HOW WE MAKE OUR MARK AT THIS FEDERAL ELECTION

Campaign Focus
Paul Bongiorno quizzes Tom
Why We March
Strategic Psychology

We listen, we understand, we care

Child & Adolescent Counselling and Assessments

Strategic Psychology offers counselling and comprehensive assessment services to support children and adolescents experiencing personal, social and academic challenges. We offer assessments and counselling services for:

Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorders · Autism Spectrum Disorders
Ability & Disability · Behavioural difficulties · Depression · Dyslexia
Anxiety · School Related Difficulties · Self-Harm · Gifted & Talented
Specific Learning Disorders · Underperformance & Motivational Difficulties

Medicare rebates available for specific services

Phone 02 6262 6157
www.strategicpsychology.com.au
Contents

Features

Exit Interview: Paul Bongiorno and Tom Greenwell 9
Palm Sunday and Refugees: Associate Professor John Minns weighs in 12
League Tables Becoming A Thing Of The Past 13
Safe Schools Update 23
Feel the Birm: how our Federal Education Minister misses the mark 24
Gonski Update: Eden Monaro 27
Why We March, by Jacqui Agius 28
Why We Birrigai: Campaign Footing, Defining the Issues, and UnionsACT 30
Politics in the Pub with Chief Minister Barr 35
What You Get When You Join 38
UnionsACT Workers Comp Bulletin 42

Regulars

Upcoming Events 4
President’s Report: Consolidating Together 4
Secretary’s Report: Building Momentum 5
News In Brief 6
CTT Report 14
School Assistants Report, by Therese Tonna 16
Women’s Focus 18
Indigenous Focus 20
Member Profile: Standing Pat, by Patrick Judge 34
Book Corner: Robyn Rowland’s This Intimate War, by Karl-Erik Paasonen 36
Member Corner: Ed Does the Maths, by Ed Staples 37
Welcome New AEU Members 41
Council and Executive Resolutions of Note 44
The AEU Office Team 47

Find us on

More info
Cover photo: Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull. Photo by Stefan Postles, courtesy of Getty Images.
Design Spectrum Graphics, sg.com.au
Print Vivid Print, vividprint.com.au
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are warned that this publication may contain images of deceased people.

Contact us
Phone: (02) 6272 7900
Email: aeuact@aeuact.org.au
Web: aeuact.org.au
Facebook: facebook.com/aeuact
Twitter: twitter.com/aeuact
Fax: PO Box 3042, Monuka 2603
Visit: 40 Brisbane Avenue, Barton ACT 2600

Editor
Luke Stickels, Communication and Campaigns Officer
Phone: (02) 6272 7900
Email: luke.stickels@aeuact.org.au
Please get in touch for all advertising enquiries, to share feedback, or contribute to future issues. Materials deadline for our Term 3 2016 edition is June 10.

ACT Educator Magazine \ AEU ACT Branch \ 3
Upcoming events

Register your RSVP at www.aeuact.org.au/events

**Week 1**

Relief Teacher Sub-branch Meeting

**Wednesday 27 April**

4 – 5pm

Centre for Teaching & Learning, Weston Creek

Women’s Network Meeting

**Friday 29 April**

4:30 – 6pm

Centre for Teaching & Learning, Weston Creek

**Week 2**

Branch Executive

**Tuesday 3 May**

5:30 – 8:30pm

United Voice Boardroom, Barton

WILD - Women in Leadership Development

**Friday, 6 May**

4 – 6pm

Centre for Teaching & Learning, Weston Creek

**Week 3**

Next TAFE Council

**Friday, 13 May**

1:30 – 4pm

CIT Reid Learning Centre, Weston Creek

Next Branch Council

**Saturday, 14 May**

9am – 12pm

J Block Theatre, CIT Reid

**Week 4**

Planning for Retirement Training Session

**Thursday, 19 May**

4 – 6pm

CPSU Training Rooms, Barton

**Week 5**

Public Education Week Dinner

**Friday, May 27**

6:30pm – late

National Press Club, Barton

Call us on 6272 7900 to book your tickets by Credit Card.

National Reconciliation Week

**27 May – 3 June**

**Week 6**

School Assistant Network Meeting

**Thursday, 2 June**

4 – 6pm

Centre for Teaching & Learning, Weston Creek

**Week 7**

Branch Executive

**Tuesday 7 June**

5:30 – 8:30pm

United Voice Boardroom

Negotiating with Emotional Intelligence

**Thursday, 9 June**

4 – 6pm

Centre for Teaching & Learning, Weston Creek

**Week 8**

Information Session: Applying in the Transfer Round

**Thursday, 16 June**

4 – 6pm

Centre for Teaching & Learning, Weston Creek

TAFE Council

**Friday 17 June**

1:30 – 4pm

CIT Reid Learning Centre, Weston Creek

Branch Council

**Saturday 18 June**

9am – 12pm

J Block Theatre, CIT Reid

**Week 9**

Next TAFE Council

**Friday, 24 June**

1:30 – 4pm

CIT Reid Learning Centre, Weston Creek

Next Branch Council

**Saturday, 25 June**

9am – 12pm

J Block Theatre, CIT Reid

**Week 10**

Information Session: Applying in the Transfer Round

**Thursday, 16 June**

4 – 6pm

Centre for Teaching & Learning, Weston Creek

TAFE Council

**Friday 17 June**

1:30 – 4pm

CIT Reid Learning Centre, Weston Creek

Branch Council

**Saturday 18 June**

9am – 12pm

J Block Theatre, CIT Reid

**Week 11**

Planning for Retirement Training Session

**Thursday, 23 June**

4 – 6pm

CPSU Training Rooms, Barton

**Week 12**

Public Education Week Dinner

**Friday, July 8**

6:30pm – late

National Press Club, Barton

Call us on 6272 7900 to book your tickets by Credit Card.

**Week 13**

School Assistant Network Meeting

**Thursday, 14 July**

4 – 6pm

Centre for Teaching & Learning, Weston Creek

In your sub-branches, you may have handed over representative roles, and you should definitely have started conversations about union membership with prospective members – keep going! They might not feel like much at the time, but these conversations truly work to grow our union, and add impact to our collective bargaining in the longer term. You might have taken on a sub-branch leadership role for the first time, or otherwise helped set a relevant agenda for the year ahead. Whatever the case, good for you. If everyone does what they can do, we’ll all be so much better off.

If your sub-branch hasn’t established these cornerstones yet this year, figure out what you can do to get things moving. The work should not all be on one person, so give your organiser a call and ask for help.

Let’s make this term about consolidating our membership, individually and together, so we can be as visible and effective as possible.

Lana Read
Our branch has built up credibility in the community by sticking to our principles. We need to make sure we make the most of it in this double election year.

The year so far has shown us what we are up against, and why we must grow in numbers and activity. The ACT Labor-Green government has been hesitating to fulfil its obligations to provide more school psychologists. It is also sending mixed signals around a future Workers Compensation Scheme for the ACT. Meanwhile, the Education Directorate responses to heating and cooling issues this summer demonstrate that we need to continue to demand additional investment in school infrastructure, particularly older buildings. This is a fundamental workplace health and safety matter, and for many, patience is running out.

Nationally, Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull floated a disturbing thought bubble about ending decades of Commonwealth funding support for public schools, while continuing to look after private and independent schools. While even fellow Coalition State Education Ministers rejected the proposal, Mr Turnbull’s view was recently mirrored all too well by his Federal Education Minister Simon Birmingham, in very cordial guarantees he gave to private and independent schools earlier this year.

Suffice to say, we have been called to action from both levels of government, loudly and clearly.

This year is especially peculiar, in that we all go to the polls twice. At the time of writing, 2 July had been flagged as a double dissolution election date, likely to take place if controversial anti-union legislation is blocked in the federal Senate. Term 2 could therefore be campaign crunch time for us.

We need to continue being active in the community, and make our presence felt. Our staff will keep advocating strongly for industrial gains in these matters and more, but please ask yourself: what can you do this year, to stand with your fellow educators, pubic education supporters and union members in the ACT and across the country?

No educator I know has time – we make time for the things we care about. The AEU ACT has built up its credibility in the community over the past several years. We take that into this double election year, with every intention of putting it to work for the best possible outcomes for educators, students and the education community. We are truly in this together.

Glenn Fowler
Branch Executive News

Congratulations to our new General Representatives joining the 2016 AEU ACT Branch Executive, filling two vacancies arising due to staff movements. Don Bemrose joins us from the ACT Schools Office – great to have a voice from that part of our educator community. We also welcome Peter Curtis from Namadgi School. This is Peter’s second stint on Branch Executive, so his experience will be valued.

Canberra Times League Tables Much Improved

This March we prepared ourselves for the annual release of damaging ‘league table’ rankings of every ACT school, based on raw NAPLAN scores in The Canberra Times, as they have done for the last 5 years. However, we congratulate The Canberra Times for significantly abandoning this crude and destructive practice in 2016, and encourage them to stick to their new, infinitely more nuanced and intelligent approach.

Read more about it on page 12.

AEU ACT Secretary Meets the New Minister

Secretary Glenn Fowler met with the new ACT Education Minister, Greens MLA Shane Rattenbury, in March for a productive conversation around the recurring issues: SRA, new reporting templates, and RCD; as well as heating and cooling work safety issues from the Summer. The minister’s office now has a good understanding of the pressing issues in public schools, and we expect positive and effective change this year. We will continue to report developments to you via our online blog, bulletin, social media and future Educator magazine issues.

It is imperative we have an open line of communication with the minister, in order to make our priorities clear, find out what we already agree on, and what we need to work on, in order to have the collective voice of ~3,500 members heard.

Principal Members Survey Results

In Term 1 we surveyed our principal members to gauge feedback on recurring issues that continue to affect our work sites. These issues include the application of SRA in schools, new reporting templates, and the proposed cost-recovery arrangements for 2015 electrical repairs (RCD). Having members in every educator role get active lets us focus our resources accordingly, and formulate the best approach on each given issue. We’ll keep you updated on further developments.

Lisa Wilkinson and Wendy Harmer to Head Up Public Education Dinner 2016

This year’s public education dinner is not far away! On Friday, 27 May, join us for what is always a big night in celebration of public education, its students and professionals. We’re lucky to have comedian and radio host, Wendy Harmer, as Master of Ceremonies, with journalist and Today host, Lisa Wilkinson, as our keynote speaker.

Tickets are on sale now – call the AEU ACT office on 6272 7900 to book yours. $45 for members, $75 for ineligible non-members.

“Short term reprieve” on Paid Parental Leave:

Expectant parents after July 1 have been granted a reprieve on 7th April, as the government admitted it would not be able to get its cutbacks to Paid Parental Leave through the Senate. It will be a battleground issue for the upcoming federal election, and we need to stand in solidarity against this attack on working parents, disproportionately affecting women.

This is a perfect example of why we need members to take concerted action this year. Whatever your usual party affiliations, we clearly cannot rely on the current government to deliver legislation that is in the interests of workers, and particularly working families that face many challenges.
COAG Morning Action for Gonski

Congratulations to the twenty or so AEU members who teamed up with NSW Teachers Federation activists at short notice on the first Friday morning of April to send a strong message to Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull about education-funding equity. Over 30 of us wore Gonski green, and waved placards at commuting workers on their way into Parliament House. Mr Turnbull and Scott Morrison were sighted driving past into Parliament but kept a low profile.

