

Dear school principals,

Your school cleaner's job is at risk.

For the first time in 24 years, the NSW government is stripping away job security provisions in the cleaning contract. 7,000 school cleaners are being forced to reapply for their jobs under the new cleaning contract, starting in July 2018.

The Minister for Finance, Services and Innovation - Victor Dominello - and his department currently maintain that no cleaning jobs or site cleaning hours are guaranteed under the proposed arrangements. United Voice is seeking the opinion of the Minister for Education and the Premier on this issue.

Not only does this mean every cleaner's job is at risk, but it means cleaners lose entitlements like sick leave which they've built up over years of service to the school – despite the fact that they'll be performing the same job, at the same school. There's no hours guarantee for cleaners – fewer cleaning hours means dirtier classrooms and unsafe schools.

Moreover, the contractors have been asked to tender on a square meter basis, rather than per hour. This raises huge questions about all the additional work that cleaners currently do to ensure that schools are safe and secure environment for students – like cleaning covered outdoor learning areas (COLAs), or locking up the school each morning and evening.

These tasks will either have to be done unpaid by cleaners, or it will fall to principals to source additional staff to complete these tasks – either increasing the responsibilities of teachers, or using the school budget on hiring external staff.

School cleaners are a vital part of the school community, keeping learning spaces and play areas hygienic and safe for children. With a fast-growing student population and crowded public schools, this is not the time for cuts to cleaning hours and jobs.

We count on them to keep our schools clean, now they urgently need our support – we only have until the 15 December before contractors put their bid in for the new cleaning contract.

Cleaners across New South Wales are asking their principals to:

- Contact the Department of Education to find out what the impact of changes to the cleaning contract will be on your school;
- Contact your Primary or Secondary Principals' Association with your thoughts to advocate on your behalf;
- Speak to the cleaners in your school about this situation as not all cleaners are aware of what is happening;
- Update your Parents' and Citizens' Association;
- Take a photo with your cleaners with enclosed sign "I support the 7,000 school cleaners whose jobs are at risk" and email to nsw@unitedvoice.org.au; and
- Email NSW Premier Gladys Berejiklian asking her to give cleaners a job and hours guarantee in the cleaning contract by sending her a message directly at cleanschools.org.au/gladys.

United Voice appreciates any support you can give in this campaign, whether public or in providing feedback to the Department of Education, before the end of Term on 15 December.

For further information on the campaign to win cleaning jobs you can count on in our government schools, go to: www.cleanschools.org.au.