

# Education



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QUARTERLY





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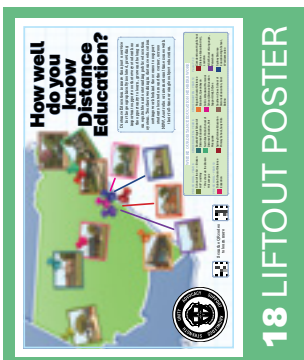
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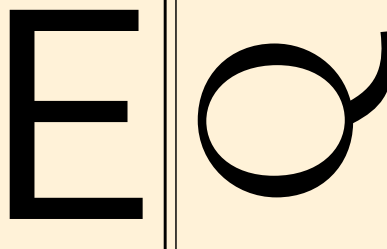
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**COVER:** This edition we celebrate our distance education settings

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# PRESIDENT WRITES

Henry Rajendra

## THE RIGHT THING FOR STUDENTS — AND THE SMART PATH POLITICALLY

Every teacher in NSW knows why preparation time matters. It's the time we use to plan the lesson that reaches the kid at the back of the room. It's the time we use to talk to an occupational or speech therapist about the student whose needs have changed. It's the time we use to mark work properly, to phone parents, to adjust tomorrow's lesson based on what happened in today's lesson.

It is, in the most basic sense, the time we use to teach well.

That time has not kept pace with the job. NSW primary teachers still receive around two hours of preparation time each week — unchanged since the 1980s. Secondary teachers have had no increase since the 1950s.

In the meantime, the number of students with disability in NSW public schools has risen by 75 per cent to more than 220,000, with 86 per cent learning in mainstream settings, and the curriculum keeps changing. Cultural and linguistic diversity has deepened.

Our work is more complex and demanding in every possible way yet the conditions to adapt remain static.

First and foremost, this is a question of what we owe students. On that, the evidence is in. The Gallop Inquiry recommended two additional hours of preparation time a week as a matter of urgency. That was four years ago.

Every NSW public school student deserves a teacher with the time and bandwidth to plan for them. To understand their needs and properly calibrate a lesson. That is the moral case for preparation time — and it would exist whether or not the issue is politically popular.

But as it happens, it is overwhelmingly popular.

We commissioned the Redbridge Group to probe public opinion on this issue — this is where preparation

time becomes important reading for the government. When more than 2000 NSW voters were asked what would most improve public education, 42 per cent said 'investing in and supporting teachers'. That was more than double the next option. Support was strong among Labor, Coalition and Greens voters.

Participants in focus groups went even further. Parents described the modern classroom in terms any teacher would recognise, talking about the need to "accommodate all the different needs" and calling the comparison with classrooms of previous decades "chalk and cheese".

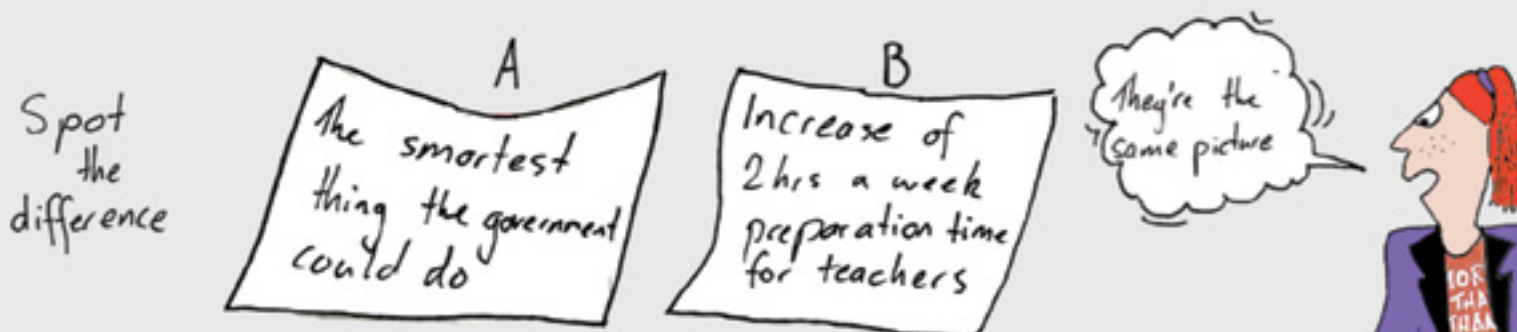
Importantly, support is resilient. Even when voters were presented with counter-arguments that investing in preparation time would detract from other government priorities, net support stayed above 50 per cent.

In the focus groups, that argument actually generated anger. One voter described it as "saying that education is not as important ... that annoys me a little bit". Voters see the trade-off framing as a false choice, and they push back on it.

The Minns Government has done genuinely significant work on public education. We have competitive salaries for the first time in a decade, a commitment to lift funding to the Gonski standard and thousands of teachers have been made permanent.

An agreement on preparation time would allow them to tell a big story about rebuilding public education. In fact, voters were 23 per cent more likely to support the policy when they learned it was endorsed by Federation. It would also activate tens of thousands of teachers to communicate the reality of the rebuild.

The case for preparation time begins with students. The political case is that doing right by them is also the smartest thing the government could do.



## IN BRIEF

### DEFENDING OUR HOME SCHOOL LIAISON OFFICERS

Federation has pledged to oppose the Department of Education's plans to gut the state's Home School Liaison Officer (HSLO) program, warning that the "reckless" move would impact struggling students and have a detrimental effect on school attendance.

The Department of Education announced in March that the State Government plans to replace 113 specialist HSLOs with social workers and caseworkers without teaching qualifications and on lower salaries.

HSLOs work with the families of students with serious and chronic school attendance issues, providing wraparound support and resources to get them back in the classroom. They are qualified teachers, giving them the knowledge and experience to work with students experiencing academic and social difficulties. The 113 HSLO positions with the Department have more than 1000 years of specialist teaching experience between them.

Federation Deputy President Natasha Watt told the *Daily Telegraph* in March that the move was "potentially dangerous" and would have "a disruptive knock-on effect" on attendance.

"These are the specialists who reconnect kids with school when nothing else has worked," Ms Watt said. "This is a winning formula that is delivering results in very difficult circumstances. To fiddle with a proven, nation-leading success is reckless and unwarranted."

Federation's May Council received a report from Ms Watt, who confirmed that the Department had agreed to retain 28 HSLOs until the end of the year and introduce eight non-school based teacher positions. The concession follows a pressure campaign from members, who have inundated the Department with demands that "the existing HSLO workforce not only be maintained but expanded".

### SYDNEY PEACE PRIZE



Human rights lawyer Jennifer Robinson encouraged public education students to think big about their futures when announced as recipient of the 2026 Sydney Peace Prize. Federation is a Partner in Peace with the Sydney Peace Foundation.

## MEMBERS TO LOBBY MPS ON PREPARATION TIME CAMPAIGN

Teachers Associations have been asked to seek meetings with NSW Government MPs and duty MLCs to secure their support for Federation's campaign for additional preparation time for all teachers.

A decision passed at Federation's May Council noted that support for additional preparation time for teachers has "deep and resilient" public support.

The decision cited a recent Federation survey that found more than 50 per cent of NSW voters supported additional preparation time for teachers — even after hearing counter-arguments.

Focus groups also found strong support for the campaign among public-school parents, who recognised the growing need for teachers to accommodate different religious and cultural backgrounds and learning requirements.

One participant described a close family friend who is a primary school teacher and 'the primary school teacher you want to get' — someone who is 'ultimately dedicated', arrives 'early' and purchases 'craft materials and stuff out of her own pocket'.

"[Parents] noted that teachers do substantial 'outside



## SECURING TAFE FOR THE FUTURE

A comprehensive report and recommendations will be provided to Annual Conference on the progress towards rebuilding TAFE in NSW and the necessary steps to be taken in the lead-up to the state election in March 2027.

While Federation welcomed the realisation of the Minns Government's commitment to remove TAFE NSW from the former government's Smart and Skilled competitive vocational education and training funding market, after years of campaigning to stop the privatisation of the vocational education sector in NSW, the challenges of rebuilding a decimated system and an exhausted workforce are profound and cannot be overstated.



school hours work, bringing stuff home to mark’ even at young year levels,” and that “comparing classrooms ‘from the ’50s and ’60s and ’70s to now’ was ‘chalk and cheese.’” Federation Representatives and Committees have also been tasked with seeking support for the campaign from their local P&C and Aboriginal Education Consultative Groups.

**How you can help us achieve additional preparation time**

- Have you added your story to the campaign webpage? Every testimonial is further evidence for our campaign.
- Encourage your colleagues to share their experience to the campaign webpage too.



“Members report that since the removal of TAFE from Smart and Skilled, very little has changed in their day-to-day work,” the “Beyond Smart and Skilled: Secure TAFE for the Future” decision passed at Federation’s May Council states.

While Federation has achieved some significant victories for TAFE workers in recent months, including winning permanent employment for thousands of part-time casual teachers, members are still concerned about growing workloads, insufficient long-term funding and an “unofficial staffing freeze” that is stretching teaching resources. Members are especially concerned at planned increases to class sizes for

physical trades courses, which pose serious potential health and safety risks.

Without serious long-term public investment, “restoring the confidence of students, the community, industry and employers in the ability of TAFE NSW to deliver high quality vocational education is at serious risk,” the decision warned.

In response, Federation is seeking a commitment from the Minns Government to increase direct funding to TAFE NSW for both recurrent and capital expenditure in June’s NSW Budget. Federation will also raise members’ concerns about workload and administrative burden with TAFE NSW through the Joint Working Group.

