



Territory Educator



Remembering the Wave Hill Walk Off

Term 3 / 2016





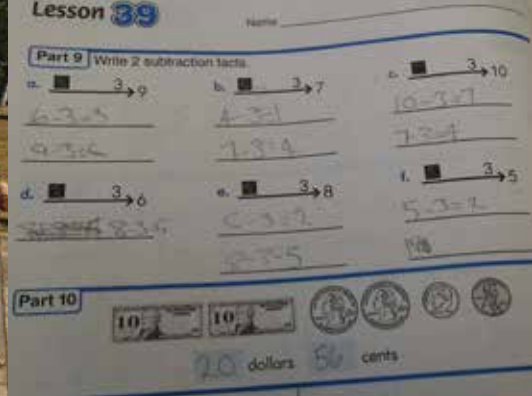
Barrister John Lawrence SC addresses a rally in response to the 4 Corners revelations about abuse in NT juvenile detention centres



AEU Awards



Gonski funding at risk



Critique of DI

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Submissions and photographs to Territory Educator are always welcome and should be directed to the Secretary, Anita Jonsberg 8948 5399.



AEU Members **Recognised** for Teaching **Excellence**

Arthur Hamilton Award

Our Branch was very proud to see one of our members, Sally Mackander of Clyde Fenton Primary School in Katherine, receive the Arthur Hamilton Award for Outstanding Contribution to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education for 2015.

Sally was recognised at the AEU's Federal Conference in February this year. The Arthur Hamilton Award is open to AEU members across the country who have demonstrated outstanding practice in the field of ATSI education.

Sally's work in the Intensive Learning Unit Teacher at Clyde Fenton over the past five years was recognised. She taught a special class set up for Year 1 and 2 students who are working well below the expected level. All of Sally's students were Indigenous, part of the 70% Indigenous student population in a school of 225, close to half of whom come from local outlying communities around Katherine.

Also of note was Sally's exemplary work in community engagement. On several occasions each year, she would organise community visits, taking student work samples to homes and talking with families about their children's' progress and learning.

We congratulate her and encourage members of our Branch to nominate colleagues for this



Sally Mackander received her award at the 2016 AEU Federal Conference

year's award, to highlight the many dedicated NT educators working with Indigenous students.

Visit our website or contact the office for information about how to nominate for the Arthur Hamilton Award.

Quality Educator Award



Sarah Calver with prize sponsor Fleet Network's Steve Asher and Branch President Jarvis Ryan

Sarah Calver of Darwin High School was the recipient of this year's AEU NT Quality Educator Award for her outstanding contributions to student learning. Many thanks to Fleet Network for their generous sponsorship of the award with a \$1000 JB Hi-Fi voucher.

The Quality Educator Award is judged by a committee of the Branch Executive. It is an annual award open to all financial AEU NT members who are nominated by peers.

Sarah was nominated by AEU members at Darwin High School, with testimonials provided by students both past and present, parents and faculty staff. Her supporters' submissions state:

'Sarah affirms the value of all Arts subjects, particularly Dance and engages her students by encouraging their creativity. Sarah reminds herself, colleagues and students about the bigger picture. She strives to provide best practice and although we are considered remote, aims to give our students the same opportunities as our Southern colleagues in a uniquely Territorian context.

'Sarah constantly strives to create authentic learning experiences for her students. Dance is her passion and this is transfused throughout every learning experience. The students are engaged and encouraged to create their own artistic work. She constantly consults with her classes in order to create fresh and exciting work for their performances. She fosters each student's creativity as a developing artist, and explores a diverse range of dance styles whilst catering to the needs of her classes.'

Hopes for a New Approach to Education

The AEU NT congratulates Michael Gunner and the Labor Party on a decisive election victory. Voters rejected Adam Giles and the Country Liberal Party and their arrogant and inept approach to government.

Lack of consultation and concern for the impact of their policies on those affected were major ingredients in the CLP's downfall. They failed to listen to key stakeholders and critics and this disregard for the electorate ultimately brought about their downfall.

It was a terrible time for teachers and educators under the Giles Government. We saw our resourcing and staffing in schools slashed and our voice taken away, with cynical politicians and bureaucrats sidelining the union and imposing destructive and divisive policies like the Indigenous Education Review and Global School Budgets.

Worst of all, the Giles Government misappropriated hundreds of millions of dollars of federal funding delivered under the Gonski agreement and earmarked for schools based on relative levels of disadvantage. None of those funds were spent in schools in the way they were intended, instead being used to offset cuts and fund a school building program that was primarily about economic stimulus rather than educational need.

The result of the Giles Government's funding priorities was that public schools saw their budgets slashed, while funding soared for private schools. Despite the repeated claim by the now former Education Minister Peter Chandler that his government was responsible for record spending on education, the Budget Papers show that less money was allocated for public education this year than in 2012. After four years of the CLP Government, our public schools are dramatically underfunded and have missed out on additional Gonski resources.

