



## **AEU – ACT BRANCH BUDGET SUBMISSION 2012-2013**

The Australian Education Union – ACT Branch (AEU) provides this submission to the ACT Government in relation to the 2012-2013 Budget. The AEU is the peak professional and industrial organisation for over 3000 principals, teachers and school support staff in ACT public schools and TAFE. Our members are employees in the Education and Training Directorate (ETD) and the Canberra Institute of Technology (CIT). This membership represents the vast majority of principals and teachers and increasing numbers of Preschool Assistants, Learning Support Assistants, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Workers/Officers, Youth Workers and other education workers who support students in public schools.

The AEU-ACT Branch welcomes the recent ACT government investment in improving public education workers' salaries and conditions. Three Enterprise Agreements affecting these employees have been negotiated over the last several months – Education Support Staff, CIT teachers and school teachers have gained or are due to gain from this investment. Ultimately this injection of funds will support the growth of the ACT public education system, and most importantly, improve outcomes for students.

The AEU-ACT Branch membership is in the best position to provide advice to government on what is needed to maintain and continually improve public education, for the benefit of all students. This submission provides recommendations that AEU members believe will address priority issues within the public education system in the ACT.

ACT public education support staff, teachers and leaders in both ETD and CIT are the voice of the profession and this submission presents their views.

## **SCHOOL SECTOR**

### **1. Recruitment and Retention of High Quality Staff**

#### **Recommendation 1:**

**1(a) Principal Classification** – school categories and school complexity are currently under review. Any resultant change to the Principal Salary Structure must be budgeted for implementation during the life of the current Enterprise Agreement.

**1(b) Employee salaries** – the new ETD Teaching Staff Enterprise Agreement concludes 30 September 2014. The ACT government must commence budgeting now for future salary increases to be bargained in 2013-14.

**1(c)** The Casual Intern rate should be raised to be equivalent to the Casual Teacher Rate 1. The Casual Intern (4<sup>th</sup> year pre-service teachers permitted to teach in public schools) rate is approximately \$100 per day less than the rate paid in ACT Catholic systemic schools. This pay gap must be addressed to ensure Casual Interns choose to gain valuable casual relief teaching experience in the public school system and to enable ETD to recruit high quality graduates as soon as possible.

#### **Face to Face Teaching Hours**

The AEU acknowledges the reduction in face-to-face teaching loads provided to graduate teachers in their first year of service under the new Enterprise Agreement.

**1(d)** However, funding should be provided to allow face-to-face teaching hours within the secondary sector be restored to 18 hours per week for Level 1 teachers.

**1(e)** Funding should be provided to allow face-to-face teaching hours within the preschool/primary sectors be reduced to 18 hours per week for Level 1 teachers.

**1(f)** Face-to-face teaching time for School Leader Cs in all sectors should be reduced by at least two hours a week to compensate for increasing responsibilities for administration and behaviour management.

**1(g)** Time taken to develop, maintain and implement a student's Individual Learning Plan (ILP), including all formal ILP meetings, be counted as part of normal face-to-face teaching hours.

#### **Black Mountain School and The Woden School**

**1(h)** A full time Youth Support Worker should be appointed to both Black Mountain School and The Woden School.

#### **Addressing Workforce Shortages in Public Schools**

**1(i)** Funding should be provided to enable the ETD and local universities to work together, as a matter of priority, to develop and implement a strategy to address existing, and plan for future, workforce shortages in ACT public schools. The particular areas of shortage that currently exist are: school counsellor-psychologists, teacher librarians, teachers of maths, science and ESL/EALD.

## **Teacher Librarians**

**1(j)** Funding is needed to support the provision and development of Teacher Librarians (TLs) in all public schools, as follows:

- At least a full-time, qualified TL (or equivalent number of part-time TLs) for every school, with specified staffing ratios for each school.
- Staffing funds for TLs to be allocated to schools in addition to the classroom teacher staffing allocation to ensure each school has the funds for at least one full-time qualified TL.
- Provide targeted scholarships that provide study leave and financial support for ETD staff to undertake study to upgrade to a TL qualification.
- Ongoing financial support from ETD to provide relevant regular professional development in teacher librarianship, including the fields of ICT, literacy and leadership.

## **Additional School Counsellor Positions**

**1(k)** The government needs to provide funding to ensure schools with enrolments of 500 students or more are provided with at least a full-time counsellor-psychologist (as per the NSW Coroner's recommendation - Inquest into the death of Alex Wildman, 2010).

