

**From:** M.Peace  
**Sent:** Thursday, 10 August 2023 10:48 AM  
**To:** Natalie Hutchins  
**Subject:** Teacher shortage crisis – Andrews Govt must act.

Dear Natalie Hutchins

It's time that you as a member of the Victorian government stood up for your public schools.

**Today, there are 1855 advertised vacancies in Victorian public schools** and many more in non-government schools besides.

I'm sure you will agree that every Victorian child and young person has the right to access high quality, adequately and fairly funded public education, and to be taught by a fully qualified and permanent teacher.

**Right now, there are 1224 teachers, 394 support staff, and 237 school leadership vacancies advertised.**

**The current number of advertised vacancies has grown by over 90 per cent compared to the start of the school year.**

The impact of the teacher shortage on students is significant. Too many do not have a permanent teacher for some or all their classes. Often students in one grade are split up and allocated to another class day to day in an ad hoc way. Subjects and learning programs have been cancelled or cut back. Class sizes are getting bigger, with an increasing number of classes, which are meant to be limited to 25 or 26 students, now more than 32 students and beyond. In some cases, large cohorts of students are supervised in libraries or gyms. Individual support, especially for our highest needs students, has reduced, including in relation to programs such as the Tutor Learning Initiative, as these teachers are used to cover classroom teacher vacancies.

The AEU represents over 2000 principal and assistant principals. They routinely report that they receive one or two applications when they advertise vacancies, often leading to no appointment. Many principals have stopped advertising vacancies as there are no suitable applicants and instead continually employ casual relief teachers (CRTs) to fill staffing gaps. Principals who report that their school is fully staffed are often unable to employ CRTs when permanent teachers are on sick leave or accessing other leave entitlements.

These are the intolerable experiences of students and staff in schools in your area, with our low SES, outer suburban, and rural and regional schools most affected.

**Your government has not systematically and comprehensively addressed the shortage crisis and must act now and take bold action.**

Student welfare and learning is also negatively affected by the impact the shortages have on existing school staff. Teachers, principals, and education support staff are exhausted. School staff are planning

for and assessing student work for classes they do not teach so that students can receive some form of learning program – this work comes on top of existing excessive workload. Principals and assistant principals are regularly filling in for classroom teachers when they are absent or when advertised jobs go unfilled. Additional yard duty, and other tasks, are required to cover the staffing gaps.

The workloads caused by teacher shortages are unsustainable and many are leaving the profession – exacerbating the problems.

In addition, the number of new teachers coming through our universities is declining, and almost 50% of those who start a teaching qualification do not complete it, largely due to cost of living pressures.

**Over 12 months ago the AEU presented to your government a [ten year plan](#) to address these issues – 12 months later urgent action is needed.**

Please see below a list of advertised vacancies by Local Government Area to see how your district or region is being impacted. We know there are many other positions vacant across the system which schools are not currently trying to fill after multiple attempts to fill them have failed.

No matter the number of vacancies, the impact of not being able to fully staff our classrooms leads to significant negative impacts on student learning and additional workloads on existing staff. The massive number of advertised vacancies is the tip of the iceberg. It is what is not visible beyond the advertised jobs that is the most alarming – existing staff are straining to cover gaps in an unsustainable way, which is leading to burnout.

The efforts of our teachers, principals and support staff to fill the gaps should be applauded, but without decisive and immediate action the teacher shortage problem will get worse, class sizes will get even bigger, and more teachers will leave public schools.

For the benefit of public school communities your government needs to properly address the teacher shortage by making the necessary investment to keep existing staff through a retention payment and reduced workloads, and measures to ensure an adequate supply of new teachers.

Take action now.

Yours sincerely

**Meredith Peace**  
**President**  
Australian Education Union  
Victorian Branch

cc: State Australian Labor Party MPs

LGA (no of vacancies)	LGA (no of vacancies)	LGA (no of vacancies)	LGA (no of vacancies)
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Alpine (11)	Glenelg (3)	Manningham (15)	Pyrenees (4)
Ararat (1)	Golden Plains (3)	Mansfield (2)	Queenscliff (1)
Ballarat (24)	Greater Bendigo (16)	Maribyrnong (30)	South Gippsland (5)
Banyule (30)	Greater Dandenong (45)	Maroondah (33)	Southern Grampians (2)
Bass Coast (13)	Greater Geelong (74)	Melbourne (12)	Stonnington (6)
Baw Baw (10)	Greater Shepparton (43)	Melton (72)	Strathbogie (6)
Bayside (24)	Glenelg (2)	Mildura (9)	Surf Coast (2)
Benalla (7)	Hepburn (1)	Mitchell (48)	Swan Hill (8)
Boroondara (31)	Hindmarsh (3)	Moira (16)	Towong (3)
Brimbank (43)	Hobsons Bay (35)	Monash (29)	Wangaratta (9)
Buloke (5)	Horsham (4)	Moonee Valley (7)	Warrnambool (6)
Campaspe (13)	Hume (181)	Moorabool (2)	Wellington (32)
Cardinia (52)	Indigo (4)	Moreland (38)	Wodonga (23)
Casey (132)	Kingston (1)	Mornington Peninsula (22)	Wyndham (173)
Colac-Otway (2)	Knox (16)	Mount Alexander (1)	Yarra (11)
Corangamite (6)	Latrobe (22)	Murrindindi (8)	Yarra Ranges (36)
Darebin (35)	Loddon (1)	Nillumbik (17)	Yarriambiack (7)
East Gippsland (23)	Macedon Ranges (6)	Northern Grampians (3)	
Frankston (28)		Port Phillip (10)	
Glen Eira (23)			