We welcome the policy commitment from Labor to restore recurrent funding to employ an additional 160 teachers from the beginning of the coming school year and we will work with the new government to help determine how the funds for these teachers should be allocated.

We disagree with Labor's stated intention to retain the Global Funding model for schools, and will continue to argue that at a minimum staffing costs are recentralised. There are too many stories of CT9 (experienced) teachers being told they are a liability due to budgetary pressures, and the current model imposes too much of an administrative burden on principals.

Territory Labor has not yet given a public commitment to implement Gonski needs-based funding in NT public schools, and we will certainly expect the new minister to take the fight to Malcolm Turnbull and Simon Birmingham, who plan to scrap the needs-based funding model, which would mean the loss of tens of millions of dollars for NT schools.

Thanks are due to all our members who have kept the faith in dark times, knowing that we were dealing with bullies in both the government and the department who simply ignored legitimate criticisms and failed to consult in any meaningful sense.

We believe that the efforts of AEU NT members played a role in bringing about the end of the Giles Government. Our industrial and political campaign in 2013 and 2014 was one of the largest in NT history, with a number of strikes and large rallies outside Parliament and in regional centres.

Now, after four years of being locked out of a role in policy-making, the AEU NT will seize the opportunity to have a meaningful place in the development of a fair funding model and progressive policies. With our next round of enterprise bargaining due to begin early in 2017, we welcome members' input on the key concerns you would like addressed.



New Chief Minister Michael Gunner pictured with Treasurer Nicole Manison and Education Minister Eva Lawler at our 2016 Branch Conference

Turnbull Plans to **Scrap** Needs-Based Funding

The federal election outcome saw a Coalition victory and Malcolm Turnbull has made clear his intentions to end Gonski funding. But the AEU will not cease in our campaign to retain needs-based funding.

Based on what we know of the new model Turnbull is proposing, it would mean a return to the pre-Gonski era of largess for private schools at the expense of more needy public schools.

A new analysis by education funding expert Dr Jim McMorrow has found the plan will simply entrench disadvantage by directing 62% of extra federal funding to private schools after 2017.

In contrast, the Gonski funding model would see 80 per cent of extra funding go to public schools, where the Gonski Review found that the need is greatest.

Malcolm Turnbull's plan would see schools receive a total of \$5.28 billion less from 2016/17 to 2019/20 – with public schools missing out on \$4.475 billion in extra funds.

In the NT schools would miss out on \$100 million in 2018 and 2019 alone, meaning that schools won't meet minimum resource standards and students will miss out on the smaller classes, more one-to-one support and extra literacy and numeracy programs Gonski is delivering.

On top of this, the Federal Government's own Budget Papers show the NT's public schools will have an actual funding cut of \$28.9 million after 2017 – despite having the highest need profile in Australia.

To achieve his aims, Turnbull will need the support of state and territory leaders and likely also pass legislation through Parliament. We have initiated a petition calling on premiers and chief ministers to reject the changes.

For more on the federal funding picture and actions you can take to help with the campaign, visit our website: www.aeunt.org.au.

Wisdom of Solomon

In the lead up to the 2016 federal election, the AEU funded a major national campaign to secure bipartisan support for Gonski needs-based funding.

This campaign saw full-time co-ordinators employed in 18 marginal electorates, to meet and hold events with teachers, principals, parents and voters. Other unions also campaigned in these and other seats, under the banner of the ACTU's Build a Better Future campaign.

When it became clear that Malcolm Turnbull would not support the continuation of Gonski funding, our message was a simple one: if you want to see additional funding for schools continued, don't vote for the Liberal National Party.

In the end, Malcolm Turnbull was returned to government, but with a vastly reduced majority. Seven of the 18 target seats changed hands.

The AEU NT Branch campaigned alongside other unions in the marginal seat of Solomon. We are

proud of the impact we had along with other unions. Solomon changed hands with a swing of 7.4% and is now considered a safe ALP seat. Education policy was no doubt one of a number of issues that hurt the sitting member, Natasha Griggs.

On election day itself, about 20 AEU members and supporters handed out materials to voters at polling booths. We were asked to focus our efforts at Woodroffe Primary in Palmerston but AEU Reps helped out for an hour or two each at a number of polling booths in Darwin and Palmerston.

We handed out leaflets showing which political parties supported Gonski funding, and speaking to voters who wanted to know more about the campaign. The AEU reps who were involved said it was a positive experience.

'I felt my time was well spent, speaking with voters and networking with colleagues. I'd happily help out again,' commented Liz.

Anthony told voters he was a teacher and says: 'I had some great conversations with parent voters about how to help our schools get the funding they need. I had fun with a great crew at our booth. Lets get Gonski!'



Attendees at a rally in Darwin in response to the 4 Corners revelations

Royal Commission Should Consider Education

The AEU NT Branch responded to the revelations on the ABC's 4 Corners about abuse of juvenile detainees by assisting, along with other unions, with the organisation of a rally in Darwin that was attended by hundreds. The rally demanded that the then Commissioner, Brian Martin, be stood down due to concerns about conflicts of interest. He was stood down two days after the rally and Aboriginal co-commissioner, Mick Gooda was appointed.


