



e-bulletin

The Australian Education Union • www.aeuact.asn.au

NO 5 - 29 APRIL 2010

UPDATE ON NATIONAL CAMPAIGN AGAINST SCHOOL LEAGUE TABLES

Ms Gillard Refuses to Negotiate

On Wednesday 28 April the Federal Minister for Education met with the AEU Federal Executive. This was an important opportunity to help resolve the issue. Unfortunately Ms Gillard opened the meeting by saying she was not there to negotiate a settlement of the professional dispute and would not do so. She used the time to simply outline the government's position through a power point presentation.

As a result of Ms Gillard's disappointing refusal to negotiate a sensible outcome that protects the students of this nation the Federal Executive resolution of 12 April remains in force. In addition the Federal Executive decided:

"The AEU is disappointed that the Deputy Prime Minister failed to genuinely explore a resolution to the concerns of the profession at the special meeting of the AEU Federal Executive on the 28th 2010. The profession remains deeply concerned about the misuse of the student data and the damage caused to students, schools and school communities by the league tables and other inappropriate, invalid, inaccurate and misleading school rankings.

The Federal executive of the AEU reiterates that it is not opposed to the NAPLAN tests which can proceed on condition that the serious concerns of the profession are adequately addressed.

Furthermore the Federal Executive of the AEU restates the profession's support for the provision of meaningful and accurate information on student achievement and school effectiveness to parents.

The Federal Executive of the AEU is disappointed that the Deputy Prime Minister rejected a proposal aimed at addressing the profession's educational concerns through genuine discussions between the AEU and ACARA within a specified timeframe. An agreed position on the use of student data would allow the NAPLAN tests to proceed this term and would form the basis of a long term agreement between the AEU and the Government to continue to build strong school accountability and improvement measures in the interest of students, schools and school communities.

The AEU remains ready and willing to engage in genuine good faith discussions to achieve a resolution to these serious educational concerns so that the NAPLAN tests can proceed."

DET Applies to Fair Work Australia

On Wednesday 28 April a hearing was held before Commissioner Deegan on application by the ACT Department of Education. The department, through its senior legal counsel, sought immediate orders to prevent the AEU ACT Branch from organizing any, what they claimed to be, "industrial action" around the NAPLAN testing in May.

The Union opposed this order, arguing that we are taking a professional stand against a decision of the Federal government which is not our employer and that any action taken is not "industrial action".

Commissioner Deegan declined to make any immediate order but will provide her written decision at some point during today, 29th April 2010.

AEU ACT advice to members

The AEU ACT Branch advises the following:

- The AEU moratorium remains in place and so all members are requested to familiarize themselves with the information contained in the NAPLAN Kit 2010. A copy of this kit has been sent to every Sub- Branch and can be accessed at <http://www.aeuact.asn.au>
- Members should attend school on the days of the NAPLAN testing and undertake their normal duties, but not assist in the implementation of the test. This includes not covering the classes of non- members who may choose to supervise the test.
- If members, including Principals, are requested to advise the department whether or not they are participating in the AEU moratorium, the Sub Branch should meet and pass a motion: "The members of this Sub Branch will abide by AEU policy concerning NAPLAN 2010". This motion should be advised to DET.





e-bulletin

- If any member should be docked pay as a result of taking this professional action then all Sub Branch members are encouraged to financially support their colleagues by taking up a collection. If this circumstance arises please inform the AEU office.
- Members should let their school communities and both the ACT and Federal government know just how deeply we feel about this issue. Copies of draft letters to school boards and to parents are available in the kit. It is suggested that every school, including those not involved directly with NAPLAN, seek the permission of its Board to distribute the letter to all parents/custodians within their school community. Alternatively members may prefer to personally hand out the letter to parents at the school "gate".
- Participate in the email campaign to Federal Members of Parliament at <http://www.aeufederal.org.au/LT/index2.html>
- Check the Latest News Page of the ACT Branch website for other information on the campaign <http://www.aeuact.asn.au>

Members are also urged to attend the second meeting today to discuss the national campaign against school league tables in further detail.

This meeting is at 4-6pm Thursday 29 April at the Weston Creek Community Centre [Parkinson St, Weston- part of Coleman Court complex].

Penny Gilmour
Branch Secretary
AEU - ACT Branch