

Australian Educator

Professional status
// Restore respect and salaries for educators

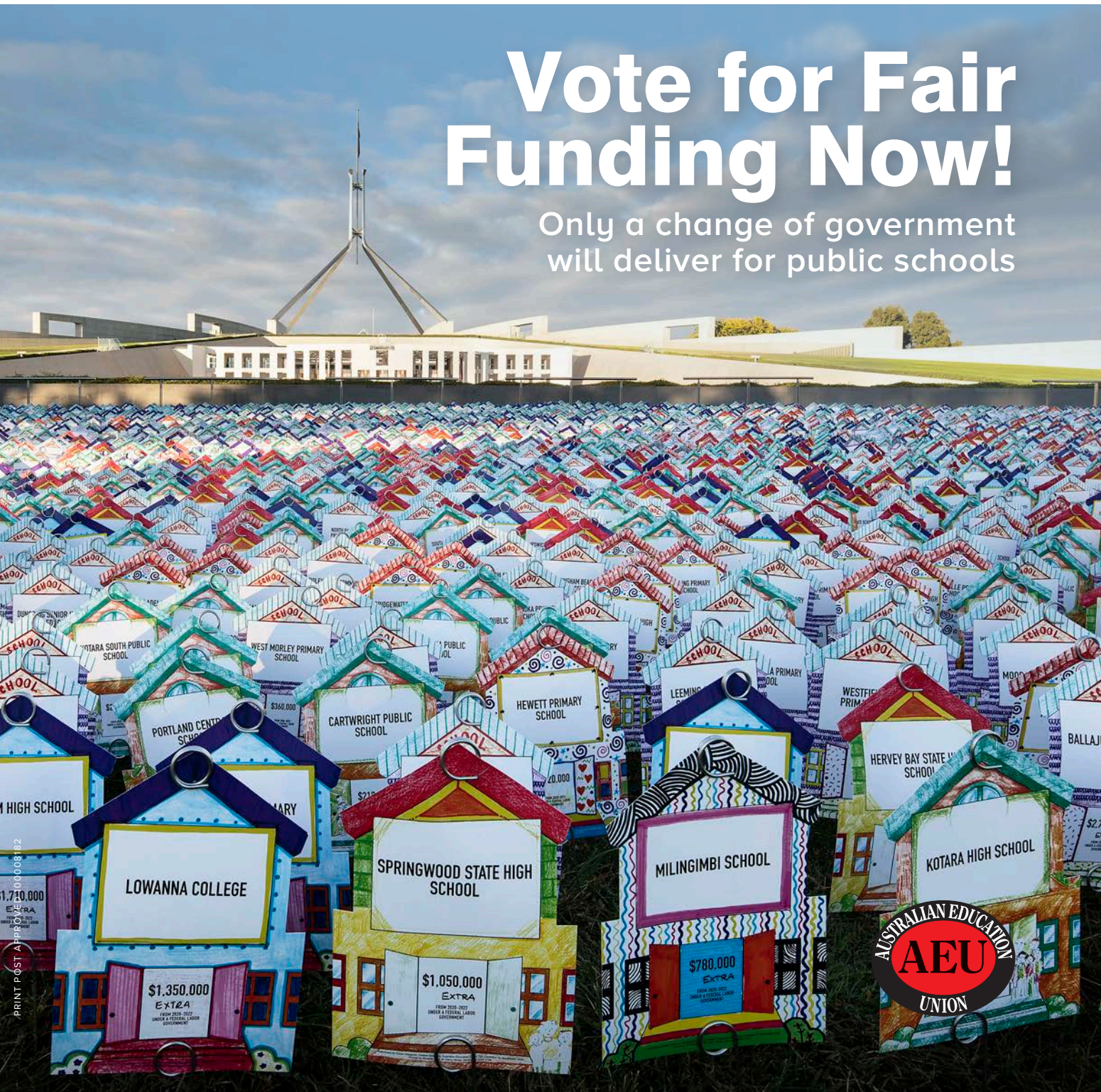
Activism to exile
// Early lessons in rights and courage

Clear language
// EAL/D tips from the experts

Demand for better deal
// Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities

Vote for Fair Funding Now!

Only a change of government will deliver for public schools



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The logo for QSuper, featuring a stylized white 'Q' followed by the word 'Super' in a white sans-serif font.

ON THE COVER The AEU took the fight for Fair Funding Now! directly to Canberra ahead of what's shaping up to be the 'education election'.

PHOTOGRAPHY ANTHONY MCKEE



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Know your union

With a federal office and branches or associated bodies in every state and territory, the AEU represents more than 188,000 members industrially and professionally.



Federal president
Correna Haythorpe



Federal secretary
Susan Hopgood

AEU FEDERAL

120 Clarendon St,
Southbank, VIC, 3006
Phone: +61 3 9693 1800
Email: aeu@aeufederal.org.au
Web: aeufederal.org.au

AEU ACT BRANCH

Branch president
Angela Burroughs
Branch secretary
Glenn Fowler
40 Brisbane Avenue
Barton 2600
Phone: 02 6272 7900
Email: aeuact@aeuact.org.au
Web: aeuact.org.au

AEU NT BRANCH

Branch president
Jarvis Ryan
Branch secretary
Adam Lampe
3/8 Totem Road
Coconut Grove 0811
Phone: 08 8948 5399
Email: admin@aeunt.org.au
Web: aeunt.org.au

AEU SA BRANCH

Branch president
Howard Spreadbury
Branch secretary
Leah York
163 Greenhill Road
Parkside 5063
Phone: 08 8172 6300
Email: aeusa@aeusa.asn.au
Web: aeusa.asn.au

AEU TAS BRANCH

Branch president
Helen Richardson
Branch state manager
Roz Madsen
1/32 Patrick Street
Hobart 7000
Phone: 03 6234 9500
Email: support@aeutas.org.au
Web: aeutas.org.au

AEU VIC BRANCH

Branch president
Meredith Peace
Branch secretary
Erin Aulich
126 Trenerry Crescent
Abbotsford 3067
Phone: 03 9417 2822
Email: melbourne@aeuvic.asn.au
Web: aeuvic.asn.au

QUEENSLAND TEACHERS UNION

President
Kevin Bates
General secretary
Graham Moloney
21 Graham Street
Milton 4064
Phone: 07 3512 9000
Email: qtu@qtu.asn.au
Web: qtu.asn.au

NEW SOUTH WALES TEACHERS FEDERATION

President
Maurie Mulheron
General secretary
John Dixon
23-33 Mary Street
Surry Hills 2010
Phone: 02 9217 2100
Email: mail@nswtf.org.au
Web: nswtf.org.au

STATE SCHOOL TEACHERS UNION OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA

President
Pat Byrne
General secretary
Mary Franklyn
1 West Street West Perth 6005
Phone: 08 9210 6000
Email: contact@sstuwa.org.au
Web: sstuwa.org.au



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Hardie Grant Media
Ground Level, Building 1
658 Church St, Richmond 3121
Tel: (03) 8520 6444
Fax: (03) 8520 6422
Email: educator@hardiegrant.com

AEU and subscription enquiries

Australian Education Union
Federal Office, PO Box 1158
South Melbourne Victoria 3205
Tel: (03) 9693 1800
Fax: (03) 9693 1805
Email: aeu@aeufederal.org.au

[facebook.com/AEUfederal](https://www.facebook.com/AEUfederal)
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Editor Susan Hopgood
Publisher Fiona Hardie
Managing editor Lucy Siebert
Commissioning editor Tracey Evans
Subeditor Leanne Tolra
Art Director Dallas Budde
Design Natalie LaChina
Advertising manager Kerri Spillane
Tel: (03) 8520 6444
Fax: (03) 8520 6422
Email: kerrispillane@hardiegrant.com

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News in brief

Events

**17
May**

International Day
Against Homophobia,
Transphobia and
Biphobia

**16
May**

World Education
Support Personnel
Day

**23
May**

National Public
Education Day

**5
June**

World Environment
Day

**12
June**

World Day Against
Child Labour

**16-22
June**

Refugee Week

**26
July**

Schools Tree Day

**28
July**

National Tree Day

**9
August**

International Day
of the World's
Indigenous Peoples

**30
August**

Wear it Purple Day



Action needed to stop sexual harassment at work

Public education employers are not doing enough to prevent sexual harassment, say 75 per cent of respondents to a recent AEU national survey.

More than half of those surveyed had either witnessed or experienced sexual harassment at work, or supervised someone who had been sexually harassed.

