

TERRITORY Educator

Magazine Of The Australian Education Union – NT Branch




**WAGE
FREEZE**

Katherine
teachers win
reprieve

Struggles of
a graduate
teacher

**PRINCIPALS
STAND FIRM
AGAINST PAY
FREEZE**



Let's make managing
your super easy

What you do now with your super can make a big difference to your future. Simple things, like finding lost super, can help you take control of where you're headed.

Our expert team in the Northern Territory are here to make it easy. Speak to Darryl Florance 8912 2710 or visit australiansuper.com/take-control

AustralianSuper



This is general information only and doesn't take into account your personal objectives, situation or needs. Before making a decision about AustralianSuper, consider the PDS at australiansuper.com. AustralianSuper Pty Ltd ABN 94 006 457 987, AFSL 233788, Trustee of AustralianSuper ABN 65 714 394 898.



BRANCH EXECUTIVE MEMBERS

Branch President

Jarvis Ryan

Branch Secretary

Adam Lampe

Vice-President (General)

Stephen Pelizzo (*Borroloola School*)

Vice-President (TAFE)

Delean Holtze (*Batchelor Institute*)

Treasurer

Julie Danvers (*Casuarina Senior College*)

Women's Officer

Alyson Kavanagh

Indigenous Councillor

Cassandra Brown (*Ramingining School*)

Arnhem

Dan Yore (*Yirrkala School*)

Michael Stimpson (*Nhulunbuy High*)

Alice Springs

Paula Thornton (*Gillen Primary*)

Carly Phillips (*Centralian Middle*)

Barkly

Dennis Venning (*Tennant Creek High*)

Darwin

Bruce Cameron (*Darwin High*)

Barry George (*Darwin Middle*)

Deb Lamb (*Nightcliff Middle School*)

Katherine

Candace Loane (*Minyerri School*)

Rachel Jay (*Katherine South Primary School*)

PARR

Glynis Hester (*Bees Creek Primary*)

Linda Hyland (*Taminmin College*)

AEU NT Staff

Branch President

Jarvis Ryan

Branch Secretary

Adam Lampe

Administration Manager

Kelly Whitty

Special Projects Officer

Mick McCarthy

Organisers

Alyson Kavanagh

Tim Davis Frank

Produced By:

Australian Education Union NT Branch

PO Box 41863 Casuarina NT 0811

Print and Graphic Design: Zip Print

Term 3/2019 Authorised by: Adam Lampe

Editors: Jarvis Ryan, Alyson Kavanagh

Enquiries: 8948 5399

Email: admin@aeunt.org.au

Web: aeunt.org.au

Submissions and photographs to Territory Educator are always welcome and should be sent via email.



Contents

FEATURES

For whom the bells toll	4
United action wins concessions on rent subsidy	6
Standing strong to beat the freeze	7
Students, sexting and schools	8
The steepest of learning curves	10
Knowledge is power	11
Democracy on the global stage	12
Spending divide a capital crime	13
Supporting the student climate strike	16

REGULARS

AEU NT branch news	2
From the President	3
School Profile: Katherine High School	5
Advice: School council employees - Do they need their union?	14
Sub-branch rep profile: Debbie Bailey Willowra School	15

Women's network launch



Launch of women's network at Olive Pink Gardens in Alice Springs

The AEU NT Women launch in Alice Springs was a successful event. Sixteen women attended the Beantree Café at the Olive Pink Gardens in person and several more online. The AEU NT Women group will continue to grow and be an important part of interacting with members. The role of the Women's Officer is providing advice on women's issues as well as promoting policies which have a specific relevance to women and girls.

Part of this work has involved developing plans and strategies to achieve gender equity in our organisations and workplaces. The AEU NT women group is one forum where women can become involved in the activities of the union. Women who attended the event in Alice Springs reported that they appreciated having a safe space to discuss women's issues.

If you would like to know more about AEU NT women, please get in contact with your women's officer, Alyson Kavanagh.

Elections update

Nominations for AEU NT Branch Executive and Federal positions closed on 21-22 August. Where there are more candidates than the number of positions, a postal ballot will be held. The ballot will open on Friday 13 September for Branch Executive positions (19 September for federal roles) and close on Tuesday 15 October 2019 (17 October for federal).

Contested positions

All eligible members are urged to vote in the elections for these positions. If you don't receive your ballot paper within a week of the ballot opening, contact the union office immediately.

Branch Secretary (1)

Julie Danvers
Rachel Helliwell
Adam Lampe
Michael Pearson

Alice Springs Regional Councillors (2)

Gillian Furniss
Kenneth Guest
Pepe Millman

National Early Childhood Committee (1)

Amy Norman
Wendy Pelizzo

Uncontested positions

Congratulations to the following members, who have been elected unopposed.

Darwin Regional Councillors (4)

Bruce Cameron
Deb Lamb
Michael Pearson
Melissa Rabar

Palmerston Regional Councillors (3)

Ashley Cole
Shanelle Lee
Rachael Metcalfe

Arnhem Regional Councillors (2)

Michael Stimpson
Daniel Yore

Katherine Regional Councillors (2)

Rachel Jay
Candace Loane

Barkly Regional Councillor (1)

Michelle Ayres

Federal Conference Delegate (General) (1)

Jarvis Ryan

Federal Conference Delegate (TAFE) (1)

Richard Johnson

Yalukit Yulendj Committee (1)

Cassandra Brown

National Principals Committee (1)

Stephen Nimmo

No nominations were received for the following positions:

ATSI Federal Conference Delegate

Yalukit Yulendj TAFE member
National TAFE Council
Executive
National TAFE Council

New database, faster service



Our Branch has invested significant time and resources in developing a new membership database.

What does it mean for you?