**1(l)** The government should provide funding to ensure that schools with less than 500 students are provided with at least a 0.5 school counsellor-psychologist.

## **English as an Additional Language or Dialect (formerly English as a Second Language)**

**1(m)** The government should reinstate the second EALD Executive Officer position in Central Office (cut in 2011 as the result of the Efficiency Dividend) in order to provide whole system professional and pedagogical support to all ETD staff on leading practice to support EALD students, including refugees and students who have experienced trauma.

**1(n)** The government should provide adequate funding to ACT public school settings to ensure every single EALD learner with a Language Proficiency Rating below 4.0 (equivalent to average speaker of English for age and year level) accesses a targeted EALD program delivered by a specialist EALD teacher. (See **Attachment A** for an explanation of the issues).

## **Early Childhood Education section, ETD Central Office**

**1(o)** The government should provide funds to create 2 new ECE School Leader C positions to replace the 2 x SLCs who have been sidelined to complete Federal Government priorities including the assessment and rating of preschools under the National Quality Standard for Early Childhood Education and Care.

## **Administrative support for the Professional Learning section, ETD Central Office**

**1(p)** At least one FTE additional administrative assistant position should be created to support the development and delivery of the Professional Learning Calendar (hundreds of professional learning sessions per year for all staff across ETD, Catholic and Independent Schools) coordinated by the Professional Learning section.

## **Class Sizes**

**1(q)** The government should provide funding to cap public school class sizes to the maximums outlined in the AEU Class Sizes Policy. (See **Attachment B** for this policy).

This model is potentially cheaper than the current ACT government policy that averages class sizes across the primary and secondary sectors.

### **Alternative Programs and Settings**

**1(r)** The government should ensure that there is adequate funding, appropriate staffing, targeted programs and other supportive measures (eg. transport provision) to support disengaging and disengaged students in their own school wherever possible.

**1(s)** The government should fund the establishment of alternative programs for those students who require a high level of educational, social and/or behavioural support. These programs should include small classes, specialist teachers and support staff (including liaison officer), individualised programs and other supportive measures (eg. transport provision); they may be established in a separate setting to the student's own school and could be provided for the short, medium or long term, depending on the needs of each student.

## **2. Professional Learning Funds**

### **Recommendation 2:**

**2(a)** The **Teacher** Professional Learning Fund (TPLF) should be increased to \$3M per annum and then adjusted by the annual June Quarter ACT CPI increases. The funding for the TPLF has not increased since its inception, despite increases in the number of teachers employed in the system. Teachers (including School Leader Cs) should be able to access these funds:

- for payment to attend approved courses and conferences, both during term and stand-down, within their school/worksite, the ACT, nationally and internationally; and
- for the payment of HECS or other fees associated with courses approved by ETD from a list of qualifications agreed between the AEU and ETD
- for professional development, including support for implementing system-wide initiatives at the local level.

**2 (b)** That the **Principal** Professional Learning Fund be calculated on one percent per annum of Principals (SLAs) and Deputy Principals' (SLBs) total salary costs so that Deputy Principals may also benefit from PPLF activities. The Principal Professional Learning Fund (PPLF) is currently allocated funds equivalent to one percent per annum of total *principal* salary costs, so its dollar value increases as salaries rise. This calculation should be extended to include the deputy principal salary costs.

## **3. New Initiatives and Compliance Measures**

Both the Federal and ACT governments have determined a number of new initiatives and compliance measures that have significant implications for the working life of teachers.

### **Recommendation 3:**

#### **Assessment of all New Initiatives Prior to Implementation**

**3(a)** The government should provide funds to ensure a scoping process is undertaken to assess the desirability and resource implications of implementing any and all new proposals, initiatives and/or compliance measures in ETD and schools.

**3(b)** Funding should be provided to ensure adequate and ongoing resources, training, workload scoping, risk assessments and risk management plans are provided by EDT for the implementation of all new proposals and/or compliance measures, including the National Curriculum and the IT systems and programs.

#### **Teacher Quality Institute registration costs**

**3(c)** Currently, most ACT ETD teachers registered with the Teacher Quality Institute will have their registration fees paid by the government 2011 and 2012. The AEU calls upon the government to extend this to fund TQI registration fees for all ETD teachers until the end of the 2015 TQI registration year.