Later in the day, Mr Turnbull was forced to back down on his idea to leave public school funding to the states while continuing to provide federal funding to private and independent schools. State and territory leaders of all political stripes were able to reject the idea, knowing they had strong community support.

If this was your first action standing up for public education, you got an enlivening start! We’ll keep making it clear to our elected leaders that equity matters.

Read more about it on page 26.

New Faces and Roles in the AEU Office Team

We were pleased to once again have a large and impressive pool of applicants for several roles advertised in 2016, and would like to congratulate everyone involved.

Well done to Patrick Judge on winning the new Organiser position in the AEU office. Patrick joins us from from Canberra College, and will be familiar to many members as a highly committed activist, and active Executive member.

Jacqui Agius has meanwhile won the Industrial Officer position, moving over from her Organiser role. Jacqui has worked as a public school teacher and as a lawyer, and will be familiar to many of you as a committed activist and tough negotiator. Organiser Suki Dorras-Walker has taken on responsibility for Jacqui’s schools in central region.

Sam Delaney won the new position of Member Response Officer, and moves over from his role as Interim Officer Manager. Anyone who taught with him at Lanyon High School, has been to Council or called us this year will be familiar with Sam’s great attitude and safe pair of hands for any task or issue.

Lastly, Luke Stickels won the new AEU ACT role of Communication and Campaigns Officer. Reflective of our aims this year and beyond, he joins us from the grassroots community campaigns sector, has been a freelance writer, and sessional lecturer, tutor and researcher at several Australian universities.

Our thanks go to our outgoing staff Tom Greenwell, Garrett Purtill, Sue Amundsen, Michelle Kirby, and Michael Freiberg, for their dedicated work for our union. They leave with our best wishes for future projects.

2016 Rosemary Richards Scholarship Applications

Applications for the 2016 Rosemary Richards Scholarship are now open. Rosemary Richards was a proud feminist, unionist and educator who played a crucial role in shaping the AEU as an organisation that reflects feminist principles. The Scholarship provides a woman member with the opportunity to increase her skills and experience in the union’s work at a state, territory, national or international level.


In order to ensure high quality applications, we suggest consulting with our own Jacqui Agius to refine your proposal. Email jacqui.agius@aeuact.org.au, or call on 6272 7900. Mark your submission “attention to the Branch Secretary”. Our Branch will then assess nominations against the selection criteria in order to determine one nominee that the Branch will endorse for consideration by the Selection Panel.

Applications close on Friday 27 May, 2016. Read more about it on page 19.
Your School’s Workload Reduction Plan

Our last EA included funding for Workload Reduction Plans in each school, but now the onus is on each sub-branch to devise, deliver, then document a specific plan, so we can prove its effectiveness and argue for ongoing funding. We have some plans working well; some a mixed success; and some being tailored further so they can be of significant practical help.

Remember that the Australian Principal Occupational Health, Safety and Wellbeing Survey released by Teachers Health Fund in Term 1 supports many educators’ shared experience: it found that “sheer quantity of work and lack of time to focus on teaching and learning are the biggest contributors to stress”. Stress is 1.7 times higher than for the average population. Burnout is 1.6 times higher than for the general population.

Speak to your sub-branch leadership group to see where your school’s plan is up to. If development or implementation has stalled, contact your AEU ACT organiser. The Workload Advisory Group is made up of experienced union leaders of varying positions across ACT schools, and are also on board to help shape and coordinate plans to logically, sensibly and effectively reduce workload across the system.

Members of the group include:

- Theresa Carroll, General Membership Representative on Branch Executive
- Trina Cleary, Branch Councillor, Hughes Primary School
- Anna Dytlewski, Branch Councillor, Charles Conder Primary School
- Shane Gorman, General Membership Representative on Branch Executive and Principal at Wanniassa School
- Michael Kindler, Principal, Mount Stromlo High School
- Ian Marshall, Branch Councillor, Lake Tuggeranong College
- George Palavestra, Principal, Canberra College
- Karl-erik Paasonen, Branch Councillor,
- Emily Squires, Workload Committee Representative, Gungahlin College
- Glennis Weatherstone, Sub-branch President, Macgregor Primary School
- Annamaria Zuffo, Principal, Lyneham Primary School

From the AEU office, Glenn Fowler, Andy Jennings and Jacqui Agius also sit on the committee.

Birrigai Leaders School

More than 40 members stepped up to the 2016 AEU Leadership Retreat in April. Attendees reported an intense but satisfying two days. We focused first on the top-priority industrial skills and judgment needed to ensure our workplaces are safe, fair and satisfying. The second day, we turned our attention to using relationships and conversations in our campaign work on key public education issues in this double election year.

Every year we bolster and renew our union by committing to keeping our veteran members skilled-up, by asking new members to step up into leadership roles, and looking to get as many of our members as active as possible.

During Term 2 we will build together on our promising campaign track record of recent years – stay tuned for an exciting year of action and solidarity.

Read more about it on page 30.
Exit Interview Paul Bongiorno and Tom Greenwell

With former Communications and Research Officer Tom Greenwell off to pursue love and Bern in California, we were lucky indeed to have distinguished journalist, national treasure and AEU ally, Paul Bongiorno, conduct Tom’s exit interview like a boss. And frankly, who knew it would get so bolshy?

Paul: Thanks for being part of my interview churn. Here’s a drinks voucher – everyone gets one.

[Tom attempts to do a runner with the voucher – see for yourself at www.aeuact.org.au/blog]

Paul: Please state for the record: what brought you to the AEU?

Tom: In one word – relationships. People I looked up to.

Paul: The reason you’re leaving?

Tom: Love.

Paul: And what’s the real reason?

Tom: Love love!

Paul: Favourite part of working for the union?

Tom: Being part of the action.

Paul: Any unresolved staff rivalries?

Tom: No!

Paul: Chips on the shoulder?

Tom: Absolutely not.

Paul: As you’ll be aware, you have a reputation as a charming good listener who can solve any problem that exists or doesn’t exist, but do you think anyone has ever wondered to themselves: “What does Tom actually do?” Please keep your answer to less than 10,000 words.

Tom: It’s the job of the Communications Officer to keep 3,500 people on the same page, so we can all make decisions and take action together. So whether it’s making sure people know about upcoming decisions they can be a part of, taking action, going to a protest, signing a petition.

Paul: What will you miss in the ACT? What will you live without just fine? For example, swiping left on all your mates on Tinder?
replaced the blue-collar unions, and the teachers and public servants are the ones causing the most heartburn to the right.

**Tom:** That’s interesting – in the ACT, my experience is that we’re the union with the ability to take large-scale strike action, and make a difference in that way.

**Paul:** You’ve been with the AEU for several years now – in that time, with everything going on, what is the one thing I’ve done that really stands out and speaks to you personally?

**Tom:** Well I think your reporting throughout has just been... It’s hard to pick out one item above them all... [Laughs]

**Paul:** Seriously though, how do you think the union has changed since either a) in the time you’ve been here, or b) in the time since I came on board for this interview? Who wrote this stuff??

**Tom:** It’s been a total revolution since you got here 15 minutes ago. Over the time I’ve been here, there’s been a really strong push to make our union as member-centric as possible, driven by the express will of the membership, and to be a really active union. So, we work really hard on making events well attended, on taking action with a union contingent at rallies on issues we’re committed to, just making union a really active thing.

**Paul:** Given that you’re heading there in a few days, who do you think is right to lead the USA and the world at this juncture: Bernie, Hillary, ‘the Donald’, Skeletor, a ruling assembly of 17th Century pirates regulated by a swear jar, or Satan from the South Park Movie?

**Tom:** [Laughs] A brokered convention is a distinct possibility, and it could be someone as whacky as that or possibly Mitt Romney. I still think Bernie’s a chance.

**Paul:** Does it have anything to do with defending their rights better in their work situation?

**Tom:** Absolutely – it starts off at that industrial level. One of the reasons why union has been so meaningful to me, and to so many people, is that it arises out of our lived experience and what we’re a natural authority about. We all feel strongly speaking about education because we do it every day. So it’s absolutely about improving our working lives, but you know, we’re also committed as a union to improving students’ learning conditions as much as that.

**Paul:** Former Prime Minister John Howard thought that the teachers unions were more militant than the construction unions...

**Tom:** [Laughs] I wouldn’t mind if John Howard thought that, but I’m not sure that’s the case. I think we’ve got an interesting history where we’ve grown out of being more professional associations and there’s more of maybe a stronger union culture these days, and that’s a good thing.

**Paul:** Former Prime Minister John Howard thought that the teachers unions were more militant than the construction unions...

**Tom:** [Laughs] I wouldn’t mind if John Howard thought that, but I’m not sure that’s the case. I think we’ve got an interesting history where we’ve grown out of being more professional associations and there’s more of maybe a stronger union culture these days, and that’s a good thing.

**Paul:** Former Prime Minister John Howard thought that the teachers unions were more militant than the construction unions...

**Tom:** [Laughs] I wouldn’t mind if John Howard thought that, but I’m not sure that’s the case. I think we’ve got an interesting history where we’ve grown out of being more professional associations and there’s more of maybe a stronger union culture these days, and that’s a good thing.

**Paul:** Does it have anything to do with defending their rights better in their work situation?

**Tom:** Absolutely – it starts off at that industrial level. One of the reasons why union has been so meaningful to me, and to so many people, is that it arises out of our lived experience and what we’re a natural authority about. We all feel strongly speaking about education because we do it every day. So it’s absolutely about improving our working lives, but you know, we’re also committed as a union to improving students’ learning conditions as much as that.

**Paul:** Former Prime Minister John Howard thought that the teachers unions were more militant than the construction unions...

**Tom:** [Laughs] I wouldn’t mind if John Howard thought that, but I’m not sure that’s the case. I think we’ve got an interesting history where we’ve grown out of being more professional associations and there’s more of maybe a stronger union culture these days, and that’s a good thing.

**Paul:** Former Prime Minister John Howard thought that the teachers unions were more militant than the construction unions...

**Tom:** [Laughs] I wouldn’t mind if John Howard thought that, but I’m not sure that’s the case. I think we’ve got an interesting history where we’ve grown out of being more professional associations and there’s more of maybe a stronger union culture these days, and that’s a good thing.

**Paul:** Former Prime Minister John Howard thought that the teachers unions were more militant than the construction unions...

**Tom:** [Laughs] I wouldn’t mind if John Howard thought that, but I’m not sure that’s the case. I think we’ve got an interesting history where we’ve grown out of being more professional associations and there’s more of maybe a stronger union culture these days, and that’s a good thing.

**Paul:** Former Prime Minister John Howard thought that the teachers unions were more militant than the construction unions...

**Tom:** [Laughs] I wouldn’t mind if John Howard thought that, but I’m not sure that’s the case. I think we’ve got an interesting history where we’ve grown out of being more professional associations and there’s more of maybe a stronger union culture these days, and that’s a good thing.
some really big states. I know California, where I’m going, their primary is in June, so it should be an interesting race.

**Paul:** So you don’t think a socialist would destroy the world as we know it?

**Tom:** I don’t think so. To me, Bernie being a socialist is an answer to Obama being called a socialist for 8 years: here’s a candidate who comes along and says, “That’s not an insult.” If you’re going to call someone as centrist as Obama a socialist, you’ve so watered down the meaning of the term.

