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## Union campaigns for permanent coordinators

Securing permanent employment for Participation Coordinators employed by the Department of Education has been a major priority for the Community and Public Sector Union/Civil Service Association.

The coordinators find alternative education and training for students in their 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> years who have become disengaged from mainstream education.

They broker post-school options including further education, apprenticeships, traineeships and community-based programs as well as employment options.

There were up to 86 full-time equivalent (FTE) Participation Coordinator positions created in the years after the service was introduced in 2006-07 but this number was revised in 2010 and reduced to 48 positions.

The coordinators have been on fixed-term contracts which the union says should be made permanent, giving public servants employment security.

“These coordinators are providing a much-needed role that will always be in demand so we are seeking permanent appointments for these staff as a matter of priority,” CPSU/CSA Branch Assistant Secretary Rikki Hendon said.

On July 13 Department of Education Director General Sharyn O’Neill confirmed in a letter to the CPSU/CSA that upon completion of current fixed-term contracts any recurrent vacancies would be filled on a permanent basis.

Ms Hendon welcomed the announcement but said they would be seeking more details as the contracts expired.

She said it was important the department didn’t cut back on the number of coordinators in the role who provide a vital service and steer disengaged students in the right direction.

“The Participation Coordinators work hard to help these young people find education alternatives which is a legislated requirement,” Ms Hendon said.

The coordinators are employed all over Western Australia and take on massive workloads.

“It is imperative the fixed-term staff are given permanency and that current staff levels are maintained so students get the best possible chance of succeeding in life.”

**FOR MORE INFORMATION OR TO  
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