# Breaking the cycle

Our members in Corrective Services are helping people turn their lives around

One of Peter Allen's favourite moments teaching automotive repair in the NSW prison system has nothing to do with fixing cars.

"Once you earn people's respect, that's huge. I've had people let me help them write their name," Peter said. "To me, that's a big thing."

A vehicle refinishing teacher and Federation Representative at TAFE Dubbo College, Peter is one of a growing number of Federation members who work with people in Corrective Services NSW prisons. While that number is still small, the cohort is growing once again as vocational education and training (VET) in the state's prisons is increasingly given back to TAFE.

Peter teaches a Certificate II in automotive body repair technology at Kirkconnell Correctional Centre, a minimum-security men's prison halfway between Lithgow and Bathurst. With 13 participants in the most recent cohort, he sees immense potential in the growing number of students who are taking up TAFE courses while they're in prison.

"The best medium is hands-on learning. They're pretty smart operators and when they can feel they can do something tangible, the confidence comes in," Peter said. "My goal when I go to Kirkconnell is to help them build up that confidence so they know they can make it in the world when they get out."

## PUBLIC PRISONS BACK IN PUBLIC HANDS

Education for people in prison was outsourced to private providers as part of the former Coalition government's disastrous push to privatise several NSW prisons. Under the 'Better Prisons' policy, education in Corrective Services NSW institutions was partly farmed out to BSI Learning, a private provider.



Federation TAFE Organiser Adam Curlis said the privatisation "proved to be a dismal failure".

"The theory was the government would throw education open to provide companies, who would tender to provide those services in gaols," Adam said. "They actually privatised the teaching of literacy and numeracy — foundation skills."

The privatisation was accompanied by vicious job cuts. Federation's Corrective Services Teachers Association (TA) was disbanded due to insufficient numbers after the Liberal state government sacked more than 160 NSW Corrective Services teaching staff — nearly the entire state prison teaching workforce. Public education in state prisons was restricted to just four Intensive Learning Centres, all of which were based in men's prisons, effectively denying women who were incarcerated their right to public education.



Peter Allen

**"The best medium is hands-on learning. They're pretty smart operators and when they can feel they can do something tangible, the confidence comes in."**



Several prisons are now back in public hands and the government is expanding the workforce, meaning more Federation members have the chance to work with inmates on developing their skills and improving their prospects once their sentences are complete. While the Intensive Learning Centres will stay open, access to public education will be expanded across 19 Corrective Services facilities — including women’s prisons.

“This is something Federation has pushed quite strongly for,” Adam said. “Women in Corrective Services gaols just didn’t have access to public education. That’s something we’re very glad to be able to correct.”

The State Government’s contract with BSI Learning is due to expire on 30 June.

### **‘YOU GET TO SEE THE LIGHTBULB MOMENT’**

Studies show that education is one of the most effective ways to reduce recidivism and reintegrate people who have been to prison back into the community. New fee-free TAFE traineeship programs, especially in areas of national skills shortages, have been enthusiastically taken up by inmates. More than 900 people took part in Corrective Services traineeships in 2024–25, compared to just 250 in 2021–22.

Peter was working with inmates at Lithgow Correctional Centre when the privatisations began and remembers how the thriving VET program was gutted.

“We had a great setup. We were arranging day releases for people so they could go finish their units in shops in the community. And then it just all fell over. The Liberals were ruthless,” Peter said. “That’s why we fought to get rid of that contestable funding model. We’re not a business. We’re a public provider. That’s what we should be doing.”

Adam Ryan is one of only two First Nations-identified members in Corrective Services across NSW. While he said Federation already provides “phenomenal” support for Corrective Services members, he thinks the reforming the TA is going to make a real difference in their classrooms.

**“We’re not a business. We’re a public provider. That’s what we should be doing.”**



Adam Ryan

“With the TA coming back together I think it’s going to improve in leaps and bounds,” he said. “We’re not a TAFE or school system; we’re something completely different. Our students and teachers need different support from other school environments.”

Besides literacy and numeracy, Corrective Services education includes a heavy focus on ‘job-ready’ skills, like how to write and send emails and the use of formal language in professional settings. Adam started teaching at Wellington Correctional Centre in the state’s Central West four years ago and “fell in love with it”.

“I just like helping people. I like seeing guys build their confidence and start to see their avenues in life,” he said. There are still enormous gaps in the provision of TAFE teaching for people in state prisons, but the results coming out of TAFE’s growing presence in state prisons gives teachers like Adam hope that the best is yet to come.

“The guys we’re teaching, they’ve been down the worst possible path in life. They’re just human beings who’ve made a mistake and our job is to try and help them — even if it’s just sitting in the classroom and having a yarn and helping people,” he said.

“I worked with a guy who couldn’t read a sentence, and now he’s reading stories to his kids every night. You get to see the lightbulb moment where it clicks for someone. I see guys I used to work with out in the community now. It’s just fantastic.”



Federation members protest cuts to public Corrective Services teaching staff in 2016

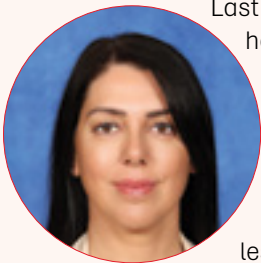
## What more preparation time would mean for teachers

**A**s part of Federation's More Than Thanks – It's Time campaign, we have been asking our members to share how they and their students would benefit from more time to prepare lessons.

We were overwhelmed by the response.

Below are testimonies from some of our members sharing, in their own words, what additional preparation time would mean to them.

### *SANDRA GOMES, NEPEAN CREATIVE AND PERFORMING ARTS HIGH SCHOOL*



Last year, I kept a detailed log of the hours I spent on preparation outside of school.

Across the year, including evenings, weekends and holidays, I recorded more than 1400 hours dedicated to planning, resourcing and preparing lessons. This equates to an average of approximately four hours every day after school, as well as substantial time during weekends and school holidays.

This workload is simply not sustainable and highlights the urgent need for increased preparation time within working hours.

### *DEMI TULL, CASINO PUBLIC SCHOOL*



This year is my sixth year of teaching. Since graduating, I have not once had a sense of preparedness in the classroom.

No matter what, there is always something I have missed, could have done better, or fought internally about, making me question my worth as a teacher and my commitment to my students.

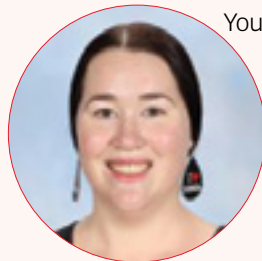
Do I stay up late and prepare my lessons or do I go to bed knowing I have more to do and probably won't find the time to get it done? Do I go to the gym to clear my head after a day in my support unit classroom where it

has been behaviour management nonstop or do I stay back late and get the lessons ready for tomorrow? I am young, but I am always tired.

I would love to have the motivation and time to participate in extracurricular activities to support students, like dance and art groups, but if I did, then I would not have a lunch break and would have to wait until recess at 2pm for my first toilet break of the day.

I want to be the best teacher that I can be and the teacher I wanted to be when I was at uni. It seems impossible with this workload.

### *JESSICA HARDY, HASTINGS SECONDARY COLLEGE, WESTPORT CAMPUS*



You can't pour from an empty cup.

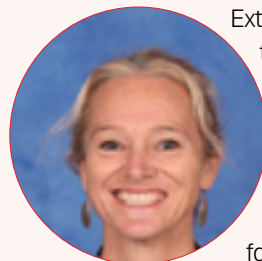
Right now, much of my lesson preparation, differentiation and feedback happens after hours. That's not sustainable and it impacts both teacher wellbeing and the quality of learning we can provide.

With more preparation time, I could deliver clearer, more engaging lessons, better support students at different ability levels, and provide timely, meaningful feedback.

When teachers are supported with time, we are more present, patient and effective in the classroom.

Supporting teacher wellbeing isn't separate from student success — it's essential to it.

### *REBECCA MILLER, BYRON BAY PUBLIC SCHOOL*



Extra preparation time may enable me to continue in this job I love so much. I stay back at school marking my students' work and giving feedback related to my students' efforts and future goals, instead of going home at a reasonable time to see my own family.





I have a daughter who is in university studying to be a teacher. My son is working as a school learning support officer at a school in the local area. I have deep concerns that they will continue to see and be impacted by the huge amount of work that it takes to be a teacher, inside and outside school hours, and will be driven away from this worthwhile career.

To be a teacher has been an incredible gift. Unfortunately, I doubt I will be in the occupation much longer due to the toll it takes on my wellbeing and that of my family. To have extra preparation time would be so beneficial for students to receive the feedback they require to achieve their goals — not to mention their teachers' wellbeing, to have some form of work-life balance.

**MATT ROWLES, SYDNEY SECONDARY COLLEGE, LEICHHARDT CAMPUS**

Once again, I am sitting in Balmain Library on a Saturday and Sunday. I would rather be having breakfast with my family, helping my eldest with her HSC or taking some time out for me. Instead, I am sitting in this library trying to meet the demands of marking multiple year group

papers, which must all be done by the end of term — over 110 papers in two weeks.

This does not take into consideration my life as a single parent and everything else that comes with life. It does not include the drafts I have read over the past two weeks. I don't remember the last lunchtime at school I sat down and had lunch.

This all has to be done before the second-term report writing and marking year 8 papers during the holidays. Somewhere, I don't know where, I have to fit in programming for new syllabuses. I don't know when or how. I guess my holidays. I wish I had overtime, as I would be rolling in coin — I must be working 50+ hours a week.

