Securing equity is essential





By Natalie Blewitt
Senior Vice President

I hope the 2023 school year has commenced smoothly for you, whether you are teaching the same subject area or something new. Welcome back to our existing members and a special welcome to those who are new to our profession.

International Women's Day 2023

International Women's Day will be celebrated on 8 March. This year's global theme is #EmbraceEquity. "Equity isn't just a nice-to-have, it's a must-have."

A focus on gender equity needs to be part of every society's DNA - and it's crucial to understand the difference between equity and equality.

Although there has been significant progress towards gender equality, women continue to experience barriers and inequalities in the home, workplace and the community.

For example:

- Women experience family and domestic violence, as well as sexual violence and assault, at significantly higher rates than men.
- There is a gap of 22.4 per cent between the average full-time weekly earnings of Western Australian men and women, compared to the national average of 14.0 per cent.
- Women perform more unpaid domestic and caring duties than men, even when they work full-time.
- Women's career progression to leadership roles can be adversely affected by workplace practices and attitudes that are biased towards traditional gender roles in families where one parent, usually the mother, provides primary care to children.

The fight for equity continues, in homes, the workplace and in our community.

Unions continue to take a leading role in this. For example, the Australian Services Union was the first union to secure paid family and domestic violence (FDV) leave in a workplace agreement in 2010. The SSTUWA first secured this entitlement for members in the 2017 Schools General Agreement.

Now we have new laws enshrining 10 days paid FDV leave for all Australian workers by August of this year. (Read more on pages 26-27.)

At the member level continue to have those conversations with your colleagues, friends and family about the importance for equity for women everywhere.

In Australia, IWD will also be marked with an additional theme, Cracking the code: Innovation for a gender equal future, which highlights the importance of accessible and inclusive education and technologies to combat discrimination.

For more information and resources visit:

- internationalwomensday.com
- iwda.org.au
- unwomen.org.au and
- International Women's Day - WA government

If you take any pictures of your IWD events, you can send them to us at editor@sstuwa.org.au or tag @sstuwa to any images that are posted to your social media accounts.

Member communication

I encourage members to keep up with the happenings of the union through our various modes of communication, whether they be in electronic or printed format.

Member communication continues to be our highest priority and we strive to improve our communication channels to ensure their effectiveness in bringing you the latest news.

We have refreshed the look of Western Teacher to reflect the contemporary, up-to-date nature of the magazine, while the union's various eNews have also been given a new look and format. Also check out the union's new and refreshed website.

If you haven't already then download the SSTUWA App to access all this information.

For early career teachers, keep an eye out for the special monthly New Educator eNews, which will provide you with all the essential information you will need.

This will hit your email inbox on the first Tuesday of every month. Continue to keep up to date via social media on our Facebook and Instagram accounts.

There is also a dedicated page in Western Teacher magazine for new educators. We've revamped the format and hope you will find it an informative read. Turn to page 12 of this month's issue to see the new educator page.

By keeping in touch you can find out the latest on the professional and industrial issues that affect you and how to achieve a

sustainable work/life balance.

Authorised by Sally Dennis, General Secretary, The State School Teachers' Union of W.A.
ABN 54 478 094 635 © 2026