# About unions

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# Playing a leadership role in unionism and education

In 1898 what is now the SSTUWA began its life with 50 members. Since that time the union has played a leadership role in unionism and in education in this state.

The union's rules state that it must watch over and protect the interests of its members, and that it must promote education. These first two objects of the union make clear that it combines a commitment to ensuring industrial control over the working conditions and rights of members with a broader commitment to be fully involved in the professional rights and interests of members as well as in matters of social justice and equity in which education plays a central role.

The SSTUWA is as strong as its members. Through the collective strength and wisdom of members we can be powerful and influential in the community. Through our democratic processes at branch, District Council, Executive and State Council we can ensure that our decision making and our action is inclusive, representative and powerful.

The SSTUWA has a commitment to a strong public education system which provides every child with the right to a quality education. Our commitment to social justice and equity demands a fair go for every child and young person.

Ultimately our ability as educators to ensure those rights depends on our collective strength in the industrial and professional arenas. It is that collective strength which can ensure our rights as educators are respected, our wisdom valued and our experience central to all decisions on education matters.

Membership, active and involved membership, is the only way to ensure that collective strength.

Members shall abide by the following **SSTUWA Code of Ethics**

1. Members shall acknowledge the authority and responsibility of the union.
2. Members shall support and assist in raising the standard of the teaching profession.
3. Members shall be loyal to other members and refrain from discussing other members in the hearing of the public.
4. Members should not seek to compare themselves publicly with other teachers to their own advantage.
5. Members shall not falsely, maliciously or recklessly injure or attempt to injure, whether directly or indirectly, the professional reputation or prospects of another member.
6. Members shall issue public statements only in an objective and truthful manner and shall not issue anonymous public statements.
7. Members shall show due consideration for their successors.
8. Members shall zealously guard their civil rights and those of the students in their schools.
9. Members shall guide their students to attain the highest possible level of academic, social moral and physical achievement.
10. Members shall deal justly, respectfully and reasonably with students.
11. Members shall exercise discretion in dealing with confidential matters relating to students and their parents.
12. Executive members shall act as exemplars for all members in their adherence to the Code of Ethics.

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