The survey results form part of the AEU's submission to the Human Rights Commission National Inquiry into Sexual Harassment in Australian Workplaces.

Current procedures and laws are simply not protecting educators from sexual harassment, the AEU submission says.

The AEU argues that most education departments don't have an effective sexual harassment policy, there is no national consistency in policies and there are significant issues with the way sexual harassment complaints are handled.

AEU supports students' climate strike

The AEU has commended the 150,000 Australian students who took part in nationwide protests to demand action on climate change.

In March, an estimated one million students in 125 countries walked out of school, according to a report in *The Guardian*.

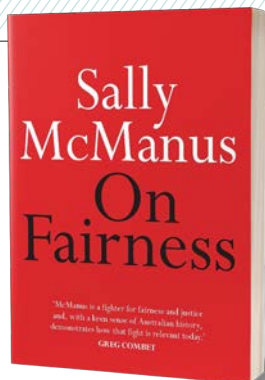
"The AEU supports the democratic right of students to take direct action,

giving voice to their real concerns about the impacts of climate change, and protesting against the inaction by the federal government," says federal president Correna Haythorpe.

"The Morrison government's continued denial of climate change and lack of action is placing Australians and our Pacific neighbours in grave danger," she adds.



ILLUSTRATION OSLO DAVIS



BOOK: ON FAIRNESS

Stagnating wages, gender inequity and creeping casualisation are hot topics in the lead-up to the federal election.

ACTU secretary Sally McManus says Australians are feeling the consequences of five years without real wage growth at a time of record company profits.

"People have been cutting into their savings. People have less to spend. This is not just a problem for retail sales, but for the quality of life for most Australians," she said during the recent launch of her book *On Fairness*.

See page 25 for more information about the ACTU's Change the Rules campaign.



Healing resources

New lesson plans detailing the experience of the Stolen Generations are available to schools and teachers. These have been developed by The Healing Foundation in consultation with members of the Stolen Generations, teachers, parents and curriculum writers.

Chair Professor Steve Larkin says that little about the Stolen Generation has been taught in schools.

"We hope these resources will foster greater respect and understanding of the past, and influence a different relationship with our communities," Larkin says.

The Healing Foundation is offering \$700 micro grants for schools to hold events that focus on the Stolen Generations between National Reconciliation Week (27 May to 3 June) and NAIDOC Week 2019 (7-14 July). To apply, visit healingfoundation.org.au/schools

The time is up for the Morrison government

A symbolic morning in Canberra was a powerful reminder of what's at stake at the next election. The Fair Funding Now! community's moment is now upon us.



On a crisp Tuesday morning in Canberra, a group of dedicated Fair Funding Now! supporters from around Australia planted thousands of schools into the lawns in front of Federal Parliament.

Dawn was still some way off, but as our group of volunteers fanned out across the damp grass, their energy and enthusiasm made it clear that there was change in the air.

The Fair Funding Now! team had a simple message for Federal Parliament: school funding decisions made in Canberra have real impacts on real people in communities across Australia.

Our school display was a visual demonstration that every public school has its own unique identity, its own characters, its own culture and its own issues. We wanted to showcase the wonderful diversity in every public school - poets, students from refugee

backgrounds, netballers, students with disability, country kids, artists, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and computer coders - who are all affected when public school funding is cut.

We planted schools from Brisbane and schools from Broome. We planted schools from the bush and schools near the beach. We planted primary schools and secondary schools.

However, there was one thing that every school on that lawn shared. It was

the amount of extra funding that each school stands to receive from Labor leader Bill Shorten's commitment of an extra \$3.3 billion for public schools if Labor is elected to government.

Our Parliament House event was an outstanding success on all fronts. There was real acceptance and understanding of our call for fair funding for public schools by the politicians who visited from Labor, the Greens and the independents. I believe that this is a key indicator of a real change in public attitudes between this federal election and the last one in 2016.

This time the public has a real grasp of what Scott Morrison's cuts to public-school funding really means for them and their children. They get it. They see his government relentlessly favouring private schools at the expense of public schools, and they don't like it.

The concept of a 'fair go' is intrinsically Australian, and when Australians see or feel that someone is acting unfairly they pull them into line. Scott Morrison's \$14 billion cuts to public school funding fall right into this category, and are shaping as one of the crucial issues that will decide this election.

This is due, in large part, to the endless support, enthusiasm and energy of the Fair Funding Now! community. You have all done a great job in keeping this issue front of mind and in the public eye. Thanks to you, this really is the 'education election'.

One thing is for certain. On the day the major parties heard our message loud and clear. And, if the Morrison government didn't know it was in for the fight of its life over the fair funding of public education, it does now.

During the six years of Federal Coalition government there has been no real new investment in public education. Scott

It's the time for every member of the Fair Funding Now! community to do everything we can to make Labor's promises a reality on poll day. Don't wait – contact your local branch to see how you can help Fair Funding Now!



Morrison offered nothing to public schools to match the \$4.6 billion that he handed to private schools last year. He made no attempt to reverse the \$14 billion in public school funding cuts he made as Treasurer.

His only Budget announcement was a \$30 million local school community fund, which, if evenly split between the three school sectors, means about \$1500 for each public school. For the average school that's not even enough for a new textbook for each student. Compared

with the billions of dollars Mr Morrison has handed out in grants to private schools, it's almost insulting.

The Federal Coalition has been determined to reduce the amount it spends on public schools since the day it took office. The Prime Minister's idea of a fair go is to cut billions from public schools and hand billions to private schools. These cuts hit hardest the students who need our help the most.

Conversely, Labor's election platform puts public schools first. Bill Shorten has committed to reversing the Morrison government's \$14 billion in public school funding cuts, and has committed \$300 million in extra funding to ensure that students with disability get the support they need at school. This will make a real difference in the push for smaller class sizes, more one-on-one coaching in the classroom.

The choice is clear for fair funding for public schools. Labor has made this the education election, and that is backed in by the Greens and their strong support for public education. It's time for every member of the Fair Funding Now! community to do everything we can to make Labor's promises a reality on poll day. Don't wait – contact your local branch to see how you can help Fair Funding Now! secure fair funding for public schools.

Six years of Federal Coalition government is more than enough. Six years of Coalition attacks on public school funding is enough. Six years of uncertainty over funding for early childhood education is enough. Six years of relentless cuts to TAFE budgets is enough.

If this is Scott Morrison's idea of a fair go – then it's time for Scott Morrison to go.

Correna Haythorpe AEU federal president.

VOTE FOR FAIR FUNDING NOW!

Only a change of government will deliver fair funding for public schools.

Prime minister Scott Morrison has failed the fairness test by refusing to reverse the Coalition's \$14 billion in cuts to public schools.

AEU federal president Correna Haythorpe says the federal budget was the prime minister's chance to reverse his six years of attacks on public schools, but he chose not to.

"The prime minister is not giving public schools a fair go, so it's time for him to go," she says.

"There's no option. If we want to stop cuts to public education funding while private schools receive special funding deals, if we want to properly support students with disabilities and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, then we need to change the government."

The AEU's Fair Funding Now! campaign is playing a vital role in reminding voters and politicians of the inequities in our education system and what's needed to create a fair go for all students.

A fleet of Fair Funding Now! vans visited schools across the country in the lead up to the federal budget with campaign teams talking to educators and parents about what they want for their kids in public schools. The vans converged on Canberra for budget day and supporters planted thousands of cardboard 'schools' in the Parliament House lawns. It was a powerful display of how much each individual school is missing out on because of Scott Morrison's \$14 billion of cuts and how much extra funding they'll receive under a change of government.



Independent MP
Kerryn Phelps lends
her support to the
Fair Funding Now!
campaign.



STARK POLICY DIFFERENCES

Many Labor and Greens MPs visited the display with Labor's Bill Shorten, Tanya Plibersek and the Greens Richard Di Natale using it as an opportunity to remind the public of the sharp divide in education policy in this election.

The Morrison government has cut \$14 billion from public schools while favouring private schools with special deals worth billions.

Labor promises to restore Scott Morrison's funding cuts for schools, providing \$14.1 billion over the next decade including \$3.3 billion in the first three years.

The Greens have also promised extra funding: \$24.5 billion over four years plus \$320 million earmarked for capital works in public schools.

The Coalition has used its term in office to chip away at Australia's public education system, effectively throwing out the recommendations of the Gonski review. School budgets were cut by \$1.9 billion in 2018 and 2019.

While the Morrison government claims it's providing "record levels" of funding, Save Our Schools convenor Trevor Cobbold says there's little prospect that public schools will be adequately funded over the next decade.