They say they have reduced our workloads; I invite the local member and the Minister to come and spend a week with me. It is unsustainable and we make mistakes as we are doing everything at speed. It is not an advantage to us or our students and I burnt out long ago, so I just operate on the smell of an oily rag.

Learn more about our More Than Thanks — It's Time campaign on our website and tell us your story



# Building equality for better public school infrastructure



**T**eachers know that decent infrastructure is a non-negotiable requirement of quality education. Practically every key learning area in the NSW syllabus has specific infrastructure requirements without which teaching can be prohibitively difficult. It's not just about classrooms being too hot, too cold, too small or too old — it's harder for teachers to teach and for students to learn when learning spaces are inappropriate, unsafe and ill-equipped to meet students' diverse learning needs.

For years, government spending in public school infrastructure has fallen behind. Meanwhile, more and more taxpayer money has gone toward building Olympic swimming pools, concert halls, saunas — even a medieval-style castle — at the nation's wealthiest private schools.

## SCHOOLS FOR OUR FUTURE

Something has to change — that's why the Australian Education Union (AEU) is conducting the nation's first national inquiry into public school infrastructure — hitting the road to hear directly from teachers and principals about the urgent need for more federal investment in our public school infrastructure.

The AEU launched the Schools For Our Future inquiry in March. Chaired by former AEU and Australian Council of Trade Unions (ACTU) president Sharan Burrow, the inquiry is travelling across the country to hear first-hand testimony from teachers, principals and communities about how years of inadequate funding have left public schools struggling to cope with ageing buildings, crammed classrooms and poor facilities.

The inquiry has travelled to South Australia, Victoria, Western Australia, Queensland, the Northern Territory and the Australian Capital Territory. At the start of June, the inquiry embarked on the NSW leg of its tour, heading to public schools to hear from local teachers and principals about what their communities need.

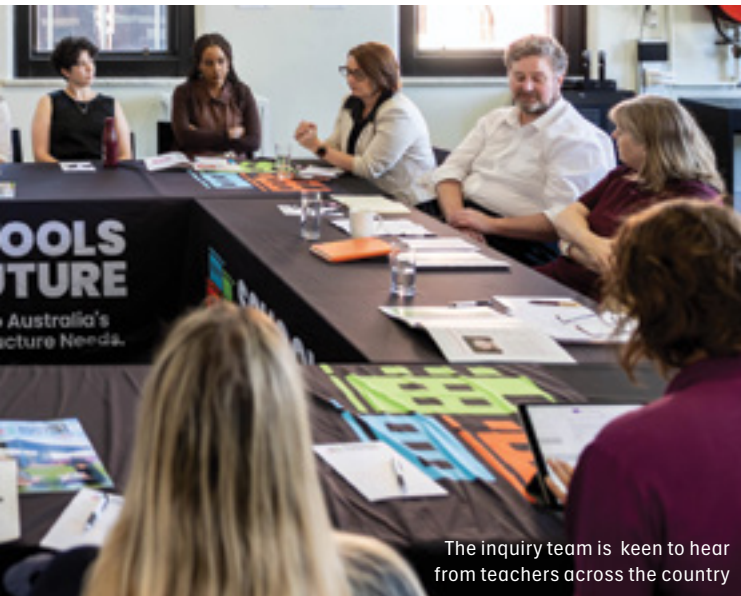


In May, Federation Council adopted a motion calling on the NSW Government to urgently address the growing backlog of maintenance and repair requests in public schools. Teachers have raised concerns about “significant delays, growing maintenance backlogs and a failure to deliver timely and effective repairs” in their schools, leaving many “frustrated, demoralised and embarrassed by inadequate facilities”.

## THE BUILDING DIVIDE

Published in February, the AEU's *The Building Divide in Australian Schools* report paints a dire picture. Private schools are spending twice what public schools are spending per student on new and upgraded schools — a difference of more than \$5 billion in 2023 alone.

An enormous amount of that private spending comes from public money. The Federal Government gives hundreds of millions a year to private schools for buildings and facilities but stopped giving public schools regular infrastructure funding in 2017. If this doesn't change, private schools will get \$3 billion more from the Commonwealth over the next 10 years, while public schools will get nothing.



The inquiry team is keen to hear from teachers across the country



While the problem is nationwide, NSW has more demountable buildings in public schools than any other state — more than 6600. Nearly 5000 of those are still classed as “teaching spaces”, despite Infrastructure NSW admitting demountables are “space-inefficient and do not accommodate flexible learning spaces consistent with future learning”.

In recent years, the problem has only gotten worse. In 2018, an astonishing 12 per cent of all public school classrooms in NSW were in demountables — about one in eight classrooms across the state. Some 48 per cent of NSW public school principals told the AEU’s 2025 State of Our Schools survey that they had demountables onsite and 10 per cent of principals reported having at least 11 on school grounds. Not only are new demountables increasing at an alarming rate, but many old demountables that were only ever meant as temporary solutions to enrolment surges are older than the senior students they house. In 2020, more than 2000 demountables were at least 20 years old.

As demountables get older, they also get less safe. In 2018, the Department admitted that up to 5450 “old

system” demountables on public school sites may contain asbestos.

Just 35 per cent of public school principals told the State of Our Schools survey they can offer the full curriculum with the infrastructure they currently have. Half say the maintenance of their school buildings is inadequate. An appalling 60 per cent say their schools lack purpose-built infrastructure to support students with disability. Meanwhile, NSW private schools are raking in extraordinary amounts of public money. From 2015 to 2025, private schools in NSW invested \$4.5 billion more in their infrastructure than public schools were able to. Between 2022 and 2025, 10 NSW private schools spent an incredible \$903 million on infrastructure — more than the 513 most disadvantaged public schools in the state combined.

**“The Federal Government gives hundreds of millions a year to private schools... but stopped giving public schools regular infrastructure funding in 2017”**

In 2025, Scots College — a private school in Bellevue Hill that charges \$54,822 in school fees each year — unveiled a new \$60 million student centre designed to look like a castle. During the castle’s construction — and while bringing in revenue of more than \$100 million — Scots received roughly \$17 million in public money.

In 2022, St Catherine’s School, an Anglican all-girls’ school in Waverley, spent \$48 million on a combined research, performing arts and aquatic centre featuring a 12-lane indoor swimming pool, a two-storey research centre and a 500-seat theatre with an orchestra pit. Cranbrook School in Bellevue Hill finished a \$125 million revamp that added an aquatic centre, a theatre, a chapel, an assembly hall and an underground car park.

“Some public school students will walk into demountable classrooms today that were installed as temporary learning spaces in the 1950s and have never been replaced,” AEU Federal President Correna Haythorpe said in the report’s foreword.

“Meanwhile, private schools are engaged in an unseemly battle to build the biggest pool, the tallest innovation centre and the most luxurious theatre.”

“Rather than continuing to fuel this inequity, governments must work together to end it,” Ms Haythorpe said.

# Settled for student success

**F**or many teachers just starting out, fears around how to control students' classroom behaviour can be all-consuming. Even for our settled-in teachers, it can often be difficult to recognise all the aspects of our practice and pedagogy that contribute to good classroom behaviour. It's important to remember that you aren't expected to be perfect and not to compare your experience to your established colleagues. You can learn from them, but don't internalise any shortcomings.

**Remember:** all behaviours are just communication, not a reflection on you. Every student, whether behaving poorly or perfectly, is communicating something — even if we don't always understand what it is. It can feel incredibly personal, but a student's behaviour is a projection of many conflicting factors, not a reflection on you as an individual.

Below are some tips and resources to help you become more confident in your classroom behaviour management.

## Tips from teacher mentors

**Tip 1:** When changing or moving schools, expect to spend more time managing the classroom than in your previous school. It often takes time to build trust with students and the community — to become part of the furniture. This is even more evident in schools with high staff turnover. Students may be resistant to establishing trust and support with a person who they believe will leave soon.

**Tip 2:** Find what works for you. In your first few years, try different styles and see what fits and what doesn't, as long as it's consistent with school processes. Don't be afraid to be 'cringe' or have students think you're uncool. Embrace it.

**Tip 3:** Partner with a colleague who has a completely different teaching style to you for Performance and Development Plan (PDP) observations. This way, you can learn from each other and see how both styles can work in the same or different contexts.

**Tip 4:** Co-regulation is a teachable moment. Take some time to build a bank of co-regulation tools to support all students to engage in their learning.

## Brain Breaks

Brain Breaks



## Resource spotlight

### GIVE YOUR BRAIN A BREAK

If you struggle to stay focused for an entire day, then why do we expect our young people to? One way to bring some fun into the classroom and prevent students from becoming unfocused by the end of the lesson is through 'brain breaks': short, simple physical and mental exercises that wake the mind and body up. These can work just as well for you as for the students! Federation's library has some brain break books and the Department of Education has some great examples of brain break activities on its website.

## Brain Breaks



## Federation events

Federation regularly runs courses and conferences to help teachers in and out of the classroom. See below for some Federation events that may help with managing classroom behaviour.

### Classroom Management through Effective Teaching

- 5 August, Canberra
- 13 August, Blacktown
- 16 September, Surry Hills
- 4 November, Newcastle

### Beginning Teacher Conferences

- Saturday 8 August, Newcastle (Best Western Plus – Apollo Hotel)
- Saturday 19 September, Bundanoon (Bundanoon Public School)

### New Activist Conference

Saturday 24 October, NSW Teachers Federation Conference Centre



Course Archive

## How can I develop my behaviour management skills?

When you begin teaching, classroom management is a skill you'll still be developing. It's important to remember that even the most experienced teachers continue to encounter behaviour management challenges throughout their career.