Join online

It's easier than ever for new members to sign up online at join.aeunt.org.au. No more paperwork!

You probably have a colleague who has been meaning to join but never gets around to filling out the form... That's no longer an excuse!

A quick and easy process enables new members to sign up in five minutes from their computer, tablet or phone.

Lodge an issue

Secondly, there is now a facility for new and existing members to lodge an enquiry with the union office at aeunt.org.au/contact.

If you need advice on an issue or to update your details, lodge your matter here and it will be logged in our database and assigned a case number.

Our office does our best to respond to every member query within one day. We're proud of our quick responses but we want to do even better – that's why we've introduced the new system.

You can of course still phone the office between 8.30am and 4.30pm, Monday to Friday, on 8948 5399 and ask for assistance on any matter.



Principal colleagues deserve support

Executive contract principals have taken a courageous stand, writes Jarvis Ryan

Sometimes resistance comes from the most surprising places. Thus it has been with the response to the NT Government's so-called budget repair plan.

What the government thought would be a political slam dunk – requesting that all executive contract officers in the public service, including principals, consent to a three-year pay freeze – has been met with fierce opposition.

Only a small handful of 87 executive contract principals have agreed to the pay freeze (some were forced to consent to it because their contract was up for renewal).

For this dedicated and hard-working class of employees, who have had to surrender benefits that most of their teaching colleagues enjoy, such as job security and stand down, the pay freeze and the crude way it was communicated was the proverbial straw that broke the camel's back.

Suddenly, executive principals, a group thought too atomised and too fearful to defend their collective interests due to their employment status, are speaking up and demanding respect.

Two principals who wrote to the Chief Executive explaining why they were not agreeing to the pay freeze forwarded their emails to me, and with their permission I am sharing their correspondence. The first wrote:

"The ECPL contract I signed means that I do not have the option of permanency, despite having a family and a mortgage. It means I signed

away allowances including the remote incentive allowance, despite living in a remote category two school, a remoteness that was reinforced last Friday when I was medically evacuated via plane when my three year old son developed pneumonia.

"Out of my salary package I pay my own super and vehicle lease, a vehicle I need to do my job and yet becomes a fleet vehicle during working hours (I pay for it but everyone uses it). Since moving from AP as ST3 to Principal I have also given up the stand down in exchange for five weeks annual leave.

"Having lost the option for permanency, all allowances, stand down and the payments for car lease, I'm now being asked to sign away 2.5% pay increases."

The second response was as follows:

"I wish to share my personal reaction to the communications about this [issue]. As a front-line officer I have felt undervalued by being asked to accept a pay freeze.

"I gave up permanency with the Department to take this role. The principal role is incredibly challenging and taxing, physically and emotionally.

"This latest communication advises that a nil response will result in the presumption that I have chosen the option of a pay freeze in my next contract at 2019 pay rates. My contract is not due to expire until 2023 and so I am not prepared to commit to something now as I have no idea what the situation will be in 2023. I felt quite threatened by this last email and was left feeling unsure as to how to proceed."

I know from talking to principals across the Territory that the fear of speaking out is real. They worry that their contracts

won't be renewed unless they tow the departmental line.

What principals have done in speaking up takes real courage, and they should be applauded. It also matters how they've done it. By acting together, and through their representative organisations, they have shown the importance of having a collective voice. They have created an impetus for change. There is now a groundswell among principals for a return to permanent employment status.

That's the core of unionism: the idea that if we stand together, we can be far more powerful than if we operate individually.

Permanency for principals is firmly on the agenda and I believe we can win back job security for school leaders. This fits within the AEU NT's broader objective of maximising permanent employment opportunities for teaching and support staff.

Greater job security for educators should be a no brainer. It makes sense for our system, our staff and our students.

However, there are institutional obstacles and inertia to overcome. Achieving our goals will require unity and solidarity.

Principals deserve our support in this campaign and I ask all members to stand in solidarity with our colleagues.



FOR WHOM THE BELLS TOLL



Branch Secretary Adam Lampe clears up misconceptions about teachers' work hours



Because of the nature of teaching work, teachers' working hours are not standard

Erroneous ideas about expected working hours are often used to keep teachers in line. Too often we still hear stories of teachers being required to remain at school until arbitrary times such as 3.21pm or even 4.21.

It seems astonishing that this Neolithic view of a teacher's working day is still viewed as standard by some senior departmental officers. Not only is it incorrect in law, it simply doesn't reflect the nature of teachers' work.

The most comprehensive legal document we currently have in defining teachers' hours in the Northern Territory is the Teacher Responsibilities Guide (TRG), which has been given added legal weight by being referenced in clause 52 of the current enterprise agreement. Yet that document itself contains such regressive statements as, "the normal work hours are 36 hours and 45 minutes and it is expected that a teacher's work will usually be able to be done in that amount of time" (TRG, p.5), which of course is nonsense, but is also just one example of why the TRG is badly in need of revision.

Read a little deeper and you will find a clause in the NTPS Modern Enterprise Award 2016 which crushes any idea that the normal public service span of hours applies to teachers. Clause 8 states that the span of the ordinary hours of work, from Monday to Friday, "does not apply to Assistant Teachers, Classroom Teachers and Senior Teachers."

Public servants who work outside the ordinary span of hours during the working week (i.e. Mon-Fri. 7.30am-5.30pm) get things like

overtime pay or penalty rates. Teachers do not. But it begs the question: where does a teacher's day begin and where does it end?

The TRG provides some boundaries: NT public schools have to provide a minimum instruction time of five hours and 20 minutes per day; in addition, students (not necessarily teachers) get recess and lunch breaks; there is one compulsory meeting of one hour per week, after classes have finished; there is one parent-teacher night per semester (though how long they actually run is open to debate); and teachers are required to be at school 10 minutes before the start of lessons.