**Paul:** What news about Australian politics do you hope not to hear about from San Francisco later this year?

**Tom:** I hope not to hear that after a coalition victory, there’s an Abbott leadership coup, and he recovers the prime ministership.

**Paul:** Tom, thanks very much for allowing me to be so generous with my time... [Paul throws printed question list over shoulder in exasperation]

We sincerely thank Tom for his amazing work in union, getting us on the same page for several years. All mistakes may now be attributed to incoming communication and campaigns officer, Luke Stickels.

Disclaimer: no journalistic standards or centrist progressive values were harmed during the production of this interview.
Palm Sunday & Refugees

Associate Professor John Minns weighs in

More of our members are becoming active, and helping the wider community realise that our leaders’ decisions reflect us all.

A throng of AEU ACT members turned out to Garema Place on Palm Sunday, 20 March, to support ~2,000 refugees currently in Australian detention. Over 400 have been detained for over two years, and over 100 are children¹. Your Industrial Officer Jacqui Agius said the rally was a great show of support by our members:

“It’s important for us to be visible on these issues that impact on our students. Many of our schools are based on values that celebrate diversity, and this is one way to show it.”

The rally followed a powerful speech at February Council, by ANU Associate Professor John Minns. He articulated the significant gap between what the current government would have Australians believe, and the documented realities of irregular migration in this country.

Dr Minns refuted the dominant myths from the current government: that locking up asylum seekers makes us safe, that Nauru and Manus Island are safe places for asylum seekers, and that all criticism of detention centre are lies told by “advocates.”

Dr Minns presented a damning track record that implicates both major parties, describing how we are the only country to:

- Have mandatory detention (since 1992) with no limit (since 1993)
- “Outsource” that detention (since the “Pacific Solution,” 2001-07, and 2012 to now)
- Refuse asylum forever to boat arrivals (since July 2013)

Dr Minns called on Australia to end mandatory offshore detention and boat turn-backs, and follow the 1951 Refugee Convention, which does not discriminate on means of arrival. He pointed out that the 2015 UNHCR World Budget was $7 billion, while the Australian 2014 Border Force budget was $3.5 billion, and proposed this money should be used to bolster UNHCR and settle refugees in the community.

As well as being directly relevant to our fundamental human rights and values in schools, the millions left over could restore state and territory funding of essential services in health and education. Imagine that.


AEU ACT Branch Secretary Glenn Fowler finds common ground on refugees with new Greens Education Minister Shane Rattenbury.
Celebrating Our Wins

League tables becoming a thing of the past

It’s taken years, but The Canberra Times largely got the memo this year about damaging League Tables and a better interpretation of NAPLAN snapshots. The Times continues to overemphasise NAPLAN on the education landscape, but a quick review of the paper’s previous NAPLAN editions, including last year’s edition, shows how far we have come.

Educators and the paper’s editorial staff now talk in relative unison about the proper place of NAPLAN and indeed its limitations. Any parent who allows these graphs to influence so-called school choice will do so in defiance of a strong and measured narrative.

We would like to thank the scores of AEU members and Canberra parents who robustly expressed their views about the pernicious effects of league tables through letters to The Canberra Times over the last few weeks. We kept track of 38 such letters, a great campaigning achievement. We cannot always improve things overnight, but if we stick to our guns, over time we can succeed. Today’s gains prove small efforts make a big difference.

During the Enterprise Agreement negotiations in 2015, AEU ACT Branch Secretary Glenn Fowler received a letter from Director-General Diane Joseph, which set out the ACT Government’s position on the limits of appropriate preparation and context for NAPLAN. The AEU commends the Director-General for her leadership in this area. Greens Education Minister Shane Rattenbury also made a positive contribution to the dialogue, leading up to and on the day of publication.

The AEU does not oppose testing, but we oppose high-stakes testing, which has had such a damaging effect in countries like the UK and US, and which NAPLAN will become if we allow it to. We must remain vigilant.

It is important that keep NAPLAN in perspective when we report to parents and carers. There is nothing about school rankings on the MySchool website. Rankings have been the creation of a small number of media outlets, and educators should avoid any mention of rankings in their communications.

Equipping children with literacy and numeracy skills is a major element of our work. However, we all know there is a great deal more to schooling than NAPLAN. It is a win for our union, for students, educators, parents, and the wider community, that has shown they know it this year too.
Earnest Engagements

CIT workplaces continue to provide a mix of tailored professional learning of the highest national standard, as well as nothing short of an industry at risk of ideological changes that would end the sector as we know it. The way forward is clear: together.

AEU ACT Branch Secretary Glenn Fowler, TAFE Council Vice President Karen Noble, and AEU ACT Executive Member Anne Brown met with the Labor Minister for Higher Education, Training and Research Meegan Fitzharris in Term 1. According to Glenn, “We emphasised the need to secure CIT’s future through legislation that commits to 70% of government VET expenditure going to the public provider CIT, with contestability with the private sector to be capped at 30%.” The leadership group conveyed widespread concern that the Commonwealth takeover of the VET sector is of grave concern. “TAFE would almost certainly be at the whims of the free market which has proven so damaging across the country,” said Glenn.

Ms Fitzharris reportedly confirmed that the ACT Government shares those concerns, so we look forward to strong action to provide these safeguards in 2016. Ms Noble reported the meeting to be “positive and productive.”

Craig Sloan, Chair of the CIT Board, attended TAFE Council in March, and engaged with members on the direction of CIT and how decisions impact members. Mr Sloan defined CIT’s focus: “We just need to generate alternate income sources, to be prepared to stand on our own two feet... to deal with potentially losing some public funding, even a slight reduction.” Some members encouraged Mr Sloan to push back on the funding plans in store for CIT from government, rather than just seeking to engage industry as a contingency. There was a general call from the floor for educators to be consulted more thoroughly in proposed changes.

Regarding how individual departments compete for funding with CIT Solutions (CITSOL), Mr Sloan showed he’d heard member concerns: “The fact that we’ve got a corporate entity as an asset is a good thing for us, but it’s about learning how to use them best... they have to implement our strategy, their program has to be checked... We are moving into a commercial world and that’s their strength.” Members conveyed frustration about realising the kind of ‘agility’ under discussion, due to obligations to meet criteria from regulations that competing providers did not have.

Responding to member concerns about the risk of abandoning equity for students in the pursuit of stable finances, Mr Sloan clarified, “When I’m talking about ‘commercial’ responses, it’s not about charging students as much as possible. It’s about going to industry to find demand for specific training we can provide. It’s another layer on top of what we’re already doing.”

TAFE Council covered a range of topics regarding the new TL2 (Teacher Level 2) roles of the most recent EA, several issues regarding mapping workload, and other institutional pressures that impinge on quality teaching and learning. An initial survey was carried out in Term 1 in order to gain insight into how the transition from AST (Advanced Skills Teacher) and STP (Senior Teaching Posts) roles to TL2 was carried out, and what members think of the change.

We need members to turn up to our next TAFE Council, so we can plan strong follow-up actions. We know full well that work pressures make it difficult to participate all the time, but it’s precisely those pressures that underscore the need to show up. Can you come to our next TAFE Council, on Friday 13 May, 1:30-4pm at Reid campus Learning Centre? Can you have a conversation with a prospective member, or a passive member, and help them see the benefit of taking part in their union?
Join the campaign by registering your support at www.stoptafecuts.com.au

Authorised by Pat Forward, Federal TAFE Secretary, Australian Education Union. 120 Clarendon St, Southbank, 3006
Incremental Gains

Following collective bargaining progress last year, we have been putting in the hard yards to ensure that specific details and implementations deliver the best outcomes for all members. Updates on each are below, but bigger news will follow this crucial negotiation period.

School Assistant Review

The School Assistant Classification Review set out under Clause T21 of the ACTPS Admin & Related Classifications Enterprise Agreement 2013-2017, has been underway since 2014. The purpose of the Review is to:

- Develop a classification structure that supports career development for school assistants
- Provide clear work expectations, including the required skills and qualifications, for school assistants.
- Consider the relationship between any changed expectations and appropriate remuneration
- Develop clear and transparent processes for the administration of relevant allowances.

The final package of documents as agreed between the Working Party and recently retitled Educational Directorate (ED), was submitted to Mercer for work value assessment on 24 July 2015.

The AEU and ED met on 2 February 2016 to discuss advice received from Mercer in relation to the School Assistant Classification Review. The AEU accepted that Mercer’s advice responded to the requested services. We agree in principle to the recommendations, noting that further discussion is required around a number of structural and implementation matters.

The Directorate now needs to undertake an internal briefing process. Following this process it is proposed that recommendations and outcomes arising from Mercer’s report are presented to the School Assistant Classification Review Working Group. We anticipate this to occur early in Term 2. Once the Review is finalised and all agreed recommendations are approved, all stakeholders will be notified of the outcomes. We look forward to sharing those with you.

This has been a very long process and we understand any frustration arising from the delay in meeting agreed deadlines. The volume of work undertaken by the members of School Assistant Classification Review Working Group and the input received by school assistant participants, was far more detailed and intensive than anticipated. We believe that this important body of work will enable school assistants and principals to clearly understand the role and work expectations for all school assistants. So please bear with us, stay focused on the big picture, and understand that the final outcome will be better for the time invested.

Beyond the Review process, AEU members will still be collectively negotiating changes and improvements that we want in the next EA. These matters are not bound to the outcomes delivered out of the School Assistant Classification Review, and will not be delayed or effected by it.

Health Access At Schools (HAAS)

Negotiations with ED and ACT Health are continuing regarding the HAAS pilot program being undertaken in schools. A training and qualifications skill set has been developed and agreed to in principle. There are still some substantial outstanding issues to be negotiated and clarified including educator role definition, remuneration, workload, and the role of nurses. We will continue to update and inform members of negotiation outcomes.

We appreciate your patience in this matter. The AEU ACT is working very hard to negotiate the best outcomes.
School Assistants and Teacher Workload Reduction

The Teacher Workload Reduction Plan is being implemented as you read this, and is something that will impact school assistants in a variety of ways. Firstly, it is designed to allow teachers to get on with their core role of teaching. Secondly, it may provide an opportunity for schools to employ more school assistants or offer extended hours to existing part-time school assistants, so this is a reform to embrace. Each school has its own timetable for identifying and implementing their specific plan, so speak to sub-branch leaders in your school to get and keep the ball rolling. The money is there and we all need to ensure it is implemented effectively.

Workload Reduction is not designed to increase the workload of existing staff, so if you find that your workload has increased but your hours remain the same, then you need to advise your AEU School Workload Committee Representative and/or your school’s AEU sub-branch executive, to assist you to resolve the matter. Section Q Guidelines to the Teachers EBA allows for a non-teaching staff member representative on the Workload Committee in your school – this means a school assistant can be on the committee and represent non-teaching staff.

If the matter is not resolved or you would like more information or assistance, please contact the AEU Office on 6272 7900 or email aeuact@aeuact.org.au.

School Assistant Salary Table (ACT)

We get a lot of queries regarding the salaries and classifications of individual School Assistants. This table will help you to know where you are on the incremental scale and what classification you are. The next increase in your salaries (1.5%) will be from 7 April 2016.