If you're looking to improve your classroom management skills, list this as a goal in your Performance and Development Plan (PDP). Your employer, meaning your school, is required to assist you in working towards your PDP goals through professional development and support.

## Where can I find quality professional learning in classroom management?

You can learn classroom management strategies from experienced colleagues in your school; for example, by observing them while they're teaching, having them do a demonstration lesson for your class or through collaborative planning.

Federation offers courses and sessions to develop classroom management skills via the Centre for Professional Learning and Federation's Trade Union Training. See the calendar on page 34.



## What if I'm having challenges with my class?

Flag challenging behaviours with your direct supervisor; for example, your head teacher or assistant principal. As the senior staff at the school with the most teaching experience, part of their role is to provide support and guidance to classroom teachers. A written follow-up email after a verbal request can act as a good reminder for busy senior staff and provides a record you can keep for future reference.

## What should I do if challenging behaviour persists?

Advice will vary depending on the type of behaviour.

In general, if you're having trouble getting the support you need, speak with your Federation Representative and Women's Contact. They may be able to give you advice on how to escalate the issue at the school level or through Federation.

All teachers, especially those early in their career, may feel nervous when escalating an issue with senior staff. Taking the Federation Representative or Women's Contact with you to act as a support person may help you feel more confident advocating for your students. The support person's role includes offering emotional support, note taking and ensuring meeting processes and procedures are adhered to.

So that the Department is aware of incidents at your school, it is advisable to report them via the Incident Report and Support Hotline (**1800 811 523**) or to fill out a Workplace Health and Safety incident report form on the Department's website. Any teacher can contact the hotline or fill in a report at any time and can decide whether the report goes to the principal or the Director Educational Leadership. The Department has a free, confidential counselling service available where you and your family members can seek help for personal and employment related matters. Immediate support is available from the Employee Assistance Program. Call them anytime on **1800 951 198**.

**Katinka Kastner**, Membership and Training Officer



# KNOW YOUR RIGHTS

## Your questions answered

**Q Are school assemblies counted as teaching time?**

**A** School assemblies are counted as teaching time and teachers are required to attend assemblies, in accordance with the Department's Attendance and Student Supervision factsheet.

**Q I am a beginning teacher currently teaching on a casual basis. If I get a 12-month engagement as a temporary teacher or a permanent appointment, am I entitled to additional release?**

**A** As a temporary teacher you are eligible for two hours of additional release time through Beginning Temporary Teacher Support Funding when all of the following apply:

- are employed in your first, consecutive four-term, full-time temporary engagement within a calendar year
- are approved in SAP by 5pm on 1 March in the year of engagement
- have not yet achieved accreditation at Proficient Teacher level at the date you commence the temporary engagement
- have cumulative past experience with the Department of equivalent to, or less than, two years of full-time experience, excluding all casual experience.

The additional release is intended for you to work collaboratively with your supervising teachers and/or mentor to develop your practice and work towards your accreditation at Proficient Teacher level.

Teacher classifications not currently eligible for the entitlement are:

- casual teachers
- counsellors, home school liaison officers, teaching or non-teaching executives or principals
- teachers who previously received any Beginning Teacher Support Funding
- temporary teachers who are employed for less than four consecutive terms in a calendar year.

If you meet the criteria and are not receiving Beginning Temporary Teacher Support funding, please contact your Organiser or Federation's Professional Support section.



**Q My allocation of supervision duties seems discriminatory. What are the guidelines?**

**A** Principals must plan rostered supervision duties in consultation with teachers (see

Determination 1 of 2026). Supervision duties must be allocated in a fair and equitable manner. The principal must take into account a teacher's family, work and care responsibilities among other factors.



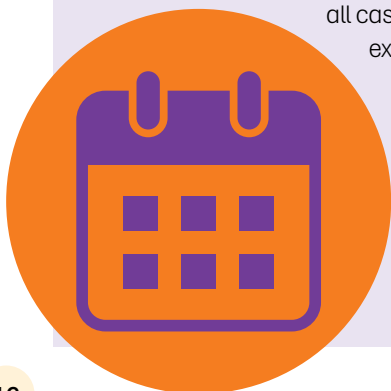
**Q I am a secondary teacher. Does roll call count as part of teaching time?**

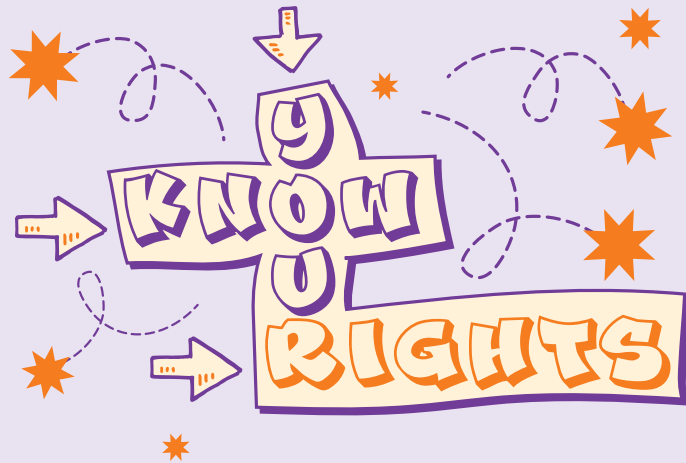
**A** In secondary schools, a stand-alone roll call of 10 minutes or less is not counted as teaching time in accordance with the Department's Attendance and Student Supervision factsheet.

However, when a school incorporates roll call into a reading, pastoral care or other education program, the time scheduled to deliver the program and mark the roll is counted as teaching time.

**Q Is it true that all I have to do is ask for a Health and Safety Representative (HSR) and we get one?**

**A** The Work Health and Safety (WHS) legislation only requires one worker to formally request that a HSR be elected to start a mandatory process (within 14 days) that would generally lead to at least one HSR being elected. The Department





publishes clear information about the process — search for “HSR election” when logged into the Department Portal and then follow the link to Work Health and Safety Consultation Procedure. TAFE has similar information available. You do not need to ask anyone’s permission to formally request that a HSR be elected. It is a right provided to all workers in NSW under the WHS Act.

**Q** My principal asked if we want a Health and Safety Representative (HSR) or a Work Health and Safety (WHS) Committee. Can we have both? And what would be the benefits of having a HSR?

**A** Yes, you can have both! In fact, one of the best models is to have a HSR and a WHS Committee. HSRs have the power to investigate matters, seek resolutions to issues and to escalate matters to SafeWork NSW if they cannot be resolved. HSRs can represent all the workers on a site (including the principal, who is also a worker as defined by the Act) in WHS matters. Federation’s long-standing position is that in most schools and TAFE campuses, members would be best represented in WHS matters by electing a HSR and having an active WHS Committee.



**Q** In regard to my employment status, what’s the difference between an engagement, a contract and a permanent appointment?

**A** In NSW public schools, teacher employment on a temporary basis is known as an engagement rather than a contract. Temporary engagements may cease early only under specific circumstances with a notice period of four weeks. Teachers are encouraged to seek advice if they are informed that their temporary engagement will cease.

The Crown Employees (Teachers in Schools and Related Employees) Salaries and Conditions Award clearly defines the employment categories that determine how teachers are engaged as a casual or temporary teacher.

Temporary engagements are for a period of four weeks or more on a full-time basis, or two terms or more on a part-time basis.

Permanent appointment refers to placement of a permanent teacher in a Department of Education school. Permanent teachers may be transferred from one position to another in accordance with the Staffing Agreement.

**REFERENCES**

- Attendance and Student Supervision factsheet
- Determination 1 of 2026
- Crown Employees (Teachers in Schools and Related Employees) Salaries and Conditions Award

Go online for live links to the reference documents



Questions are answered by:

- Anthony Brereton, Officer attached to Casual Teachers
- Sam Clay, Deputy Secretary (Research, Industrial and Professional Support)
- Damian Purins, Work Health and Safety Officer

**Have you got any questions for us?**  
Email [journal@nswtf.org.au](mailto:journal@nswtf.org.au).



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# How well do you know Distance Education?

Distance Education is more than just a service for the geographically isolated, providing important supports so that every student has the opportunity to learn, grow and belong in an equitable and outstanding public education system. Teachers working in distance education settings work behind the scenes to support students located around the corner, across NSW, Australia or international time zones with their full-time or single subject education.

## WHERE OUR DISTANCE EDUCATION MEMBERS WORK

### SCHOOL – YEAR 6

School of the Air — Broken Hill\* and Hay

\*Pre-school via the Broken Hill campus

### SCHOOL – YEAR 12

Dubbo School of Distance Education

### KINDERGARTEN – YEAR 6

Bourke-Walgett School of Distance Education

North East Public School of Distance Education, Port Macquarie

Sydney Distance Education Primary School, Surry Hills

### KINDERGARTEN – YEAR 12

Finigan School of Distance Education, Queanbeyan

Sir Eric Woodward Memorial School (Distance Education Support Unit), St Ives

Southern Cross School of Distance Education, East Ballina

### Years 7–12

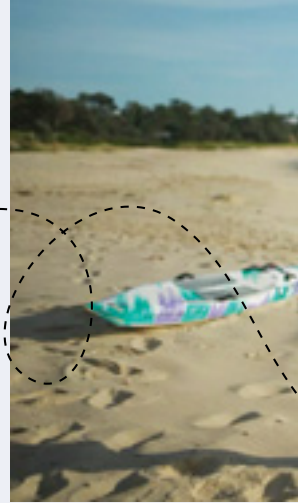
Camden Haven High School (Distance Education Unit), Laurieton

NSW School of Languages, Petersham

Sydney Distance Education High School, Woolloomooloo



# Separated by distance, connected through education



It may support some 8000 students, but NSW's distance education program is a remarkable part of our public education system that's often overlooked.