The Commission commenced with a directions hearing on 5 September. The AEU supports the Royal Commission and believes it is an opportunity to explore how to provide better pathways for youth at risk of being pulled into the justice system. We believe the education system can do more to assist children and families.

Our Branch Executive adopted the following resolution: 'The AEU condemns the abuses inflicted on young people in NT juvenile detention as documented by the ABC's 4 Corners program. The abuses are a clear breach of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, and a testament to wider failings in the youth justice system, notably the

significant over-representation rate of Indigenous youth, the high recidivism rate and the number of young people being held on remand in juvenile detention facilities.

'We welcome the formation of a Royal Commission and the decision to appoint an Aboriginal co-commissioner. The Royal Commission provides a crucial opportunity to address systemic failings of not only the youth detention system, but the broader structural problems of racism and social and economic disadvantage that have brought about such high levels of Indigenous incarceration.

'The AEU will seek to work with Indigenous and other interested individuals and organisations to ensure that the Royal Commission (and any parallel or related inquiries) considers the impact (both positive and negative) of education and rehabilitation programs both within the juvenile detention centres and the education system more broadly, in particular whether policies and practices of the Northern Territory Department of Education and schools could be improved to assist youth offenders in terms of both diversion and also rehabilitation.'

A portrait of Josephine Greensill, a woman with short reddish-brown hair, wearing glasses and a purple polka-dot scarf. She is looking directly at the camera with a slight smile.

Victorian teacher Josephine Greensill was wrongly imprisoned over alleged abuse of students 30 years ago

Guilty Until Proven Innocent?

Interaction with students needs to be circumspect, writes Henry Gray

The series of child abuse inquiries happening around our nation at the moment are lifting the issue to the forefront of public awareness. Without doubt, some of the allegations levelled against teachers and others are as a result of the 'stimulation' generated by these inquiries.

Sins against children need to be visited and perpetrators punished. However, the reputations of those who are completely innocent of any wrongdoing need to be protected. Current actions need to be such that educators protect and guard against allegations at some future time.

Teaching is a profession that requires increasing vigilance in human relations by teachers, school leaders and principals. In recent years, the issue of child abuse has gained traction. Lots of abuse issues, most of an historical nature, are being raised.

Various Royal Commissions and inquiries have highlighted the matter. And, without doubt, many of the allegations being brought against alleged perpetrators of past abuse, especially sexual abuse, are justified. They need to be followed through. However, there are instances when allegations are made with mischievous and malevolent intent. They hang those falsely accused out to dry. Accusations may be levelled against people many years after the alleged abuse occurred.

A June 2015 program aired on ABC TV's *Australian Story* illustrates this point. A female teacher in Melbourne, Josephine Greensill, was accused of sexually interfering with

two boys around 30 years ago. She was dragged through a messy court process, including being accused, found guilty, and jailed. The case was subsequently appealed and another grimy court process ensued. At the end, she was found not guilty of these crimes and acquitted. Her career, of course was absolutely ruined.

The protagonists who had brought the case against her, two men in their early 30s (they had been boys of seven or eight at the time referred to in the allegation), have not to this point in time been charged for making false allegations. The story's inference is that they have simply shrugged it off. Significantly, the Victorian Department of Education, teachers' union and registration authority appear to have offered no visible support to the teacher. These cases are not rare.

Allegations made against teachers presume guilt until the teacher proves his or her innocence.

I have been told that it is very unlikely prosecution will be brought against false complainants. The only recourse available to someone falsely accused and acquitted, is to seek redress through the civil court. That is costly, messy and continues the hurt.

Protective practices

It is wise for teachers to keep a clear, detailed and time noted record of instances when they have been connected with students in counselling and development. Nothing beats a detailed diary. When moving schools, retiring or otherwise moving on, take these records with you (I would suggest a diary). Maintain their accessibility. Keeping this data in USB or electronic form is an option.

If allegations are then brought, there is a clear record to show the date, time, place, and nature of the counselling. Often details brought by the complainant are fairly vague and being able to refute them with accurate data is of inestimable value.

There are one or two other points to keep in mind.

If counselling or working one-on-one with children, ensure that it is in a space that has visibility from the outside. A room with a see-through window, a common area within, a learning module, or a location within a linear classroom close to an open door are options.

I believe it paramount for teachers to report matters of counselling and discipline to a senior or to the principal along with keeping a written record.

Those who have false accusations brought against them, regardless of outcomes, are never the same people again. I understand they look at life differently. Their outlook becomes tinged with suspicion. They wonder if they can never be part of trustful relationships again.

This issue is one of growing consequence and something all educators need to take on board and carefully consider. Don't live in fear but never think it can't happen to you – because it can.

Legal Assistance for AEU Members

The AEU NT has stringent processes for assisting members who find themselves in difficulty because of a work-related matter.