It is important to make sure that you look at your payslip and see what ‘Classification/Salary Level’ is recorded as.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Classification</th>
<th>Pay Rates as at 1.7.2012</th>
<th>$2990 or 2% from 1.7.2013</th>
<th>1.5% from 3.7.2014</th>
<th>1.5% from 9.4.2015</th>
<th>1.5% from 8.10.2015</th>
<th>1.5% from 7.4.2016</th>
<th>1.5% from 6.10.2016</th>
<th>1.5% from 6.4.2017</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>School Assistant 2</td>
<td>$38,491</td>
<td>$41,108</td>
<td>$41,826</td>
<td>$42,453</td>
<td>$43,090</td>
<td>$43,736</td>
<td>$44,392</td>
<td>$45,058</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(65.034% of ASO2)</td>
<td>$40,517</td>
<td>$42,294</td>
<td>$42,929</td>
<td>$43,573</td>
<td>$44,227</td>
<td>$44,880</td>
<td>$45,553</td>
<td>$46,246</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$41,583</td>
<td>$43,380</td>
<td>$44,011</td>
<td>$44,671</td>
<td>$45,341</td>
<td>$46,021</td>
<td>$46,711</td>
<td>$47,412</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$42,659</td>
<td>$44,436</td>
<td>$45,103</td>
<td>$45,780</td>
<td>$46,467</td>
<td>$47,164</td>
<td>$47,871</td>
<td>$48,589</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$43,728</td>
<td>$45,505</td>
<td>$46,185</td>
<td>$46,881</td>
<td>$47,584</td>
<td>$48,298</td>
<td>$49,022</td>
<td>$49,767</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Assistant 2/3</td>
<td>$39,421</td>
<td>$41,238</td>
<td>$41,826</td>
<td>$42,453</td>
<td>$43,090</td>
<td>$43,736</td>
<td>$44,392</td>
<td>$45,058</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(65.034% of ASO2/ASO3</td>
<td>$40,537</td>
<td>$42,304</td>
<td>$42,929</td>
<td>$43,573</td>
<td>$44,227</td>
<td>$44,880</td>
<td>$45,553</td>
<td>$46,246</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Broadband)</td>
<td>$41,553</td>
<td>$43,350</td>
<td>$44,011</td>
<td>$44,671</td>
<td>$45,341</td>
<td>$46,021</td>
<td>$46,711</td>
<td>$47,412</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$42,659</td>
<td>$44,436</td>
<td>$45,103</td>
<td>$45,780</td>
<td>$46,467</td>
<td>$47,164</td>
<td>$47,871</td>
<td>$48,589</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$43,728</td>
<td>$45,505</td>
<td>$46,185</td>
<td>$46,881</td>
<td>$47,584</td>
<td>$48,298</td>
<td>$49,022</td>
<td>$49,767</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Assistant 3</td>
<td>$44,933</td>
<td>$46,900</td>
<td>$47,391</td>
<td>$48,102</td>
<td>$48,824</td>
<td>$49,566</td>
<td>$50,299</td>
<td>$51,053</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(65.034% of ASO3)</td>
<td>$46,081</td>
<td>$47,858</td>
<td>$48,676</td>
<td>$49,305</td>
<td>$50,045</td>
<td>$50,789</td>
<td>$51,558</td>
<td>$52,331</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$47,247</td>
<td>$49,024</td>
<td>$49,760</td>
<td>$50,506</td>
<td>$51,264</td>
<td>$52,033</td>
<td>$52,813</td>
<td>$53,605</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$48,474</td>
<td>$50,251</td>
<td>$51,005</td>
<td>$51,770</td>
<td>$52,547</td>
<td>$53,335</td>
<td>$54,135</td>
<td>$54,947</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Assistant 4</td>
<td>$54,064</td>
<td>$55,883</td>
<td>$56,723</td>
<td>$57,675</td>
<td>$58,640</td>
<td>$59,616</td>
<td>$60,609</td>
<td>$61,614</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(21.838% of ASO4)</td>
<td>$55,777</td>
<td>$57,568</td>
<td>$58,494</td>
<td>$59,442</td>
<td>$60,434</td>
<td>$61,452</td>
<td>$62,485</td>
<td>$63,549</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$57,280</td>
<td>$59,140</td>
<td>$60,037</td>
<td>$60,938</td>
<td>$61,852</td>
<td>$62,790</td>
<td>$63,722</td>
<td>$64,678</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$58,700</td>
<td>$60,618</td>
<td>$61,529</td>
<td>$62,462</td>
<td>$63,400</td>
<td>$64,341</td>
<td>$65,305</td>
<td>$66,285</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
A Woman’s Place is in Her Union

AEU members celebrated international women’s day in term 1 with solidarity, wit, and zeal. Your new industrial officer Jacqui Agius checks in to offer some perspective.

On Friday 8 March, the AEU ACT held a dinner to celebrate women’s rights in the workplace, as part of 2016 International Women’s Day. Professor Marion Baird, Chair of the Discipline of Work and Organisational Studies in the University of Sydney Business School, and Professor of Gender and Employment Relations, delivered a fascinating and vital call to action about women, work and family in Australian history. Member stories during the dinner only confirmed what we already knew: the fight is not over for achieving gender equality in the workplace. A delegation of members had earlier attended the United Nations International Women’s Day lunch – a great opportunity to galvanise our members to keep taking action in our workplaces and wider social circles.

The first International Women’s Day was the initiative of German Communist Clara Zetkin in 1911. It has continued every year since then. It is an opportunity to collectively remember the women who have struggled before us, the Suffragettes, the women who fought for equal pay and still fight, the women who fought for reproductive rights and still fight.

Each year, International Women’s Day is an opportunity to celebrate suffrage for Saudi Arabian women since 2015, Oman in 2003, as we recognise that Swiss women have been voting since 1971, and New Zealand women as the first female voters in 1893. Putting domestic violence leave in our Enterprise Agreement for the first time in 2015 recognises how pervasive and urgent the issue is to our union, and hopefully chips away at the stigma to help our society find viable solutions.

We have come a long way but we have many more battles in front of us. We encourage all members to reflect on the inequality and injustices still faced by women in our communities every single day. Domestic violence, pay and superannuation inequality, threats to paid parental leave, and the human rights of women in detention, are all clear and present dangers. Online community group Destroy the Joint reported 79 women killed by violence in 2015, with 25 already killed this year. The Australian Bureau of Statistics last year reported that one in three women experience violence in their lifetime. The average female wage in Australia remains 87% of the average male wage. Dog groomers make more per hour than women who educate our children. The same act that made Australia the second country to let women vote, in 1902, also disqualified Indigenous men and women from voting, and was not corrected until 1962. As long as there is inequity we must continue the struggle for freedom.

We collectively resist because our struggle is far from over, and we collectively hope because our struggle is not just for ourselves, but for our female students. The girls and boys we teach will lead happier and more fulfilled lives, the more equal women in our society are.
Women members of AEU branches and associated bodies are encouraged to apply for the 2016 Rosemary Richards scholarship.

Rosemary Richards was a proud feminist, unionist and educator. Sadly, Rosemary passed away in 2006 after a long battle with illness.

This scholarship, now in its tenth year, is in recognition of the significant contribution that Rosemary made to the AEU as an organisation and to all its members, women in particular. Across the AEU, women’s employment rights and women’s union participation has been steadily advanced due to an active, committed and predominantly female membership, but challenges still remain.

The Scholarship aims to provide the opportunity to a woman member to increase her skills and experience in the union’s work at a state, territory, national or international levels, and by extension, supporting the AEU’s women members. The proposal may include (but is not limited to):

- The establishment of a work-shadowing arrangement or a mentoring arrangement;
- Research or study experiences;
- Formal and/or informal training and development opportunities (e.g. attendance at an appropriate conference); or
- The design and implementation of a discrete project.
- The scholarship is valued up to $10,000 per year.

In order to ensure high quality applications, we suggest consulting with our own Jacqui Agius to refine your proposal. Email jacqui.agius@aeuact.org.au, or call on 6272 7900. Mark your submission “attention to the Branch Secretary”. Our Branch will then assess nominations against the selection criteria in order to determine one nominee that the Branch will endorse for consideration by the Selection Panel.

For more information please refer to the guidelines and nomination form on the AEU Federal website aefederal.org.au/our-work/rosemary-richards-scholarship-2016.

The deadline for applications is Friday 27th May.
National Close the Gap Day

On Wednesday 17 March Red Hill Primary School celebrated National Close the Gap Day. It is Australia’s largest Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health campaign. We downloaded resources from the Oxfam Website to help students and staff learn about national health equality issues. Our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Committee held a morning tea in the staff room, during which we circulated and discussed the Oxfam resources.

Many people on our staff signed a pledge calling upon the Australian government to provide adequate and long-term financing, real partnerships leading to greater control around health care delivery and to address critical issues of housing, education and self-determination for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People.

Australia must address these issues if it is to live up to its reputation as a knowledgeable and caring community. At Red Hill, it is our hope to support and reflect upon our past and present, and project into the future. In this way, our hope is that children will have a better connection to a wider community experience. Through gaining a wide complement of skills and attitudes, our students will be able to support their fellow Australians better.

Red Hill Primary School sub-branch member Sue La Flamme reports in from her school’s National Close the Gap Day action.

Red Hill Primary School staff celebrating National Close the Gap Day

Photo courtesy of Red Hill Primary School AEU ACT sub-branch members, and Oxfam Australia.

National Reconciliation Week 2016

27 May to 3 June

OUR HISTORY, OUR STORY, OUR FUTURE
Indigenous Focus

Indigenous Gonski Delegation goes to Parliament

On 3 February this year, an Indigenous delegation representing the AEU’s Gonski campaign visited Federal Parliament to meet politicians and share their stories of how Gonski is making a crucial difference for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.

The Indigenous Gonski Delegation speaks to media outside Parliament House

The delegation was made up of students, educators, parents and union leaders from three states, including AEU Federal President Correna Haythorpe and AEU ACT Branch Secretary Glenn Fowler.

The delegation met with Federal Education Minister Simon Birmingham, and found support from Opposition Leader Bill Shorten MP, fellow Labor MP Kate Ellis, and Greens Senator Nick McKim. Both Labor and the Greens have costed policies to fund at least half of the Gonski plan in 2018-19.

MPs heard stories of how schools have lifted results for Indigenous students by investing in one-to-one support, engagement and cultural programs, and targeted literacy and numeracy programs. NSW Student Shakeela Williams personally attested to the funding’s transformative success: “The one-to-one help that I get in school through the Gonski funding, has really helped me to excel in my studies.”

Only 44% of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students complete Year 12, compared with 75% of non-Indigenous students. AEU Federal President Correna Haythorpe said, “We know that getting Indigenous students to complete Year 12 increases their life expectancy and chance of employment, that’s why it is crucial that we give them the best education we can.”

Show your support by signing the petition at igiveagonski.com.au. Read more about Gonski on page 26.
Support Upcoming Indigenous Commemorations in Term 2

National Sorry Day is May 26, National Reconciliation Week takes place between 27 May-3 June, and NAIDOC Week celebrations take place between 3-10 July this year. Find out how to make your school part of all three.