**L**ocated in both metropolitan and regional centres, distance education schools provide education to students who face obstacles in accessing school in person. These students can be living around the corner, interstate or in a far-reaching pocket of the globe.

## STRATEGIES FOR STUDENT ENGAGEMENT

Teachers in these school settings face the particular challenge of keeping a student engaged against all the distractions that come with not being within the confines of a classroom.

**Christianna Billows** teaches English and Society and Culture at Finigan School of Distance Education. Having taught distance education for most of her career, she's learned there are no shortcuts to keeping students engaged.

"It's about relationships — it's not like a mainstream school where you've seen a student come and go for years. We take our students as we find them," she said.

"I would say it takes about double the time to engage them, but when they realise we're not their worst enemy, they're really eager to engage.

"It's important to give them autonomy and flexibility to access the lessons at whatever stage they're at."

## DIVERSE STUDENT COHORT

Contrary to popular assumption, it's not just students in isolated and remote areas who need to access distance education. Students' parents may be itinerant workers, serve in the military or an overseas consulate, or be travelling long-term. Many students access distance education while they travel to meet elite sport or music commitments.

Others need distance education for reasons that have nothing to do with distance. Distance education can be a vital source of support for students with acute medical conditions, who are pregnant or caring for a child, who are experiencing homelessness or who are in and out of care.

Fiona is the mother of four children, all of whom had periods of distance education. "We were a military family, so we moved all over the place," she said. "Obviously, having to move all the time is not conducive to traditional education, so distance ed worked really well for us. You've got the freedom to do the home education part but you've also got access to all the NSW public school resources — athletics carnivals, the Schools Spectacular, that kind of thing."

Her sons were often part of an extremely diverse student cohort, from students with serious medical conditions to ballerinas, actors and racing-car drivers. Such diversity gave her an appreciation of the unique skillset distance ed teachers use every day. "The flexibility and the personality of the distance ed teachers is so important; they can be a very important person in their kids' lives," she said. "It's often a cohort of kids who are not your standard bell curve — kids who are really excelling, and kids who are really struggling, and teachers have to come up with lessons for both. They know what success looks like for each student and their circumstances. They have a very difficult job and they do it very well."

## REWARDING EXPERIENCES

Camden Haven High School teacher **Darren Mearrick** teaches both distance education and face-to-face teaching — a mix he finds brings unexpected insights.

"It's a great balance; you become a strong teacher in both modes," he said. "Distance education can be very rewarding...we teach some of the most vulnerable kids and when you get a connection with them and their families it's very special."

With distance education involving logistical challenges not present in face-to-face learning, it's vital for students to receive support that's catered to their circumstances.

"Our elite athletes often need support with time management or scheduling around training," Christianna said. "For students with mental health concerns, it's about building trust and rapport, so they



Above, right: Fiona's sons accessed distance education



“From a parent’s point of view, distance ed is a wonderful thing. It can be a lifeline”

feel confident enough to engage with the coursework. That can take time — especially with students who haven’t been to school in a long time — and involve teachers and schools adjusting their expectations about what to expect.”

It may seem counterintuitive, but distance education often lets teachers develop a deeper rapport with their students than in mainstream schools.

“I love that it’s different from a mainstream school,” North East Public School of Distance Education teacher **Tracey Stone** said. “I speak to the families multiple times a week, which is much more personalised.” She creates an individualised program for each of her students, catering for their needs, location and context.

**‘DISTANCE ED IS A WONDERFUL THING’**

From performing at the annual Schools Spectacular and competing at zone athletics to travelling to Japan on the Premier’s Anzac Memorial Scholarship, Fiona’s sons came out of distance ed with rich and varied school experiences.

“Distance ed fills a space for people who don’t quite fit the mould,” she said. “So many kids these days have labels attached to them, and it’s really difficult for a lot of kids to navigate the school system. But with the right teacher, a lot of those kids can find a way through. From a parent’s point of view, distance ed is a wonderful thing. It can be a lifeline.”



Teachers at schools offering distance education show their support for the More Than Thanks — It’s Time campaign



# EQUITY MATTERS

## Your questions answered

**Q** I have a student who requires higher levels of support. Unfortunately, an Access Request application was denied. What do I do when a student is eligible and suitable but misses out on a placement?

**A** Discuss the concerns with your school team, the learning and support teacher, executive or principal to seek further information and feedback on the application. Seek advice from your learning and wellbeing officer as part of the Team Around a School to investigate alternate supports or avenues for the student. Discuss the additional supports to best meet the student's needs in the interim while a placement is not available.

**Q** How can I access additional and suitable support for a recently arrived refugee student?

**A** Schools can access further information and support for refugee students and their families by contacting the NSW Service for the Treatment and Rehabilitation of Torture and Trauma Services.

To effectively support refugee students, schools must develop programs that support English language competence across the curriculum so students can commence language acquisition and fully participate in schooling. English as an Additional Language or Dialect (EAL/D) programs can vary between schools, depending on the numbers of EAL/D students, their English language learning needs and the number of specialist EAL/D teachers allocated to the school. The Department of Education's EAL/D advice for schools provides guidance to schools in how best to manage EAL/D programs.

The English language proficiency equity loading is a resource allocation to support students learning English as an additional language or dialect. To learn more about the loading and funding allocations, members should visit the Department's 'English language proficiency' and 'Funding allocations and effective use of funds' webpages.

If refugee and/or newly arrived students enrol and they require EAL/D and settlement support in addition to what is already available in your school, there may be capacity to access further funding and support programs via the Department's New Arrivals Program.

Online, onsite and telephone interpreters can be used by schools, parents or the community for meetings and interviews with a school. Find out more via the Department's 'Interpreting and translations' webpage and Interpreting and Translation Services Guidelines.

**Q** How do I support a student in my classroom who identifies as non-binary?

**A** Public schools are centres of inclusion and this should be celebrated.

A student who has identified as non-binary or gender diverse should enjoy the same legal rights and protections that are afforded to all students under the duty of care, education and work health and safety laws. This includes respecting a student's gender identity and ensuring they are not disadvantaged in areas like enrolment, wellbeing, safety or participation in school life.

Support is typically tailored to each individual student rather than applying a single rule for all

students. Schools should work with the student and their family to develop appropriate support plans, which may include using preferred names and pronouns, adjustments to uniforms or participation in some activities. Teachers and staff are expected to foster respectful classroom environments and promote inclusion through everyday practices and wellbeing support systems.

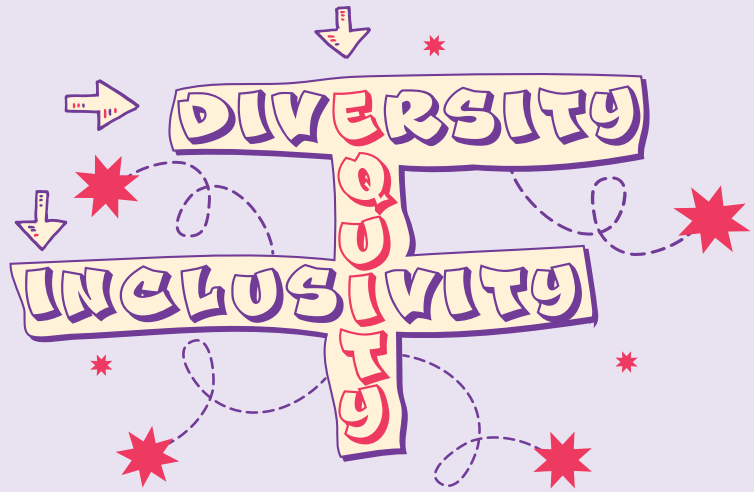
The Department's Legal Issues Bulletin 55: *Gender Diverse Students in Schools* and Legal Issues Bulletin 20: *Changing the way a student name is used and recorded by schools* should be referenced for Departmental guidance. If there are community issues that are raised in relation to the schools inclusion of non-binary or gender diverse students, principals should refer to the Department's *Supporting LGBTQIA+ communities in schools* toolkit and associated resources.

**Q** I have a student who is Aboriginal and demonstrates high potential. Should I write a Personalised Learning Pathway (PLP)?

**A** Yes. If you have an Aboriginal student or Torres Strait Islander student who shows high potential, developing a PLP is recommended and can be a powerful way to support and extend their learning.

It's highly encouraged that all Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander students have a PLP that is tailored to the student and is regularly reviewed, updated and celebrated. These plans:

- recognise strengths and aspirations focusing on the student's talents, interests and goals
- set high expectations, reinforcing



that they are capable of achieving at the highest levels

- provide tailored support, identifying strategies, resources and opportunities to help them excel
- encourage collaboration, involving the student, their family and community in shaping the plan.

Even if the student is already performing well, a PLP can help develop their potential, connect learning to cultural identity and ensure ongoing progress.

The Department's Personalised Learning Pathways Guidelines are available online to support teachers in creating PLPs. The My Future, My Culture, My Way campaign also supports student potential through high potential and gifted education.

### **Q** One of my students is making me feel uncomfortable. How do I know if it is sexual harassment?

**A** Sexual harassment is any conduct (physical, verbal, written or digitally communicated) that is unwelcome, is of a sexual nature and that a reasonable person would anticipate could possibly make the person subjected to the conduct feel offended, humiliated or intimidated. It could include inappropriate questions or comments about your personal life, relationship status or appearance; if students obstruct you, crowd around you or call out across the playground; or say things in the classroom that have sexual references.