For existing members, there is the possibility of gaining legal assistance. The process for this is that an initial contact is made with the union's Full-Time Officers to discuss any issues. If the matter is serious and has legal implications, we may refer you to a lawyer for a free initial consultation.

Pending the outcome of this, you may lodge an application for legal assistance from us. The application then goes to our Finance Committee for discussion, including legal opinion, and then approval or rejection.

If approved at this stage, then the application goes to the full Branch Executive for ratification. Any Branch Executive member with an interest declares it and then removes themselves from the decision-making process.

No judgements are made regarding applicants themselves. Rather, all decisions are based on the prospect of a successful outcome. The union's role is to ensure fair process for all members, regardless of who they are and what they are alleged to have done, or to have not done. Anyone can become the subject of an allegation at any time.

If a member is successful in gaining a financial payout as a result of any proceedings, then the AEU NT has its expenditure repaid by the member.

We are beginning to hear of organised groups of students actively targeting individual teachers and are hoping this trend does not take hold. If you feel you are becoming a target: talk to your line manager or principal, document everything that occurs – emails can be useful in this regard – and contact us for support and practical advice.

Further to Henry Gray's article, a useful resource for members, produced by the Teacher Registration Board, is 'Protective Practices' and it can be found on the TRB website.

50 Years Since Wave Hill Walk Off

Celebrating the history and continuing the struggle

August marked the 50th anniversary of Australia's single longest strike and one of the most important industrial disputes in the Australian union movement's history: the Wave Hill Walk Off.

To mark the event, the ACTU organised a program of events in Darwin bringing together union officials and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander members to discuss the challenges facing Indigenous workers. The AEU NT Branch sent three delegates: Indigenous Officer Cassandra Brown, Delean Holtze representing the Darwin Region on Branch Executive and Tristan Duggie from central Australia, and representatives also attended from New South Wales, Queensland and our federal office.

A major focus of the event was drawing attention to the federal government's Community Development Program (CDP), a work for the dole program in place in remote communities. According to ACTU Indigenous Officer Kara Keys, 'The Wave Hill anniversary is a reminder of the fact that half a century of struggle has produced a lot of progress, but leaves a lot left to be done, especially with regard to the oppressive Community Development Program, which imposes harsher requirements on workers in remote communities than those in metropolitan areas.'

'This is a program which discriminates on the basis of race, and has no place in a modern society. The ACTU will explore all possible means of removing the CDP and replacing it with a more equitable alternative that will place Indigenous people in control of their own futures.'

AEU delegate Delean Holtze writes about her experiences at the Conference

As you are aware, gaining permanent employment these days is difficult, just ask any educator next to you if they are lucky enough to secure permanency or continue their professional path to a senior position. What if you didn't have any recognised qualification but relied entirely upon government funding? At the conference these issues were raised to seek answers to the lack of transparency behind the Community Development Program (CDP), or as it's more commonly known, the 'work for the dole' scheme.

"The ACTU Indigenous Leadership Conference in Darwin was about hearing Indigenous Union voices coming together to support each other.

It was about camaraderie and we need to come together as a union collective to fight for the rights of our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workers across all workplaces."

Cassandra Brown, Indigenous Officer

Aboriginal people living remote are employed in their own communities but are expected to work under CDP. The Indigenous Affairs website states: 'CDP encourages people whom live in remote communities with finding work, gain new skills whilst contributing to their communities and finding employment'. One advantage of CDP is that Aboriginal people can live on country and maintain country but that does not mean that they are exempted from having career goals such as being the manager of the ranger program.

Many who work under CDP are not entitled to the basic workers' rights such as superannuation, sick leave, pay increments, carers leave and long service.





Thousands of people from across Australia gathered in Kalkaringi and Daguragu on the weekend of 19-21 August to remember the original Wave Hill Walk Off. It was an emotional and poignant event as survivors of the strike were joined by successive generations of Gurindji people and black and white Australians from near and far to celebrate an incredible struggle in Australian political, industrial and land rights history.

The 50th anniversary of the Wave Hill Walk Off highlights that cultural and employment rights are still challenge today and after 50 years the Gurindji people continue to be disadvantaged in their employment.

Indigenous union reps play a key role in being a voice for those who cannot express their views or argue for their rights – this is an important role you ‘mob’ play.

Fellow members of the AEU NT Tristan Duggie, Cass Brown and I learnt that people are starting to take notice and action through speaking up and ‘telling it like it is’ for Aboriginal people employed through the CDP. Unions are the voice of the working people and as unionists we need to protect everyone’s rights to fair work and entitlements regardless of social, cultural and geographical factors.



In August 1966, Vincent Lingiari led the strike of 200 Aboriginal stockmen, domestic servants and their families. The strike, over their appalling wages and conditions, eventually saw the end of discriminatory employment practices and became the catalyst point for the land rights movement in Australia, with Gough Whitlam returning the Gurindji lands in August 1975.

