



## Council Report

March 02, 2018

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Federation has commissioned a research team from the University of Sydney and Curtin University to undertake an independent research project on the work of teachers, executives and principals in public schools.

Council heard a report on the survey that was sent in the week beginning 19 February to all members employed by the Department of Education.

The most important aspect of the survey will be the opportunity for teachers, executives and principals to have their say in describing:

- the nature, intensity and complexity of their work
- the impact of changes on their work
- demands made by the Department and other authorities and the effect of these demands on teaching and learning
- strategies to better support teaching and learning and reduce excessive and/or unnecessary demands.

The research team will conduct a detailed analysis of the results of the survey and develop a comprehensive report for Annual Conference.

### **Schools funding campaign**

This year was to be a significant one for funding increases under the NERA agreement, intended to bring hundreds of NSW schools closer to the minimum School Resourcing Standard (SRS).

The Turnbull plan has capped the Federal Government's contribution to the SRS at 20 per cent in public schools, while for non-government schools this cap is 80 per cent. This has resulted in an \$856 million cut to NSW public schools in 2018-19 alone.

Council resolved that Federation will continue to work with, and seek a shared commitment from, allied principal, parent and relevant community organisations.

Federation's campaign will continue to build on the successful strategies implemented in school communities across the state while seeking to improve communication, engagement and campaign actions with parents and wider school communities.

Council endorsed the inclusion of the Coalition-held seats of Banks, Gilmore, Page and Robertson as part of this national strategy.

The NSW campaign will be built around highly targeted and localised school community engagement strategies in each of these electorates.

### **Closing the Gap: 10 years on**

A report to Council detailed the 10th anniversary of the Australian Government's apology to Indigenous

Peoples and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children forcibly removed from their family and community.

It is also 10 years since all Australian governments committed to the Closing the Gap strategy and targets. A decade on, a review of the policy and the Prime Minister's 2018 Closing the Gap report conclude that governments have failed to address the widening gaps in education, health, mortality, life expectancy and employment between Indigenous and non-Indigenous populations.

Council condemned the Turnbull Government for its appalling lack of commitment, funding and leadership on the issue and called on all governments to prioritise the problem and provide necessary funding.

Federation reaffirmed its commitment to this important issue and will continue to work with the Australian Education Union to ensure it is a key national priority.

### **School staffing entitlements**

Local Schools, Local Decisions continues to be the single greatest threat to teacher permanency and high-quality, high-equity public schooling for all students, a report to Council stated.

Despite the Department's continuing efforts to devolve the cost of teacher positions to the school staffing budget, and therefore establish the pre-conditions to cut funding to schools, Federation has successfully achieved successive staffing agreements that have:

1. protected permanent teacher employment in the NSW public school system
2. maintained a state-wide teacher transfer system
3. protected class sizes
4. established monitoring and compliance action for permanent teacher employment
5. provided the means for permanent appointment to positions created by schools with additional needs-based funding.

Recent moves by the Department to diminish school staffing entitlements determined by student need are a cause for concern for all public school communities. Council resolved that Federation will continue to oppose any attempts to remove school staffing entitlements and engage membership action where necessary.

Federation will provide the Staffing Agreement Kit to all members and encourage a joint approach that ensures their school's compliance with the Staffing Agreement.

Federation will continue to pursue with senior departmental officers their review of school staffing entitlements, including investigating the additional executive staffing of primary and secondary support classes and Intensive English Centres/classes.

In doing so, Federation will reaffirm its opposition to cuts to staffing entitlements and the conversion of teacher positions to a cash amount in school budgets. Federation will pursue with the Department the acknowledgement of teacher librarians and careers teachers as specialist positions, and within school staffing entitlements.

In the lead up to Annual Conference, Federation will develop strategies to protect and enhance school staffing entitlements, establish adequate state-wide systems support for schools, ensure greater accountability for NERA funding across all equity areas, and encourage increased permanent positions for relevant teaching and non-teaching staff such as Aboriginal Education Officers. It will seek a further increase in the number of EAL/D staffing entitlements, and seek improvements to SSP staffing, executive and teacher release, consistent with Federation policy. Such strategies will form part of Federation's broader state election platform and priority demands on all political parties.

### **Executive elections**

The first Council of each year elects members of the Executive made up of 15 elected members of Branch Council; four Vice Presidents, two Custodians, an Aboriginal member and eight Association Representatives.

Those elected were:

- Vice Presidents — Tim Mulroy, Gemma Ackroyd, Julie Ross and Natasha Watt.
- Custodians — Margaret Vos and Dianne Byers.
- Aboriginal member — Russell Honnery.
- Association Representatives — Denis Fitzgerald, Phil von Schoenberg, Jenny Mace, Kylie Dawson, John Morris, Mike Morgan, Brian Webb and Annette Bennett.

— **Nicole Calnan**, Deputy Secretary (Communication and Administration)