Within all that are classes, student supervisions, yard duties, meetings, marking, reports, lesson preparation, professional learning – there are not a lot of dead spots in the day. The TRG deals with all these things to a degree. It even acknowledges, ironically, that while breaks are required (under the award), they can't, in reality, be delivered within schools' normal operational requirements (TRG, p.8). However, the Guide is careful to delineate between non-contact time and breaks, a thing some principals seem to conflate by mistake.

What the Guide leaves largely unsaid, apart from its asinine comment about the time in which "a teacher's work will usually be able to be done", is the work which happens when schools are closed: late into the night, on weekends, during stand down. None of this logged or accounted for. But it is expected, because in the end what most teachers do is work to facilitate good results for their students; and resources and time are essential elements in allowing teachers to do that.

Also, it is why over-structuring teachers' days in what are already (and necessarily) heavily timetabled environments is a frequent mistake made by school leaders.

Indeed, that is why it is called the *Responsibilities Guide*, not the *Teacher Hours' Guide*. Unnecessarily requiring teachers to stay at school after classes have ended misses the point about what they are getting paid for. Equally, expecting teachers to submit to extra meetings on a consistent basis or to use their non-contact time to meet imposed local school managerial initiatives devalues and puts obstacles in the way of teachers' core business: quality educational outcomes.

Creating the conditions for success

At Katherine High School, student and teacher voice indicated that there was a need for transparent and clear expectations and for opportunities for students and teachers to build positive relationships through common understanding and appreciation of everyone's cultures, strengths and challenges. Students, families and community members were last year invited to vote on their top three values, resulting in four stand out values that have framed the expectations and standards for the school to move forward. This was achieved through newsletters, online surveys, face to face questionnaires and social media.

The values of Inclusion, Effort, Respect and Resilience were chosen. Students and community members assisted in creating a common understanding of these values, to be shared across the school and within the town and region.

Since the implementation of the school values, the school community have collaborated with local artists and student musicians to communicate

At Katherine High School, we have transformed the school culture to create greater opportunities for quality teaching and learning

these values and expectations across all sectors, and to celebrate the cultures, achievements and strengths each individual student and their families bring to the school. The school's expectations are aligned to a strong positive behaviour framework that is based on restorative practices.

All teachers have had training in building strong relationships and restorative practices to ensure students are engaged in their learning and can name somebody who believes that they will be a success in life.

Katherine High School have taken the next step in our cultural transformation by implementing responsible thinking practices and a responsible thinking classroom (RTC), where students who demonstrate disruptive behaviour choose to go to the RTC to work with a teacher to change

their behaviours and re-engage in their learning. Students then participate in a restorative meeting with the class teacher to restore the relationship and improve the conditions for quality learning for all.

At Katherine High School the school community believe that all students have the right to learn and all teachers have the right to teach.

Along with the support from the school's key stakeholders that include the Clontarf Academy, the Stars Academy, our school-based police officers, Home Liaison Officer and our AIEW, each and every student is case managed with support to improve attendance, engagement and their learning.

The Katherine High School staff meet regularly in collaborative impact teams to analyse key data, set improvement priorities, formulate and action improvement plans and review the impact of the plan in 5-week cycles. This process has been the key to success for the school to now focus on quality learning and focus far less on behaviours.

*Daniel Murtas
Principal*



Renewed focus on school values has contributed to improving the culture at Katherine High School

United action on

RENT SUBSIDY

A vocal campaign by Katherine teachers will protect current employees from large rent increases, but eliminate subsidies for new employees, writes Alyson Kavanagh



Katherine teaching staff at the most recent consultation meeting

A plan to drastically increase rents for teachers in Katherine has been watered down after a sharply critical response by teaching staff, the local community and the AEU.

As part of the Government's budget austerity measures, the Department of Education was directed to cut \$500,000 from the subsidy it currently provides to nearly 100 teaching staff in Katherine.

Earlier options included doubling the rent for employees receiving the subsidy, which currently caps their rent at about \$150 per week.

Under the latest proposal from the Department, the existing scheme will be grandfathered for current employees, meaning they will retain the subsidy but see rents increase by between 20 and 30 per cent, with increases differentiated based on salary tiers. In dollar terms, rents will increase by somewhere between about \$23 and \$45 per week.

For those staff who wish to leave Katherine but remain in the NT, DoE has promised to facilitate a transfer to a remote location. The provisions extend to contract staff and the Chief Executive has committed to giving priority to contract staff in Katherine for consideration for permanency.

Although the current proposal came as a relief to existing staff, the tradeoff is that the burden of the cuts will fall on new employees, who will have no access to a housing subsidy and must source their own property rather than via a DoE

leasing arrangement. The only concession for new employees is they will receive at 10 least fortnightly relocation payments (equivalent to teachers in Alice Springs).

It was always going to be difficult to overturn a cabinet decision to inflict austerity on Katherine teachers and their housing subsidy, especially given the housing subsidy for Katherine teachers was not written into any enterprise agreement or other legislative document. This meant that there was no industrial mechanism to stop the reduction or removal of the decades-old practice of providing a housing subsidy to teachers.

Back in April when the decision was announced alongside many other austere measures, teachers were on holidays. The poor communication of the implications of this decision left teachers feeling disrespected upon their return.

However, the passion and courage with which our members in Katherine asserted the importance of the subsidy, ably supported by many members of the community, forced a big shift in tone from the Department.

The language initially used by the government was negative in tone and the connotations of words like "cut" and "review" meant that teachers were worried that this meant the end of the entire subsidy. This language has since softened and at the latest consultation meeting, Katherine teachers were advised that cuts to the subsidy would be phased in over the next three years and grandfathering arrangements put in place. While the decision to save money in this area was not completely reversed, by taking a strong collective stance we were able to influence the decision about how the measure would be implemented.

