

EARLY CHILDHOOD RESOLUTION – WORKLOAD

The AEU welcomes the focus of State and Commonwealth governments on early childhood education and care (ECEC).

The COAG early childhood reform agenda which acknowledges the critical role of ECEC to the life chances of children, and the role of the staff delivering such programs, in large part reflects both the policies and effective advocacy of the AEU.

Nevertheless implementation of the agenda has left the sector in a constant state of change. Since 2009 there has been the introduction of:

- Transition Statements;
- Victorian Early Learning and Development Framework;
- National Early Years Learning Framework;
- pilots, planning and preparatory steps for Universal Access in 2013.

Ahead is further change with the introduction of the National Quality Framework and associated Assessment and Rating System in 2012.

In parallel with the introduction of these new government initiatives has come a profound increase in the workload of staff, in particular that of teachers.

The message from members has been so strong that it is, for some, a factor which will impact on their decision to stay or leave the profession. It would clearly be counter-productive to the capacities of the sector to respond to the joint State and Commonwealth governments early childhood agenda to lose teachers and experienced assistants from the profession. The ongoing workload demands also present significant and unacceptable OHS impacts for ECEC staff.

Accordingly the AEU calls on the Ballieu Government to:

1. Amend the *Victorian kindergarten policy, procedures and finding criteria* to provide for adequate pupil free time for each teacher to write transition statements and to allow staff (both teachers and assistants) to attend the various PD and information sessions associated with the reform agenda;
2. Recommit to funding the *Kindergarten IT Project*, enabling all community-run kindergartens to access information technology and helpdesk support, systems maintenance, internet and email connectivity to as to more effectively support their service.
3. Provide further support and resources, such as but not limited to ICT hardware and software to facilitate effective and efficient implementation of the various elements of the early years reform agenda, in particular transitions statements, EYLF/VEYLDF and the QIP. As part of the system in Victoria that supports the learning, development and wellbeing of children, we believe that DEECD should provide IT for kindergartens in the same way that they provide IT for primary and secondary schools.

Further the AEU will utilise the results of the AEU EC Workload Survey and ongoing consultation with members in the preparation of the log of claim for the successor agreements to the VECTAA and LGECEEA.