In schools, the workplace sexual harassment prevention and response policy clearly outlines the steps that should be taken. Expectations of student behaviour and responding to students with problematic or harmful

sexual behaviour are covered by several linked policies, including the student behaviour policy and the suspension and expulsion procedures. Principals must treat all reports seriously and there is an obligation for anyone who witnesses a situation to be an 'active bystander', to intervene where necessary and report it.

Sexual harassment is a work health and safety issue and all reasonably practicable steps must be taken to eliminate health and safety risks in the workplace. This means addressing unwelcome or unlawful behaviour towards workers, including when the behaviour comes from students of any age.

You can talk to your Fed Rep and Women's Contact for support to report the behaviour.

Recent amendments have been made to the *Industrial Relations Act 2006 (NSW)* that provide new protections against sexual harassment. Similar provisions prohibiting sexual harassment also exist within the *Fair Work Act 2009*. The *Anti-Discrimination Act 1977 (NSW)* provides protections against sexual harassment that can be pursued as an alternative course of action. Members are encouraged to seek advice from Federation if they are experiencing sexual harassment of any nature.

### REFERENCES

- NSW Service for the Treatment and Rehabilitation of Torture and Trauma Services
- EAL/D advice for schools
- English language proficiency
- Funding allocations and effective use of funds
- New Arrivals Program
- Interpreting and translations webpage and Interpreting and Translation Services Guidelines
- Supporting LGBTQIA+ communities in schools
- Legal Issues Bulletin 55: Gender Diverse Students in Schools
- Legal Issues Bulletin 20: Changing the way a student name is used and recorded by schools
- Personalised Learning Pathways Guidelines Workplace sexual harassment prevention and response
- The new sexual harassment prevention and response policy (webstory)

Links to the reference documents



Questions answered by Federation's Equity Team:

- Russell Honnery, Aboriginal Education Officer
- John Skene, Disability Officer
- Mandy Wells, Multicultural Officer
- Leeanda Smith, Women's Officer
- Mel Smith, Officer attached to LGBTIQIA+ matters





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Image: The Heart of Philomathēs, by Valerie Walker, South Metropolitan TAFE Murdoch, 2025 WA and national winner

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# A snapshot of the talent teaching photography in TAFE

Credit: Caterina Pacialeo



With smartphones ubiquitous and AI increasingly prevalent, the skills, knowledge and craft that make a professional photographer have never been more important. Meet Caterina Pacialeo, one of our teachers of photography at TAFE NSW campuses.

**C**aterina is a photographic artist whose work has been exhibited in Australia and internationally. Besides TAFE and Bradfield College, she's taught at the UNSW School of Art and Design, the Australian Catholic University and the National Art School.

Her passion for photography began in high school.

"I remember being in the darkroom and seeing my first print come up. I was hooked. I thought, 'I want to do this forever'," Caterina said. "And I've never stopped."

A two-time finalist in the Chelsea International Fine Art Competition, Caterina teaches a wide range of photography skills, including analogue, alternative and digital — expertise that's more important than ever.

"Don't believe any ad that says 'shot on an iPhone' —

you need the equipment and the knowhow," she said. "When you start to teach people analogue, they realise you need proper cameras and training to realise the image in your head."

For would-be photographers, knowledge of how the industry works is just as important as the technical side.

Caterina cites the TAFE Certificate II in Workplace Skills as a vital component in readying students for the workforce.

"We teach the students how it is going into an actual workplace. Our campus turns into a studio," she said.

"That's what TAFE's all about — giving people life skills and getting them ready for work."



Caterina Pacialeo

# Everyday industrial relations in the workplace

## Federation has a role to play in consultation and professional dialogue

**T**he Department of Education and Training's new Consultation Framework for Schools lays out expectations for genuine consultative practices in schools.

"Establishing genuine consultative practices in schools reflects a shared commitment by the NSW Department of Education and the NSW Teachers Federation to improving workplace practices and culture," the framework states.

Benefits of a best-practice approach to consultation, listed in the document, include:

- better decision-making when teachers and their union representatives have input
- easier change implementation, as teachers have been involved in the planning process
- better school performance during change, as less time is spent on responding to misunderstandings, rumours or disputes
- improved teacher engagement and satisfaction.

The framework covers information sharing versus consultation, how to consult, the features of effective consultation, providing support to minimise distress during the consultation period, how school leaders are expected to consider feedback, how they can clearly articulate how feedback was considered when announcing a decision and the rationale for the final outcome.

The role of union representatives in consultation is acknowledged several times throughout the framework.

### **FEDERATION MEMBERS SHOULD SPEAK UP WHEN DECISIONS ARE UNSATISFACTORY**

When consultation breaks down or a resulting decision appears to be at odds with legislative requirements, industrial agreements and/or Department policy and procedures, Federation members have the right and responsibility both professionally and under the Award to raise questions and difficulties with their supervisor and/or principal.



Informal professional dialogue that references relevant documentation is the preferred and most effective initial step in seeking a local resolution.

Members may also choose to hold a Federation meeting to facilitate further dialogue, consider new information or advice, and/or make decisions about appropriate courses of action.

Trade Union Training courses and Association seminars can build the capacity of Federation Workplace Committee members to bring members together to democratically deliberate, decide upon and act upon everyday problems, issues and questions in the workplace. Scan the QR code (top right corner) for more information.

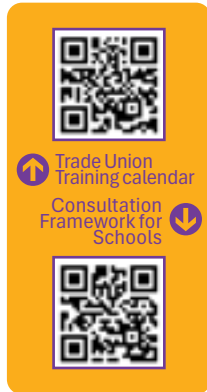
### **RAISING DISPUTES AND HOLDING DELS TO ACCOUNT**

As officers of the Department in closest proximity to schools, Directors Educational Leadership (DELS) are charged with responsibility for directly and operationally supporting principals and their school communities to 'get it right'.

In cases where a school has an unresolved dispute (including a question or difficulty) and all reasonable professional means have been exhausted, Federation Representatives should consult their Organiser about how to escalate the matter. The union will work with members to hold the DEL accountable for supporting the school to achieve an appropriate resolution.

### **WORK HEALTH AND SAFETY CONSULTATION AND ISSUE RESOLUTION**

There is a legislative imperative that the Department and TAFE NSW ensure that workers across their respective



systems are physically and psychologically safe.

Again, as officers of the Department in closest proximity to schools, DELs have legislative obligations to uphold best practice in health and safety and to consult with all workers in a worksite, including principal members.

Work Health and Safety (WHS) consultation and issues resolution procedures remain an effective avenue for members to pursue everyday health and safety issues that cannot be reasonably resolved within the workplace with the available expertise and resources.

In accordance with the provisions of the NSW Work Health and Safety Act (2011), elected Health and Safety Representatives (HSRs) are accorded significant powers to investigate, consult on and assist in resolving workplace hazards. With fewer than 10 per cent of schools and TAFE campuses represented by a HSR, all workplaces are encouraged to establish workgroups and elect HSRs to assist in improving work health and safety consultation in their setting.

### Does Federation have an active presence in your workplace?

Federation's active presence in local workplaces, with members democratically deliberating, deciding and acting upon everyday problems, issues and questions, provides collective agency to advance the teaching profession and public education.

If you are interested in making a difference, contact your local Federation Organiser to learn more about the roles of Federation Representative, Women's Contacts and Federation Workplace Committee members.

# Not everyone has an award-winning health fund.

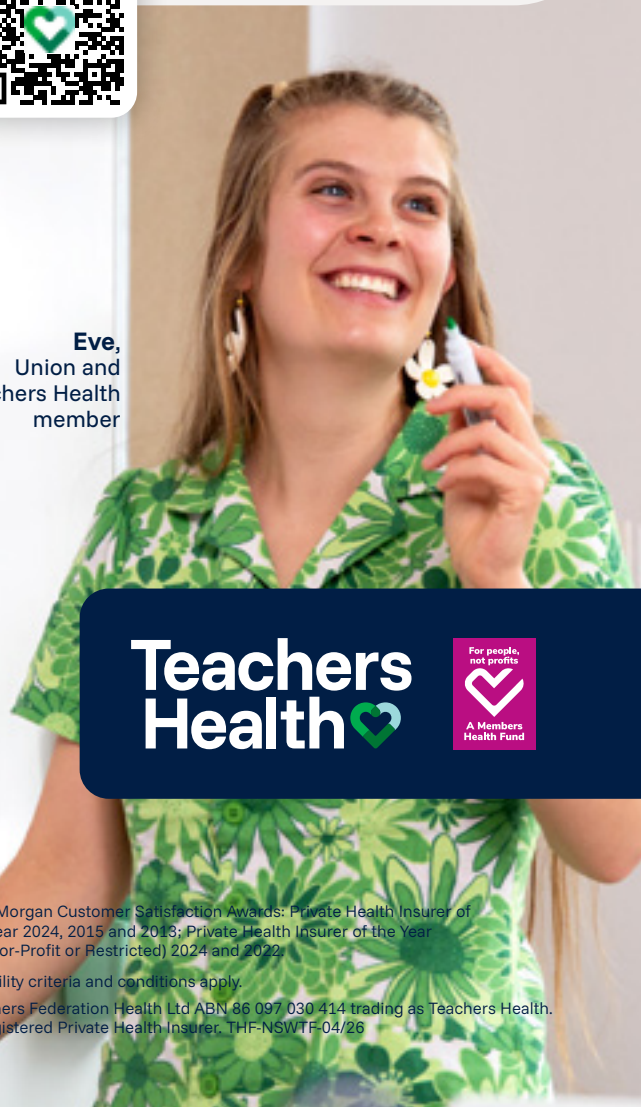
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# Planning for all learners when one size doesn't fit all

Words **John Skene**

What is your definition of 'inclusion'? Valuing the differences of people and using these to support all learners?