Cobbold points to bilateral funding agreements the federal government signed with state and territory governments that effectively lock in public school disadvantage. Under the agreements, public schools will only ever be funded at 91 per cent of the Schooling Resource Standard (SRS) "at best", while private schools are guaranteed 100 per cent of the standard or more by 2023, he says. The Coalition has kicked in a further \$4.6 billion for private schools to quell their disquiet over the Gonski review's recommendations for a fairer and more

The claim of record funding is nothing more than political spin. The reality is that the Coalition has overseen record school funding cuts.



Correna Haythorpe
AEU federal president

equal schools funding model, plus \$1.9 billion to boost their capital works programs.

Haythorpe has accused the Morrison government of coercing the states and territories into signing the bilateral agreements by threatening to withhold funding if they refused. As a result, she says, only 1.3 per cent of public schools will reach 100 per cent of the SRS by 2023.

"The claim of record funding is nothing more than political spin," she says.

"The reality is that the Coalition has overseen record school funding cuts.

They claim they are investing more money because school funding is based on the number of students in a school and, as we all know, our population is accelerating so the number of students in public schools is higher than ever before.

"It's not simply a case of more funding, it's about fair funding. All schools must be funded to 100 per cent of the SRS to prevent inequality becoming further entrenched and to stop public school kids missing out."

According to a new report from the Australian Bureau of Statistics, in the past five years public schools across Australia have received 75.9 per cent of new school student enrolments, while student enrolments to Catholic schools dropped over the past 12 months.

Indefinite underfunding of public schools perpetuates disadvantage and is a "huge cost" to individuals, society and the economy, says Cobbold.

Overwhelmingly, voters want a government prepared to invest in public schools, not one that cuts funding and makes it harder for the children who need the most help. With Labor's pledge to restore the cuts and ensure that public education is at the heart of their government if elected, the facts are clear. If Scott Morrison wins, our children and their schools lose.

STAND UP. SPEAK OUT. CREATE CHANGE.

Go to fairfundingnow.org.au to join the campaign.

Labor's shadow education minister Tanya Plibersek says the Schooling Resource Standard (SRS), which was introduced when Labor was in government, is an objective measure of the cost of properly educating a student. Plibersek calls it the 'Fair Funding Level' because it includes loadings for factors such as socio-economic status, remoteness, size of the school, number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, disability and English language proficiency.

Public schools educate two-thirds of Australia's 2.5 million students, says Plibersek, noting that a higher percentage of children from poorer families, children with disabilities and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students attend public schools.

IMPROVING DISABILITY SUPPORT

Labor is committed to improving support and resources for students with a disability and their teachers. An extra \$300 million will be added to the disability loading between 2020 and 2023 to ensure schools have the resources to teach every child.

"This increased disability loading will help students get specialised teaching and support, pay for necessary equipment and alterations to school facilities and provide access to modern technologies that enable learning," says Plibersek. The Greens is also committed to reversing Morrison's cuts to funding for students with disability.

Join our campaign for Fair Funding Now! at fairfundingnow.com.au.

A CLEAR CHOICE FOR EARLY CHILDHOOD

What's left out of a government budget is often more remarkable than what is included and that was certainly the case with the Morrison Budget. While hundreds of billions went to tax cuts there was no new investment for preschools, schools or TAFE.

The Morrison Government's failure to commit to ongoing federal funding for preschool for four-year-olds beyond the next financial year leaves educators and parents facing yet another year of uncertainty awaiting future funding announcements.

There was no investment for three-year-old pre-school, no announcements around making childhood education more accessible and nothing for early childhood educators who are some of the lowest paid workers in the country.

While academics agree that preschool sets the foundations for cognitive, physical, emotional, social and language development that will benefit a child's learning potential for the rest of their life, the Liberals still decry it as an expense. Due to their lack of investment, almost half of all Australian early education and care services are now provided by for-profit businesses, according to the Productivity Commission. These private services are located in areas where they can turn the most profit and not necessarily where the most children need them making them less accessible by parents on lower incomes.

Both Labor and the Greens have promised to put an end to this lack of investment by guaranteeing government funding for universal access to preschool for all four-year-olds. In addition, Labor's \$1.75 billion National Preschool and Kindy Program will extend guaranteed funding



PHOTOGRAPHY ANTHONY MCKEE



Greens MPs showed their support for the the AEU's Fair Funding Now! campaign in Canberra

for preschool to three-year-olds, and restore the \$20 million safety and quality funding which was cut by the Coalition, to ensure that early learning centres are safe places for all and that no child is left behind.

The AEU is campaigning for Australia to invest in guaranteed permanent funding for universal access in the two years before primary, by a degree-qualified teacher.

Support the movement by joining our Pre-School Funding Now! Community - [facebook.com/PreschoolFundingNow](https://www.facebook.com/PreschoolFundingNow).

A CLEAR CHOICE FOR TAFE

The Morrison Government's Budget not only failed to provide a single dollar of specific funding for TAFE - it was completely silent on TAFE altogether.

The budget's focus on industry over TAFE shows a complete abrogation of the government's responsibility to ensure that Australia has a strong, public TAFE system at the heart of vocational education.

During its term in government, the Federal Coalition has overseen:

Scott Morrison's Budget continues the Federal Coalition's agenda of privatising vocational education...

”

- 140,000 fewer apprentices now than when it was elected.
- \$3 billion cut from vocational education.
- a decline in enrolments in vocational education and training.
- a decline in TAFE enrolments in particular, which have plummeted by 24.5 per cent.

Haythorpe condemned the Budget saying it would do nothing to revitalise the TAFE sector.

She said the lack of extra funding for TAFE was exacerbated by the Morrison Government's announcement of a National Skill Commission which would give industry free reign over VET qualification design.

“Scott Morrison's Budget continues the Federal Coalition's agenda of privatising vocational education yet TAFE needs to be the heart of a strong, public vocational education sector” Haythorpe said.

In contrast, Labor has guaranteed that at least two-thirds of all government vocational education funding will go to TAFE if it wins government and the Greens is promising that TAFE will be the first priority of all federal VET funding.

Labor has also committed to a comprehensive post-secondary review in the first 100 days of government and \$200 million for TAFE infrastructure immediately.

Get involved in the AEU campaign to Stop TAFE Cuts at [StopTafeCuts.com.au](https://www.stoptafecuts.com.au).

What the parties stand for

Here are some of the key policies from the major parties.

Education policies			
	The ALP	The Greens	The Coalition
Public school funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will restore \$14.1 billion cuts by Morrison Government with \$3.3 billion provided in the first three years. • \$300 million for students with disability. • Working towards 100% of the Schooling Resource Standard. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extra \$24.5 billion over four years in public school funding. • Committed to 100% of Schooling Resources Standard. • \$320 million earmarked for capital works. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Morrison Government cut \$14 billion from public schools. • Announced a \$4.6 billion special funding deal and \$1.9 million capital works program, and a \$1.2 million choice and availability fund for private schools. • Their plan leaves 99% of public schools below the Schooling Resource Standard. • Imposed an arbitrary 20% cap on federal funding for public schools. • Cut disability funding.
Preschools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Investing \$1.75 billion for National Preschool and Kindy Program ensuring preschool for three- and four-year-olds. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing funding for universal access to 24 hours a week preschool for three- and four-year-olds. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing \$453 million to fund preschool for four-year-olds in 2020 only. • No long term funding guarantee. • No funding for three-year-olds.
TAFE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two-thirds of all government vocational education funding for TAFE. • \$1 billion investment in TAFE. • Offering 100,000 fee-free places in key disciplines. • \$200 million to rebuild and re-open TAFE campuses. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Free funding over a decade, with all government vocational education funding going to TAFE as a first priority. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$3 billion in cuts to vocational education since elected. • Only an extra \$55 million promised over five years for VET. • No mention of TAFE in the budget. • Responsible for national skills crisis with a drop of 140,000 apprenticeships in six years.

Housing



Limit negative gearing to new homes, reduce capital gains tax discounts, and subsidised rents and affordable homes for low income families.



Phase out negative gearing and capital gains tax discounts, rent-controlled public homes and improved rights for renters.



Over 65s selling principal home can put \$300,000 of sale proceeds into super, new affordable housing, support for community housing projects.

University



Extra \$10 billion funding over the next decade, end cap on university places.



Provide free undergraduate degrees for all, boost funding by 10 per cent.



Ongoing university student funding freeze and a \$328 million cut to university research funding.

