

TAFE Rally highlights plight of part-time casual teachers

November 23, 2021

The NSW Teachers Federation held a rally outside Wentworth Falls TAFE on 18 November as part of the Australian Unions, [Secure Jobs, Worth Fighting For Campaign](#). The rally highlighted the inequities, struggles and stresses that insecure work brings to the daily lives of local [TAFE teachers](#) across the Macquarie electorate.

Sally McManus, ACTU Secretary and Councillor Romola Hollywood (representing Susan Templeman, Member for Macquarie) were in attendance and were joined by teachers and students, former Blue Mountains Mayor Jim Angel, the CPSU/PSA, Unions NSW, ACTU delegates, local union members and members of the Blue Mountains Unions & Community (BMUC) organisation.

Phill Chadwick, NSW Teachers Federation, Deputy Secretary Post Schools said, “Part-time casual teachers make up about 75 per cent of the TAFE teacher workforce. Many of these teachers have worked a regular pattern of teaching and related duties for years.



“Part-time casual teachers do the same job, have the same responsibilities and have the same requirements to maintain currency and competency as their permanent teacher colleagues, yet their teaching program or class can be cancelled, and payment denied, with only two hours’ notice.”

A further blow to part-time casual TAFE teachers occurred on the 27 September this year, when TAFE management sent a standard mass email to over 7,700 part-time casual teachers across NSW advising them that TAFE would not convert them to permanency under the changes to Commonwealth Fair Work Legislation around casual employees.

NSW Teachers Federation TAFE Organiser, Liz Ingram said, “This decision is a slap in the face for local TAFE Teachers, many of whom have dedicated years, if not decades, of service to TAFE, whilst dealing daily with the issues and limitations that are endemic with casual, precarious employment.”

ACTU Secretary, Sally McManus was scathing of the Morrison Government’s changes to the Fair Work Legislation around conversion of casual employees to permanency.

“The legislation is all spin and no substance,” said Ms McManus, adding that it “does nothing to protect vulnerable casual workers.

“It is an absolute disgrace that Scott Morrison will not stand up for casual frontline TAFE workers who have served the community so well during COVID.”

In a statement read by Councillor Romola Hollywood, Ms Templeman said, "The refusal of TAFE to make long term casual teachers permanent makes a mockery of the changes to the Fair Work Commission and proves the ineffectiveness of the federal changes.

"Secure work with enough hours to pay the bills is an absolute necessity for a productive, healthy and hopeful society.

"At a time when we have drastic skills shortages, we need TAFE more than ever, with the best qualified and experienced teachers.

"The refusal of TAFE to make long term casual teachers permanent makes a mockery of the changes to the Fair Work Commission and proves the ineffectiveness of the federal changes."

The NSW Teachers Federation and the CPSU/PSA are mounting a challenge to the decision.