. I deal with V as the assessing officer and S on the agile team. Then there's the Deloittes team and what is required in the funding review.

And that's without even adding the National Workforce Census, the desire to progress reconciliation and the need to be abreast of the current information. I subscribe to CELA, CCSA and ECA and do my best to read information. I was doing this after dinner at night, but I have learned that going to bed with my head buzzing is not conducive to a good night's sleep. Given that I am driving long distances, with children in the car, I have stopped doing this.

I have tried completing the Be You online workshops and reading the mountain of information on wellbeing, but it's hard to find the. Access to a quality early childhood program is what is most important for these children and some only get 40 single days a year. (Casual teachers are not available in the places I go to.)

We still program, write up our observations and liaise with parents, for these are the things we enjoy and are trained to do.

Judging by the amount of information I see on teacher wellbeing I am not alone. Yet, the load never gets lighter.

On top of all of this, I am employed by a council. So there's plenty of red tape.

I hope this helps you understand the barriers that people are facing in helping some of our most vulnerable children.

**Nominated Supervisor of a NSW Mobile Service**

## UNION SNAPS



**Sally-Anne Croker at St Mary's Primary, Crookwell, receives her IEU Rep gift, with Rachael Croker and Alison Cummins**



**IEU Organiser Berna Simpson presents IEU Rep Paul Corcoran from St Joseph's Primary Boorowa with his Rep's compendium gift**



**Reps Mary Khano and Sean Kelly with chapter members, holding their 2.5% pay rise mugs (part of the union's AIS campaign) at St Hurmizd Assyrian Primary School Greenfield Park**



**Rep Natalie Maddock of Wycliffe Christian School Warrimoo accepts her Rep gift from IEU Organiser Ann-Maree McEwan**





# Expanding IEU opens Lismore office

**The IEU was delighted to open its Lismore office on Thursday 25 March, after celebrations had been delayed by COVID-19 restrictions.**

Opening a union office is always an occasion as it indicates strong and increasing membership, said the Secretary of Unions NSW, Mark Morey, who spoke at the opening. (Unions NSW is the peak body representing more than 600,000 union members throughout the state.)

“The thing about the IEU is it is a big, diverse union, and one of the growing unions in our movement,” Morey (pictured below, left) said. “That the IEU is opening a new office in a regional area – that’s the strength of this union, it is across the whole of New South Wales. It’s a union that builds community hubs.”

The IEU advocates for members’ rights at work no matter

where that workplace is. “Unions have always been part of the fabric of regional towns,” said IEUA NSW/ACT Branch Secretary Mark Northam (pictured above).

“This new office is in the heart of a growth area. We are proud to open an office serving our members in this region. It is always important to have active union support in regional areas.”

The Lismore office supports two of the IEU’s Sub Branches: North Coast, which boasts 2543 members; and Mid North Coast, which has 2156 members.

Also speaking at the launch was IEU President Christine Wilkinson (pictured below, right), who acknowledged that the Lismore office is on the lands of the Bundjalung Peoples.

IEUA Assistant Federal Secretary Christine Cooper came from Brisbane for the occasion. Also in attendance were

IEU Deputy Secretary Carol Matthews, IEU Rep and Executive member Suzanne Penson of Mackillop College, Port Macquarie, and representatives from the Lismore Catholic Schools Office. Retired organiser Peter Bishop came from Sydney, along with Sandra White, retired North Coast Organiser.

“Opening this office is a significant milestone,” said Northam. “Members on the North Coast are well served by this office. The union is rightly proud of supporting its purchase and fitout.”

IEU Organisers Steve Bergan, Carolyn Moore and Richard Ryan are based in the Lismore office, with professional support from Cassie Barnes.

**Monica Crouch** Journalist







**A dignified retirement for all workers, pooled assets professionally invested with diversity, wholesale group insurance for death, injury and salary protection, the benefits of compounding interest over a lifetime, massive investment in Australian infrastructure, exposure to share markets for all workers – this is socialism, right? And this is precisely why the neo-cons hate compulsory super and industry funds in particular.**

Their latest and most serious attack on our superannuation system comes in the guise of a bill called Your Future, Your Super. It is a bill which *The New Daily* describes as “a perfect storm” and is an unprecedented attack on the foundations of our superannuation system. Experts from both industry funds, the Law Council and consumer groups have strongly criticised the bill in its current form as deeply flawed, yet the Treasurer has put this bill forward as a ‘reform’.

Firstly, the bill purports to identify underperforming funds over two-year periods and would bar them from taking on new members. In this case the alleged underperforming funds would be publicly identified and members of these funds would most likely be targeted by predatory organisations seeking to switch them into another fund which may be a worse performing fund.

Weeding out underperforming funds or forcing them to merge is clearly supported by industry funds. However, under the current proposal some funds could be measured against other funds with a different investment agenda (for example attitude to a long-term infrastructure investment) and could therefore be classified as underperformers.

The performance benchmarks at present do not take into account different levels of risk and different asset classes selected by investment managers and fund trustees. Certainly not comparing apples with apples!