What remains to be seen is how the government now attracts new teachers to Katherine town schools, given that the Katherine region already experiences the highest rate of teacher turnover and contract employment in the NT.

The new arrangements are only temporary and will be reviewed in 2022, or sooner if it remains challenging to recruit teachers to Katherine schools.

This dispute has highlighted the importance of having our conditions protected in industrial agreements. That's why the AEU NT will be campaigning for the inclusion of a housing allowance or similar instrument to be included in our next round of bargaining.

Standing strong to beat the **FREEZE**

Principals have shown the power of collective action with a united stand over an attempted pay freeze, writes Jarvis Ryan



For many principals, the benefits of executive contracts have melted away

The standoff over government attempts to impose a pay freeze on executive contract principals continues. In June, chief executives wrote to all executive contract officers (ECOs), including principals, asking them to agree to a variation in their current contract that would freeze their salaries at current levels for three years.

The wage freeze is part of the government's "budget repair" measures. But it is purely symbolic. The ECO pay freeze could save an estimated \$8 million a year – against a predicted budget deficit for the current year of \$1.1 billion.

The Government thought it was on to an easy winner politically with a move against public sector executives. However, the backlash among principals was immediate and pronounced. Our office was inundated with enquiries from principal members on whether they should consent to the pay freeze.

While executive principals are not protected by an enterprise agreement, the majority are AEU members and we have advocated on their behalf throughout this dispute. The NT Principals' Association (NTPA) has also lobbied strongly on behalf of its members. The AEU NT advised members, based on legal advice we sought, not to sign any variation.

With a very poor take up rate, the Gunner Government doubled down on its earlier stance by writing to all ECOs on 1 July with what could only be deemed a threat: agree to a three-year pay freeze now or face a four-year pay freeze on your next contract. For many principals, this added insult to injury.

The AEU NT joined with the NTPA and parent peak body COGSO to call on the Government to exempt principals from the pay freeze, on the grounds that principals are teachers and

frontline workers, and pointed to analysis that the freeze could leave some principals worse off financially than their assistant principals.

At the time of writing, I was informed that less than 10 executive contract principals had agreed to a contract variation. This number does not include some principals who were forced to accept the freeze because they were due to sign a new contract.

The AEU NT is continuing to proactively engage the Government and Department on solutions to the current impasse. We believe there is a simple solution: if government no longer believes it can afford executive-level salaries, principals should be offered job security with a return to permanency and coverage under the teachers' enterprise agreement, and access to the benefits enjoyed by their teaching colleagues.

The obvious window for this to take place is 2021, when teacher enterprise bargaining resumes. In the meantime, the AEU is seeking a public commitment from the Government to adopt such a position as policy.

There are important technical issues to work through, such as ensuring that principals continue to be compensated appropriately based on their context, considering variables such as stage of schooling and remoteness. Workload and welfare also need examination, particularly principals' right to a full six weeks of recreation leave and stand down.

A useful vehicle for this is the review of principal classifications being conducted by consulting firm Mercer. A report is due to be submitted to the Chief Executive by the end of September. As a member of the principal classifications working group, the AEU expects to be consulted about the findings and part of the process of developing a way forward.



STUDENTS, SEXTING AND SCHOOLS

The online world poses both learning opportunities and moral dilemmas for adolescents

AEU member Jacob Fajzullin recently took out the Charles Darwin University Essay Prize in the NT Literary Awards. We have adapted and abridged his winning essay on the effect of Online Sexual Activity (OSA) on young people and points teachers toward best practice in dealing with a difficult topic. A link to the full essay can be found at our website.

Introduction

While young people's accessibility to and proficiency with the internet and online devices has revolutionised education, the attainment of knowledge and social connectivity, the rapid pace of the online world also poses several dilemmas.

The prevalence of young people partaking in Online Sexual Activity (OSA) is having a number of effects on development of contemporary adolescents. Some of these impacts can be considered beneficial for sexual exploration and identity but, a range of studies across different cultures have found that participation in OSA can have detrimental effects.

What is Online Sexual Activity and how prevalent is it among adolescents?

OSA encompasses a range of different activities involving technology and sexuality of which secondary schools should be informed. It can be defined as the use of the internet for any practice involving sexuality. The term sexting has been coined to describe the sending and receiving of sexually explicit messages and photos.

Research indicates that it is relatively common for Australian adolescents to participate in OSA. A 2013 Australian study of more than 2000 secondary school students across every jurisdiction of Australia found that 25.9% of participants had sent a sexually explicit photo or video of

themselves and 41.9% reported receiving a sexually explicit photo or video from someone else. The study indicated that males are marginally more likely to partake in OSA than females. Nearly one in ten participants reported that they had sent a sexually explicit image or video of someone else.

Image-based sexual abuse also has legal and well-being ramifications for secondary schools. The Australian Government Office of Children's eSafety Commissioner defines image-based abuse as "when intimate or sexual photos or videos are shared online without consent, either to humiliate or shame someone, or for the 'entertainment' of others".

Monash University and RMIT University research indicates that approximately "1 in 5 Australians" are victims of image-based abuse, "1 in 3 people aged 16- 19" reported at least once instance of "image victimisation" and that males and females were equally at risk of being victims.

What dilemmas do young people face regarding Online Sexual Activity?

OSA is serious when the associated harms of cybersex, sexting and image-based abuse are considered. Studies have reported negative consequences for sexual development, especially for younger adolescents. These range from trauma, sexually transmitted diseases, unwanted pregnancy, substance abuse, cyberbullying, incarceration, depression, and even suicide.

