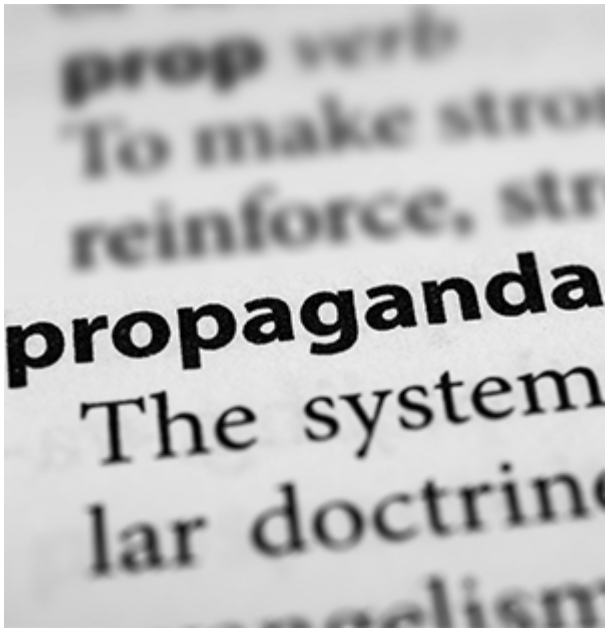
Concerns over schools being asked to peddle government propaganda



The State School Teachers' Union has criticised the State Government for asking schools to distribute its propaganda selling its messages on education.

The government has sent a memo through the Department of Education to Principals to encourage them to distribute material from its Bigger Picture Education campaign through their school websites, newsletters and social media.

SSTUWA President Pat Byrne said it was unacceptable to try to turn schools into free propaganda machines.

"If the government wants to advertise its propaganda, it can pay for it through the usual channels rather than using schools," she said.

"Schools have previously been directed by the Department of Education not to push any political messages.

"It is Department of Education policy for schools to remain non-party political, and this campaign circular is in clear breach of that.

"In fact, in the last two years, schools have been instructed to not even refer to reductions to school budgets as 'cuts' because it may have political connotations.

"It seems the government is not interested in playing by its own rules."

Ms Byrne said the union would be informing its Principal members that they were not in any way obliged to circulate this information.

"We believe it's unacceptable for Principals to be used as political pawns by the State Government to promote its political agenda in the lead up to the next election," she said.

"It is hypocritical of the government to ask Principals to promote schools after it has ripped nearly $200 million from their budgets.

"We will be letting Principals know that not only are they under no obligation to disseminate this information, but that to do

so would be in contravention of the Department’s own regulations.”

Authorised by Sally Dennis, General Secretary, The State School Teachers' Union of W.A.
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