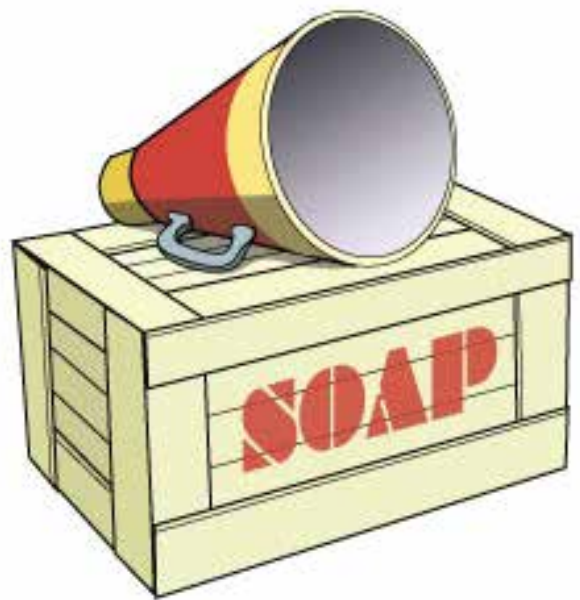
Throughout the protracted industrial and land rights dispute the Australian trade union movement stood shoulder to shoulder with the Gurindji workers. Unions and their partners provided significant support to workers and their families such as providing food & supplies, organising forums and protests in capital cities and sponsoring Aboriginal union organiser (NAWU) Mr Daniels to speak to trade union and community members down the breadth of the east coast to garner support for Aboriginal workers in the NT.



SoapBox

Soap Box is your chance to share your thoughts and experiences. All members are encouraged to submit articles and they will be published anonymously.

Here a teacher explains their experience working in a DI school.



Sticking to the Script

I am a teacher with half a dozen years' experience working, by preference, mostly in remote Aboriginal communities. Last year I took a posting teaching in a DI (Direct Instruction) school. I made the decision to leave this school after completion of my contract because I am in the business of teaching children and felt the program to be so imposed as to be significantly flawed.

My take on DI is that it is a good arrow to have in the quiver; it has a place in a student's overall literacy package. In particular, DI helps children to focus on the way language is spoken and getting the ordering of words in sentences correct by repetition.

I consider DI in many respects to be similar to teaching Standard Australian English as a foreign language, as in 'conversational English'. It reminds me a lot of my university class in conversational

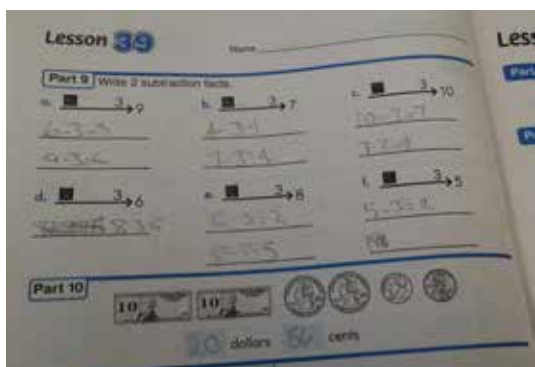
Indonesian whereby a dialogue was created between teacher and students and sentences were repeated over and over again to establish a 'muscle memory' of sorts in the speaking of the language.

It is a good way to get across some of the basics of phonetics and sentence structure in an interactive fashion. It is best delivered in short bouts (as in an hour or even an hour and a half max). In other words, too much DI is not necessarily commensurate with better outcomes.

My DI posting was interesting to say the least! How much teaching practice (or should I say what is expected of teachers to put up with from management) has changed in such a short while. The animosity between teachers (professional teachers) and management (those that seem to be sifted through and pass the muster of the Department of Education) has in my short career always been heating up, but the degradation of this relationship seems finally to be at its lowest point with the rollout and implementation of the Direct Instruction method. Especially this method of DI.

Yes, I might add that there is a bit of confusion associated with the different types of DI and how they should be implemented. I won't get too much into this but the version used for example in some WA schools (Explicit Direct Instruction) caters for a more flexible, less exhaustive programme than what has been embraced by the Northern Territory.

The extent of DI is the real issue and the overuse of the method (with schools required to spend at least three hours a day using the program) depletes not only its



effectiveness but also the overall curriculum provided to children in these schools.

Well, my line manager and I had difficulties from the start, as her sense of reality was different to what in practice was actually happening in my classroom (alongside those of my fellow cohorts). Her language and bearing essentially stated there was not to be any professional dialogue or discourse on the subject of DI and its efficacy and the ongoing mantra from her and our principal was that the students were now amazingly speaking in sentences for once. Not saying 'basketball', but 'can we play basketball?'

In one memorable staff meeting our principal clearly and unequivocally told all teaching staff that this was a big deal, a lot of eyes were on us, that there was a lot of money at stake as the Department had sunk substantial funds into DI. That, in essence, we were to make this program a success come hell or high water.