Further impacting these negative experiences is the issue of consent. The Monash-RMIT university study alluded to above found that 75 percent of victims whose images were shared without consent experienced "moderate to severe depression and/or anxiety"; many participants in the study also reported feeling that their personal safety was at risk.

Considering the prevalence of OSA it is crucial for those who work with adolescents in secondary schools to understand which characteristics

put students at risk for the possible negative consequences of OSA so they can give focused support. Adolescents are far more vulnerable to the negative consequences of OSA than adults as young people more frequently use the internet for leisure and partake in more risk-taking behaviour. While it can be difficult to discern exactly what makes an adolescent more likely to participate in online risk behaviour, some interesting theories have been proposed regarding adolescents' motivations for participating in OSA.

What do key studies indicate to Northern Territory secondary schools about the substantial dilemmas OSA poses to adolescent females?

It is crucial that secondary schools are informed how OSA raises significant dilemmas for adolescent females. While males and females have been shown to equally participate in OSA, young women are "more likely to be negatively impacted" by practices like cybersex and sexting and there is a suggested link between OSA and "gendered sexual violence targeting women". In a 2016 study, findings show adolescent females who experience offline sexual coercion are more likely to be pressured into sending explicit images or receive explicit images without consent and vice versa. Perpetrators can use these images to cause further harm via threats and blackmailing victims.

Through OSA, young women are particularly at risk of exploitation due to the emergence of value systems based on explicit images. Peer group pressure within secondary school groups placed value on the hierarchical system of collection and sexting images of body parts and rewarded boys for attaining such images.

What approaches should be implemented in Northern Territory Middle and Secondary Schools to address the developmental dilemmas associated with Online Sexual Activity?

Secondary schools must take informed action to implement policies and procedures to address the dilemma of OSA and its impact on students. However, these actions cannot be merely dealt with under the umbrella of student wellbeing, requiring a systemic response given the legal ramifications of OSA.

There appear to be three main ways that schools are responding to OSA.

1. Attempting to restrict or entirely ban adolescents' access to online media (which is an ultimately unhelpful response);
2. Imparting blame on the adolescents involved in OSA (which supports the outdated deficit approach to youth development resulting in the "demonisation of young people");
3. Educating young people about "ethical and safe media use" and encourages secondary school students to "critically engage with what they consume".



AEU NT member Jacob Fajzullin accepting his NT Literary Award

The third option of education seems to be the most sensible and effective approach. There are some effective approaches and strategies Northern Territory middle and secondary schools can take. Schools must be informed on the risks, warnings and behaviour associated with OSA and proactively educate youth, parents and the community. Other approaches include incorporating OSA in the school curricula, creating partnerships with parents and the community so warning signs and risks in students can be recognised, develop concepts of positive body image with students to establish that "they are in control of who sees their body", and create a team in each secondary school to address the OSA dilemma, which should include school nurses and counsellors.

The Office of the Victorian Privacy Commissioner has developed an excellent resource which could be used to initially introduce OSA awareness into secondary schools. *So You Got Naked Online...* assists teachers in educating students about what sexting is and its risk but, more importantly, encourages reflection after being involved in sexting and where to obtain help. It is important to empower adolescents rather than shame and vilify them for participation in OSA.

The Positive Youth Development (PYD) approach should be adopted by Northern Territory middle and secondary schools to best address the OSA dilemma while maintaining the wellbeing of students. The PYD model, which recognises the agency and strengths of adolescents while fostering strategies to respond in effective ways is the best approach to address dilemmas posed such as OSA. The skills in building resilience, relationships and networks of supportive adults are central protective factors for young people.

THE STEEPEST of Learning Curves

A new AEU NT member writes about her difficulties as a teaching graduate entering the workforce*

As a passionate believer in quality education, the data surrounding new teacher retention rates seemed unbelievable. The AEU has recently submitted some reasons to a parliamentary inquiry for teachers leaving the profession: lack of job security, little professional autonomy, teaching out of field as well as placing inexperienced teachers into highly challenging environments to begin their careers as some of the reasons that teachers exit the profession so early.

As a graduate teacher, the reports now make perfect sense. I now understand the lightning speed at which new teachers need to develop resilience and understand their workplaces. I now also understand the harsh reality about how well-intentioned, hard-working and emotionally intelligent people could give up on their dreams during their first five years of teaching in a system dedicated to student outcomes yet indifferent to teacher wellbeing. It is glaringly obvious that these seemingly opposing forces are inextricably linked.

Cognitive dissonance is the psychological stress experienced by a person who holds two contradictory beliefs simultaneously. Teachers are more vulnerable to high levels of stress due to the high level of job demands placed on us. Graduate teachers, often optimistic and somewhat naïve, experience many types of stressors, usually all experienced at the same time at the very beginning of your career.

Other seemingly contradictory examples include, but are not limited to, how teachers are to develop meaningful relationships with students, while coping the brunt of abuse when mistakes are made. New teachers then sustain a hyper-vigilant approach to teaching, instead of sustaining their own teaching style. Teachers are to encourage creativity yet gradually give up their own creativity in exchange for classroom management.

Teachers are to reward individuality but reprimand students who have not yet learned how to conform and disrupt others. Teachers are to be passionate about a subject yet be prepared to have it torn to shreds by students (sometimes literally). Teachers are to read widely but spend



A teacher's first teaching placement is often an uphill battle

every spare hour meticulously planning or marking. Teachers are to have utmost confidence and control yet face constant criticism and denigrating probation ("performance") meetings. Six months is an unrealistic timeframe to perfect the craft of teaching.