Industrial Relations



Restore penalty rates, stop sham contracting, increase the minimum wage, stop abuse of 457 visas, abolish Australian Building and Construction Commission (ABCC).



Re-write workplace laws, increase wages, close gender pay gap and abolish ABCC.



Refuse to lift the minimum wage, support further penalty rate cuts and committed to the ABCC.

Climate change



Cut emissions by 45% by 2030 with net-zero emissions by 2050, deliver 50 per cent renewable energy by 2030.



Net-zero emissions by 2040, aim for 100 per cent renewable energy, phase out coal stations, exports and legislate against new coal mines.



Cut emissions by 26–28% by 2030, no renewable energy target and signed off on the Adani coal mine.

Health

The greatest Medicare investment in a generation, Labor's Medicare Cancer Plan will deliver cheaper cancer scans, cheaper medicines and cheaper cancer specialist consultations.

Build a truly universal health care system that includes dental and mental health; guarantee free or low-cost access to all essential community services such as disability services, childcare, mental health and aged care services.

A 30% increase in hospital funding between 2020 and 2025 and a new Community Health and Hospitals Program to improve specialist services including treatment for cancer, drug and alcohol addiction and mental health.

What's at stake

Labor, the Greens and the Coalition explain their education policies.

The Australian Labor Party



Tanya Plibersek

Shadow Minister for
Education and Training

Labor wants Australian children to be the best educated in the world and receive 15 years of world-class education, from access to universal pre-school for three- and four-year-olds through to Year 12. That's why a Shorten Labor Government will deliver the biggest investment in public schools in Australian history, so every child gets the fair go they deserve. Labor's record school funding will transform public schools across Australia. Investing in schools is a priority for Labor because we know many of the things that will help our schoolchildren improve require additional funding.

A Shorten Labor Government will restore every dollar the Liberals have cut and provide an extra \$14.1 billion in funding for public schools over the decade. Around \$3.3 billion extra will be provided over the first three school years (2020-22). Estimates for every

school are available on our website:

fairgoforschools.com.au.

We'll break through the Liberals' unfair 20 per cent cap on federal funding for public schools by 2022, abolish it for good, and work with the states and territories in the coming years to get every Australian public school to 100 per cent of its fair funding level (the Schooling Resource Standard).

Labor believes investment in our outstanding teachers is the best way we can improve our schooling. That is why a future Labor Government will target entry to teaching degrees to the top 30 per cent of academic achievers while ensuring there are pathways into teaching for those who might have struggled at school. We will provide our nation's top achievers with bursaries of up to \$40,000 to encourage them into teaching.

We also want to support our teachers to deliver outstanding teaching throughout their careers. Our additional needs-based funding for schools will allow real investment in continuing professional development for teachers so they can be lifelong learners and improve their teaching throughout their professional lives. We will also rejuvenate the Highly Accomplished and Lead Teachers program, providing a career path for teachers.

We will restore teacher representatives to the Board of AITSL.

Labor also knows that investing in school leadership is one of the ways we can have the greatest impact on student performance. That is why Labor will set up a new National Principals' Academy

The Australian Greens



Senator Mehreen Faruqi

Education spokesperson

The Greens is unapologetic in our advocacy for well-resourced, world-class public education from early childhood to primary and secondary school, and all the way to TAFE and university.

We think differently to the other parties. We believe that with public money, the 2.5 million children in public schools and their teachers must come first.

That's why we are the only party to oppose the Morrison Government's multibillion dollar special deal and slush fund for Catholic and Independent schools. We know that billions going to already overfunded private schools are billions not going to underfunded public schools.

The Greens has a \$24.5 billion plan to ensure each and every public school in Australia reaches 100 per cent of their School Resourcing Standard (SRS) by 2023. This means more resources and

CONTINUES ON P18

The Coalition

better conditions for teachers to focus on teaching and a quality learning environment for students. We will also double the Federal Government's capital works program and reserve 80 per cent of it for public schools – an investment of \$320 million a year.

Our education system should meet the individual needs of all children and no one should fall through the cracks. Public schools teach the majority of disadvantaged students and must receive appropriate resources, including more teachers. We will reverse cuts to funding for students with a disability and ensure that disability funding tiers match the actual cost of delivering high-quality education.

With 84 per cent of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students attending public schools, we need to ensure they have the resources they need to thrive. With extra funding, public schools can employ more Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education support workers, and develop and deliver language and culture programs.

The Greens pledges to rebuild TAFE. Labor and Liberal governments have starved TAFEs of resources and forced them to compete with private providers. TAFE must be the first priority for all federal VET funding. We are committed to stripping for-profit providers of funding, which will lift TAFE's share of funding close to 100 per cent.

In addition, the Greens' plan for free, unlimited TAFE degrees will inject \$45 billion into the TAFE system over the next decade. Too many TAFE



Dan Tehan

Minister for Education

We believe every Australian student should receive a quality education.

Our government is delivering guaranteed, needs-based funding and real reforms to support teachers and schools to lift student outcomes.

Since being elected in 2013, the Commonwealth Government has delivered record levels of funding for schools. This has included implementing a needs-based funding model for all students for the first time.

Last year, the Coalition committed to continuing that record funding by providing \$307 billion over the next 10 years. Our Quality Schools package will mean record funding for all schools is guaranteed into the future.

In this election, Labor will claim the federal government has cut funding to school education. This is not true. In fact, ABC's independent Fact Check

team found Labor's claims about education cuts were "misleading".

We are also supporting teachers and schools with the resources necessary to lift outcomes for students.

As recommended by David Gonski, we have committed to establishing a national centre of excellence and research. This ensures teachers have the support and resources they need to effectively teach students according to their stage of learning and in line with the best evidence on teaching methods.

We are also decluttering the Australian curriculum, ensuring teaching graduates have sufficient literacy and numeracy proficiency before they graduate, and supporting schools to check that students are gaining sufficient knowledge in each year of schooling.

We understand the challenges of teaching in very remote areas, so we have also committed to waive all or part of the HELP debt for teachers who commit to teach in these areas.

We are also providing \$200 million to give more Indigenous students the support and mentoring they need through their secondary studies, and working with communities and schools to invest in projects that promote school attendance.

We believe vocational education is vital to supporting the next generation of skilled Australians. We are investing over \$3 billion annually in Australia's vocational education and training (VET) sector to support the skills of the future.

The ALP

CONTINUED FROM P16

to give thousands of Australian principals advanced leadership training.

Labor will increase funding for students with disability by \$300 million over the three calendar years from 2020. This increased disability loading will help students get specialised teaching and support, and pay for necessary equipment and alterations, and provide access to technologies that enable learning.

We will invest \$280 million into an Evidence Institute for Schools, so high-quality, independent research drives our education system and review NAPLAN to ensure it is still fit for purpose.

We'll invest in Indigenous education by providing more funding to organisations that improve school attendance and increase Year 12 completions and employment rates among Indigenous students.

Labor will restore TAFE to the centre of our training system and ensure that every two out of three dollars spent on vocational education is spent in TAFE. We'll invest \$100 million in improving TAFE facilities and provide 100,000 fee-free TAFE places to students in key disciplines.

In early childhood education, Labor will extend subsidised preschool to three- and four-year-olds, investing in the early years of childhood development.

Only Labor can be trusted to ensure there is a fair go for schools, including public schools, which educate two-thirds of Australian children.

The Greens

CONTINUED FROM P17

teachers and staff have suffered casualisation and poor working conditions. This must change to better working conditions, permanent work and respect for teachers.

Early childhood learning plays a vital role in a child's development and provides valuable support to families with young children.

The Greens will extend universal access to 24 hours a week of early childhood education to three- and four-year-olds, and fund the National Partnership Agreement on an ongoing basis. We fully support the National Quality Framework to improve education and child ratios. Educators must be supported in their professional development. We will fight for better pay and conditions for workers, including backing the Big Steps campaign.

Public schools and TAFEs shouldn't have to wait at the end of the queue. No student should be left behind. The Greens is proudly the party of public education.

The Coalition

CONTINUED FROM P17

We are also cleaning up Labor's VET mess, which led to a doubling of fees to students and 792 per cent increase in student loans, while the number of apprentices and trainees collapsed by 22 per cent in 2012-13 - the biggest ever annual decline.

Our child-care reforms are making this service more affordable for more than one million families balancing work and parenting responsibilities. Our reforms have seen out-of-pocket child care costs fall by more than 10 per cent across the country.

Labor cannot be trusted with child care. Labor tried to block our changes to make child care more affordable and when in government allowed fees to skyrocket by 53 per cent.

