

# Teacher Graduates

# Why join the union?

### The AEU represents your profession

Join over 190,000 members nationally and more than 45,000 members in Victoria. Graduate teachers have reduced membership fees in the first three years of teaching.

### The AEU negotiates your pay and conditions

As a beginning teacher starting work in a government school in 2012 your annual salary will be \$56,985 — one of the best salaries for beginning teachers in Australia. It was negotiated with the Department of Education by the AEU.

In your first year of employment you get time off from face-to-face teaching. This too was negotiated by the AEU.

The Victorian Government Schools Agreement contains substantial improvements in salaries and conditions for graduate teachers. And as an AEU member, you will have a say in all future negotiations.

### The AEU provides professional development

Members gain access to a wide range of AEU-organised professional development, including conferences just for student teachers and graduates. We run PD sessions about legal issues, industrial issues and skills relevant to graduates such as behaviour management. Our New Educators Network brings new teachers together. We can help you to apply for jobs in government schools through our sessions on Recruitment Online and our CV and application writing workshops. Dozens more sessions are run by our training partner, the Teacher Learning Network.

### The AEU gives you legal protection

This is an extremely important benefit in an increasingly litigious society. Our

team of legal experts gives invaluable support and advice.

### The AEU supports you in the workplace

You receive immediate assistance in all professional and industrial matters. Every school has an AEU representative. The union has an extensive support service which is only a phone call away — just ring (03) 9417 2822 and ask for the Membership Services Unit. The AEU's website is also a valuable resource: [www.aeuvic.asn.au](http://www.aeuvic.asn.au).

### The AEU runs a New Educators Network

As an AEU member you are eligible to join the New Educators Network. This is an email network that keeps you up to date with what's going on at the AEU. We also have an online discussion board for members where you can get involved in some of the debates around education issues.

“For a worker to refuse to belong to a union is not to exercise a democratic freedom. It is to accept benefits that others have worked for without contributing to the costs.”

### All this plus a wide range of other services

Being part of such a large organisation brings with it other benefits such as:

- Networking opportunities within the AEU and the broader trade union movement on issues such as curriculum, social justice and other special interests
- Education credit unions which give a better deal than many banks
- Superannuation and financial advice
- Low interest home loans
- Low cost private health insurance with Teachers Health Fund.

### The AEU tackles the big issues facing educators

The AEU is a major voice in the education debate both nationally and in Victoria. We campaign for positive change in education and society. We seek better funding, better facilities, more resources and more training opportunities in schools. Our goal is a fairer, more cooperative education system where all children have access to the best education regardless of their cultural or religious background, their financial situation or academic ability. For our members, we seek the best possible working conditions and a real say in what happens at your school.



For further information and assistance contact [andrew.cassidy@aeuvic.asn.au](mailto:andrew.cassidy@aeuvic.asn.au)

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# What the AEU can do for you

Here are just a few of the ways the AEU has helped its members

## Nicole

Nicole was working as an early childhood teacher when a child left her preschool unsupervised. After the child was found, Nicole rang the AEU for advice about the steps she needed to take. The AEU advised her about her obligations under the Children's Services Regulations and accompanied her to an interview with the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development.

## Bill

Bill faced losing a day's pay to attend his graduation ceremony. His absence was reported as unpaid leave. But graduation leave of one day on full pay is an entitlement under the Award. Following action by his AEU organiser, Bill got his money.

## Meaghan

By halfway through the year, teachers at Meaghan's primary school were fed up with the amount of work they were doing. Meaghan rang the AEU for advice and discovered they were working more contact hours than allowed in the Agreement. They held a meeting and decided to write to the principal. By Term 4, their teaching load was down from 23.5 to 22.5 hours per week, with a further one period reduction for the graduate teachers.

## Angelina

Angelina lost her voice while teaching and was placed on WorkCover for a short time. Two years later, the problem recurred. WorkCover disputed her claim. She was referred to an AEU solicitor, and won her case in the Magistrates' Court. An AEU organiser accompanied her to all appointments and court appearances.

## Jian

Jian took a job at a government school. During her first year, she realised she was being paid \$3,000 less than a graduate teacher's annual salary. She contacted the AEU and a cheque was sent within a week. She received \$1,457 in back pay and was placed on her correct salary level.

## Andrea

Andrea is a graduate teacher who was asked to take a PE class (for which she was not trained). She was concerned about legal liability and the school's responsibility for supporting her. She contacted the AEU's membership services unit, which sent her documents about liability and professional development. She took these to her school and was given the support she needed in the form of training and mentoring.



## THE AEU – IT PAYS TO BELONG

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