

Branch Out

News from the Federal Office

April/May 2014

THIS MONTH

- **Budget Blues: Federal Budget 2014 fails students with disabilities**
- **IEU contributes to Senate Inquiry**
- **Bagging the Boss; Glen Seidel shares a word of warning on facebook blunders**
- **Bargaining begins for NSW**

A new president for the federal office

The IEU federal office welcomes John Quessy as its new federal president, after farewelling Dick Shearman last month.

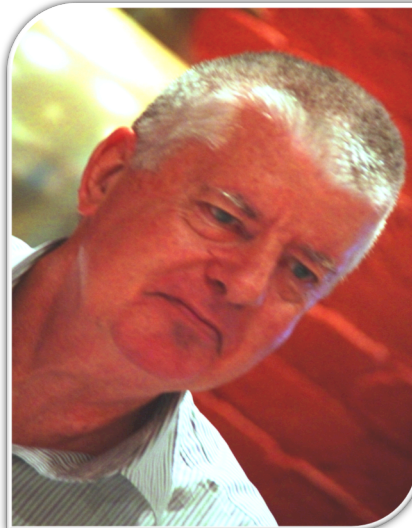
REPRESENTING a legacy of over 30 years, Dick Shearman has resigned his position as Federal President.

Mr Shearman joined the IEUA in 1976, beginning work as a full time union official in 1982. Holding the federal presidency for 21 years, the former humanities teacher also acted as NSW General Secretary for 23 years.

"It has been my greatest pleasure to experience the commitment of members I worked with and the collegiality of IEU staff," he said. The

IEUA veteran retains his position as chairman of NGS Superannuation. Federal Secretary Chris Watt thanked Mr Shearman for his devoted service to members, the education sector and the wider Australian union movement.

Current NSW General Secretary John Quessy replaces Mr Shearman, and will work with IEUA's federal officers, who were nominated uncontested last month including Terry Burke as Federal Deputy President, Debra James as Federal Vice President, Chris Watt as Federal Secretary and Anthony Odgers and Christine Cooper as Assistant Federal Secretaries.



Bargaining begins for NSW independents

A new enterprise agreement is currently being sought for NSW teachers and operational staff in independent schools.

While current agreements are due to expire in October this year, a new claim has been developed in close consultation with members and includes a demand for pay rises of 3.5 per cent per annum over a three-year agreement.

The union also seeks payment of compulsory fees associated with teacher accreditation, progression to Band 3 and child protection checks. Represented by the Association of Independent Schools, employers are proposing pay rises below the anticipated cost of living increases.

3Rs campaign heats up

Representing employers, the Catholic Commission for Employer Relations has put up a "draft" agreement threatening increases to face-to-face teaching hours, scrapping class size restrictions and abolishing promotions and half-hour meal break and sick leave rights.

Support staff proposals remove automatic progression and include a dramatic reduction of overtime entitlements and new staff salary slashes to the tune of \$6000 and \$17,400.

NSW/ACT Members have met to endorse industrial action and are putting their weight behind the IEU 3Rs: Recognise, Respect and Reward.



NSW/ACT's John Quessy replaces Dick Shearman as Federal President.



Back in the senate again: Former Federal President Dick Shearman and Federal Secretary Chris Watt recently appeared before the Senate School Funding Select Committee. Here's what they said:

APPEARING before the Australian Senate last month, federal officers represented the IEUA, making a valuable contribution to the School Funding Select Committee. Concerns regarding the Better Schools funding model were highlighted including the model's complexity, under-resourcing of students with disability and employment stability for members working in the non-government sector.

Addressing Senator Jacinta Collins and Senator Deborah O'Neil, former federal president Dick Shearman shared his initial doubts on the certainty of the model.

"When you construct a new funding model, but you put no money into it other than rolling over the national partnerships money—and say that in four, five, six years time there will be this huge amount of money that comes in; we were always of the view that that was at best a wish rather than a certainty.

"(The increased funding) is a couple of elections away. It was actually promised in the same context by the previous government as precisely the time they were going to bring the budget back into surplus."

Despite expressing a lack of certainty in relation to increased school funding in the future, Federal Secretary Chris Watt outlined some of the benefits of the current model.

"One of the positive elements of the current model is the rolling in of the national partnership money," he said.

"Successful programs run under the national partnerships

"Those programs provide evidence that certain interventions clearly work, and having those on an ongoing basis is a good thing," Mr Watt said. Mr Watt also expressed the shortfalls of the current model.

"In our view, the current model has led to an effective cap on our capacity

to be able to negotiate better outcomes than we have at the moment.

"It makes it incredibly difficult to deliver around

"We need a clear certainty on behalf of our members. This is not just for their jobs, but certainty for them in terms of the work they do on a day-to-day basis, and how they deal with the learning needs of the students in their classes." Chris Watt

some of the rhetoric that has been supported by many people—bipartisan rhetoric often—in relation to recognising and rewarding teachers of high capacity. Quizzed by senators as to the effects of a decline in school funding, Mr Watt said teacher development and training would be extremely compromised.