Now I have worked in plenty of schools with their inherent dynamics and difficulties, but I had never heard the likes of such an announcement made so blatantly. Such are the stakes (and the departure from professionalism and reality) for the Territory: to succeed in Direct Instruction at all costs.

Curriculum issues

There are plenty of arguments that suggest focussing so intently on 'pure' English—as we tend to define it, Standard Australian English—is fundamentally flawed; that SAE is not the only form of English communicated successfully in this country.

There are many entertaining novels on our library shelves in a plethora of English forms that succeed at presenting what we regard as Australian Literature, and indeed, a significant portion have been authored by Aboriginal Australians and written (to a greater or lesser degree) in Aboriginal English. Some of these novels and stories are required reading for study in mainstream high schools and at our universities.

The narrowed vision of our current head educators and curriculum designers prefers to ignore this fact—and the fact that Indigenous Australians can learn to not only communicate well in English but often express themselves more successfully without rigidly adhering to a very finite form of it.

Direct Instruction (as currently presented in NT classrooms) goes against the grain of the two-way concept. A matter of fact, some would say it is more an assimilation tool than a progressive educational method.

It is misleading to make comparisons (and therefore favourable projections for Indigenous kids) to the relative successes of an inner-city Hispanic Spanish-speaking mob—which the American DI team has used to sell the program to the Department. These cultures' language bases, oral traditions, methods and ideologies, values,

communal and familial responsibilities and obligations, etc, are distinct and incomparable.

So are we as educators to develop the minds of young Aboriginal Australians in such a way as to better support their navigating two cultures? Or are we to disregard one culture for another – because it is too difficult to do the former successfully?

Dumbing down teachers

I would have to agree with Allan Luke. He states that DI will cause a dumbing-down (de-skilling) of teachers. If we just looked to the merits of DI and used these facets in our classrooms (with the flexibility to use them appropriately in a balanced fashion) then this would be one thing. But the extent of the DI program implemented (imposed) means that teachers let themselves down on several fronts:

- DI is not just a program, it is the program and you must follow it to the letter. End of story regarding having to program for the majority of interface you will have with students on any given learning day (DI requires more repetitive assessment and recording of test scores than classic program creation).
- You will not need to reflect too much on your literacy teaching—as long as you follow the programme explicitly. DI has this part of your 'good teacher practice' covered. You don't even have to reflect on the merits of DI—it is completely and whole-heartedly mandated... and regardless, any opposition will be shut down.
- After you finish Maths and slot in the last half hour of DI in the arvo good luck trying to integrate any engaging subject into the students' learning day. There are simply only so many true contact hours available after subtracting the odds and sods that are part and parcel of any timetable. Realistically, this means your ability to create additional learning activities for the children will be far less than in a more traditional setting.

As you can imagine, the hardest part of DI is stuffing it into Indigenous kids all day and still calling yourself a teacher. If they like you enough the kids will try to parrot the script for you, again and again and again. And if you are just getting to know them, well, you might have some behavioural issues legitimising the whole thing.

Sadly, there is actually lots of benefit to the DI concept – it's just that the Department is on a different wavelength, and unfortunately some of us are along for the ride.

Branch **Executive** Election **Statements**

2016 AEU NT Branch Elections

Voting is open for elections to the Branch Executive for four positions: President, Treasurer, Women's Officer and Indigenous Officer.

Financial members should have received a ballot already – if you have not, contact the AEC on 8982 8064 or ntelections@aec.gov.au. The ballot closes on Monday 17 October – ballots must be received by the AEC by that date.

We have allowed each candidate to submit a photo and 250-word statement.

BRANCH PRESIDENT

Jarvis Ryan



I am seeking your support for a second term as Branch President.

As part of the leadership team with Branch Secretary Anita Jonsberg over the past two years, I have:

- Restored the union's credibility with members and the public
- Led a visible school funding campaign, holding the CLP Government to account for its vicious cuts to schools
- Campaigned against the DoE's plan to abolish remote secondary schooling

- Secured an election commitment from the ALP to restore 160 teaching positions
- Finalised the EBA without a loss of conditions, ensuring teachers received 12% increases in salaries in the current agreement
- Ensured the union's primary focus is the provision of support and advice to individual members
- Fought for the Department to keep its promise to offer more permanent positions – we are finally seeing results
- Supported members including with visits to dozens of workplaces across all regions.

I would welcome the opportunity to lead the union in a new political environment where the AEU will have the opportunity to shape education policy. With our next round of enterprise bargaining approaching, I will lead a strong and united campaign to secure improvements for you, in particular addressing crushing workload burdens.

I will hold the Gunner Government to account and make sure it keeps its promises and fights for a better funding deal for the NT.

I will focus on growing our membership to make sure our union gets stronger and is better able to support members, especially in remote areas.

Neil Gibson



I've been a member of the AEUNT for nearly 28 years and I've been with the NT DoE for the same period of time. I have worked in one teacher remote schools, large remote schools, in Katherine and in Darwin. I have worked as a classroom teacher and as a Principal.

