Growth Team doing stellar work



By Natalie Blewitt
Senior Vice President



State Council Conference Guest Program participants: (pictured L to R) Sam, Jade, Max, Jessica, Rhys and Craig.

This year, I am committed to regularly sharing information and updates from across the various portfolio areas under my responsibility as SSTUWA senior vice president.

For this edition, I would like to showcase and share the great work of the Growth Team (GT).

The primary purpose of the GT is to work closely with new educators, including pre-service teachers and both trained and

untrained teachers in the early career stage. All new teachers require specific advice, support and information as they enter the profession, and the GT are there to help.

This team is often the first SSTUWA staff that early career teachers meet with and speak to. As such, they undertake a vital part of a beginning teacher member's journey. To develop quick connections and shared understanding, the SSTUWA has undertaken the first iteration of the GT new educator internship.

Two very active early career teachers, Simon Joachim and Ellie Aldred, commenced at the beginning of Term 1 and they, along with the coordinator of the team, Chloe Hosking, have been operating at full capacity.

The energy in this team is amazing and they are always on the go, attending graduate modules and universities, linking up with members and potential members during school visits, recruiting and speaking with teachers and preservice teachers over the phone, even delivering presentations at lectures, events and forums.

In conjunction with the Education and Training Centre, the GT welcomed 25 participants to the Building a Strong Foundation for New Teachers in Public Education event.

Held in January, this half day event was designed to provide an opportunity for those who are studying teaching or who are working in a school under the category of Limited Registration.

The content included important clauses from the 2023 General Agreement and TRBWA processes. Participants explored the range of options for securing a position within the public education system and this event provided a wonderful opportunity for networking.

Feedback received was very positive with participants being very appreciative of the SSTUWA providing information that was not covered during university.

On the back of the success of this event, the SSTUWA will again be offering the course during the upcoming term break. I will be co-presenting with the GT, and we are looking forward to welcoming another group of participants through the doors.

Targeted communication continues to be a cornerstone of support for new educators. Every edition of this magazine includes a one-page article from the team, with content dedicated to early career teachers. It is complimented by a practical teaching tip and a feature from the New Educator ABCs series, which breaks down essential aspects of beginning teaching.

On the first Tuesday of every month, new educator members also receive the NEN eNews, an email newsletter curated by the GT, which is designed especially for early career educators. This eNews is packed full of content and is proving very popular.

The GT is also very active on social media platforms, including the New Educator Network Facebook group and the SSTUWA Instagram page. Posts follow a themed weekly schedule, covering union structures and processes, industrial rights, professional advice and light-hearted union and teaching-related memes. If you are an early career teacher and haven't engaged with the team on social media, I strongly encourage you to do so.

The new educator cohort is becoming increasingly active and interested in the workings of their union. The 2025 New Educator Committee went to ballot due to the high levels of interest. Fifteen engaged early career teachers meet termly, identifying and advocating for the evolving needs of educators entering the profession. I look forward to working with these committee members throughout this year.

And finally, I would like to thank and acknowledge the new educators who attended our recent State Council Conference through our guest program – Sam, Jade, Max, Jessica, Rhys and Craig (pictured above). They were thoroughly engaged across the two days, and I am sure learnt a great deal, not only from the opportunity to hear from a range of speakers but also to see how decisions are made. It was wonderful speaking with them during State Council Conference and I look forward to seeing them at union events in the future.

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