Teachers are to be deeply reflective but not too self-critical. We are to be sensitive and show empathy but be bulletproof and retire both tear ducts. Teachers are to have high expectations of all students while being prepared for the worst. Ironically, we teach students how to voice their opinion, question things and work hard to solve problems, while many of us are suffering in secret.

Despite these conundrums, science has shown us that mindfulness meditation for 30 minutes per day can relinquish symptoms of stress. My days that begin this way are significantly easier than the days that begin with the bell and her associated sounds of morning morale. It is one strategy that reminds me to be grateful that even in my first year of teaching, hanging by a thread off the side of the steepest curve, I have a meaningful opportunity to positively affect other people's daily lives.

The systems within which teachers work lack a duty of care to those new to the profession. For example, in other states' enterprise agreements, early career teachers are given extra time off class to help adjust to the demands of being a teacher for the first time. This is sadly not the case yet in the NT. While the DoE are working on a framework for teacher wellbeing, there are real concerns for the new educators struggling in our system right now.

** This piece has been published anonymously at the member's request.*

Knowledge is POWER

The AEU NT is empowering members by providing sub-branch rep training in all regions of the Territory, writes Alyson Kavanagh

Organisers are continuing to hold sub-branch rep training across the NT. In July we held our first combined event with the AEU SA Branch, with 30 members from central Australia gathering in Alice Springs for a weekend course.

Our NT reps learned how to organise in their schools and heard about issues facing educators across the border from the APY lands.

One issue common to both our members is the lack of Aboriginal voice in the way we deliver education. This was also a major theme in discussing our values with the need for respecting cultures to be reciprocated. This team building activity was one of the ways in which we developed a shared space for learning over the weekend.

Our members that take on representative roles in their sub-branches do so voluntarily and we thank them for their hard work. Some were surprised that they are protected under the enterprise agreement as well as by the Fair Work Act. As we unpacked the role of being a rep, it was clear that good communication and consultation with both members and management is the key.

Open communication with your non-union colleagues is also essential. Research shows that many people don't join unions for the simple reason that they have never been asked! Reps learnt that the best person to recruit a fellow

teacher or educator is a colleague. Asking your colleagues to join our union is perhaps the easiest way to help our union grow stronger. This includes your Aboriginal colleagues, so we can amplify their voices within the education system.

Three Aboriginal members from Yuendumu and Nyirripi participated in this session. Sam Watson from Yuendumu had this to say about her experience: "It was good meeting other people from other communities. I feel really supported by the union! I'm looking forward to signing up more of my colleagues when I get back home." It was also fantastic to hear what a recruitment conversation sounds like in Warlpiri.

Finding answers to questions commonly asked is one role of being a union rep. We used the Teacher Responsibilities Guide and the enterprise agreement to look at how those documents answer questions for members. Reps learnt frameworks for helping members with issues and when to ask for help resolving them.

Our reps left the training with a sense of purpose and confidence in helping organise colleagues in their schools to come together to resolve problems that arise. Working with our colleagues from South Australia meant that we were all learning, even the trainers! Although it was the weekend, most participants had a great time learning from us and from each other.

Over the last year we have put on several training sessions for members with the next event happening in the Barkly region. The training builds the strength of the union and develops our activists. We have now empowered more than 80 reps to help resolve issues at their schools and support their colleagues.



The learning continued over dinner

Democracy on the global STAGE

Jarvis Ryan reports from the world's largest global gathering of teacher unionists



The AEU delegation to World Congress featured representatives from every state and territory

In late July the 8th World Congress of Education International was held in Bangkok, Thailand. EI is the global union federation for teachers and educators, with more than 400 affiliates from 172 countries and a combined membership of more than 30 million.

The World Congress takes place every four years and is an opportunity for our profession to meet, discuss, debate and shape our global vision for education and democracy.

This Congress featured 1300 delegates and observers from about 150 countries, including 23 members of the AEU delegation. A dizzying array of plenaries, workshops and receptions took place over eight days, with many sessions simultaneously translated into seven or more languages.

I attended looking forward to learning more about what some of the major issues facing educators in other countries would be. Perhaps the most striking takeaway was just how similar the challenges we face in Australia are to those in other industrialised countries.

Major themes were the continued efforts to erode teacher autonomy by governments, lack of equitable resourcing of schools, crippling workloads for teachers and the imposing of commercial imperatives and corporate agendas.

Congress grappled with emerging issues such as how technology is transforming schooling, for good and ill. Artificial intelligence has great potential to reduce much menial work but also threatens teacher autonomy and the nature of education if not managed carefully. As one delegate put it, "New technology can never

substitute for the relationship between teacher and student."

The Congress is an important forum for developing international solidarity and better understanding the hardships faced by colleagues in poorer and developing nations. Many of these countries lack democratic freedoms, both in a general sense and for unions seeking to improve the conditions of workers. Some of these countries are in our own neighbourhood. In Fiji, for example, workers do not have the right to take collective action. Various union leaders have been detained.

From the Philippines to Turkey, EI and its affiliates have sounded the alarm to defend union leaders and democracy, highlighting these issues in global forums and through media.

The Congress also highlighted how far we must go as a global community in ensuring access to schooling. Although the numbers of uneducated children have fallen, globally there are still 270 million children currently not in school. Kailash Satyarthi from India, who won the 2014 Nobel Peace Prize, spoke of significant reductions in the use of child labour, but stressed that more than 150 million children worldwide were still working instead of going to school.

Striving against these injustices is at the heart of what we believe in as educators. As AEU Federal Secretary and EI President Susan Hopgood said in her opening address, "The fundamental issue is access to free, quality, public education for all."

Delegates emerged from the Congress resolving to deepen our commitment to the struggle for universal rights and quality education.