Second, the bill covers MySuper products only in terms of costs. It does not include certain retail funds’ products in the comparison and does not include administration costs. Since industry funds in general have provided members with a lower fee structure than retail funds, under the proposed model many retail funds will not be named as ‘underperforming’ because their administration fees are not counted.

The bill clearly targets industry funds! Xavier O’Halloran, Director with Super

Consumers Australia, has told a recent Senate inquiry, “To have a double standard where consumers in some funds don’t find out they’re in an underperformer, but everyone else in the market does, could create some real consumer harm”.

Third, in a dangerous brushstroke of ministerial overreach, the proposed legislation would give the treasurer the power to block funds’ spending even if the spending were in the members’ best financial interest. This proposal would set a new precedent for government intervention into our superannuation system.

At present both APRA and ASIC have extensive powers to regulate super, yet the new bill proposes to reverse the onus of proof so that trustees would have to prove why an investment is in members’ best interest. The sole purpose test which stipulates that superannuation savings should be used in retirement for the benefit of members and their dependants only is already in place and so is a huge body of trust law relating to trustees’ fiduciary duties to their beneficiaries.

So in theory the treasurer would have the power to demand that the trustees provide proof that their expenditure on their stationary bill was in the members’ best financial interest. A red tape nightmare and which, by giving the treasurer discretion to choose his targets, gives the government the weapons and opportunity to weaken industry funds while the coalition is in power.

So the neo-con agenda driven by ideology goes on – COVID withdrawals, withdrawals for home purchases, withdrawals if you have been subject to domestic violence, questions surrounding the implementation of the 12% super increase even though it is legislated to start from 1 July 2021.

One wonders why the ideological battle is ongoing given the positive performance of industry funds when examined in the recent Royal Commission into Misconduct in the Banking, Superannuation and Financial Services Industry. Is it the ‘socialism’ word?

**Bernard O’Connor** NGS Super



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# Giveaways



## #HigherSelfie

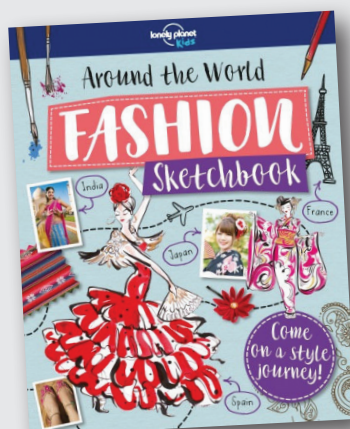
Publisher: Hay House  
Author: Lucy Sheridan and Jo Westwood

There is a cosmic alarm clock going off around the world. #HigherSelfie's aim is to unite all those waking up spiritually in this digital age. This book is a guide to love, connection, and kickass surrendered action for young people who have at least a toe in

the door of spirituality. With a no-nonsense approach and full of wit and humour, this book shares age-old concepts in a language that is accessible to the modern spiritual audience. Whether you have just bought a yoga mat or have been meditating for years, this book will offer you guidance and support, whatever stage of the journey you're at.

Life coaches Jo Westwood and Lucy Sheridan touch upon timeless topics such as forgiveness, surrender and the ego, as well as subjects specific to the current age, such as using social media in a healthy way, finding a like-minded tribe, and following your own spiritual and life paths without comparing yourself to others.

Whether you're a Reiki master, climbing the corporate ladder or working in a suburban garden centre, #HigherSelfie will be the perfect 'gateway drug' for those looking for something deeper and more meaningful.



## Around the World Fashion Sketchbook

Publisher: Lonely Planet Kids  
Author: Jenny Grinsted

From the Indian sari and Mexican Day of the Dead costumes, to Chinese wedding dresses and Scottish tartan, this book takes kids on a seriously stylish journey to discover the fashion, clothes and fabrics worn by different cultures around the world. Full of fun activities, there's plenty of space for kids to get creative and design their own outfits.

Lonely Planet's Around the World Fashion Sketchbook explores many of the planet's most famous and iconic clothing styles. Children will get to visit Brazil's amazing Carnival and marvel at its colourful samba dancers, meet Indian women and their beautiful patterned saris, get streetwise with New York's hip-hop scene, take to the saddle in a poncho with Argentina's cowboys, and lots more.



## Friday Barnes, No Escape

Publisher: Puffin Books  
Author: RA Spratt

Friday Barnes is back with a new mystery to be solved. It's two years later . . .

Friday steps out of prison, a shell of her former self. She's still wearing the same brown cardigan, but she swears she's never solving mysteries again! Yeah right – who is she kidding? She can't suppress her brilliant deductive mind and is soon drawn back into the intrigues of Highcrest Academy.

Then Uncle Bernie rings, pleading with Friday to fly to Italy and help him protect the Uffizi Galleries from a team of art thieves – and she can't say 'no' to family. Even if it means travelling to the city where Ian, her ex-boyfriend/nemesis is living.

Will Friday be able to protect Italy's finest artworks? Will Melanie stay awake long enough to help her? And will Ian still be as gorgeous as a Greek god and twice as annoying?



Email entries to [giveaways@ieu.asn.au](mailto:giveaways@ieu.asn.au) with the title of the book you would like to receive in the subject line. Write your name, membership number and postal address in the body of your email. All entries must be received by 15 June 2021.

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