All Australians benefit from our education system and we all have a stake in the education of future generations. This is why we are committed to these changes that will enhance education from the early years through to tertiary years for the benefit of all Australians.

From our record funding for all schools to our support for teachers, the Coalition government has a plan to ensure that every Australian child gets the world-class education they deserve.

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It's time for educators to be back at the heart of decision making in Australia's public education system.

BY NIC BARNARD

Professional status must be restored



Funding may take the headlines when discussions about schools are held, but educators expect more than just a commitment to adequate resources from the next federal government. They want the respect that has been missing for more than half a decade in Canberra.

That is the message the Australian Education Union is sending to politicians ahead of the federal election.

AEU federal president Correna Haythorpe says that since 2013, Australia has had a succession of federal education ministers who have not been prepared to meet the largest voice of the education profession in the country.

"There's a national conversation going on about formative assessment. People are talking about assessment and reporting, about NAPLAN, and teachers aren't even at the table," Haythorpe says.

"No other profession would be treated that way. There are far too many people out there who have nothing to do with education, but seem to think it's fine to have a free kick at teachers. It is time to acknowledge that teachers should be responsible for their own professional journey."

The election comes as the House of Representatives' standing committee on employment, education and training

conducts the first inquiry in 20 years into the status of the teaching profession.

As the AEU's submission forcefully notes, most of the recommendations in the 1998 inquiry's report, *A Class Act*, "would be equally as valid and welcome as outcomes from this inquiry". It's evidence of the lack of substantive action by governments to improve the standing of the profession.

SALARIES FALL BEHIND

Teacher salaries relative to similar professions have fallen behind and after about 10 years their pay levels plateau, which means educators watch as other professionals move further ahead. The gap between the bottom and top of the scale has shrunk, providing little incentive to remain longer in the classroom.

Meanwhile, autonomy is declining, even as school leaders are expected to take on greater managerial responsibility, while standardised testing and centralisation impose an administrative burden on teachers that takes the focus away from students' needs.

The profession now faces a paradoxical recruitment crisis: universities treating education degrees as a "cash cow" by lowering ATAR requirements to increase enrolments, while schools struggle to find enough maths, science, English and language teachers.

There are far too many people out there who have nothing to do with education, but seem to think it's fine to have a free kick at teachers.

”

Correna Haythorpe
AEU federal president

The AEU's submission to the inquiry represents a blueprint for how extra funding can enhance the skills and effectiveness of teachers and school leaders by giving them the time, resources and professional development to deliver the education their students need.

All these are challenges the next government must face. But as Haythorpe says: "Regardless of any policy or legislative agenda that the new governments comes in with, we must be at the heart of it.

"We must be at the table. You cannot run an education system effectively when you sideline teachers and their union."

Australia's oldest and most vulnerable citizens cannot wait for the outcome of the Royal Commission into aged care.

BY **NIC BARNARD**

Nurses demand urgent action on aged care

Nurses and carers will be demanding immediate action from the next government to mandate minimum staffing ratios in residential aged care homes and overhaul regulation and training in the largely privatised sector.

The Australian Nursing and Midwifery Federation (ANMF) says too many shocking revelations have been aired in the first hearings of the aged care Royal Commission and the decline in staffing ratios over the past 15 years indicates it is time for the government to act now.

Lori-Anne Sharp, the ANMF's assistant federal secretary, says changes to John Howard's 1997 Aged Care Act are needed to mandate qualified staffing levels in homes and tie funding to the care that residents receive.

"Residential aged care is about 75 per cent government funded, but there is no transparency or accountability about how that money is spent. There is no obligation for providers even to reveal the number of nurses and carers in their facilities."

ANMF members were among the first witnesses to be heard by the commission in February and staffing levels quickly emerged as a theme. "We have heard of homes where there is no registered nurse employed overnight, or where there is one registered nurse for up to 120 residents," Sharp says.

"At the moment, we're seeing residents receiving substandard care, not receiving the correct medication or adequate pain relief because there is simply a lack of qualified staff. We are seeing an increase in pressure sores, dehydration and common infections.

We're seeing residents receiving substandard care ... there is simply a lack of qualified staff.

”

Lori-Anne Sharp
ANMF assistant federal secretary

CARERS UNDER STRESS

"But also, the carers are under stress. We've heard of places with one carer to 15 residents. It's a female-dominated workforce and it's highly casualised. These carers are salt-of-the-earth people, going into these jobs with big hearts and they shouldn't be put under this pressure."

A national trend towards retirees staying in their own homes to an older age means that by the time residents move into care homes they have developed more acute, complex problems.

Studies show half of all aged care residents have dementia, according to the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare. Meanwhile, the number of registered nurses in aged care fell by 14 per cent from 2003 to 2016; carers require no qualifications at all, and oversight of what training that exists is negligible outside of the public TAFE system.

"Delivery varies so much that you can't be confident that someone has the skills to do the job," Sharp says.

The union commissioned a cost-benefit analysis of its proposals that found its recommended changes would save taxpayers money by reducing the number of residents who develop complications and require hospital care.

Nurses in aged care can earn 15-20 per cent less than their public sector counterparts, while carers are often on minimum wage - even as private-for-profit aged care providers reap enormous profits from Australia's ageing population.

The ANMF is calling on voters to elect candidates who will protect the elderly and make it clear that this issue cannot be ignored any longer.

The Royal Commission's final report is due in 12 months.

More information:
ratiosforagedcare.com.au.



Australia faces a once-in-a-generation chance to change the rules for working people.

BY **NIC BARNARD**

A chance to change the rules



Trickle-down economics has failed and profits are up – but wages have flatlined and insecure work is rife. This federal election is the time to put it right.

Australian unions are mounting their biggest campaign in more than a decade in what ACTU secretary Sally McManus says is a “once-in-a-generation chance to change the rules for all working people in Australia”.

“Right now, the system is out of balance and it’s not working for us. As a result, we see inequality at levels not seen in 70 years, wage growth at near-record lows for years on end.

“We need to update and re-balance our workplace laws so working people can win fair pay, more secure jobs and better rights.”

Educators are at the frontline of seeing the effects of insecure work and stagnating pay, on themselves, secondary and TAFE teachers and on their students, McManus says.

INSECURE WORK CRISIS

“Teachers know first-hand about the crisis of insecure work, which is affecting so many Australian workers. Short-term contracts and casualisation have become routine, and wages aren’t keeping up with the rising cost of living.

“Young people today have it harder than ever getting a start in the world. Exploitation and wage theft have become business models in some industries and dodgy employers target young people because

they think they don’t know their rights.

“We are also seeing young people fighting back. The number of young people joining their unions is rising. They’re taking action against wage thieves and engaging in new types of activism that we didn’t know about when I was their age.

“Young people have the most at stake in this election. And teachers – those who are given the awesome responsibility of shaping and guiding young minds – know this more than anyone. It’s time to change the rules so that everyone in that classroom has a brighter future.”

“This election is a clear choice between the current Liberal coalition government that has overseen record levels of insecure work, stagnant wage growth and cuts to vital services or a change of government to parties that will change the rules and have committed to our agenda, the working people’s agenda, of more secure work, fair wage rises and properly funded services,” she says.

Demands include stronger rights for casual staff to gain permanent positions; an end to sham contracting and equal rights in the gig economy – two developments that have seen workers classed as “self-employed” even when they work full time for one employer – and greater investment in training and apprenticeships.

“Reforms like improved bargaining rules, the re-instatement of penalty rates

This election is a clear choice between the current Liberal coalition government that has overseen record levels of insecure work, stagnant wage growth and cuts to vital services or a change of government to parties that will change the rules and have committed to our agenda...



Sally McManus
ACTU secretary

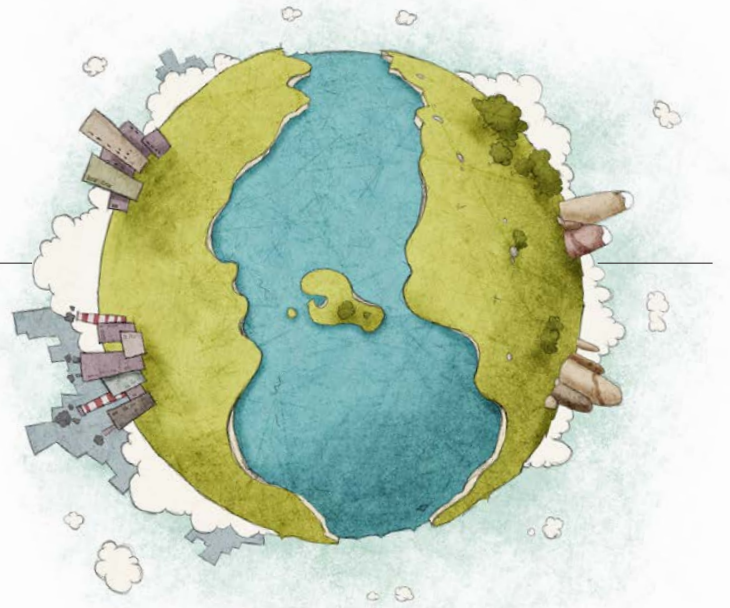
cut under the Abbott/Turnbull/Morrison government, reducing the number of insecure jobs and better rights for working women are all within reach at this election,” McManus says.