Attending the Congress gave me a greater appreciation of the importance of having a strong voice in the international arena. Although Paris and New York seem a long way from a remote Territory school, decisions being made at the highest levels in global institutions such as the UN and OECD do filter right down to our classrooms. This is so often where the push for things like standardised testing comes from.

AEU members can be proud of the progressive role played by the AEU internationally, especially in the Asia-Pacific region, where our leadership amplifies the voices of our brothers and sisters in smaller developing nations.

Spending divide a capital crime

School infrastructure spending further highlights the inequalities in federal funding for public and private schools

The schools funding agreements that were recently signed by all states and territories in Australia did not include additional monies for public school infrastructure. In 2019 the Commonwealth Capital Grants Program has allocated more than \$146 million to fewer than 140 non-government schools. By contrast, public schools will not receive a single dollar of equivalent Commonwealth funding.

Capital funding for private schools is estimated to be \$1.9 billion over the next ten years. This includes money for things such as orchestra pits, hyperbaric chambers and rooftop play areas. All the while teachers and students in the NT are having to put up with classrooms with asbestos walls, no ovals or sporting facilities and temporary demountable buildings.

New data on school finances reveals that between 2013 and 2017 Australia's four richest elite private schools spent more on new facilities and renovations than 1800 schools combined (\$402 million vs \$370 million). Nationally Catholic schools spent 2.2 times more per student on capital works than public schools in 2017, while Independent schools spent four times more per student.

Australian Education Union Federal President Correna Haythorpe said that the Morrison Government had abrogated its responsibility to the millions of students in public schools across the country by refusing to provide any Commonwealth funding for capital works.

"The question must be asked – why does the Morrison Government persist in funnelling millions of Commonwealth dollars into Australia's richest elite private schools when they clearly do not need it? What possible justification could Prime Minister Scott Morrison have for continuing to refuse to provide any capital funding at all for public schools? This policy needs to change, for the sake of all students," Ms Haythorpe said.

The data from MySchool provides solid evidence of deliberate inequity

in the policy settings by the current government. It is our nation's public schools that are most in need of new classrooms, libraries, science labs and equipment.

The lack of Commonwealth capital funding for public schools is despite the fact ABS data shows almost 200,000 additional students have enrolled in Australian schools in the past five years and 76% of the growth has been in public schools.

There are also serious moral and ethical questions about how private schools were spending the recurrent funding they receive from the Commonwealth. This is because private schools are allocating amounts for infrastructure that are very similar to the recurrent funding amounts they receive. The rules state that recurrent funding cannot be used for capital works projects.

Federal education minister Dan Tehan believes that infrastructure spending for public schools is a problem for state and territory governments. However, this implies that public schools should use recurrent funding, denying students and schools the resources for teaching and learning programs. This is an unacceptable position, particularly for the smaller states and territories that have less capacity to raise revenue.

The AEU has called for the establishment of a federal capital works fund for public schools, as recommended by many experts, of at least \$300 million dollars. Just as our union has campaigned for a fair recurrent funding system, we will now intensify our efforts to highlight inequities in allocation of capital works monies.



An outdoor area at a school in the Barkly region

School council employees need unions too

Mick McCarthy explains why school council employees should join their union

No matter who you work for in Australia, you have a right to join a union and seek their support and advice. Which union represents which worker is set out in the registered constitutions (the rule books) of each of Australian union. In most union's rules it is about what you do at work, not who you work for, that determines which union workers should join.

Over the last 18 months or so, the AEU officers have gained an appreciation that there are significant numbers of workers within NT schools that are being employed directly by the school council. While this is permissible under the NT Education Act, this provides workers with less industrial rights and protections.

For example, in August 2018 AEU completed a study of

employment patterns in the NT schools of the Arnhem Region that showed only 40% of employees with an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander background are being employed by the Department of Education. The remainder are engaged by the school council and/or are Community Development Program (CDP) placements.

This tells us there are potentially several hundred school council employees in that region alone. The study also told us that most (possibly all) in the region are employed on a casual basis (with no paid personal or recreation leave) despite many having years and years of association with their school. The study found many examples of a 10-year connection, in one instance 20 years plus at their school.

Is this just an issue for remote schools?

We believe not. We are aware of both a few permanent but

many more casually employed by school councils in Darwin and other regions.

Is this situation a cause for concern?

It is the case that school councils have been employing staff on a casual basis for a very long time. However, the concept of repeated years, with examples of decades of engagement only as a casual employee, is an issue. As is the apparent number of employees now engaged in this manner.

The basis of their remuneration is the Educational Service (Schools) General Staff Award 2010. This federal instrument has vastly inferior pay and conditions to the enterprise agreements that cover Department of Education employees.

Is there a hidden poorly paid workforce in NT schools?

There might be, so we should find out more conclusively.

Has there been a shift of work away from workers employed under our enterprise agreements to casual school council positions? Again, there might be and together we should stop it.

Members will see more on this subject in the months (and possibly years ahead). For now, the first thing every current member can do is help us identify these workers and aim to get them to join their union. If they work in the classroom then they can join the AEU. If they are doing administrative work only, they should join CPSU. If they are doing grounds or cleaning or other physical roles, they should join United Voice. Finally, we encourage members to discuss this subject at a sub-branch meeting: what are your combined knowledges about School Council employees in your school?



The three workers behind teacher Alison Wunungmurra are all performing similar work with children in the school. All three are employed under different conditions

Debbie Bailey, Willowra School

How do you view your role of sub-branch president?

As the Willowra School rep I support staff to address issues that they are having with other staff or line managers. I want to be a person who is seen as there to listen and understand issues that members are having in their school and with the help of the organisation come to some solutions.

I follow up with AEU NT website and office to access the information that members need to check that we are informed of the correct procedure or policy. Staff are then referred to our office if needed. I also encourage those who are not members to join and explain the advantages of being a union member.

