



AUSTRALIAN EDUCATION UNION 2003 FEDERAL WOMEN'S CONFERENCE DECISIONS

WOMEN AND ACTIVISM

The 2003 Federal Women's Conference strongly endorses the development of a campaigning kit to support and encourage women's contacts/workplace delegates to promote activism and networks amongst all women public education workers. The kit is to be developed in consultation with Aboriginal and Multicultural Officers and Members.

1. The Women's Officers will oversee the production of the campaigning kit.
2. That Branches/Associated Bodies further develop the kit by adding local information on an ongoing basis.
3. That Branches/Associated Bodies support the implementation of the campaign by including it in their Women's Conference program and all union training.

WOMEN AND THE PROFESSION – WHAT'S STOPPING US?

1. The Federal Women's Conference 2003 recommends to Federal Executive that Federal Women's Officer in conjunction with Branch-Territories Women's Officers progress actively the process of Succession Planning through policy and bargaining.

That Succession Planning be implemented for all staff at the education systems workplaces both education and union to ensure equity outcomes in leadership That succession planning be implemented for all staff in education, at system, workplace and union to ensure equity outcomes in leadership.

A SUCCESSFUL SUCCESSION PLAN:

Is the deliberate systematic effort to recruit, develop and retain people with a range of leadership capabilities who will be able to implement current and future organisational goals.

Successful Succession Plans

- Identify organisational goals

Should be based on principles of equity and access

Looking to the long term sustainability of the provision of the quality public education

Should recognise the importance of life balance

- Base selection processes on future organisational goals

That:

- explore alternative selection process models including those for short term acting positions (to prevent nepotism and broaden opportunities for others)
- are authentic and recognise the diversity of potential applicants
- have capacity to actually enable the diversity to be reflected in selection.
- are strong distinctive and should reflect the capacity to maximize re-entry and recognise the future

- Inspire leadership aspiration

That:

- encourage leaders to let go, share, engage in active mentoring, modelling
- develops a structured discourse which defines and describes leadership in a variety of settings

- Create pools of talent

To develop processes whereby:

1. Leaderships are clearly described
2. Provision is made for mentoring, work shadowing and other means by which aspirants can enhance their understanding of various leadership roles and identify, develop necessary skills to be successful in application
3. Workplaces must evidence development and actioning of aspirant leadership programs

- Recognise multiple paths to leadership

- e.g. permanent part time positions at leadership levels,
- Identifying and promoting other leadership opportunities in the system e.g. school councils, curriculum leadership, finance committees etc

- Opportunities for acting positions both short and long term (e.g. 4 days to a term)
2. Further, that the Federal Women's Officer develops model clauses to address the balance family and workplace needs based on examples of best practice gathered from states/territories and that these be used in future enterprise bargaining
 3. Further that the Federal Women's Officer, in conjunction with the Branch/Territory Women's Officers collate and disseminate information on most effective campaigns and strategies being employed to progress the balancing of family and workplace needs.

WOMEN AND HUMAN RIGHTS

1. The 2003 Federal Women's Conference recommends that the AEU add an additional section to the AEU Website under the "Current Campaign" section which outlines a Human Rights Campaign.

The section should contain a summary of useful related websites which will assist AEU members and students to easily locate resources and information which will raise awareness of Human Rights and provide knowledge and skills for members to actively advocate for human rights in their work and personal lives.

It should also be noted that the AEU is in the process of transforming the AEU Human Rights Kit into electronic form, which each Branch and Associated Body already has in a hard copy form. This resource will then be made available in the Publications Section of the AEU website.

2. Federal Women's Conference notes that the AEU sponsors the "Universal Rights Network" which is located on the AEU website and contains comprehensive information for students and teachers on human rights and industrial rights. The site receives up to 9000 hits per month. Information on Women's Rights is already located on the Women's Focus section of the AEU website.
3. The 2003 AEU Federal Women's Conference recommends that additional resources be added to the Refugee Campaigns section of the AEU website.
4. Federal Women's Conference acknowledges the 2003 AEU Federal Conference Decision "Working and Teaching for a Peaceful World" which calls on Branches and Associated Bodies to develop a national campaign to raise human rights issues in the broader community.
5. That this AEU Women's Conference applauds the work undertaken by the AEU and its members in Branches and Associated Bodies in support of the basic human rights of refugees and asylum seekers in Australia and its off-shore detention centres, including campaigning strongly for access to public education and training programs as a fundamental right.

Women's Conference notes that while our campaigning to date has had some notable successes, including access to public schools for child detainees, and access to TAFE courses for many TPV holders, that there is still much work to be done in the provision of education and training.

We applaud the NSWTF for its initiative in negotiating a joint Union/Department fund to provide resources to support the education of refugee and asylum seeker students in NSW public schools. This Conference urges all Branches and Associated Bodies to investigate similar initiatives in their State/Territory.

This Conference notes that large numbers of refugees and asylum seekers on TPVs are students in public schools and TAFE campuses in Australia, and that the majority of them live under the constant threat of deportation.

This Conference condemns the forced deportations which have already occurred at the instigation of the Federal Government and expresses its outrage that increasing numbers of deportations appear inevitable under the current Government's inhumane policies.