“We’ve been preparing for this for a long time.”

Get involved at changetherules.org.au.

Climate damage is already here – but so are the solutions, say environmental campaigners.

BY NIC BARNARD



Urgent need for climate action

After months of record-breaking fires and floods, power cuts and student strikes, climate campaigners believe voters recognise we are heading for a make-or-break federal election.

Kelly O'Shanassy, the chief executive officer of the Australian Conservation Foundation says people are realising the problem does not belong to future generations. "They're no longer buying the fearmongering," she says.

"Our political leaders have really stuffed around with climate policy for 20 years. We need to elect a government now that will get serious about taking action on climate change."

The ACF and other climate campaign organisations plan to complete one million conversations with Australians before the election to ensure that climate action is at the top of their minds when they vote.

They're finding a receptive audience. Seven out of 10 people the ACF talks to say they will only vote for candidates with climate policies that would move Australian beyond coal and on to renewables.

"There were 1600 bush fires in Queensland and New South Wales last winter," O'Shanassy says. "That's shocking. The reef has bleached twice in two years and half the shallow coral died because of that bleaching. One million fish just died

in the Darling river – yes, because of the drought, but too much water is extracted when we know climate change will take more water out of our rivers."

Voters also recognise the urgency is increasing if the world is to meet the Paris Agreement's target of limiting global warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius, a rise that will still bring dramatic changes to our environment.

"Scientists are crystal clear that we're not taking the urgent action that we need to take," O'Shanassy says.

COUNTDOWN TO 2030

"We have 11 years until 2030 to take significant action to cut pollution to reach that global goal. What we do in the

next couple of years will determine the trajectory over that coming decade."

The first step, she says, is to ban the development of new mines such as Adani in the Galilee Basin; then shift Australia away from coal and other fossil fuels entirely by 2030.

"We're already seeing big transformations in energy," O'Shanassy says. "We want the next government to have a strong transition plan and package to care for the workers and the communities that are affected by this transition. That's as important as the environmental outcomes."

It also means an end to exporting coal and liquid gas. "We can be a renewable energy superpower. We've done a lot of work on renewable hydrogen – liquid sunshine, essentially. We know that countries such as Japan and South Korea don't have the [energy] resources that we do and have much greater populations, so they have to import energy. Currently we're giving them coal, but we could change this.

"Environmental and economic outcomes, growing jobs, it's a win-win-win if the Government opens its eyes.

"We're letting people know that climate damage is here now, the solutions are here now, and their vote is what really matters," O'Shanassy says.

We need to elect a government now that will get serious about taking action on climate change.



Kelly O'Shanassy
Australian Conservation Foundation

Nic Barnard is a freelance writer.



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HAVING YOUR SAY

The Morrison Government's school funding cuts have hit Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities hard, but the federal election could turn that around.



The AEU has launched campaign actions aimed at getting the Fair Funding Now! message out to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander educators and communities in the federal electorates of Leichhardt in Queensland and Page in NSW.

The Morrison Government holds both seats by a small margin.

Margaret Malezer, an Indigenous campaign coordinator working with the Queensland Teachers' Union in the seat of Leichhardt - which covers Cape York and the Torres Strait Islands - is passionate about the need for proper funding for schools.

As a teacher with more than two decades of experience, Malezer - a Gubbi Gubbi and Kamilaroi woman - knows the difference that resources and staffing levels can make to students.

When the Morrison Government cut school funding in 2016, her school was forced to cancel a number of programs that it had planned for students.

"They couldn't afford to staff the programs and a lot of teacher assistants lost the opportunity for additional work," she says.

The electorate of Page, on the north coast of NSW, is small in area but has high numbers of students and teachers. The NSW Teachers Federation (NSWTF) has made a concerted effort to meet as many teachers, parents and community members as possible.

CHANGING LIVES

NSWTF Aboriginal education coordinator Charline Emzin-Boyd, a Bundjalung woman and former primary school teacher, says having conversations with friends and family members can also help get the message out.

"We want our students to have the best education in quality public schools with fully resourced classrooms, more specialist teachers and more support staff," she says.

"We want fair funding now, based on individual students' needs. It changes children's lives."

We want our students to have the best education in quality public schools with fully resourced classrooms, more specialist teachers and more support staff.



Charline Emzin-Boyd
NSWTF Aboriginal education coordinator

PROPERLY FUNDED PUBLIC SCHOOLS CAN:



Develop strong partnerships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities



Employ more Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education support workers



Meet every child's needs



Increase the number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander teachers



Develop and deliver language and culture programs

While schools across Australia have suffered as a result of the Morrison Government's cuts, Northern Territory schools have copped the biggest hit in the wake of a bilateral agreement brokered by education minister Dan Tehan.

Under the agreement, no NT public school will reach 100 per cent of the Schooling Resource Standard (SRS) by 2023, says AEU federal president Correna Haythorpe. In fact, NT schools will only be funded to 79 per cent of their SRS under the bilateral agreement.

The SRS is the funding that a school requires to meet its students' needs. It includes base funding for primary and secondary students, and loadings to help schools with students who have greater needs. The loadings deliver extra money for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students as well as students with disabilities, students who speak English as a second language and those from a non-English-speaking background. It also helps those who live in rural and remote locations and low socio-economic areas.

The SRS is particularly important for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students who may experience compound disadvantage and so be eligible for several loadings.

"It's an appalling indictment on the Morrison Government, which has ignored the impact that this funding inequity will have on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students," Haythorpe says.

Ready to deliver

This year's crop of new teachers has fresh ideas to help young minds thrive.

BY MARGARET PATON



CLAUDIA SIGALLA
Settlers Farm Campus, SA

Do you like the idea of a year-long internship while you complete your master's teaching degree? New educator Claudia Sigalla, 24, did hers at Settlers Farm Campus in Paralowie, a primary school in Adelaide's northern suburbs last year.

"I was there from week zero at the school working with the teachers leading up to my placement to build relationships with students," she says.

Sigalla worked about one day a week and did a five-week placement. The school was so impressed she was offered a

contract at the end of the year when she graduated. She's teaching a Reception (Kindergarten) class this year.

Several language and cultural backgrounds are represented among her 18 students, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and Southeast Asian children. As one of five Reception teachers, Sigalla is delivering a program that's strong in oral language, maths and developing fine motor skills.

"My focus is on building relationships with the students, and allowing students the time to make connections and interact with one another," she says.

Her students are gaining independence, no longer relying on mum, dad, or grandparents to help unpack their bag.

"I do a happy dance when kids can do it themselves. It can really make me teary when I see them gaining independence skills."

CHILDHOOD INSPIRATION

So, why teaching? Sigalla recalls struggling when she was in Year 2.

"I had a teacher who, rather than focus on my mistakes, would celebrate my efforts and mini successes. She'd modify her approach to learning and bring in concrete



We follow new teachers throughout this year and feature their challenges and achievements in each issue of *Australian Educator*.

materials. Children need to feel successful to be successful. Having that teacher believe in me made me want to give that [experience] to other children," she says.

Sigalla is learning how to be flexible with children's needs in her own classroom. When a child is having a meltdown, she says she needs to quickly figure out how to support them while not ditching their peers.

"Sometimes I'll try to direct a child to independent work or will set up fine motor stations that I know they'll be able to manage such as playdough. Other times, we'll stop what we're doing, take our materials outside and learn outdoors."

Recently Sigalla was running a maths lesson on counting to 10. Earlier her class had been reading a picture book about bears, so she asked them to draw 10 bears.

But the students struggled to complete the task, leaving Sigalla confused because they knew how to count.

"Later, another teacher asked me if I stopped to think whether they could draw bears. So, I reflected on whether I was assessing for that, or number knowledge. It made me think about how I was delivering content."

For Sigalla, collecting data on students' progress is something she didn't have much insight of as a student teacher.