What aspects of being a sub-branch president do you like?

I like that I can network with those in the Barkly Region and know that as a union sub-branch we can offer support and advice to each other. This is something that I am still learning. I have now been elected to the position of Barkly region vice president and hope to help this remote area of the NT work together to put forward motions to address issues.

What tips do you have for new sub-branch vice presidents?

To believe that you are doing something worthwhile not just for your workplace, but for your



region. Don't be afraid to ask questions, as they say, "There is no such thing as a silly question". Be active in the union and your workplace. Assist your members to work towards a safe and healthy workplace.

Recognising and rewarding Nominations open for the Arthur Hamilton Award

This is your chance to celebrate AEU members who are making an outstanding contribution to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education. The Arthur Hamilton Award commemorates the achievements of Arthur Hamilton, a Palawa man who was active in promoting cross-cultural awareness, recognition of Indigenous peoples and the right for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students to access a high quality public education.

The winner will receive a \$1500 prize and will be flown to Melbourne to accept the Award at the annual Federal Conference of the AEU in February 2020. All nominees will receive a certificate from the AEU.

Get nominating!

Download your nomination form at:

www.aeufederal.org.au/our-work/indigenous.

Alternatively, request one from Suzanne Lowndes:

(03) 9693 1800 slowndes@aeufederal.org.au

Closing date for nominations is Friday 1 November 2019

Find out more

Visit aeufederal.org.au/our-work/indigenous

or contact AEU Federal Secretary,

Susan Hopgood: aeu@aeufederal.org.au



The 2018 Arthur Hamilton Award went to the Aboriginal Education Team at Briar Rd Public School. The Award was presented by Correna Haythorpe, AEU Federal President (centre), to Jessica Scott (left) and Samantha Rangaiya (right) from the Aboriginal Education Team, at the 2019 AEU Federal Conference.



Supporting the student climate strike

Tim Davis Frank explains why the AEU NT and other education unions support students taking action on climate change on 20 September

In the lead up to the International Day of Peace on 21 September, the United Nations has called upon all people around the world to take action to lower greenhouse emissions, build resilience and improve education on climate change. The 2019 theme is "Climate Action for Peace" and people will be sharing their activities online with the hashtags #PeaceDay and #ClimateAction.

The UN Secretary-General António Guterres has stated that "We need decisions, political will and transformational policies to allow us to still live in peace with our own climate."

The Federal AEU and the AEU NT's Branch Conference have declared public support and endorsement of the Student Strikes for the Environment taking place on 20 September. Federal President Correna Haythorpe declared in March that "the AEU commends the actions of students in Novem-

ber 2018 who participated in the climate strike to build pressure on the Morrison government to enact laws and policy that would place Australia at the international forefront on proper action to tackle climate change."

Jarvis Ryan, AEU NT President, states that "students who participate in the strike planned for September and in any future actions must be afforded their democratic rights and must be able to participate in these actions safely. AEU NT officers will work to provide advice to AEU members about the appropriate protocols to ensure the safe participation of students in the strike and we will send a delegation from the AEU NT office to take part in the event."

As teachers and educators we have an important role in educating young people about being responsible global citizens. Undoubtedly, the many Australian students participating in these important civic actions are doing so because of studies in science, geography, commerce, economics, legal studies, maths and English that inspire and educate. These students are empowered because of our farsighted education system. Although teaching staff are

not permitted to engage in stop work action for the climate strike, members of the AEU NT are encouraged to show solidarity with the students in a manner you feel is appropriate. Some of the suggested ideas are: to apply for a form of approved leave in order to attend the strike; organise a workplace action to show solidarity such as posting selfies to social media; or pass a resolution of solidarity from your sub-branch.

The global federation of education unions, Education International, has stated:

"Students, by taking to the streets, have rejected cynicism and apathy and embraced hope. Hope is contagious and can inspire others to take charge of their destinies. The action of students on climate change has not only forced discussions in many countries about that issue, but has also revealed the weak response of many democracies to the most compelling needs of the population and the planet. This mobilisation can contribute to and help inspire a process of re-invigoration of the democratic process."

Let us all hope that our politicians are inspired by the passion and intelligence of our incredible students.



Students at the Alice Springs climate strike earlier this year.

Bringing *fair* to your side



Work. Life. Fairness.

- | Personal Injury
- | Employment Law
- | Wills & Estates
- | Industrial Relations
- | Family Law
- | Defamation Law
- | Immigration Law
- | Disability & Super
- | Commercial Law
- | Property Law

hallpayne.com.au - Call 1800 659 114

Lease a car and you could win \$500!

If you are looking for a new car, now's the time to salary package with Fleet Network!

For a short time only, we are offering all AEU NT Members an **EXCLUSIVE OFFER!** With every novated lease settled during September and October 2019, Fleet Network will give AEU NT Members a **FREE BONUS GIFT PLUS ...**

You'll go into the draw to **WIN \$500 CASH!***

AUE NT ONLY DRAW



Your own dedicated Novated Leasing specialist



Save with exclusive National Fleet Discounts



We'll sell your Trade-in for you



Save GST on your vehicle's running costs^



Your Package includes Finance, Fuel, Insurance, Servicing, Tyres & Registration



Get a free quote today!

FleetNetwork

Lease > Package > Save

1300 738 601

www.fleetnetwork.com.au/aeunt

*Drawn on 5 November 2019. Only open to AEU NT Members. To qualify for this offer you must mention this advertisement to Fleet Network prior to the completion of your initial contract. The new or used salary packaged car must be settled between 1 Sept and 31 Oct 2019. Vehicle must be procured by Fleet Network. ^Subject to Employer policy.