I've been quietly active over these 28 years and have nominated for positions only once before. However, I feel it's time for an experienced NT voice to support our educators deal with our new NT Government with their 'new' policies / promises.

As President of the AEUNT I believe I have the skills and local knowledge to represent the views of AEUNT members, I believe I can support, discuss, question, debate or argue to obtain the best outcomes for NT educators.

The word is that the new NT Government will continue with Global budgeting, I have a few concerns about the effects of Global Budgeting both in the short term but particularly in the next two or three years.

I want to be elected as President of the AEU because I feel that our conditions are being slowly wiped away by policies that challenge our schools ability to recruit and retain our best and more experienced teachers. Our ability as educators to transfer or apply for positions may be hindered by our classification / cost to schools. As more and more NT schools begin eating into their "reserve" funds their "flexibility" with recruitment becomes as flexible as a brick, and if you're a CT 9 do you become unaffordable?? Our AEU again needs to ask the "right" questions I promise I'll certainly be asking the "right" questions for all NT educators.

TREASURER

Adam Lampe



As former Secretary of the AEU-NT and Unions NT, I had oversight of all aspects of both organisations' financial management. I worked closely with the members of the Unions' Executive Committee of Management to safeguard those organisations' finances. During my time as Secretary both Unions NT and the AEU-

NT experienced periods of financial growth and healthy membership.

As Treasurer I will ensure that effective financial systems and procedures have been established and are consistently followed in line with best practice and legal requirements. In my former role as Secretary I liaised with designated staff about financial matters and made sure that record-keeping and accounts met the conditions of statutory bodies and complied with the relevant legislation.

I made sure that accurate financial reports were delivered regularly to Executive, and that they were suitably

prepared for the annual audit. At no stage were there any financial irregularities while I was Secretary. I also made sure that the Unions' finances were only used to advance the interests of members and that the financial reports were available to members at all times.

I have a distinguished record of financial management in Unions over a significant period of time, including the AEU-NT.

Consequently, I'm asking for your vote as Treasurer.

Julie Danvers



I have been an accounting/business teacher at a senior school over the past seven years. I also teach book-keeping at adult night classes when required. At the previous school where I taught IT, I was sub-branch secretary for a few years.

I have been on the Australian Education Union, NT, Executive for six years and as Treasurer for the last four.

I have a Bachelor of Business majoring in accounting and am thoroughly familiar with computerised accounting programs and accounting process. I have an excellent understanding and expertise in financial record keeping, book-keeping, budgets and interpreting financial reports etc.

Over many years I have been an honorary treasurer for school committees and non-profit organisations. Currently I provide all book-keeping services: pay all bills, banking and generate financial reports for a long standing organisations out of school hours.

I am mindful that it is only through the member's fees that the Union is able to operate and provide the services that it does. Therefore as the Treasurer I acknowledge fully, that the Executive has complete responsibility to manage those funds wisely in order to provide essential support and services to its members.

I enjoy the challenge of holding this responsible position and feel happy and confident to continue in the role if re-elected.

WOMEN'S OFFICER

Rachel Webb



I was born and raised in Darwin, and I completed my schooling here. I began teaching in 2008 and have taught in both the Northern Territory and New South Wales. I'm currently employed at

Wanguri Primary School in Darwin. I have been a union member since I started working and also worked for a union in my pre-teaching years.

I believe that it is important to have a transparent and cohesive Union in order to work in the best interest of members' rights. Ensuring that students needs are met is paramount and therefore it is equally important also to ensure a fair and equitable workplace for those at the forefront of providing these educational outcomes. Educators of all backgrounds and situations are entitled to feel safe and supported at work.

Contrary to popular belief, our working hours do not simply begin at 820 and finish at 1440. Cuts to funding for schools has increased the pressure on all school staff, teachers and support workers alike.

The expectations placed on teachers increase each year and many of us spend our spare time and money to ensure our students get the best education possible. I would like to be part of a team that supports teachers to continue to provide the excellent services for their students and ensure that we get a fair go in the process.

Julie Danvers



I have lived and worked in the Northern Territory (NT) for 27 years. Whilst raising my own family I have enjoyed working in many areas of the community: when my children were small, I successfully set up and ran a

three year old kindergarten with a grant from the Department of Defence and fundraising.

Over the years I have held positions on a number of school councils, both in Darwin, remote and

overseas. I have also been COGSO rep for a Darwin primary school. I bring a wealth of life experiences with me having served and supported these many agencies and committees over the years. I am a strong supporter of public education. My children were educated in the NT, attended public schools and/or accessed distance education.

The NT covers 1.4 million square kilometres and the AEU NT has around 75% female membership. This creates a significant challenge for women working in education, in many cases quite isolated, in rural and remote areas, to connect and support each other. In these circumstances I recognise the absolute need for greater assistance. There are many issues faced by women in the education sector and I believe in equal opportunity, equity and support for all members.