National Sorry Day is a significant day for Australia’s Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, and particularly for Stolen Generations survivors. It was one of the 54 recommendations of the 1997 Bringing Them Home Report, about the forcible removal of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children from their families, communities and cultural identity carried out by government from the 1800s to the 1970s. The first National Sorry Day took place in 1998, and Prime Minister Kevin Rudd apologised in Parliament to the Stolen Generations on 13 February 2008.

National Reconciliation Week begins on 27 May, to commemorate the 1967 referendum that saw over 90 per cent of Australians vote to give the Commonwealth power to make laws for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and recognise them in the national census. The week ends on 3 June, commemorating the High Court of Australia’s landmark Mabo decision in 1992, which legally recognised Indigenous people’s special relationship to the land, paving the way for land rights or Native Title.

Later in Term 2, NAIDOC Week celebrates the history, culture and achievements of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, by Australians from all walks of life. We encourage all school sub-branches to participate in a range of activities supporting your local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community.

Have you thought about organising a National Sorry Day, National Reconciliation Week or NAIDOC event in your workplace? Some suggestions include:

- Display the National Reconciliation Week, NAIDOC Poster or other Indigenous posters around your classroom or workplace.
- Start your own hall of fame featuring Indigenous role models.
- Listen to Indigenous musicians, watch a movie about Indigenous history.
- Research the traditional Indigenous owners of your area, study a famous Indigenous Australian, or research Indigenous history online.
- Make your own Indigenous trivia quiz.
- Study Indigenous arts and crafts, create your own Indigenous art, even run an art competition for your school or community.
- Visit local Indigenous sites of significance or interest, learn the meanings of local or national Indigenous place names and words.
- Invite local Indigenous Elders, sportsperson or artist to speak or give a Welcome to Country at your school or workplace.
- Invite Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander dancers to perform.
- Host a community BBQ or luncheon.
- Hold a flag raising ceremony or organise a smoking ceremony.
- Tweet using the hashtag #NRW2016.

Please note that permission is not required to fly either the Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander flag, unless you want to reproduce their image on a flyer or poster. Visit the NAIDOC website to find out more: naidoc.org.au/about. Get resources for NRW from reconciliation.org.au/nrw/resources. To find out about NAIDOC Week activities in your area, email naidoc@pmc.gov.au.

The AEU is a proud supporter of Reconciliation Australia and Recognise.
The SAFE SCHOOLS program has been effectively “gutted”, but the AEU will keep telling the Turnbull Government there is no place for homophobia in our schools.

Following a month of internal pressure from the minority conservative right of their own party, Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull and Federal Education Minister Simon Birmingham issued a list of restrictions to the Safe Schools syllabus that conservative Queensland MP George Christensen hailed an effective “gutting” of the program.

The Turnbull Government’s changes to the Safe Schools anti-bullying program will remove educators’ control over how the program is used, and could make it harder for schools to support LGBTI students.

The AEU will continue to support Safe Schools because it recognises the importance of ensuring all students feel safe at school. AEU Federal President Correna Haythorpe said,

“The Government’s own review of Safe Schools has found that its lesson plans were ‘suitable, educationally sound and age-appropriate’ so why should educators require consent from parent bodies before teaching them?”

Safe Schools has always been a voluntary program and schools retain discretion over which of its materials they use. Research shows that a majority of LGBTI students experience bullying at school, and many suffer long-term effects as a result. Ms Haythorpe also said,

“Educators should be able to make the decision based on their own expertise and knowledge of their schools. This is an unreasonable interference in the professional judgment of educators.”

The ACT and Victorian Governments have indicated they will continue to support the program, including by replacing any lost federal government funding.

ACT Labor Chief Minister Andrew Barr said,

“Our message to LGBTI kids [is] that they are fine, we support them and there is nothing wrong with them and don’t let any Neanderthal conservative tell you anything otherwise.”

Green Education Minister Shane Rattenbury said,

“Secondary schools do not seek individual parental permission for students to access lessons on health, sex education or other kinds of peer support – they should not need to seek individual permission to have access to an anti-bullying program,” he said.

The AEU ACT has worked with all branches to start a petition and show support for the Safe Schools Coalition in the media. In April, the office sent flowers with messages of support once it became clear their national, state and territory offices were suffering from sustained abuse by phone, email and social media following the review. At the time of writing, the AEU ACT Branch was planning a big turnout for the Defend Safe Schools on 23 April, to send a further message to the Turnbull Government.

Sign the petition to show your support: megaphone.org.au/petitions/support-the-safe-schools-program-no-review-needed
Stop me if you’ve heard this one before: a man walks into a bar. The bar is hosting the National Education Forum put on by the independent schools sector. The man does his best to deny any link between education funding and student performance. [Canned laughter ensues]

Our Federal Education Minister Simon Birmingham addressed the Independent Schools Council of Australia and Association of Heads of Independent Schools of Australia in March this year, and the result was a sustained, eloquent wriggling out of his government’s responsibilities.

Despite outing himself as “a proud product of the public school system”, Mr Birmingham goes to great lengths to neutralise the arguments and experiences of educators making the case for funding equity:

“The debate about the quality of our school education counterparts has been more concerned by what have been the calls for the surrogates for quality... such as spending limits, class sizes or teacher-student ratios.” [emphasis added.]

AEU members understand well the significant effective difference for students and educators between a funded versus defunded program, or between classes of 31 versus 18.

We welcome a productive dialogue with Commonwealth, state and territory ministers of education any time. However, common ground seems to start further back than we would prefer:

“Spending more does not automatically equal better outcomes... I hear a lot now about needs-based funding... Often [it’s] used as a proxy for arguments for more funding in totality, which indeed successive governments have provided.”

Rolling a rhetorical Yahtzee, Mr Birmingham seems at once: a) sceptical about the core principle of needs-based funding, b) confuses the principle with its political use, and c) argues more funding has already been provided.

When Mr Birmingham discussed education funding ratios to GDP, he claimed that in 2012 Australia’s funding was 4%, compared to the OECD average of 3.5%. However, not only was this funding under a Labor government, he was counting “both public and private contributions, which reflects Australia’s unique public and non-government education system, as those of you in this room most certainly appreciate.”

However, Australia is 30th out of 34 OECD countries regarding equitable distribution of resources between disadvantaged and advantaged schools. The increase for private schools from 1999-2000 to 2013-14 was over double that for public schools – 31% compared with 14% for public schools.1 There’s good reason why Mr Birmingham would not want to discuss funding differentials between the two sectors. Between 2009-10 and 2013-14, public school funding actually fell by $344 per student while

In the USA, #FeelTheBern has become a stirring call to progressive action around Democrats candidate Bernie Sanders. With Federal Education Minister Simon Birmingham deciding many budget and policy decisions that affect ACT educators this year, #FeelTheBirm should also be a stirring call to progressive action, but for very different reasons.

FEEL THE BIRM How our Education Minister misses the mark

In the USA, #FeelTheBern has become a stirring call to progressive action around Democrats candidate Bernie Sanders. With Federal Education Minister Simon Birmingham deciding many budget and policy decisions that affect ACT educators this year, #FeelTheBirm should also be a stirring call to progressive action, but for very different reasons.
private school funding increased by $838 per student.

The idea that more money doesn’t deliver better results is one of the key “big lies” identified by economist Trevor Cobbold in a recent speech, as well as being something educators can refute with each working day. Successive Liberal education ministers have claimed that Australia’s declining PISA results show spending more on schools will not improve results. Hence Mr Birmingham’s pledge to his audience:

“I have resisted ideas that I should simply do a deal that deals with the so-called final two years of Gonski rather than actually engaging in thorough conversations to try to achieve longer term outcomes... Most importantly... we do need to shift the education debate away from one that is dominated by inputs like funding.”

Cobbold argues that the reason Australia’s PISA and NAPLAN results have not improved is because funding increases have been woefully misdirected to favour privilege over disadvantage. He cites research that shows how inefficiency in school expenditure appears to be confined to private schools. A study by Melbourne Institute for Applied Economic and Social Research shows that the decline in PISA results was largely a result of a decline in private school results, despite their large increase in funding.

Ironically then, Mr Birmingham is right to say, “Spending more does not automatically equal better outcomes,” but he does not hold his audience accountable to why. As David Gonski said in 2014:

“[T]he way monies are applied is the important driver. Increasing money where it counts is vital. The monies distributed over the 12-year period to which the commission refers were not applied on a needs based aspirational system.”

Mr Birmingham says the Commonwealth Government pays more per student to the states and territories government schools, and that more students have shifted from government to non-government schools. He laments that despite both factors effecting to “reduce the cost pressures on the states and territories, they continue to have the gall to say there is a funding crisis.”

But the biggest problem might be about what the minister thinks it can achieve:

“Schools can make a difference, and do make a difference, but we should be honest enough to acknowledge that their influence has limits in the face of these wider social, cultural and individual factors, which in part explains why all of the extra funding targeted to schools and students has a limited impact in tackling areas of disadvantage.”
If Mr Birmingham’s message here is that education solutions for socio-economic disadvantage are too hard for him to meaningfully tackle as the responsible minister, Australia might want to consider someone else for the job.

Mr Birmingham’s manifest helplessness wilfully ignores the many international studies that show increased funding improves results. A recent Rutgers University study shows strong evidence of a positive relationship between school funding and student achievement, and that particular school resources that cost money have a positive influence on student results.3

Many studies also show that money matters particularly for disadvantaged students. For example, the February Quarterly Journal of Economics found that a 10% increase in per-student spending each year for all 12 years of public school increases their adult earnings by nearly 10% and family income by 16%. The annual incidence of adult poverty is also reduced by 7%. These benefits “are large enough to justify the increased spending under most reasonable benefit-cost calculations” 4

Despite the analysis and advocacy done by David Gonski, Trevor Cobbold and international education experts, the greatest cut-through may come from the Liberal Party itself:

“Anyone who argues money doesn’t matter in schools is wrong. If money didn’t matter, why would people spend $30,000 a year to send their kid to a school like Sydney Grammar, Malcolm Turnbull’s old school? To say money doesn’t matter is incomprehensible.” — Adrian Piccoli, 5 April 2016”

The benefit of Mr Birmingham’s address is to lay bare the Federal Liberal-National Coalition’s clear agenda for Australian education. Indeed, Mr Birmingham’s expressed views closely match his Prime Minister’s attempt to pass education of public schools onto states and territories at the last COAG meeting. This plan to cleave government and non-government schools away from each other was so wrong-headed, that their own Liberal NSW State Education Minister Adrian Piccoli labelled the plan “the biggest mistake in education policy – probably forever... It would entrench a two-tiered education system.”

From our federal minister’s comments to the independent schools sector, the problem is not that his government can’t find the money to reduce disadvantage in Australian society, it’s that he can’t find the will. Mr Birmingham sounds like a man who has given up on public schools and put them in the proverbial ‘too hard basket’. It seems that a core principle of the Liberal Party’s own self-rationale: to provide opportunity, does not apply evenly across the country it seeks to govern for another term.

Do you #FeelTheBirm yet? Sign up to a campaign event with UnionsACT on page 31, or visit aeu.org.au/events.

Source: Estimates based on figures drawn from the Report on Government Services (ROGS) published by the Productivity Commission (SCRGSP 2002, 2016). Public schools funding has been adjusted to exclude user cost of capital, depreciation, payroll tax and school transport, because these items are not included in government funding figures for private schools and have no impact on school outcomes.

