

# Report-back from 19 March Council

Thanks to incoming 2016 Councillors for a great meeting (*and* to 2015 Councillors showing up when their replacements are pending). We dug into several matters and made progress for all members. Business on Saturday included: ongoing Sub-Branch elections; Workload Reduction check-in; Heating and Cooling HSR issues; AEU Class Sizes policy; AEU engagement with the new Education Minister on our Principals Survey and other matters; an important drafted motion about SRA; a motion of support for APHEDA's Fiji Appeal; positive developments on Workers Compensation, NAPLAN league tables, and more.

## Election of 2016 Sub-branch Representatives

We still have a number of schools without sub-branch representatives for 2016. Please return your sub-branch's [nomination form](#) to the AEU office ([aeuact@aeuact.org.au](mailto:aeuact@aeuact.org.au), 6273 1828) ASAP. If your sub-branch needs support, please let us know and we'll be happy to help ([aeuact@aeuact.org.au](mailto:aeuact@aeuact.org.au), 6272 7900). This process is essential for the health of our union democracy.

## Heating and Cooling HSR Issues

We reviewed Dickson's sub-branch motion regarding old and new buildings' inadequacy of providing safe learning environments on hot days. It was agreed that Secretary Glenn Fowler will raise the matter with Education Minister Shane Rattenbury, in the context of this government's 2012 election promise to invest \$70 million into refurbishing public schools.

It is important that teachers who leave work ill from heat exhaustion don't only apply for sick leave, but also file an incident report as a more substantive industrial matter. It was also noted that schools have HSR officers and measures in place, which are often not being utilised to their fullest extent. All members can ensure such processes are being followed in their school, as we all benefit from safe workplaces.

## AEU Class Sizes Policy Update

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 this persistent issue.

## AEU meets the new Education Minister

Secretary Glenn Fowler met with Education Minister Shane Rattenbury in March to discuss our recent Principals Survey on several ongoing issues, including reporting templates, SRA, and cost recovery arrangements around electrical repairs (RCD). We will be seeking to work collaboratively with the Minister's office wherever possible, as well as undertake the advocacy and campaign work necessary to

ensure commitments are made and met, on issues such as more school psychologists, 21<sup>st</sup> century learning environments, and other workplace issues.

## **SRA Concerns: an important drafted motion**

We succeeded in articulating our union's support for needs-based funding nation-wide, while refining down our objections to how SRA affects ACT schools. The following Council motion reflects the individual sub-branch motions submitted heading into Council, and priorities identified in the ensuing discussion:

“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.”

Branch Secretary Glenn Fowler will pursue this with the Directorate and the Minister.

## **A Motion of Support for Fiji Appeal**

Council recommended that Executive support APHEDA’s Fiji Cyclone Appeal. Subsequently, Executive endorsed a donation of \$3000. This will make a difference to the people of Fiji, where many schools have been destroyed.

## **Canberra Times League Tables**

Branch Secretary Glenn Fowler reported back on *The Canberra Times*’ marked change for the better in how they use NAPLAN data this year. Following a concerted letter-writing campaign by AEU ACT, *The Canberra Times* eschewed simplistic league tables to instead rank a sample of schools by “gain”. Raw scores were still published, but not ranked, so it was a significant change for the better.

Congratulations to the dozens of people who submitted a letter to make our presence felt, and to those who logged comments on the website defending the new approach.

## **1:500 School Psychologist Campaign**

Our campaign is having an impact – on top of our [open letter](#) signed by leading community groups, over 160 emails have been sent to the Chief Minister, calling on him to resource one school psychologist for every 500 students, as recommended by the Expert Panel on Students With Complex Needs and Challenging Behaviours. Please take a moment to [send your email to the Chief Minister >>>](#).

## Workload Reduction Report

We discussed progress and effectiveness of current Workload Reduction Plans, and the report was a mixed bag of success stories, encouraging developments, and sticking points. Our organisers are there to help you make your site's plan a success. If your school hasn't submitted a plan, [you can download a template here >>>](#) It is important we maximise this win from our last negotiated EA, and get each plan working effectively so we can push to keep the funding allocation in future years.

## Term 1 offer extended into Term 2!

### Ask your colleagues to join the AEU and win a month's free membership \*\*Offer Extended\*\*

Welcome to 60 new members who have joined since last Council on 20 February! A big congratulations and thank you to the members who have been identified on membership applications *as the person who asked the new member to join*. All these wonderful members will receive [one month's AEU membership free](#). With this new member offer extended, so will everyone else who successfully asks a new member to join in Terms 1 and 2.

## School Assistant Review

AEU ACT Organiser Therese Tonna informed Council that subsequent to the delivery of a report by consulting firm, Mercer, we are still in negotiations with ED to: establish a school assistant career structure that supports career development; provides flexibility that allows school assistants to choose to work longer hours (and is purely voluntary); and clarifies work expectations by identifying duties for each school assistant classification).

## AEU Public Education Week Dinner Tickets On Sale Now!

[Public Education Week Dinner](#) tickets are on sale now! This is always a big event in our annual calendar – a chance to celebrate our work as public educators together. This year our special guest MC is Wendy Harmer, with a keynote address by Lisa Wilkinson. It's on Friday, May 27, 2016, at 6:30pm at the [National Press Club](#), Barton. **Call our office to buy your tickets by Credit Card – on 02 6272 7900.**

## AEU priorities for Terms 1 & 2 2016

A reminder that Council had previously endorsed a set of top priorities to ensure a strategic approach over the coming months, which continue into stand-down and Term 2: Workload reduction; 1:500 School Psychologists Campaign; Recruitment of New Educators; Healthcare Access At Schools (HAAS); Class Sizes Policy; SRA and Teacher Transfer; TAFE Organising; School Assistants Review. Speak to you Councillor about our detailed goals in each of these areas.

## Upcoming Events

[Women's Network Meeting](#) Friday, April 29, 2016 at 4:30 PM · TBA

[May Information Session: Annual Professional Discussions](#) Thursday, May 05, 2016 at 4:00 PM Centre for Teaching & Learning

[WILD - Women in Leadership Development](#) Friday, May 06, 2016 at 4:00 PM · Centre for Teaching & Learning

[Next Branch Council](#) Saturday, May 14, 2016 at 9:00 AM · J Block Theatre, CIT Reid

[Planning for Retirement Training Session \(Defined Benefits Schemes\)](#) Thursday, May 19, 2016 at 4:00 PM CPSU Training Rooms, Level 3, 40 Brisbane Avenue, Barton

[National Sorry Day](#) Thursday, May 26, 2016 at 12:00 PM

[Public Education Week Dinner](#) Friday, May 27, 2016 at 06:30 PM · National Press Club · Barton