"I understand its importance, but I didn't realise how much time it would take."

A VOICE FOR PUBLIC EDUCATION

Sigalla put her hand up to share the role of Australian Education Union Sub-Branch Secretary.

"I feel very lucky to have this opportunity and to work at a great school with supportive leadership and all of the



I do a happy dance when kids can [unpack their own bag] themselves. It can really make me teary when I see them gaining independence skills.

”

Claudia Sigalla
Settlers Farm Campus, SA

staff at the school – without them, we'd be pretty lost as new educators," she says.

Sigalla plans to do the AEU's professional learning course in classroom management at the end of term one. Building confidence about using technology in her teaching is another goal. She also wants to improve her grasp of AUSLAN, the school's choice of a language other than English.

In second term, she'll start collecting evidence towards becoming a fully registered teacher.

"I'm very proud to be a public educator and an active union member," she says.



LAUREN WELLS
Giralang Primary School, ACT

When she was a primary school student, Lauren Wells and her classmates were asked to dress up to represent whatever career they aspired to. Wells was the only one who dressed up as a teacher.

She eventually got her wish after first establishing herself as a world-class athlete. Aged 30, she's now a freshly minted Year 3/4 teacher at Giralang Primary School in the ACT.

Wells represented Australia at two summer Olympic Games (2012 and 2016), two Commonwealth Games (2006 and 2010) and the World University Games – competing in the 400-metre hurdles and long jump.

Despite the training time involved to maintain her elite status, Wells also pushed herself to coach other athletes and complete a psychology degree and a Bachelor of Primary Education.

She says another Olympics isn't out of the question.

It's refreshing when you build their confidence and they feel they are being listened to.



Lauren Wells
Giralang Primary School, ACT

UP THROUGH THE RANKS

Wells was inspired to get her teaching degree after taking a job in after-school care and as a learning support assistant at Giralang Primary in Canberra.

She graduated in mid-2018 and worked her first two terms at Giralang last year.

"When I started teaching," she says, "I'd get hungry all the time and think, gosh this is harder than being a professional athlete."

"As a teacher, you have to be 'on' all the time. From the moment you walk into school, you're organising your work, you're in your own bubble in the classroom with the students and even when they're outside playing you still have to be switched on."

FOCUS ON ALL ABILITIES

The 20 students in her class range from those requiring extension to those needing additional support, so she also works with a part-time learning support assistant.

Wells is one of four teachers in the Year 3/4 team. They each develop learning programs, then collaborate with their executive teacher to plan, discuss assessment results and develop future programs.

Teamwork allows the teachers to share ideas while using time productively, says Wells.

"The challenge with the split age group is finding a way that all of your students are going to get the concepts, so I'm always differentiating the content and being flexible in the learning. It's refreshing when you build their confidence and they feel they are being listened to."

Her goal this term is to "successfully get some maths and literacy groups up and running".

Meanwhile, she's managing to fit in her athletic training around her school commitments. And her students think it's "pretty cool" that she's an Olympian.

In February, Wells qualified for the World Championships, which means next year's Olympics are still on her radar, although teaching is now a major focus.

"I'm not retiring from sport, just using different 'r' words: refocusing and reprioritising on teaching," Wells says.

It warmed my heart to see these kids wanting to do their work.

”

Christopher Harvey
Katherine High School, NT

CHRISTOPHER HARVEY

Katherine High School, NT

Christopher Harvey, 25, says many of his friends who have graduated as teachers have no interest in teaching in rural or remote schools. But he urges them to give the bush a chance.

“It’s definitely about the community, connecting with other teachers and parents, having more meaningful discussions about what’s happening and seeing how students’ achievements are reflected in the community,” says Harvey.

He says he enjoys getting to know his students, not just as their teacher but as a positive role model in their community to guide them through adolescence.

“This is not like a traditional school where all you have to do is follow

the essential skills for classroom management. Here you have to go out in your own time, play some sport with them at lunch, watch them play footy on the weekend to get them on your side.”

Harvey studied engineering for a year, then dropped out for six months before returning to his original plan to become a teacher. He’d been inspired to teach by the support he received at high school during what was a “pretty tough time”.

It’s a long way from the city life Harvey has been accustomed to. He grew up in Darwin and studied a Bachelor of Secondary Education at Central Queensland University but he’s fallen in love with his new home.

PRACTICAL APPROACH

A mentor teacher sits at the back of his classes but he says it is different to the practicum.

“I’m left more to my own devices. I’m really putting myself and strategies on display.”

Harvey is steering the same two classes this year – a Year 8 history class that needs “a lot of support” and a Year 9 biology extension class.

“I’ve had to plan two new units from scratch, including all the lessons and scope and sequence. I’ll also be marking and doing the assessments and giving students feedback.”

On the day *Australian Educator* caught up with him, Harvey had just finished “probably my best” lesson with the Year 8s.

“We’re doing diary entries on the Vikings. To settle them down at the start, I asked them to write what they did in the morning and how they got themselves ready for school,” he says.

“Then we did some activities to identify the characteristics of a diary entry. It really helps to engage students as a whole class by modelling and scaffolding how I want them to answer the questions.

“In the end they were really engaged. There were no behaviour management issues I needed to work on, and they’d come up to me and say, ‘Look, Sir. Look how much I’ve written.’

“It warmed my heart to see these kids wanting to do their work.”

Harvey works from 7:30am to 5pm and takes work home, but recently the “huge muso” joined a community band to play bass guitar. He plans to teach for five years and then do a PhD in neuroscience on behaviour management of adolescent students.

Margaret Paton is a freelance writer and casual K-12 teacher.



From activism to exile

Sajjad Khaksari's early lessons in Iran were about rights, courage and taking a stand – the result of growing up as the son of high-profile trade union and human-rights activists, Soraya Darabi and Mohammad Khaksari. In this edited extract of a blog published late last year, the 37-year-old talks about his parents' work and his own fate.

My parents are both journalists and teacher union activists. Twenty years ago, my father founded the first non-governmental association of Iranian education workers after the overthrow of the Shah in 1979. In 2003, he created a weekly independent magazine focusing on education and trade unions called *Teacher's Pen* or *Ghalame Moallem* in Persian.

My parents worked together in the umbrella teacher association (Coordinating Council of the Iranian Teacher Associations affiliated to Education International) and as editor in chief and editor of the *Teacher's Pen*. In 2007, my mother was active in Madarane Solh (the Mothers of Peace), collaborating with Nobel Peace Prize Iranian lawyer Shirin Ebadi in the Centre for the Defence of Human Rights. It was shut down a year later by the Ahmadinejad regime.

Both my parents have suffered years of intimidation, court charges and detentions due to their roles at the helm of the Iranian Teachers' Trade Association, which has never been legalised by the Iranian government. In May 2007, my mother was one of a small number of female teachers arrested in front of the Parliament in Tehran after calling for better rights and status. She was detained in prison and condemned by the Islamic Revolutionary Court.

Later that year, my father was interrogated for days after he returned from the Education International's World Congress in Berlin. His passport was seized and held for years. A few months later, on World Teachers' Day, my parents' apartment and the apartments of other union leaders were searched by agents of the Ministry of Intelligence. Computers and papers were confiscated.



Because of their union involvement, my family received public death threats. Once, a teacher close to the Iranian regime threatened to burn my father's home and family, "stitch his mouth and kill him". It was not the first time my parents were subjected to such threats. The authorities never acted to protect their safety.

Over the years, Education International has consistently denounced the fact that teachers are deprived of freedom of association. The teacher associations are still banned and teacher unionists still detained. EI has also launched a new case to request the release of teacher unionists. At least 15 names are known,

and dozens of others are presumably detained as well. This new wave of arrests follows the monthly protests of teachers throughout the country.

A year after graduating high school, in 2001, I was attending a small gathering in the north of Tehran when I was shot in the leg by a Pasdaran (Army of the Guardians of the Islamic Revolution). I was taken to the military hospital for treatment. Many operations and months of physiotherapy treatment followed. The news of my shooting was censored in the media because the military was responsible for the attack. The assault was never officially recorded.

On World Teachers' Day, my parents' apartment and the apartments of other union leaders were searched by agents of the Ministry of Intelligence.

”

Sajjad Khaksari
Iranian activist

A year later, I was arrested by the security forces for launching a student demand for additional study rooms in the University of Arak where I was studying industrial engineering. When I later transferred to the University of Tehran, I suffered further intimidation from the university's security because of my activism and “illegal” publications challenging the Iranian regime propaganda.