1. Statistics quoted in this article are from Trevor Cobbold’s “Can We Afford Gonski” Speech to a State-wide Meeting of the Victorian Association of State Secondary School Principals in March 2016, unless otherwise noted.

2. Quoted in Cobbold, Trevor, ibid.


EDEN MONARO

Your new editor learns that an Eden Monaro is not, after all, a muscle car made from pure nature. But it’s still very important.

Eden Monaro used to border the ACT to the southeast, but now surrounds the entire territory. It has long been considered a “bell-weather” electorate, but has become less marginal than it used to be. Nevertheless, it is still our best chance to send a clear message to political parties that want to pick winners from Australian schools.

Your AEU is not politically aligned with a particular party, but we campaign for policy that is good for public education. That means we are campaigning as hard as we can against the Liberal Government in 2016.

During their 2013 campaign, the Liberal Party committed to an infamous “unity ticket” on education funding. However, they have ruled out the final two years of 2018 and 2019 funding, where the bulk cost is due to be allocated.

Federal Education Minister Simon Birmingham has admitted, “Schools have done fantastic things with the extra Gonski money.” However, the Liberals continue to peddle misinformation that schools can be more efficient – run leaner and meaner – without correlating funding.

Your AEU has found effective and interesting ways to get our Gonski needs-based funding message out into the community so far this year. And we’ve needed to.

Ahead of his March COAG meeting with state and territory leaders, Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull voiced his thought bubble to continue federal funding for private and independent schools, while leaving public school funding entirely to the states.

Bizarrely, Mr Turnbull was there to defend the non-government school sector:

“No Coalition Federal Government... would retreat from funding or continuing to support the non-Government school sector because there would be a concern that they would not get a fair go from state governments.”

So it was a great turn-out on the morning of COAG, with twenty or so AEU members teaming up with NSW Teachers Federation activists at short notice to send a strong message to the Prime Minister. Over 30 of us wore Gonski green and waved placards at commuting workers on their way into Parliament House. Mr Turnbull and Scott Morrison were sighted driving past into Parliament, but kept a low profile. Later in the day, a marked lack of support from state and territory leaders forced Mr Turnbull to back down.

We’ve also headed to neighbouring Queanbeyan to talk about Gonski funding and listen to community concerns about securing their children’s education and future. We need you to join us wherever possible. Bring your friends who want to support public education, or want to support you. Together we’ll keep telling our elected leaders that equity matters.

Show your support by signing the petition at igiveagonski.com.au, and by RSVPing to any campaign events you can make time for.

---

1 Interview with The Age, 29 December 2015.
WHY WE MARCH

There’s a lot to stand up for in Australia today. Many values we hold dear have come under renewed threat, from lopsided funding in our country’s health and education, to persecuting the most vulnerable people in our society. But it’s understandable that members question whether everyone else’s fights should be our fight too. Sometimes I get asked: “Jacqui, why do we march for refugees, climate change and other social justice issues? Shouldn’t we just focus on our own industrial campaigns?”

The answer, broadly, is simple: everything is connected to everything else. If we care about education, then why would we stop short of worrying about the education of those who are particularly denied access to education resources and opportunities? Why, for example, would the struggle of parents with children with a disability not be our struggle? Or, why would we not care about the education outcomes for First Nations children, or children seeking refuge?

Audre Lorde, the great feminist poet, once wrote: “There is no thing as a single-issue struggle because we do not live single-issue lives.”

So, if we care about social justice for our kids, then it just makes sense for us to embrace the greater struggle for social change. The bottom line is we are never going to succeed in addressing industrial injustice unless we address the interconnected causes of injustice.

Writer Isabel Allende has one of her characters say: “It was not a question of changing our personal situation, but that of society as a whole.” Does this seem too big to bite off? There is a current dominant tendency towards atomisation and alienation in our society. We need to remember who we are connected to and who we stand in solidarity with. We need to make education truly equitable and health care a human right, so that every person has the basic rights to a place to learn, a place to work and a place to call home.

“There is no thing as a single-issue struggle because we do not live single-issue lives.” — Audre Lorde
Doctor Martin Luther King Jr implicitly understood that everything is connected to everything else. When he was assassinated, he was in Memphis to organise striking garbage workers. He was also focusing strategically on the bigger picture of poverty and its role as an oppressor of African Americans:

“[T]he movement must address itself to the question of restructuring the whole of... society. There are forty million poor people. And one day we must ask the question, ‘Why are there forty million poor people in America?’ And when you begin to ask that question, you are raising questions about the economic system, about a broader distribution of wealth.”

We remember Dr King for his stirring, prophetic words to assembled masses of people who were clamouring for social justice and meaningful change.

Unions are and have always been political bodies, as well as industrial bodies. We are in the business of seeking to create a better place for everyone. It is through our collective voice that we can demand to be heard.

Historically, unions have always been involved in broader social justice issues, from the struggle for First Nation People’s rights to the peace movement and the struggle for gender equality. A prominent example in Australian culture is the lead role played in Sydney, from 1971-74, by the Builders Labourers’ Federation (BLF), in defending heritage sites and the natural environment through its imposition of Green Bans. Their first action was a humble community meeting to judge the level of local support, and by 1974, 42 Green Bans had been imposed, refusing to work on ill-judged projects. This sent a strong message to government and developers about the need for consultation and a stronger emphasis on heritage and the environment. It didn’t last forever, but over 100 buildings considered by the National Trust to be worth preserving were saved by the bans, as well as local public places like The Rocks, Centennial Park, the Botanical Gardens, and the entire suburb of Woolloomooloo.

Lorde, Allende, King, and the BLF, show that no one is an island. Rather than letting the enormity of the task overwhelm us, let us consider our actions, no matter how small, as moments in the greater collective movement for progressive social change.

Once we acknowledge the interconnected nature of being in union for the sake of defending our working conditions, the question should not be why do we march on these wider issues, but rather, why don’t we march? As educators we seek to give our students a better understanding of the world they live in. Before we can teach this to our students, we must first learn and practice it ourselves.

Jacqui Agius is your new Industrial Officer, having previously served as your Organiser. She is an accomplished activist, lawyer and teacher.
Why we Birrigai
Getting on a Campaign Footing

This year’s federal election is an opportunity to ask ourselves: “What kind of society do we want?” Then, answer with conviction.

The AEU ACT has a promising track record for campaigning over recent years. With a double dissolution election likely for July 2, you can expect Term 2 to hold exciting opportunities for action and solidarity.

More than 40 members stepped up to the 2016 AEU Leaders Retreat in April. Attendees reported an intense but satisfying two days. We focused first on the top-priority industrial skills and judgment needed to ensure our workplaces are safe, fair and satisfying. The second day, we turned our attention to building relationships and applying conversations in our campaign work on key public education issues. You can expect a call from a member this year, asking you to make time to stand up for public education in the ACT and across Australia.

Our organisers also took a squad of New Educator members to Bundanoon in March, to join with NSW Teachers Federation’s industrial training workshops, spliced with our own sessions focused on upskilling and inspiring some of the talented people new to education. Between both events, participants gained a strong sense of how to set up a strong and effective sub-branch, leading to better industrial outcomes and overall work experience.

Every year we bolster and renew our union by committing to keeping our veteran members skilled-up, by asking new members to step up into leadership roles, and looking to get as many of our members as active as possible. The connection between industrial sub-branch development and external campaigning is most distinct, when so many of the good habits about conversations, relationship-building, and taking action together, apply to everything we do.

Defining the Issues

As we covered in our Gonski updates (pp.21, 27), and our profile of Federal Education Minister Simon Birmingham (p.24), the very philosophical foundations of education funding equity are under threat. The flagship issue is the Liberal government’s reneging on Gonski funding in the final two years when it counts the most. Educators, students, parents and the wider community, all need that funding.

We’ve already heard how Mr Turnbull wants to hand off public school funding to states, who face a perpetual crisis – you
might remember that the 2014 budget presented states and territories with an $80 billion funding hole for education and health services. This is the same government that tried to charge sick people to see a doctor, when we already pay a levy in our taxes; the same government that tried to keep jobseekers from accessing sub-poverty line benefits for 6 months per year, as “encouragement” into the workforce.

The Prime Minister has let the radical fringe of his own party dictate the “gutting” of the Safe Schools anti-bullying program (p.23). This is the same government whose Attorney-General, George Brandis, sought to change our racial discrimination laws in defence of “the right to be a bigot” in 2014.

Federal Social Services Minister Christian Porter has made an election issue out of Paid Parental Leave, by confirming that despite being unsuccessful in passing a policy to ban it through the Senate, it remains the government’s intention to do so.

The AEU ACT absolutely rejects the “double-dipping” rationale from the Liberal government, in solidarity with experts and the community sector. Paid Parental Leave was designed by the Productivity Commission, was always intended to complement workplace schemes, and has been widely supported by community groups and economics experts, including the Australia Institute and the Australian Council of Social Services (ACOSS). The Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry has criticised the government’s plan to dismantle PPL.

These are just some of the reasons why we will be campaigning strongly this year. If everyone does what they can, our impact will be significant.

Introducing UnionsACT

We’re working closely with UnionsACT this year in order to maximise our efforts and outcomes for members in a double-election year.

The upcoming federal election is an opportunity to extend our solidarity with other unions, whose members all want the same outcomes as us: social equity and a fair go for public services, health, education. That’s why we’re working closely with UnionsACT, who are already doing a great job pooling our collective resources.

The more of us who lift, the less load for each. As Glenn said on page 5, no educators have time – we need to make time for the things we hold dear. Not only is this an opportunity to improve our own working conditions and social surrounds, you’ll meet great people and have powerful conversations you might not have otherwise imagined.

Send your RSVP to UnionsACT Lead CampaignOrganiser Naomi Brooks, at naomibrooks@unionsact.org.au or 0406 049 455, or our own Communication and Campaigns Officer Luke Stickels, at luke.stickels@aeuact.org.au, or 0468 869 957. You can also RSVP via unionsact.org.au and aeuact.org.au.
Slater and Gordon is proud to partner with the AEU ACT Branch

Slater and Gordon has partnered with unions and their members since 1935. We understand the legal challenges you face at work and everyday life.

Our services include:
+ Workers Compensation
+ Industrial and Employment Law
+ Motor Vehicle Claims
+ Superannuation and TPD Claims
+ Family Law
+ Medical Negligence Claims
+ Public Liability Claims
+ Wills and Estate
+ Conveyancing
+ Other legal services

Benefits for AEU Members:
AEU ACT Branch members are entitled to:
+ Initial obligation-free consultation
+ A Free Standard will*
+ 25% off Fixed Fee Conveyancing*
+ 10% off Family Law Fixed Fees*
+ Discounted rates for services

*Conditions apply. Standard wills may not be suitable for all estate types. Fixed Fees excluded disbursements which are charged at cost. See slatergordon.com.au for details

GET IN TOUCH
AEU ACT Branch office
02 6272 7900
for a referral to Slater and Gordon
slatergordon.com.au
NATIONAL PUBLIC EDUCATION WEEK

23-27 MAY 2016

PUBLIC EDUCATION DINNER, National Press Club - 27 MAY
Call 02 6272 7900 to book your tickets by CREDIT CARD

Come help celebrate the work we all do in public education, with our annual Public Education Week Dinner, with special guest MC Wendy Harmer, and special guest keynote Lisa Wilkinson. It’s a big event every year, a bit special and lots of fun.