**S**pecial education expert Dr Shelley Moore's view requires shifts in language and thought to allow greater engagement, proposing inclusion as "there is no other". This frames inclusion as no longer about students with disability. Instead, it's about shifting paradigms to embrace, celebrate and consider all types of diversity in our learners and world. Everyone is seen as the diverse individual they are (learning ability, language, cultural background and more) — and this is used to support planning and programming within the school context.

This idea of inclusion works across mainstream, support classes and schools for specific purposes (SSPs). It supports all teachers to widen their thinking on learning needs and difference in all its facets.

Teachers who use this lens of inclusivity rely on a strengths-based approach to planning and learning, rather than a deficit model. This means supporting students to build on their strengths and those of others in a safe and supported environment. This model also allows opportunities, where available with strongly funded support, for students to engage in learning that builds confidence in capacity and development.

## COLLABORATIVE CLASSROOM

Uppsala University education academic Claes Nilholm's definition of inclusion involves all pupils, regardless of needs, participating



both socially and academically in a supported space.

One model that sits under this definition is the Collaborative Classroom model, a school-wide strategy developed to maximise inclusion and achievement by ensuring that the expertise of all staff is utilised to its full potential to support all students, across all classrooms and settings.

It gives every student access to the collective expertise of staff while ensuring individual support needs are explicitly addressed regardless of the class or program in which they are enrolled. It allows specialist teachers and Student Learning Support Officers to work with parents, students and staff to allow each student a balanced experience of 'special education' in their 'home class' (support unit) while benefiting from a sense of belonging in their 'peer class' (mainstream).

Classes are formed based on stage more than classification, to allow students (and teachers) to be linked to their peers. This structure allows individual students and small groups from mainstream to work in the support unit, allowing them greater opportunities to work toward their learning goals and with their peers across





the curriculum. (Note: This organisation is not always possible — student need and the availability of additional resourcing for the class structure need to be taken into consideration.)

The Collaborative Classroom model enhances classroom practice, experience, perspective and collegial training. It's a shift of thinking, planning and collaborating that changes the language and perspectives across classes and the community.

Ultimately, it creates an environment where every child is seen and planned for, regardless of their enrolment place.

In the school where I taught in 2023, one outcome of this model was that six out of eight stage 3 students enrolled in the support unit developed the skills and confidence needed to successfully participate in learning with their mainstream classmates for more than 80 per cent of the school day.

### PROGRAMMING ADJUSTMENTS

Programming adjustments are successful when mainstream and specialist teachers work together to support all students across the school, building capacity of one another for the benefit of the individual.

Take this example: in a support class in a mainstream school, a student is working at stage level for mathematics. Among his peers, there are students that are not. Teachers in this team decide that levelled maths groups across the stage is a suitable structure to build capacity of both students and teachers.

Therefore, they map learning as a continuum together to allow all students an opportunity to access the learning to the best of their ability, with necessary adjustments along the way.

**John Skene is Federation's Disability Officer. John has more than 15 years of experience working in SSPs and support units.**

This is an edited version of 'Is inclusion truly inclusive?', which first appeared in the semester 2, 2025 edition of the *Journal for Professional Learning*. Scan to view the entire article, including suggested resources and references.



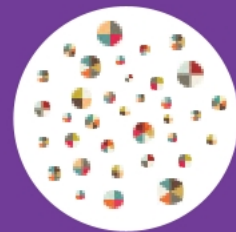
## What is *inclusion*?



**Including**  
'special needs' students  
into general education  
classrooms



Teaching and designing for  
**diversity**  
(that includes disability)



Creating space for students  
to feel confident and safe to  
**identify?**  
(that includes students who are  
disabled)

Credit: Dr Shelly Moore

# Join our next Online Book Club!

HELD QUARTERLY VIA ZOOM

Join like-minded teachers and connect through discussions and analysis of one of our library books



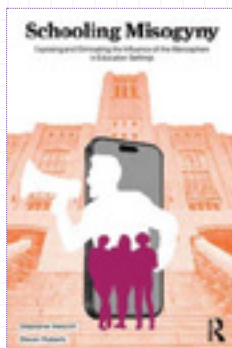
THIS TERM'S BOOK FOR DISCUSSION VIA ZOOM IN TERM 3

## **Schooling Misogyny: Exposing and Eliminating the Influence of the Manosphere in Education Settings**

STEPHANIE WESCOTT AND  
STEVEN ROBERTS

"This book confronts an escalating crisis unfolding in Australian schools: the influence of manosphere-aggravated misogyny and the everyday gendered violence it produces. Drawing on interviews and testimonies from over 130 teachers, it examines the legacy of the profound harms caused by Andrew Tate and the ways that other manosphere groups and ideologies are shaping boys' attitudes and behaviour towards women in schools.

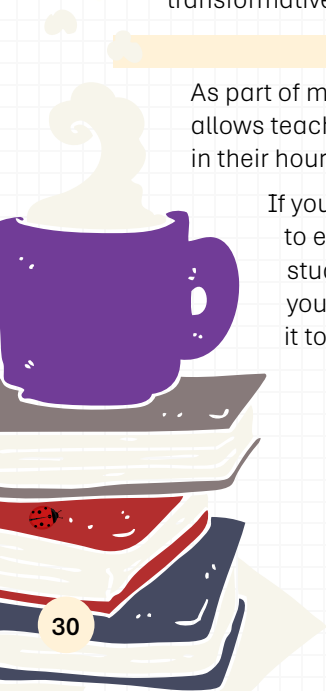
"Accessible yet deeply grounded in data and theoretical analysis, *Schooling Misogyny* is both a diagnosis and a call to action — an essential resource for anyone committed to addressing and preventing gender-based violence and creating more transformative educational futures." (Abstract)



### LOG YOUR HOURS

As part of maintenance of accreditation, NESAs allows teachers to include their professional reading in their hours.

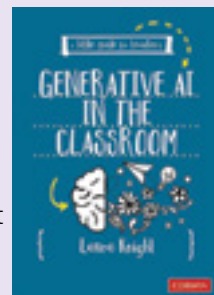
If you use the reading of *Schooling Misogyny* to enhance your pedagogy to impact on student learning progress or discuss it with your colleagues, then you can log the hours it took to read it.



## **Generative AI in the classroom**

BY LAURA KNIGHT. THOUSAND OAKS, CA: CORWIN, 2025

"Generative AI has the potential to transform teaching by reducing workload, enhancing learning, and fostering creativity. It also poses significant challenges and raises important questions. This book is for teachers who want to know more about generative AI: how it works, the ethical questions it raises and what it can do for them and their students." (publisher)



## **Becoming an autism-affirming primary school: how to listen to our autistic pupils to create meaningful change**

BY MELANIE CUNNINGHAM. ABINGDON, OXON; NEW YORK: ROUTLEDGE, 2025

"This accessible guide explores what an autism-affirming primary school should be like, from the perspective of autistic pupils, introducing a tool to gather pupil's voices and sharing a toolbox of strategies informed and requested by autistic children themselves. The book presents a fun and engaging approach, the 'three houses', which can be used with autistic children to generate a greater understanding of how they are experiencing school and how they may be masking their difficulties." (publisher)



## **Connecting whole-school literacy: building capacity from leadership to classroom practice**

BY HAYLEY HARRISON. MELBOURNE: AMBA PRESS, 2025

"*Connecting whole-school literacy* tackles the reality that many secondary students arrive with literacy skills years below grade level, yet every subject demands specific reading, writing, speaking and listening abilities. Author Hayley Harrison, drawing from twenty years of classroom experience, promotes the understanding that literacy development cannot fall solely to English teachers — it must become every educator's responsibility. This practical guide not only explains the research around how students learn to read and write, but also demonstrates how teachers across all subjects can effectively support struggling readers and writers while extending advanced learners." (publisher)

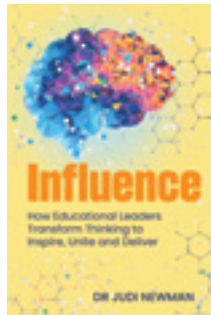


# What's hot in the library

## Influence: how educational leaders transform thinking to inspire, unite and deliver

BY JUDI NEWMAN. MELBOURNE: AMBA PRESS, 2025

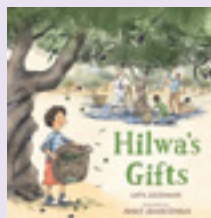
“Leadership isn’t about authority — it’s about influence ... Whether you’re a seasoned executive, emerging leader or someone seeking to amplify their impact, *Influence* offers a unique blend of scientific insights and real-world application. Newman’s research shows that the most effective leaders understand how to appeal to our inner motivations through biological processes in the brain. With compelling stories, evidence-based research and actionable tools, this book will help you master the art of influence and become the kind of leader who inspires others to bring out their best performance.” (publisher)