We support the development by the AEU of a national school and community-based education and action campaign aimed at protecting and defending refugee and asylum seeker students in schools and TAFE campuses across Australia, and their families, from deportations. Such a campaign would draw on the successful Victorian school and community-based campaign against the deportation of East Timorese families. This recognises the unique role of educators in raising awareness about such fundamental human rights issues with students, parents and communities, and the importance of working collectively through our education communities to protect and defend vulnerable individuals and their families.

ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER PROGRAM OF ACTION

Making Indigenous peoples visible and valued: valuing and respecting Indigenous cultures, diversity, knowledges

1. That the 2003 Women's Conference endorse the Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Program of Action as outlined below:

TARGET GROUPS

- Union (internal changes)
- Schools/Colleges/Departments
- Ministers
- Community (eg. parent organisations)

OBJECTIVES

- To make overt the fact that "white Australia has a black history"

- To change institutional/organisational protocols about cultural acknowledgement and respect
- Making cultural acknowledgement and respects automatic practice, not token or only for special occasions
- To put in place affirmative action strategies and proactive actions

LENGTH OF THE CAMPAIGN

- Acknowledgement – 6 months
- Other issues – ongoing, longer-term

WHO

- AEU Branches and Associated Bodies – contact officers within union
- ATSIECs – AECGs/IECBs
- Education Department contact people
- Other unions including Labour Councils

ACTIVITIES FOR THE CAMPAIGN – Acknowledgement

- Circulate NSW pro forma Acknowledgement of Country and Information Guide
- Put links to Information Guide on union web sites
- Meetings with AECG, IECB, AECC
- Letters to Department/Ministers
- Getting the issues on Union Agendas
- Branches to review Reconciliation Statements/Policy and establish them if they haven't done so yet
- Letter to Branch journal editors and General Secretaries

ACTIVITIES FOR THE CAMPAIGN – Union Employment

- Anna Stewart – style programs to support/mentor Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander members to take up elected and/or paid positions. Work shadowing, observers, proxies. Supportive and inclusive programs
- Proactive affirmative action strategies for admin, etc, job vacancies. eg. approaching Indigenous agencies and networks
- Review progress in Branches and Associated Bodies in creating officer and committee positions to represent and involve Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander members

ACTIVITIES FOR THE CAMPAIGN – Department of Employment

- Encourage development of flexible and supportive structures in schools/colleges
- Report-back from Branches about progress in implementing employment target strategies. (and other Indigenous employment claims)
- Include Indigenous people on selection panels
- Campaign for post-recruitment support processes, including publicising and promoting successful models (eg. James Cook Uni program)

RESOURCES

- Produce Acknowledgement of Country materials appropriate to each state/territory (Branches to do) – kit, guideline, wallet cards, bookmarks

- Commitment of Branch officer time (could also involve rank-and-file member brought in on project work)
- Budget allocations for mentoring/shadowing/Anna Stewart – style
- Inter-branch co-operation/joint activities
- Budget allocation for promotional materials and posters
- Space in AEU journals and encourage more Indigenous authors

MEDIA

- Use Indigenous radio

GENDER EQUITY/BOYS LIGHTHOUSE PROJECT and MALE TEACHER STRATEGY

1. That the AEU Women's Conference 2003 reaffirms the AEU Gender Equity Policy with that, it must form the basis for any debate around educational issues for boys and girls.
2. The current Federal Government focus as articulated in 'getting it Right for Boys' focuses too narrowly on the literacy & numeracy outcomes for boys. It does not acknowledge other significant influences and factors such as:
 - socio economic background
 - ethnicity
 - indigeonality
 - sexuality
 - physical and learning disabilities
 - mental health
 - geographic location
 - isolation
3. The AEU is committed to quality public education for all.
4. To broaden the public debate to include the above essential issues, we will provide to members:
 - a range of good quality research material (including the above essential issues)
 - professional development and training

which will challenge some of the current assumptions within research being used to justify the Federal Government's position on the education of boys and the male teacher strategy.
5. As a lead up to the June 2004 MCEETYA meeting, we call upon Branches/Associated Bodies to lobby local Education Ministers highlighting the AEU position on gender equity.

ACTU TEST CASE & WORK/FAMILY LIFE

1. That the Federal Women's Conference 2003 endorse a national campaign to support and extend the ACTU Test Case on work and family flexible options.
2. It is envisaged that this campaign will be an acknowledgement of our role, as a highly feminised union, in educating the general public, our membership and political parties on the needs/benefits of flexible work options for women; and of pushing the barriers to improve access to flexible provisions and conditions within our own workplaces.
3. The Federal Women's Conference 2003 believes that in a political climate where the Federal Sex Discrimination Commissioner is pressuring the Prime Minister for a National Paid Maternity Leave Scheme; the ACTU is mounting a significant test case campaign around Paid maternity leave and other family friendly provisions; and much work has been done within the AEU to see work flexible options maintained and implemented within our own agreements and awards; the time is right to raise the bar.
4. The AEU Federal Women's Conference recommends that the AEU endorse a long term campaign around work and family. The first stage of this campaign will involve an information gathering component, where Women's Officers will gather information on existing work and family entitlements around the country. This will be followed by an education component to raise awareness amongst our members and members of the community of the benefits of flexible work options and other issues that affect our members with work and family commitments.
5. Future stages of the campaign will be refined by the Federal Women's Committee and future women's conferences.