#### **IT Support Staff and Systems**

**3(d)** The central office should receive adequate funds to ensure that every ETD workplace (all schools, units, central office) has an IT technician/support officer to manage all aspects of ICT establishment and maintenance. As per the in-principal Enterprise Agreement, teachers' engagement with ICT in schools should be educational and not technical. Teachers should not be called upon to establish ICT equipment nor undertake system or school network maintenance tasks.

**3(e)** Funding should be provided to ensure ETD/Shared Services ICT systems can effectively manage new staffing arrangements agreed as part of Enterprise Agreement negotiations (ie. some positions filled by a school-based panel, other positions filled by a central transfer/placement round).

#### **Increased School Autonomy**

ACT Public Schools have for many years been operating under a system of School-Based Management which has provided considerable autonomy to each Principal. The ACT government and Federal government have sought to extend this autonomy.

**3(f)** The AEU asserts that any proposed changes to school autonomy, including funding arrangements, must:

- be the subject of broad consultation (in accordance with the Enterprise Agreement);
- bring about improvements for students and staff;
- ensure that ACT public schools operate effectively as a system;
- not jeopardise the ability of the ACT public education system to meet the needs of all students and staff; and
- not lead to a decrease in funding and not disadvantage individual schools, students or employees.

#### **4. Support for Small Schools**

##### **Recommendation 4:**

A review should be undertaken into small public schools and the resources required to ensure equity for students and staff in these schools. Small schools struggle to provide the same breadth of curriculum and the same level of physical resources as larger schools. In small schools, staff are overworked as compared to colleagues in larger schools as they still need to provide the same levels of support to their school communities but there are fewer people to provide this support. If small schools do not have their resources reviewed government needs to reconsider their viability.

## **5. Supporting Pregnant and Parenting Young People to Continue Their Education**

### **Recommendation 5:**

A similar program to the award-winning *CC Cares* program at Canberra College should be established at a north-side public college to support pregnant and parenting young people to complete Year 10 and 12.

## **6. Murrumbidgee Education and Training Centre – Bimberi Youth Justice Centre**

### **Recommendation 6:**

Funding should be provided to employ a technical assistant to support practical classes at METC. Other detention centres around Australia provide two adults per class. This ensures appropriate supervision is provided, allows tasks to be completed and provides additional support to the teacher. This position would be in addition to the Youth Workers who currently provide support in the metal and wood work classes only. Other classes such as art and agriculture do not have a second staff member and would greatly benefit from this support.

## **TAFE SECTOR**

The AEU recommends a thorough review of current level of CIT funding and the viability of the commercialisation of CIT to existing levels. The AEU asserts that CIT is inadequately funded to provide the range of profile programs desired and necessary to meet the needs of the ACT community. In light of the retraction of federal government funding through the contestability agenda for VET and TAFE provision in Australia, the ACT government must fund CIT at levels which provide, in real terms, funding equivalent to levels existing prior to the 1997 implementation of 'funding efficiencies' and policy designed to promote contestability in the ACT.

## **7. Cultural Change Within CIT**

In recent years the direction of CIT towards commercialisation and increased contestable funding has seen a marked change in the culture within the organisation. This has led to teachers voicing concern about the de-emphasis of quality teaching in favour of cost cutting and/or money making measures. This includes issues around the level of administrative support and marketing expertise available to teachers, Education Managers and Centre Directors.

### **Recommendation 7:**

**7(a)** CIT should be funded to 1997 levels in real terms to ensure sustainability of workloads for teaching staff and quality of teaching delivery within CIT.

**7(a)** CIT should be funded to provide access to all staff to Respect, Equity and Diversity training and to other relevant programs that support respectful, safe work environments for ALL staff at CIT. This funding should be sufficient to allow completion of program delivery by the end of 2012.

**7(b)** Funding should be provided to address staffing shortages at CIT and ensure that the FTE teaching staff to administrative/general staff ratio is at 3 teachers: 2

administrative/general staff, and allow CIT to provide 1 full-time administrative staff member for each Band 2, 3, 4 and STP. The priority must be to ensure adequate education services are provided by CIT and that administrative staff are not sidelined from this core work

**7(c)** Funding should be provided to create additional STP, Band 2, 3 and 4 teacher positions to allow teachers to concentrate on educational delivery, to adequately meet the needs of students at CIT, and to reduce the individual administrative compliance burden on teachers.