## Hilwa's gifts

BY SAFA SULEIMAN; ILLUSTRATED BY ANAIT SEMIRDZHIAN. SOMERVILLE, MA: CANDLEWICK PRESS, 2025

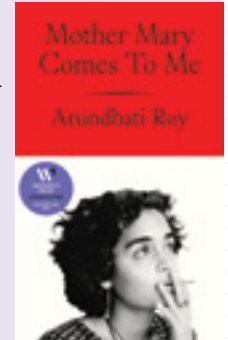
“Ali has arrived in Palestine for a visit just in time for the olive harvest. His grandfather, Seedo, and Hilwa — his favourite tree — greet him in the grove, where Seedo explains that Hilwa has many gifts to share. Other family members whack the trees’ branches with sticks, singing “Zaytoon, ya zaytoon!” while cousins clap and dance and happily pick up fallen olives ...The next day, at the olive press, Ali watches the drip of gold liquid into a can, another of Hilwa’s gifts. Later, they picnic under the tree’s branches with hot mint tea, pita, and delicious olive oil swirled on hummus. Tradition is the greatest gift of all: the family gathering — generation after generation — to celebrate a bountiful harvest. Dynamic illustrations and a graceful text peppered with Arabic words, plus a glossary and author’s note, make for an intimate picture-book debut about a child discovering his heritage.” (publisher)



## Mother Mary comes to me

BY ARUNDHATI ROY. LONDON: HAMISH HAMILTON, 2025

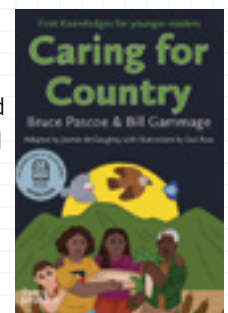
“Arundhati Roy’s first work of memoir, this is a soaring account, both intimate and inspiring, of how the author became the person and the writer she is, shaped by circumstance, but above all by her relationship to her extraordinary, singular mother Mary, who she describes as ‘my shelter and my storm’. Distraught and even a ‘little ashamed’ at the intensity of her response to the death of the mother she ran from at age eighteen, Arundhati began to write *Mother Mary comes to me*. The result is this astonishing, disconcerting, surprisingly funny chronicle — unique and simultaneously universal — of the author’s life, from childhood to the present, from Kerala to Delhi.” (back cover)



## Caring for Country

BY BRUCE PASCOE AND BILL GAMMAGE; ADAPTED BY JASMIN MCGAUGHEY; ILLUSTRATED BY SAVI ROSS. WURUNDJERI COUNTRY; CREMORNE, VIC: THAMES & HUDSON AUSTRALIA, 2025

“What do you need to know to prosper as a people for 65,000 years or more? Join writer and farmer Bruce Pascoe and historian Bill Gammage as they generously share their knowledge about the amazing way that First Nations people cared for Australia and how closely humans have been connected with nature for tens of thousands of years. From the careful use of fire to sustainable hunting and farming, there is so much we can learn about how to make sure we have a beautiful country today and for the future.” (back cover) 2026 CBCA Notable Book for Eve Pownall Award. Audience: For ages 8-12 years



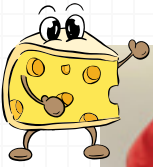
## HOW TO BORROW FROM THE LIBRARY

Contact the library to borrow resources or reserve them via the library catalogue, which can be accessed via the Federation website. A postal service is available. Hot Topics Guides on popular subjects and Library Bulletins may be found in the Member Portal.

Members can also visit the library to borrow in person:

**Library Hours:** 9 am – 5 pm Monday to Friday and 10 am – 1.30 pm on Council Saturdays.





# TUT



Timekeeping tips at Trade Union Training

# BEGINNING TEACHERS



Our Beginning Teachers Conference at Surry Hills was a big hit

# HISTORY CORNER



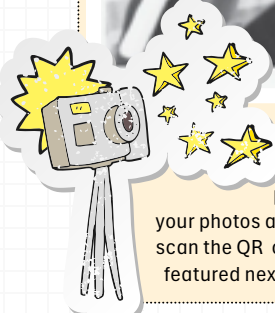
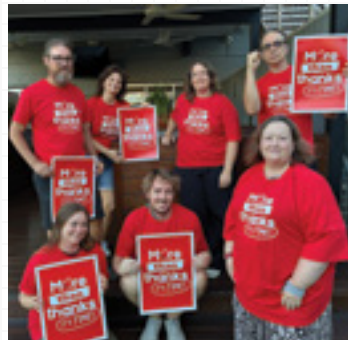
Student teachers in Newcastle rally for higher allowances in 1962. **Do you have a photo from the archives to share?** Send us your photos and information to [journal@nswtf.org.au](mailto:journal@nswtf.org.au) or scan the QR code. One lucky person will have their photo featured next edition!



# CAM



# Sau Ch





Member Terrie Lowe (far right) has been awarded TAFE TA Life Membership

# TAFE AGM



# CPL



For a CPL Podcast, Margaret Vos and Judy King discuss the importance of students learning history



# PAIGN



Members show their support for our More Than Thanks — It's Time campaign



# ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER MEMBERS CONFERENCE

Members heard about our campaigns and attended workshops on a range of topics





**SPECIAL OFFER** Free for casuals in term 3

For the latest course listings, information and to apply



COURSE	DATE	LOCATION
Writing in Secondary Schools (3 days)	Fridays 12 June, 26 June, 31 July	Surry Hills
Inclusive Strategies: Teaching Students with Disability	Tuesday 16 June	Broken Hill
Supporting Students with ADHD in 7–10	Wednesday 24 June	Surry Hills
Tell Me Your Story: Supporting EAL/D Students from K–8 (3 days)	Fridays 24 July, 7 & 21 August	Surry Hills
Inclusive Strategies: Teaching Students with Disability	Tuesday 28 July	Tamworth
Classroom Management Through Effective Teaching	Wednesday 29 July	Tamworth
Women in History: Reclaiming (In)Visible Women	Friday 31 July	Surry Hills
Implementing Aboriginal Education K–12	Wednesday 5 August	Surry Hills
Classroom Management Through Effective Teaching	Wednesday 5 August	Canberra
Inclusive Strategies: Teaching Students with Disability	Thursday 6 August	Canberra
Assessing Higher Order Thinking K–12	Tuesday 11 August	Surry Hills
Teaching Peace — Integrating Peace Studies into the Syllabuses	Wednesday 12 August	Surry Hills
Classroom Management Through Effective Teaching	Thursday 13 August	Blacktown
Conversations About Texts in Secondary Schools	Friday 14 August	Surry Hills
Early Career Teachers	Wednesday 19 August	Surry Hills
Assessment Matters: Let's Measure What We Value	Thursday 20 August	Surry Hills
Respect Starts Here: Fostering Safe and Inclusive Classrooms and Schools	Monday 24 August	Surry Hills
Assessing Higher Order Thinking K–12	Wednesday 26 August	Online
Assessment — the Judicious Use of Data and Evidence	Wednesday 2 September	Blacktown
Stimulating Science K–2	Thursday 3 September	Surry Hills
Tell Me Your Story: Supporting EAL/D Students from K–8	Friday 4 September	Surry Hills
Leading Assessment Practice in Schools K–12 (2 days)	Wednesdays 9 & 23 September	Blacktown
Classroom Management Through Effective Teaching	Wednesday 16 September	Surry Hills



For the latest course listings, information and to apply



COURSE	DATE	LOCATION	CLOSING DATE
Work, Health and Safety in Education Workplaces	22 June	Surry Hills	1 June
Foundations for Women's Contacts	25–26 June	Surry Hills	4 June
Rethinking Ability: Organising for Intervention Seminar	1 July	Gynea	17 June
Communication Skills for Workplace Representatives	23–24 July	Surry Hills	2 July
Foundations for Workplace Representatives	27–28 July	Surry Hills	3 July
Association Environment Contacts	30 July	Surry Hills	3 July
<b>Women's Conference</b>	<b>1 August</b>	<b>Surry Hills</b>	<b>3 July</b>
<b>Beginning Teacher Conference</b>	<b>8 August</b>	<b>Newcastle</b>	<b>20 July</b>
Foundations for Workplace Representatives	10–11 August	Tamworth	20 July
TAFE Foundations for Workplace Representatives	12–14 August	Surry Hills	22 July
Association Executive (Presidents, Secretaries and Treasurers)	17–18 August	Surry Hills	27 July
Communication Skills for Workplace Representatives	19–20 August	Surry Hills	29 July
<b>Beginning Teacher Conference</b>	<b>22 August</b>	<b>Lightning Ridge</b>	<b>31 July</b>
Association Peace Contacts	24 August	Surry Hills	August
Association Aboriginal Education Contacts	25 August	Surry Hills	4 August
Work Health and Safety Seminar	26 August	Gynea	12 August
Foundations for Women's Contacts	31 August–1 September	Surry Hills	10 August
Work, Health and Safety in Education Workplaces	2 September	Surry Hills	12 August
Rethinking Ability: Organising for Intervention Seminar	3 September	Brookvale	19 August
Potential Officers	Monday 14 September	Surry Hills	24 August
<b>Principals' Conference</b>	<b>Tuesday 15 September</b>	<b>Surry Hills</b>	<b>25 August</b>

# ANZELA NSW & ACT Chapter 2026 essay/multimedia competition

Closing date 30 June



We invite NSW and ACT resident lawyers, educators, law students, education students or recent graduates with something to say about a legal issue affecting education to enter an essay or video in the Australia and New Zealand Education Law Association (ANZELA) 2026 essay competition.

Contact [nsw@anzela.edu.au](mailto:nsw@anzela.edu.au) for more details.

# ANZELA



AUSTRALIA AND NEW ZEALAND EDUCATION LAW ASSOCIATION



POSTCARD

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THE NEW SOUTH WALES TEACHERS FEDERATION AUSTRALIA ACKNOWLEDGES THE GADIGAL PEOPLE OF THE EORA NATION, THE TRADITIONAL OWNERS OF THE LAND AND WATERS UPON WHICH THE NSWTF STANDS