I can identify with women and the issues they face across the territory. I have raised a family here, lived and worked in both remote and urban settings.

Unions are only as strong as their members. I believe in the role of unions in the workplace and a union serving its members. I support the Union and should I be successful as the women's officer I will endeavour to: forge a connection and support network between women working in education across the Northern Territory.

INDIGENOUS OFFICER

Cassandra Brown

Comrades Hi, I'm Cassandra Brown my clan group is



Traibelang-Bunda on my dad's side and Kungangi on my mother's side. I am a proud Murri. This is where I draw on my connection to country and strong ties with my culture. I have lived and worked in the Northern Territory for 17 years. My heart belongs here.

I tend to ask the difficult questions to get answers that support our Aboriginal

and Torres Strait islander members here in the Northern Territory.

Can I handle this roll? Simple answer, YES!

Do I speak out for my Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island members across all fields that work in the city, rural and remote? HELL YEAH!

Am I available to listen to your concerns? YES!

If you want a YES MAN, I am not your person. I am the person who isn't afraid to step on toes to get my point across and support your issues and fight for your rights as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders Unionists.

My passion is supporting my Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander members' rights. I may not be politically correct or eloquent at times. My fight comes within and it is with that strength and determination I draw on to keep our voices at the table in every executive meeting. For this to occur we have to work alongside our non-Indigenous members and support each other. The fight isn't over!

If you trust me vote for me.

Yours in Solidarity

Kym Tucker



I am a proud Aboriginal woman who was born in Darwin in the early 1970s. My Nanna was a survivor of the Stolen Generation and she was born in Borroloola. I am also connected to the Larrakia on my Grandfather's side.

As a high school and middle school teacher since the year

2000 in outback QLD and in Darwin, my goal has been to improve the educational outcomes and employment pathways for young people. Whilst I was trained as a high school English teacher, my passion has been to engage young people from many different social and cultural backgrounds in the great value of Indigenous Languages and Cultures.

I have been a formal and informal mentor and coach of many teachers and more recently (gratefully) of Indigenous teachers.

I have served as the Chairperson of the Sanderson Middle School Union Sub-branch during the introduction of Middle Schools and I served as the Secretary of the Sub-branch during the recent staff cuts and funding cuts.

I have a first-hand knowledge of the hardships that teachers and their students can face and the difficulty that can sometimes occur when trying to communicate through, at times, diametrically opposed cultural perspectives.

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Overpayments: The Silent Threat to Your Financial Future



It is becoming clear that many of you are receiving or have received overpayments from DoE. Often, it's only when a letter lands in your PO box, saying you owe hundreds, or in some cases thousands of dollars, that you become aware any overpayment has occurred. Payroll calculates pay on the information it receives and is not always notified in a timely manner when you move school or area, both of which can affect allowances.

Though there is always a responsibility on behalf of the recipient to notify the Department of any overpayment, in many recent cases, recipients of benefits such as Remote Retention Allowance

genuinely believe they are entitled to them, often because they have been informed by a line manager that this is the case.

The number of overpayments is so large that we assert the DoE must take responsibility for allowing its staff to accrue debt of thousands of dollars – the largest sum we've been made aware of recently is \$18,000. This particular individual did not find out she owed anything until she had made the decision to retire and this sum was deducted from her entitlements. We are pursuing this and others on our members' behalf, as regular audits should have picked up many of these errors.

There are a number of things you can do to protect yourself from financial shock down the line:

- If you are receiving any type of allowance, check the Conditions of Employment document for evidence of your entitlement. Do not rely on what you are told, as it holds little weight when overpayments occur. You can also contact HR and ask for email confirmation of your entitlements.
- Do check your bank account and myHR regularly, especially your salary slip, for any irregularities and notify payroll immediately.
- Print records of personal leave, LSL etc regularly so you have a hard copy of what you have accrued.

If you are contacted regarding an overpayment, do not sign anything and contact us immediately for support.

Meet the Union Lawyers Working for You

Hall Payne Lawyers (HPL) are legal representatives of the Australian Education Union NT Branch (AEU NT). They provide services to the organisation and AEU NT members at a discount. The first consult for members is without charge. HPL also offer a free will service to AEU NT members.

The partnership with HPL was initially established so that AEU NT and its members had access to expert advice on employment and industrial law. HPL has successfully represented the AEU NT and a number of members referred by the AEU NT including disciplinary matters, challenges to dismissals, and workers compensation matters.

The HPL head office is in Brisbane but James Burke is the local solicitor in their Darwin Office located on the 1st floor, 38 Wood Street, Darwin. James has spoken at our last two Conferences.

James grew up in Darwin, completing all but his first year of primary school at Darwin schools attending Wanguri Primary and then Dripstone High and Casuarina Secondary Schools (as they then were). James completed his university studies through what is now Charles Darwin University but initially was the University College of the NT at the Myilly Point Campus.

Whatever your legal matter, contact the AEU NT office to arrange a referral to HPL.

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