SSTUWA calls for State Government to share the wealth



SSTUWA calls on government to share new economic gain by:

- lowering TAFE fees;
- increasing the number of teachers and lecturers in public schools and TAFE and;
- scrapping the current government wages policy.

The State School Teachers' Union of WA (SSTUWA) is calling on the state government to share its new economic gains to lower TAFE fees, scrap the wage policy and increase the number of teachers and lecturers in public schools and TAFE.

It comes as Treasurer Ben Wyatt today released the Annual Report of State Finances, which highlighted that the McGowan Government recorded a $1.3 billion surplus for 2018-19.

SSTUWA President Pat Byrne said now that the state's finances were in good shape the focus needed to be on better education outcomes for WA.

"It is important we have a skilled workforce and a thriving education system to further boost the state's economy and help the government meet its own 'Our Priorities' vision", Ms Byrne said.

The SSTUWA wants to see lower TAFE fees and where possible no fees at all.

"The former Liberal Government came close to destroying TAFE with is constant cuts and massive fee increases.

"There is an opportunity now for Premier Mark McGowan to set out and create a long-lasting education legacy, starting with rebuilding the TAFE sector by lowering or abolishing fees and employing more lecturers.

"Slashing or altogether removing fees is both necessary and welcome – but that needs to be supported with more lecturers, who are able to give proper class time to students.

"This will enable more people to access courses and qualifications that will allow them to get one of the jobs we know are so necessary to the state's economy.

"The state government can support its own declared priorities of improving literacy and numeracy and increasing participation in science and technology by employing more teachers.

"Nothing improves a child's performance in literacy and numeracy more than one-on-one attention from a teacher, especially in the formative years.

"More teachers will boost WA's education system by tackling the sad reality that WA has the most crowded classrooms in the country. More teachers mean better education outcomes.

“The McGowan government also needs to tackle the crucial issue of suppressed wages. Teachers and lecturers have done enough heavy lifting for the economy.

“The imposition of wage caps on teachers and lecturers is not sustainable. The government must address this issue and offer hope to teachers and lecturers of proper wage increases,” Ms Byrne said.

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