



Federation: a proud history, a confident future

December 10, 2018

As we end our 100th anniversary year, we can look back proud of our union's achievements over the decades. I have lost count of the celebrations I attended throughout the year that were organised by local associations, some were drinks in small country pubs in remote locations, while others were dinners in large city function centres. But the common elements to all were the pride, camaraderie and commitment of the local teachers who organised each celebration.

But as our year draws to a close, we need to turn our attention to the tasks ahead. With a state and a federal election to be held between March and May next year, the union has been raising with the major political parties the priorities Annual Conference and State Council set.

The need for a massive and sustained increase in both recurrent and capital funding is fundamental for improvement, growth and certainty across all public education settings. As this investment must be a shared responsibility of state and federal governments, there is an overlap in the demands that we make to federal and state politicians.

Our two major national and state campaigns, Fair Funding Now! and Stop TAFE Cuts, aim to ensure that both sectors receive funding that meets the needs of all students, in all settings, as well as the professional support and resources teachers require and deserve.

The priorities that have been endorsed at Annual Conference in July as well at November and December Council meetings will require a permanent increase in recurrent funding and a huge lift in capital funding. The bulk of recurrent funding is spent on employing staff, while capital is needed to redress not only the maintenance backlog but also the building of hundreds of new public schools in the next decade.

So, just before we break for the year, let's remind each other of what we will be continue to pursue in the election campaigns in 2019.

- All public schools to be funded to 100 per cent of the Schooling Resource Standard (SRS) to ensure that all teachers are equipped with the necessary resources to meet student need with additional loadings for low SES, students with disability, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander, language

backgrounds other than English as well as remote and small schools.

- A growth in permanent positions, delivered as a staffing entitlement, filled by qualified teachers.
- Investment in statewide system support for teaching and learning to replace failed “schools autonomy” policies such as Local Schools, Local Decisions.
- The provision of high-quality infrastructure in every community.
- Repeal of unjust federal and state industrial laws that restrict the rights of all workers.
- Industrial rights for teachers to pursue significant increases in salaries, without trade-offs, to reflect the value of teachers’ work.
- The abolition of the market model in vocational education and training.
- Guaranteed government funding of at least 70 per cent to TAFE.
- The restoration of public provision of education in NSW correctional facilities.
- The recognition of teacher professional judgement through the restoration of teacher-driven pedagogy and assessment.
- The protection of teaching qualifications and high teaching standards including initial teacher education entry requirements.

Keep the list handy as we will be encouraging members to take these issues directly to political candidates during first few months of 2019.

Finally, on behalf of your union, let me thank you for all the work you do for your students, your colleagues, your communities and for public education.

We close 2018 proud of our history; we look forward to the campaigns of 2019 confident of our future.

— Maurie Mulheron, President