Looking after leaders



The SSTUWA continues to be the union that supports the needs of school leaders, at whichever level they are at. This year we welcome three staff members to the union who will be invaluable in providing school leader members with the assistance that they require. Linsday Hale joins the union as a school leaders consultant, Melissa Rinaldi as a school leaders organiser and Nicola Sorrell as a project officer with the Growth Team. Learn a little bit more about them below.

Lindsay Hale

Lindsay spent the first 34 years of his professional life in public schooling - in classroom teaching and school leadership roles in both metro and regional schools as well as system-level executive leadership positions. Supporting vulnerable young people, strengthening regional services, the advancement of Aboriginal people and supporting public school educators have been consistent themes throughout his career.

More recently he held executive roles at the Department of Communities and the Mental Health Commission. Lindsay is a staunch advocate for social justice and public education – and other services – that are person-centred, place-based, trauma-informed and culturally responsive. He has a BA, DipEd and MEdAdmin and is a proud member of the SSTUWA.

Melissa Rinaldi

Melissa has spent the last 18 years working in roles in the Department of Education in central and regional offices supporting leadership to understand and navigate the complex industrial environment and support all staff to give their best for public education. During this time Melissa has also worked in ministerial offices and with senior leadership across the department.

Melissa brings a perspective from outside the classroom that compliments the daily work in schools to deal with the complex challenges created in working with staff at all levels in an increasingly complex environment. Her last 11 years have been as a coordinator of regional operations in the North Metropolitan Education Region where she had the chance to work with a group of fantastic principals and people to help resolve issues and maintain positive relationships with the intent of giving students the best possible opportunities in public education.

Melissa's background is in industrial relations and human resource management, and prior to starting in the public sector, she spent time in the private sector working in organisational learning, coaching and training and development roles before deciding to dive into the world of industrial relations. Before starting in public education, Melissa spent six years at the Western Australian Industrial Relations Commission and worked across a range of industries and public sector agencies to help resolve disputes.

Nicola Sorrell

As the new Growth Team project officer, Nicola is particularly focused on the recruitment and engagement of heads of learning areas, heads of department and program coordinators in schools across the state.

Nicola has been a teacher and union member for 23 years.

She began her career as an English teacher before becoming a literacy specialist.
Nicola excelled in leadership and became an Aboriginal education coordinator and head of department.

Nicola understands the importance of positive and personable leadership within schools. She believes this extends to having a strong understanding of members' industrial rights and promoting the work of the SSTUWA.

Nicola has firsthand experience in how complex the role of a leader can be, the immense workload leaders are expected to take on and the array of skills needed to manage students, parents and colleagues, as well as work and communicate effectively with school leaders.

Nicola is very interested in hearing from you and your experience as a middle leader in your school and very much looks forward to meeting many of you during her school visits.

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