"Any decline in real dollars is a problem for our sector. There are live debates at the moment about the attraction, retention and development of high quality teachers," he said.

"If the sector is not sufficiently resourced to ensure good salaries, good working conditions and supportive working arrangements to ensure that they can act in a professional way and deliver the teaching and learning that they want to be able to deliver in the classroom that will, of course, impact on all schools."

Budget Blues: 2014 fails students with disabilities

Federal Office

The IEUA has hit out at the absurd inclusion of additional funding for school chaplains, releasing a media statement this month detailing how the additional commitment of dollars from the Federal Government betrays real need within the sector.

"No one in the school education sector was asking for additional school counselor or chaplain funding. No parent, teacher, principal or school employer." Chris Watt said.

Mr Watt has called for the additional commitment of dollars for school chaplains in the Federal Government's 2014 Budget to be reversed and redirected, for the sake of fairness, to funding students with disabilities in schools.

"While school chaplains have an important role to play there is an unequivocal unmet need for some of

our most vulnerable children."

As Stephanie Gotlib, CEO of Children with Disability Australia stated as recently as 12 May;

A typical school experience for students with disability involves limited choice of school, discrimination, bullying, limited or no funding for support and resources, inadequately trained staff and having to contend with a culture of low expectations

"We can and we must do better for these children and their families," Mr Watt said. The IEUA will now call on Senators to amend Budget provisions to redirect funding to these students.

Anti-social Media

By Glen Seidel

I like a challenge, but please don't come to me for industrial help on "mission impossible" over Facebook allegations or similar. Be gentle on both of us by obeying some simple, commonsense guidelines. Employment Law is rapidly evolving in this area and arm-waving appeals to "freedom of speech" or "the vibe" are not going to cut it. Each case will turn on its own facts so don't take too much comfort from any of the cases below.

"Bagging the boss" comes naturally to many, but if your criticism of your employer becomes public and/or damages the reputation of your workplace you can expect to be called to account. Usually schools will have policies around staff and student use of ICT, but a thin or absent policy will not give you carte-blanche to publically denigrate your employer. Save the "dump" for a face-to-face conversation with a sympathetic ear over a Friday beer or two. Email jokes become unfunny when they result in termination. One employee was terminated for sending an inappropriate email from a co-worker's email. Another, however, used one of his lives for disseminating a crude bogus CV of a director. As the workplace had a culture of disseminating offensive material, he won his unfair dismissal case.

Facebook is a minefield. Not only will prospective employers check out the Facebook pages of job applicants, existing employees are vulnerable to random (or not so random) monitoring. Privacy settings are not necessarily sufficient protection if your friends have a connection with the business.

[Read Glen's full article in SA's EdU](#)

Think before you tweet



Tips for keeping Cyber Savvy

- Never have students as friends on Facebook
- Never email students on personal email addresses
- Don't become too informal or flippant when replying to parent emails
- Keep your browsing of dubious websites to your own personal computer through your own ISP; any history can be reproduced click by click from school servers and machines
- Never leave your computer logged-on while you are away from it
- Keep passwords secure and never log on as someone else.

IEUA meets with new early childhood minister

To encourage continued investment into Early Childhood Education, Assistant Federal Secretary Christine Cooper and NSW Industrial Officer Verena Heron recently met with Assistant Minister for Education Sussan Ley.

Despite disappointments for education in the Federal Government's Budget 2014, Sussan Ley last month agreed with IEUA representatives that early childhood education was an investment in society and citizenship, and should not be considered a mere babysitting activity.

"Australia needs to continue to ensure that our children receive the best possible start in life through quality early childhood education," Ms. Cooper said.

"Ongoing funding is required to ensure the benefits of early childhood education are not lost," she said.

"The Federal Government's support for the National Quality Framework is noteworthy and the Long Day Care Professional Development Program will provide some support to the implementation of the National Quality Framework in Long Day Care, however, it does not address all the key



Christine Cooper recently represented the IEUA in a meeting with Sussan Ley.

continue to provide funding for universal access to ensure support for the sector in future years.

"Attraction and retention of qualified teachers is vital to the delivery of quality early childhood education and to enable this; salaries of teachers working in early childhood education and care centers *must* be comparable to those teachers' salaries in schools settings."

issues within the sector."

In light of the upcoming review of the National Partnership Agreement for Universal Access for Early Childhood Education, the IEUA has urged the Federal Government to

TISTA set to amalgamate with VIC/TAS Branch

The executive membership of TISTA has unanimously voted to close their branch by the end of the year. Federal Secretary Chris Watt said work was now underway with IEUA's VIC/TAS branch to look at how the Tasmanian subdivision could be most effectively integrated. TISTA currently has a membership of 400.

More IEUA Milestones

Branch Secretary Terry Burke celebrated 20 years last month as QIEU's General Secretary. The QIEU bids farewell this month to two long serving staff members including Assistant Secretary Ros McLennan, who after 16 years with our union, has been appointed as the Assistant Secretary of the Queensland Council of Unions; and Greg McGhee, who is retiring after more than 18 years as an organiser.