I was contributing articles and photographs to my parents' magazine and in 2006, was arrested for releasing an article in the *Teacher's Pen* and distributing the magazine in several provinces of Iran. I was arrested again that year for releasing another article in the magazine and for participating in a teachers' demonstration in front of the Iranian Parliament.

In 2007, I graduated with a Bachelor of Science, however my thesis on the Education Management Information System in Iran was rejected and censored

because of its critique of the Iranian regime's education policy. I was deprived of my right to study further in Iran.

Two years later, I was arrested again during a gathering of teachers demanding permanent contracts. After some days of interrogation and solitary confinement, I was sentenced to a year in prison, charged with “propaganda against the sacred regime of the Islamic Republic of Iran”, “disturbing public opinion”, and “disordering the public order”.

A further six months was added to my sentence for my participation in teacher rallies, but I was released early in 2009 and invited by the Italian government, UNESCO and UN Habitat to take part in the first Youth Meeting for a Sustainable Future, held in Italy. During the trip, my request for asylum was granted and I moved to Piedmont to return to study, graduating with a Masters of Science in engineering and management.

My parents, now aged in their 60s, are still committed teacher unionists although they suffer many health problems because of their ill treatment during their times in detention.

The trade union situation in Iran remains very complicated. In 2015, my father and other Iranian teacher union leaders were denied participation in the 7th World Congress of Education International. Participation in these international gatherings is very important for Iranian teachers as it provides an opportunity to talk about the conditions of teachers and challenges in the education system. Not only are union freedoms and collective bargaining denied, academic freedom is restricted, schools are unsafe, especially in the rural regions, minorities are discriminated against, there is gender segregation and no respect for diversity.

This is an edited extract of an article that first appeared on worldsofeducation.org.



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When English is not a student's first language, a classroom in a mainstream Australian school can be a confusing place. *Australian Educator* spoke to three EAL/D [English as an additional language or dialect] teachers.

EAL/D TIPS FROM THE EXPERTS

BY MARGARET PATON



ABBY SALEH, NSW

The relationship with an EAL/D student as well as the student's wellbeing are both

paramount considerations for Abby Saleh.

Saleh is an accredited Highly Accomplished EAL/D teacher and refugee support leader, responsible for implementing the NSW education department's Refugee Education Strategy in three networks of schools in Sydney's western suburbs.

Getting the basics under control is an important first step, she says.

That means pronouncing students' names correctly, learning to say hello in the students' first language and engaging parents.

Building empathy is next. Understand that students may be silent at first as they absorb the culture, school routine and language, Saleh says.

And don't forget the effect of the 'cultural iceberg', she says.

Customs, mores and courtesies are the easy-to-see elements, but are perhaps just 10 per cent of a person. While values, priorities and assumptions, which constitute more like 90 per cent, tend to be hidden.

"Delve in and truly get to know those children," says Saleh.

"They are learning English while learning in English and about English at the same time, and that's no easy feat.

"Every child brings with them a different set of circumstances, a different attitude to learning and attitudes to culture that we need to know. Don't view EAL/D students as a homogenous group.

"If educators have a true understanding of how difficult and complex the processes are, we can develop a deeper sense of empathy with students," she says.



Resources

Facebook

EAL/D teachers' network - TESOL

High Impact Teaching Strategies

<https://tinyurl.com/yck439m>



GAE NASTASI, QLD

Gae Nastasi believes in a "high-challenge but low-threat"

approach to teaching EAL/D students.

"You don't have to dumb it down cognitively, but you will need to simplify your teaching linguistically," she says.

Nastasi, who's been teaching EAL/D students for 36 years, including stints overseas, has just been seconded from MacGregor Secondary High School in Brisbane to a regional position to help train other teachers to work with EAL/D students.

"Being an EAL/D student is a disadvantage, not a disability, but sometimes it's treated as if they have a physical impairment," says Nastasi, who is also president of the Queensland Association of Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages.

She suggests mainstream teachers say and write new vocabulary for EAL/D students so they can make a connection between the oral and written word.

"I speak clearly, and students can follow because I am not trying to confuse them by adding anecdotes and analogies to try to explain my point."

Mainstream teachers could consider learning a new language to "put themselves in the role of what it's like to be a language learner", says Nastasi.

"Think about all of the stresses involved in learning a new language in a different country and how you'd like to be taught," she says.

Another option is to seek out professional development in teaching EAL/D students and engage in more collaborative discussions with your peers as you reflect on your practice.

Think of all the stresses involved in learning a new language in a different country and how you'd like to be taught.



Gae Nastasi

Currently on secondment in a regional position in Queensland



SEAN MORICE, VIC

Two-way feedback is one of the tools that Sean Morice relies on.

Morice is a secondary EAL/D teacher and wellbeing co-ordinator at Collingwood English Language School in Melbourne.

He checks in with his students to see if they understand him. "The students may be shy and not used to giving teachers feedback, so I use a simple tool - a piece of paper for them to rate from one to 10 the lesson's difficulty, how much teacher talk they understood, then an open section for comments."

At his school, each class is multi-stage with a maximum of 14 students, some of whom could be learning their fifth language. They spend up to three terms there before going on to their local high school.

"Secondary schools can be intimidating places. For our students, it's a new high school, a new language and culture, new friends, and they may be dealing with huge issues at home as their families adjust to a new country. That's a lot more than the average high school kid," says Morice.

To help engage EAL/D students, Morice suggests speaking more slowly, not speaking for too long and repeating your words in different ways.

He writes the key vocabulary used in a lesson on the whiteboard, explicitly teaches grammar and phonics, uses quizzes and initially keeps tenses simple. Morice also uses High Impact Teaching Strategies (see link). They are 10 instructional practices that the Victorian education department says increases student learning.



Margaret Paton is a freelance writer and casual K12 teacher.

Early life lessons

Support for a child with a serious illness can be a valuable learning experience for everyone involved.

BY **CYNDI TEBBEL**



We work together to develop these skills and to help them learn about the world around them.



Dianne O'Dwyer
Early childhood teacher

Early childhood teachers are adept at handling the bumps and bruises that come with the territory. Somewhat more challenging though is knowing how to respond to a child's life-threatening illness in a way that involves siblings, parents and other students.

It's a situation that Dianne O'Dwyer, an early childhood teacher in Victoria, faced after almost four decades in the sector, and reinforced her passionate advocacy of the importance of early childhood education.

"One of my four-year-olds, Lily (name changed), told me her younger brother, Liam (name changed), was going into hospital 'to have his hand cut off.'"

O'Dwyer was shocked, but assumed Lily was exaggerating. Nonetheless she reassured Lily that the doctors and nurses would look after Liam.

"I asked Lily's mum what was going on and she explained that a lump on Liam's hand had been diagnosed as an aggressive cancer, and he would be having surgery in two days to have part of his hand removed."

ACTION STATIONS

O'Dwyer wanted to help make the journey easier for Liam and his family, so she kept a special eye on Lily, knowing siblings of sick children need extra care. Her first step was to put together a kit with books for children about hospital procedures, some medical equipment (syringes, gowns and bandages), and a teddy to be Liam's 'patient'.

Liam had been expected to start with the three-year-old group that term, but his treatment and recovery meant he missed that year. Meanwhile, Lily returned to school two days after Liam's operation. The teachers set up a "hospital" for her to play in "where she could make sense of what was going on around her and have

opportunities to discuss any concerns she had", says O'Dwyer.

When Liam returned the following year, he was sensitive about losing two of his fingers and kept his hand hidden under his sleeve.

Keen to build Liam's confidence, O'Dwyer introduced him to a friend of hers who had been born with a short arm and three fingers and become a talented sportsman. She planned ball games and activities that developed hand strength and, one day while squeezing dough, a fellow classmate named David (name changed) showed Liam that he could squeeze just as well with his three-fingered hand.

"At that moment, Liam turned a corner," says O'Dwyer. "David's acceptance helped him accept himself, and he never looked back after that. He gained confidence and was able to start school with his peers, ready to learn."

It's just one story of many in a long career for O'Dwyer but, she says, it's an example of how early childhood education makes a difference.

"I'm currently working with 22 children. Some need help to self-regulate their emotions, to develop their motor skills, to express themselves verbally, to learn how to use art materials, and to listen and to respond to instructions. We work together to develop these skills and to help them learn about the world around them."

Why do you teach?

We'd love to hear your best tips for engaging young minds. Email us at educator@hardiegrant.com if you have something to share. You can provide a written piece or we'd be happy to interview you.

Cyndi Tebbel is a freelance writer.





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