It’s held again at the National Press Club on Friday 27 May, with drinks from 6:30pm and official proceedings beginning from 7pm.

Tickets are $45 for members, and $75 for ineligible non-members.

Call to book your tickets by Credit Card over the phone with our Office Administration Team, on 6272 7900.
When I started teaching in 2012 I did it because I wanted to make a difference in the lives of young people and be a positive force for social change. I had given up my job as a commercial lawyer and spent a year at university being inspired by stories of the good that I could do in the classroom. It never would have occurred to me that, less than four years later, I would be working as an AEU organiser.

I joined the AEU because I knew that educator-unionists played a strong role in building our public education system. In fact, it was one of the things that attracted me to the teaching profession. As a student, I remembered seeing teachers volunteering on campaigns to seek a better deal for their students, going to weekend events and running stalls at fairs and markets. I was always impressed that my teachers cared so much about getting a better deal for their students. To me, that was true professionalism.

I volunteered to be my school’s representative on Branch Council at my first ever AEU meeting, because my colleagues told me that it would be a good learning experience. They were right. In the classroom I experienced frustrations with resourcing and administration. At Council, I saw how educators could unite to solve them. Being involved in the AEU showed me that teaching extended beyond the four walls of my classroom. An educator alone could only do so much, but as a united profession we had real power to make change.

One of the first big campaigns I was involved in was for the Gonski funding reforms. Just as my teachers had committed their time on my behalf, I committed my time to make sure that my students were getting a fair go. I went to conferences, became a member of Branch Executive, attended ACTU Congress and held almost every position in my sub-branch. With each step I learned more about how the ACT education system worked, and found new opportunities to progress the cause of public education.

Working as a union organiser is a very different job to teaching. I miss working with students and having deep professional conversations about teaching. But for now, this is where I can be most effective – I can enable educators from many schools, work at some of the structural barriers to the best learning, and help bring about the social change we need. If you want to make a difference in public education, I want you to get involved in our union too.

“\nI was always impressed that my teachers cared so much about getting a better deal for their students. To me, that was true professionalism.”

Standing PAT

Minted AEU organiser Patrick Judge describes his journey from commercial lawyer to teacher, active sub-branch member and now, industrial activist in a double election year.
It was great to see new educator-activists holding the Chief Minister to account at politics in the pub.

It is always good to get politicians to go on the record, because it helps us hold them to account for their pledges, promises, and sometimes just the way they frame issues. With this sense of purpose in mind, we headed to The Australia Institute’s March politics in the pub event, where ACT Labor Chief Minister, Andrew Barr, wanted to talk about innovation.

Our gritty team was comprised of mostly new educators, taking their first steps as activists. Patricia, Meg and Angus did a great job, because we got both of our questions asked, and even sort-of answered!

Our campaign focus this year has been on securing more school psychologists, so our first question was why his government hadn’t implemented the Shaddock Report recommendations, having accepted and endorsed its findings. Mr Barr assured us that Greens Education Minister Shane Rattenbury was “engaged with stakeholders” on the issue, even as he had earlier defined that, as Chief Minister, “my role [is] to make decisions on how to spend education and health funds.”

The AEU ACT supports the Shaddock Review that defined the need for more school psychologists, as well as – not instead of – greater complementary professional services, like social workers and counsellors. However, Mr Barr would not make any such commitment, and handed responsibility to his new minister from another party:

“There’s a legitimate discussion to be had about the right mix of skills and professions... a narrow or broader range of skills to bring to those solutions. That’s an interesting debate to have, and we’re anticipating [Mr Rattenbury’s] advice.”

Regarding nationwide TAFE cuts, we asked the Chief Minister if innovation in the vocational education sector simply meant privatisation and defunding. He cited CIT’s relative good funding compared to other states and territories. He reminded us that approximately two-thirds of funding comes from the ACT Government, with CIT responsible for generating revenue via student fees and a “commercial arm” to make the most of industrial and private sector engagement.

“The ACT Government continues to invest in day-to-day operations, physical assets... [we’ve] invested heavily in Bruce campus and the renewal of Fyshwick.”

However, Mr Barr appeared ambivalent about VET contestability limits between CIT and private colleges:

“Other players do compete with CIT and erode its market share... It is what it is.”

By having our questions heard and answered in a public forum, we’ve gained increased awareness by attendees – including Mr Barr – that educators are active participants in our democracy, and that policy decisions affect us and spur us to take action. If politicians’ positions change over time, documenting what gets said in public is vital to encouraging consistency in what seems to be an inherently chaotic field.

Perhaps you can represent members at the next political forum – stay tuned for future event invitations on our website and Facebook page.
This intimate War

Telopea Park sub-branch president Karl-Erik Paasonen reviews Robyn Rowlands’ volume of poetry ‘This Intimate War: Gallipoli/Çanakkale 1915’

How do we, as educators, deal with Gallipoli? It’s a central icon of Australian history. From an event that drew little public interest in the 1960s and 70s, it now draws massive public obeisance, both at ANZAC Day ceremonies here in Australia, and apparently increasing numbers of young people attending memorials in Turkey. What materials do we have that put forth a contrary perspective? This volume adds to that set of materials.

Robyn Rowland is an esteemed Australian poet. She has published nine books of poetry. This volume is her response to the centenary of what is clearly to her the British – and thus too, Australian – invasion of Turkey. The book is some 25 poems long. Each poem is presented in English on the left-hand page; in Turkish on the right-hand page. Rowlands has read extensively in public with her translator in Turkey.

Rowland asserts that the Australians who took part were indeed motivated in different ways, but a common driver, especially for the officer class, was an appeal to a British national identity. The Australian national identity was at best incipient among those not part of the ruling class, but the ruling class was decidedly British. The education system was British. This is reflected in one of the first poems, where the speaker, an Australian officer, speaks of his sense of continuity of a European invading Troy (‘The Folly of Myth: Prologue, 1915’). The British classical education system drives the invasion’s motivation and symbolism.

The volume documents brutalities from the Turkish perspective: a perspective that, curiously, the Australian War Museum does not deal with at all. For all the fantasies about ‘the yellow peril’ over the intervening decades, there is scant historical literature about how it would feel for post-colonial Australians if we were invaded by an imperialist state. Rowland writes of the anguish of Turkish women, of child soldiers sent to die, of the execution of deserters. But of more familiar ANZAC topics too. Her lines are pungent.

Unionists should consider this experiential sense of perspective. Before the First World War, unions and Labor parties pledged to stop any international war through the combined power of union members across international borders. That was part of the purpose of the 1889 Socialist International. It failed to stop the 1914 war; but not for lack of trying. The warmongers were simply better organised resourced by every state. Still, Australian unions successfully opposed the introduction of conscription. 2016 marks the anniversary of the first stage of that campaign, and we should celebrate it.

I strongly recommend this volume as an educational resource for helping rebalance a considered historical perspective.


Interested in contributing a book review? Email luke.stickels@aeuact.org.au.
Dear Glenn and AEU ACT branch,

Having recently retired, your reminder to new teaching staff about joining the AEU prompted me to reflect on my own membership and what a real investment in my career it was.

I’m not really sure how many EBAs I encountered in my 32 years of teaching, but I don’t recall a single one in which the ACT Government matched the AEU’s first round of claims on working condition improvements and remuneration packages.

If there was no union to protect our conditions and entitlements, and no one to negotiate with ministers who often know very little about what’s happening in schools, then, I ask you, how would the profession look today?

From what I recall, I started teaching in 1982, on about $16,000 per year. Today, starting salaries are about $63,000. That’s a little more than a 4% pa compounding increase across the 34 intervening years.

But what if we didn’t have a union? What if teachers simply had to accept whatever the government of the day offered?

For simplicity, let’s assume that a hypothetical government made offers that averaged less than 4%, say 3% pa. (The point is that what the union negotiates for is more than what the government initially offers).

The mathematics shows that a first year teacher would now be on an annual salary of around $43,710. Think about that for a moment, and mention it to your colleagues who might not be in the union.

It is quite straightforward to determine the total savings made by this hypothetical government on each of their first year teachers relative to the averaged actual percentage increases that occurred over 34 years. Under these simplified assumptions, at 3% pa, the savings hit $211,042.

Looking back, I really have to thank my union. Yes, there were battles lost, but there were far more battles won. Over the decades, you looked after my remuneration and working conditions far better than I could have done by myself.

Because of the AEU’s energy, I have secured a far better retirement income too. Whatever the fees are for full-time educators these days [Editor: It’s 0.85% + GST per salary, except for relief teachers], it’s a trifle compared to the alternative.

No one asked me to write this. I just wanted to say thank you, to those in the union executive, broader membership, and especially those who showed up to our collective actions, for all of those years of effort made on my behalf.

Yours sincerely,

Ed Staples
Retired ACT Teacher
February 2016

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hypothetical Salary increase Offers (%)</th>
<th>1st year 4 year trained teacher salary today</th>
<th>1st year Government savings over 34 years</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>$43,710</td>
<td>$211,042</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>$46,691</td>
<td>$172,663</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>$49,868</td>
<td>$132,463</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>$53,254</td>
<td>$90,350</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>$56,863</td>
<td>$46,230</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
WHAT YOU GET when you join

Better pay.
You have experts at the bargaining table representing you when your pay is being negotiated. And the strength of our united voice gives us real bargaining power. That’s why ACT teachers are receiving 1.5% pay increases every six months.

Better conditions.
You have smaller class sizes, paid maternity leave, permanent part-time work, reduced face-to-face hours for beginning teachers, new educator support days and a union constantly campaigning to improve the conditions in your workplace.

Information, advice and support.
Whenever you have questions about topics like salary, leave, entitlements, probation, contracts, transfer, workload and work safety you have a network of support at your school and full-time paid officers to assist you.

A voice for educators.
Your representatives are constantly meeting with bureaucrats and politicians to make sure they understand what it’s like in the classroom. You also have a voice in the media making sure the community understands the challenges we face and the great work we do.

A voice for public education.
You have a champion for public education in the community, promoting our schools and winning extra resources for them.

Training.
You can access training on maternity leave, managing finances and superannuation, applying for jobs, preparing for leadership and other aspects of your professional life.

Journey Cover insurance.
The employer does not provide journey cover. As an AEU member you’re covered. If you are injured travelling to or from work or on work-related journeys, you are eligible for income protection under our policy.

Union Shopper.
With the collective buying power of union members across Australia, you get great deals on electrical products, travel services, cars, computers, phones and more.

Member Connect.
You have access to a huge range of special deals and offers from businesses that closely align with union values.

Teachers’ Health Fund.
You are eligible to join Teachers Health Fund, a national, not-for-profit health fund designed exclusively for education union members and their families.

You have a say.
You’re part of a democratic organisation in which you have a say. You choose who you feel best represents your interests in your workplace or you can become a representative yourself.

You’re part of our community.
You are part of a community of over 3,500 educators in the ACT and nearly 200,000 educators across Australia. Meet people, share ideas and collaborate.

You know we’ve got your back.
If you ever run into trouble, whether you’re not being treated fairly at work or you find yourself in financial hardship, we stick by each other.

It’s very affordable.
You only pay .85% of your salary + GST. That’s only $22 a fortnight for a beginning teacher AND your union fees are tax deductible!

