

First School Leaders' forum for 2015



Performance Management

The SSTUWA is preparing for discussions with the Department of Education and the professional associations on a review of Principal Performance Management and the process for other school leaders.

Union president Pat Byrne spoke to the union's recently published Performance Management handbook which clearly states the union position in relation to teacher performance management. Use of the AITSL framework is recommended, with a clear understanding that performance management should use a developmental approach, rather than an appraisal model. While the union does not oppose the use of classroom observation, "best practice" models should be used. This means appropriate training for all participants, as well as time, must be provided. The SSTUWA does not support mandated observation (WA is the only state where observation is mandatory) and especially so in an environment where the process is not being resourced. It is imperative in a developmental approach that any process be negotiated and collegiate.

Pat recommended that PM processes need to be kept as simple as possible. A similar approach needs to be taken to moving teachers to full registration with the TRB.

It was noted that the extra workload and responsibility for principals was not recognised by the department and that there is little support for school leaders.

Re-profiling

Excluding district high schools, there are now only six metropolitan and eight country high schools which are not IPS. This has now resulted in serious equity issues in accessing specialised staff and in placing redeployees. Re-profiling has seen a series of grievances being initiated resulting in changes to the original decisions.

The union is taking the issue of surplus teachers being denied access to IPS schools through the normal redeployment process to the Industrial Relations Commission.

Student-Centred Funding Model causes issues for schools

The new school funding model is causing difficulties. Members are urged to inform the union as issues arise so they can be raised. Some problems highlighted at the forum included:

- A school has a cash flow problem and all purchases have to be cleared through the registrar and expenditure held over until the end of March.
- Uncertainty over a school hosting PEAC and School Psych services funds to support utilities, cleaning costs, etc.
- The formula for shared site costs for Ed Support and mainstream seems incorrect.
- The need to keep constant check on salary budgets is time consuming and stressful as there are almost daily variations on the system.
- Some schools are not replacing staff who are on leave to boost teacher relief budgets, or to pay for other initiatives
- The hours for education assistants have been reduced in some schools.
- In some schools with IECs, student entitlements are being eroded, e.g. larger than formula class sizes.
- In some primary schools LOTE programs are being cut back despite receiving funds. There are no teachers available for new programs in some instances.

New School Leaders' Organiser

The selection process for the School Leaders' organiser is underway. The union is hoping the new SLO will be in place for the commencement of Term 2.

Next Forum to focus on Performance Management and Classroom observation

The next leaders' forum will be held on Friday 22 May and will include a training component.

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