**7(d)** Funding should be provided to enable CIT to purchase more fleet cars so that teachers can perform their work more efficiently. Teachers should not be required to use their personal vehicle for work purposes without being provided a Motor Vehicle Allowance.

**7(e)** Funding should be provided to allow the ongoing delivery of all Language courses in the Vocational College of CIT, to ensure that formally-recognised language programs are still available in the ACT community. The AEU understands that all Certificate III and IV Language courses will cease at the end of 2012 and that Certificate I and II Language courses will be significantly reduced in the near future.

**7(f)** Funding of the Year 10 and Year 12 programs, delivered by the Vocational College, should be based on the same resource allocation in ETD colleges.

## **8. Proposed Merger Between CIT and University of Canberra**

### **Recommendation 8:**

The AEU has provided a submission to the ACT government stating its strong preference for CIT to remain as a separate public education institution. The AEU welcomes the recent announcement that CIT and UC will not merge but will continue to work closely together to provide high quality tertiary education across within ACT. Adequate funding must be provided to ensure no students, staff or programs are disadvantaged in the future arrangements of CIT and UC.

## **EDUCATION SUPPORT STAFF**

### **9. Recruitment and Retention of Education Support Staff**

Education support staff include employees who are Learning Support Assistants, Preschool Assistants, Youth Workers, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Workers and Officers and any other DET employee who work directly with students.

The work performed by education support staff is critical to the delivery of high quality public education for all ACT students. This value has not been evident in the amount and quality of professional development made available by ETD.

### **Recommendation 9:**

An Education Support Staff Professional Learning Fund should be created, based on 1.5% of the total Education Support Staff salary and adjusted by the annual June Quarter ACT CPI increases. This will enable all support staff working with students, including LSAs,

Youth Workers, and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Workers to attend regular, relevant, high quality professional development. The operation of this fund is to be jointly agreed with the DET and the AEU.

## **PUBLIC SECTOR-WIDE CONDITIONS**

### **10. Supporting Employees Who Experience Domestic Violence**

#### **Recommendation 10:**

**10(a)** Funding should be provided to implement a new common core condition across the ACTPS which enables an employee experiencing domestic violence to have access to 20 days per year (non-accumulative) of paid special leave for medical appointments, legal proceedings and to deal with other impacts of family violence on work and family. Principal/Manager training in relation to privacy obligations and implementation procedures would be required to support this leave entitlement.

### **11. Superannuation**

#### **Recommendation 11:**

**11(a)** The ACT Government should reinstate the 15.4% employer superannuation contribution for all ACTPS employees, or at least move to an interim model of matching employee contributions 1% for 1%.

**11(b)** The ACT government should pay a superannuation contribution for women on all forms of unpaid maternity/parental leave in order to recruit and retain skilled employees in the ACT Government workforce.

### **12. Increase ACT Paid Maternity Leave**

#### **Recommendation 12:**

The ACT Government should increase Paid Maternity Leave to 26 weeks on replacement wages and move the payment of paid maternity leave and other entitlements to a central pool to relieve the financial pressure on smaller agencies.

### **13. Shared Services Pay Slips**

#### **Recommendation 13:**

The ACT Government should provide resources to ensure that Shared Service provides payslips that include the employee's:

- Long Service Leave balance and accrual date
- Personal Leave balance and accrual date
- Personal Leave days taken for the current calendar year including an itemised record of the dates and total hours of personal leave taken with and without a medical certificate.

### **14. Journey Cover Insurance**

#### **Recommendation 14:**

In the absence of any decision by the Commonwealth Government to reinstate journey cover insurance, the ACT Government should make provision in the Budget for other

forms of insurance coverage for injuries sustained by ACT Government employees while travelling to and from work.

**15. No Further Efficiency Dividends Imposed Upon ETD or CIT**

**Recommendation 15:**

There should be no further efficiency dividend imposed upon either ETD or CIT in the next budget.

**16. Support for Mature Age Employees**

**Recommendation 16:**

Funding should be provided to develop and implement a whole-of-ACT-government Mature Age Strategy, particularly in the areas of:

- Valuing the experience and expertise of mature age employees
- Recognition of the specific issues affecting mature age employees
- Promotion of, and support for, flexible work arrangements
- Professional development for managers in how to effectively support mature age employees
- Support by the employer in accessing transitions to retirement.



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