Update Your Details – Just Call Tracey on 6272 7900!
Are you at a new school this year? Have you moved house recently? Have you been promoted to a leadership position? Have you gone part-time or changed your percentage load?
If yes, we hope it’s going well! Please let us know your new details. It’s just a very quick call (6272 7900), email (aeuact@aeuact.org.au) or visit http://www.aeuact.org.au/update_your_details.
Our name has changed. Our renowned retirement planning expertise hasn’t.

StatePlus is the new name for State Super Financial Services. With 25 years of experience and over 60,000 clients, we’ve provided financial advice to thousands of current and former public sector employees. Our name has changed, but our expertise in helping people achieve their retirement goals hasn’t.

For more information call 1800 620 305 or visit stateplus.com.au
ME & MY SCHOOL
Engaging migrant families

How to create a sense of belonging at school for migrant and refugee students and parents?

Five panellists bring their own unique insights to this pressing question for many schools in a forum exploring what works and what doesn’t.

We will hear from parents, students, education and cultural experts as well as educators who have successfully engaged migrant students and families. Your questions and comments are encouraged. The event is free and all are welcome.

Where: Level 1, Centre for Teaching and Learning, 51 Fremantle Drive, Stirling
When: 6 - 8:30pm, Thursday June 9
RSVP by June 6 to glenn.flanagan@companionhouse.org.au or phone 6251 4550

The evening will begin with a light dinner, including vegetarian and halal options.
Welcome Over 100 New Members Who Joined In Term 1

Congratulations to everyone who joined or rejoined during Term 1. By joining our union, you’re helping us all win better pay and conditions as well as ensuring our students have the learning conditions they deserve.

Adam Volmari · Sally Martin · Vicky Harrington · Kerryn Atterbury · Abby Trevillian · Jeffrey Emerson · Hazel Davies · Amanda Gillborn · Nichole Edwards · Emma Bowden · Alexandra Dashwood · Cheryl Walker · Millicent Peattie · Rebecca Tedeschi · Jenny Tabur · Anne-Yvonne Clacy · Isabelle Telfer · Samantha Mitchell · Paula Charles · Emily Gregory · Alexander Lilly · Tahlia Bruce · Tarun Whan · Humaira Jalil · Lyndsay Saywell · Jessica Durieu Rebecca Baxter · Melissa Smith · Wenyan Liu · Sally Gladwin · Sophie Peacock · Veronique Barret · Tiahna Junakovic · Gerard Dwyer · Alison Robb · Katie Slater · Clare Whittaker-Allan · Rowena Van Ballegoojen · Sasha Posthuma-Grbic · Debra O’Brien · Malisa Lengyel · Chris Moon · Erin McMahon · Rebekah Lane · Joanne Ellison · Sarah Burke · Stephanie Vials · Lauren Griep · Grace Bourke · Joshua Stefanou · Kate Deakin · Danielle van Kemenade · Jerome Villegas · Aurelie Le Nevez · Sarah Rossiter · Kirsten Queck · Kylie Brown

Our Term 1 special has been extended!

Join the AEU before 1 July 2016 and you are eligible to receive one month free. And the person who asked you to join gets a month’s free AEU membership. We all do better together.

Don’t let your colleagues and friends miss out on the benefits of AEU membership.

Invite them to join today aeuact.org.au/join
Major changes to the public sector workers compensation scheme could remove important protections and rights for firefighters, paramedics, nurses, teachers and every other public sector worker in Canberra.

There for you?

Our first priority is to ensure that workers are not worse off under a new scheme.

We have significant concerns about the various models that the ACT Government has proposed.

Public sector unions do not currently support the ACT Government’s proposed new models.

Unions will not back down on protecting your rights and the rights of all injured workers.

We will keep all members informed of any updates.

Joint public sector union Information bulletin.  
February 2016.
Every day, teachers help create a brighter future.
Now your money* can too.

When you choose Teachers Mutual Bank you choose:

✅ A certified ethical bank1.
✅ Zero direct investment in fossil fuels.
✅ Investment in the education community, the planet and the people on it.

Find out more at
tmbank.com.au/community

*If you are an employee in the Australian education sector, or are a family member of a Teachers Mutual Bank Limited member – you can join Teachers Mutual Bank.
1. Teachers Mutual Bank is recognised as a certified ethical bank. The Teachers Mutual Bank $500m wholesale debt issuance programme has been certified by RIAA according to the strict disclosure practices required under the Responsible Investment Certification Program. See www.responsibleinvestment.org for details. Teachers Mutual Bank Limited ABN 30 087 650 459 AFSL/Australian Credit Licence 238981 | 005765-CSR-0116-PEV-ACT-297x210
New Sub-branch at Charles Weston School
Moved: Emma Cox, Trish Ghiradello
9 February 2016 Executive

Branch Executive moves to establish a new Sub-branch at Charles Weston and welcomes any new members as well as existing members.

Branch Executive noted thanks to member Helen Del Guzzo from the Sub-branch.

Heating and Cooling
Moved: Shane Gorman, Theresa Carroll
19 March 2016 Council

Following complaints made by sub-branches, the Secretary will raise the issue of inappropriate Heating and Cooling solutions as a priority workplace safety issue with both the Director General and Education Minister, in the context of a 2012 broken Labour election promise of $70M to refurbish public schools.

Draft Class Size Policy
Moved: Roger Amey, Theresa Carroll
9 February 2016 Executive

Branch Executive endorses tabling of the current draft for AEUACT Class Sizes Policy at 20 February Council.

Concerns Over SRA Application
Moved: Sue La Flamme, Steve Hood
19 March 2016 Council

Council reiterates the AEU’s position that all classroom teachers be treated equally in terms of resource allocation for staffing. In particular, that the previous teachers points system be retained and that a proposed model assigning dollar value to teachers based on experience and level of the pay scale not be implemented.

Council asks all sub branch leaders to determine position and strength of feeling of members in their sub branches.

19 March 2016 Council
Moved: Glenn Fowler, Theresa Carroll

Councillors endorsed a revised AEU Class Sizes Policy, which will be launched and promoted early in Term 2. It gives greater guidance to members in dealing with a persistent issue.

Working with UnionsACT
Moved: Karl-Erik Paasonen, Roger Amey
19 March 2016 Council

UnionsACT is comprised of 25 affiliate unions, representing 25,000 Canberra workers. Ian Marshall, Elise Meredith, Jody Pang were moved as AEU Delegates to Unions ACT. Tania Blak, Jeff Mansfield, and Glennis Weatherstone were moved as Alternative Delegates.

APHEDA Fiji Cyclone Appeal
Moved: Ian Marshall, George Cygan
19 March 2016 Council

Council moves a statement in support of AEU ACT Executive donating to APHEDA’s Fiji Cyclone Appeal to support teachers and student in Fiji, where many schools were destroyed. It was noted that past donation to Vanuatu was $3,000.

Workload Reduction Report
Moved: Clive Mckillop / Jane Murray
20 February 2016 Council

Gavin Scales and Andy Jennings presented feedback from recent meetings of the Work Load Advisory Group. Predominantly they proposed ideas for measuring workload in the next two years of the Enterprise Agreement, to ensure that that AEU can make the strongest case in the future for further reductions in work load. Gavin is currently structuring a survey to use as a tool in measuring this.
Expert Panel on Students with Complex Needs and Challenging Behaviours – Policy Matters
Moved: Laura Bond / Kate Herrington
20 February 2016 Council

Tom Greenwell reported on the current progress of implementing the recommendations from the expert panel on students with complex needs and challenging behaviours; in particular the recommendation for attaining more school psychologists in schools. Tom asked members to continue to send letters to the Education Minister expressing your view on attaining more School Psychologists with the goal of two hundred and fifty letters sent.

Elections and Appointments
Moved: Patrick Judge / Ian Marshall
20 February 2016 Council


Moved: Glenn Fowler / Trish Ghirardello
8 March 2016 Executive

Branch Executive endorsed the appointment of Don Bemrose and Peter Curtis to the remaining General Representative Roles on Executive, the term of which ends December 2017.

Moved: Theresa Carroll, Trish Ghirardello
8 March 2016 Executive

Branch Executive moved Glenn Fowler, Andy Jennings, Suki Dorras-Walker as alternate representatives to the Unions ACT delegation from the AEUACT office.

Moved: Shane Gorman, Trish Ghirardello
8 March 2016 Executive

Branch Executive endorsed Theresa Carroll, Peter Curtis and Susan Thomson to represent AEUACT Branch Executive with Emma Cox as alternate.
ACT BRANCH COUNCIL –
GET INVOLVED IN 2016!

We’d like to congratulate our
new councillors and other
sub-branch leaders elected
in Term 1. Several sub-
branches have yet to elect
their 2016 representatives,
and we’d encourage anyone
keen to ensure their school
is not left out of big council
events this year, to get in
touch with their organiser or
the staff office ASAP.

What’s the role of a Councillor?

Council is AEU ACT’s ultimate decision-making body
and has representatives from every Sub-branch. The
job of councillors is to represent the interests and
concerns of your Sub-branch; to determine the overall
direction of our union and to report back from each
meeting. It’s a great way to make a difference in your
workplace and play a part in the broader affairs of
our union.

Each Sub-branch is allocated a councillor for every
20 members (or part thereof) belonging to the Sub-
branch. We still have too many schools without 2016
representatives! If you think you might be interested,
please talk to your past councillors, sub-branch
president or organisers about what’s involved.

2016 Council Meeting Dates

TERM 1
February 20
March 19

TERM 2
May 14
June 18

TERM 3
August 6
September 10

TERM 4
October 29: Council and
Annual Conference
November 19

Meetings of Council are held from 9am to Midday on Saturday mornings
in the J Block Theatre at CIT Reid, 37 Constitution Avenue, Reid.
The AEU ACT office team

Jasmine Sawtell
Administration Assistant
aeuact@aeuact.org.au

Tracey Govan
Membership Co-ordinator
Tracey.Govan@aeuact.org.au

Therese Tonna
Organiser
Therese.Tonna@aeuact.org.au

Patrick Judge
Organiser
Tracey.Govan@aeuact.org.au

Suki Dorras-Walker
Organiser
Tracey.Govan@aeuact.org.au

Sam Delaney
Member Support Officer
Sam.Delaney@aeuact.org.au

Luke Stickels
Communication & Campaigns Officer
Luke.Stickels@aeuact.org.au

Jacqui Agius
Industrial Officer
Jacqui.Agius@aeuact.org.au

Andy Jennings
Lead Organiser
Andy.Jennings@aeuact.org.au

Glenn Fowler
Branch Secretary
Glenn.Fowler@aeuact.org.au

MORE INFO
Phone: 6272 7900
Web: aeuact.org.au
Email: aeuact@aeuact.org.au
facebook.com/aeuact
twitter.com/aeuact
First State Super works as hard as you do

We believe Australians who choose careers looking after others deserve a comfortable retirement.

Join the super fund that puts members first.

Call us on 1300 650 873 or visit firststatesuper.com.au

Consider our product disclosure statement before making a decision about First State Super. Call us or visit our website for a copy.

FSS Trustee Corporation ABN 11 118 202 672 AFSL 293340 is the trustee of the First State Superannuation Scheme ABN 53 226 460 365