

TO: QTU MEMBERS

## **BUDGET FORGETS EDUCATION AND TAFE...AGAIN!**

While the federal budget last night brought welcome spending on support for domestic and family violence and on preschools, it failed to deliver for state schools and TAFE.

Since 2013, TAFE has suffered more than \$3 billion in funding cuts. Despite TAFE being best positioned to deliver high quality vocational education and skills to help our nation recover from the COVID-19 pandemic, these cuts were not addressed in last night's budget. Instead, the government has chosen to direct training funding to private colleges and the job network. If the government was serious about funding vocational education to help people get a stable and secure job, it would rebuild with TAFE.

Similarly, state schools continue to be under-resourced by the federal government. All schools will share in record spending of \$24.4 billion, but the largest share will go to private schools. Private schools will receive \$14.7 billion in 2021-22, up \$1.7 billion (or 13 per cent) on 2020-21. State schools, which educate two-thirds of children, will receive \$9.7 billion in federal funding – up \$675 million (or just 7.5 per cent). As a result, state school staff are denied the resources they need to provide the education and support their students deserve.

The difference in funding between the state and private sectors demonstrates the fallacy of the government's argument that national testing like NAPLAN assists in directing funding to schools with the most need. If it was genuine about this being the purpose of NAPLAN, then the budget would reflect it.

The federal government must understand the critical importance of resourcing every state school properly to ensure that every child has a high-quality education, regardless of their background.

A federal budget that delivers for public education would include:

- a guarantee of a minimum 70 per cent of all government funding directed to the public TAFE system
- a commitment to funding state schools to a minimum of 100 per cent of the schooling resource standard
- the establishment of a capital fund for state schools to help meet rising enrolment growth and infrastructure needs.

### **NAPLAN**

With the commencement of NAPLAN this week, there has been much commentary on the need for NAPLAN, or otherwise.

The Federal Education Minister believes it is necessary to map student outcomes and for school accountability. But we know that schools, teachers and school leaders are so much more than NAPLAN outcomes, and have written to the Federal Minister to assist in debunking some of the myths associated with NAPLAN. A copy of this letter can be found on the [Queensland Teachers' Union \(QTU\) website](https://www.qtu.asn.au).

The fact remains that NAPLAN is a point in time test and does not replace the daily operations of schools, which are implementing engaging teaching and learning experiences to best support their students. The NAPLAN test should be reimagined, and should be an opt in sample test.

## Review of the Australian Curriculum

As Queensland is the only state to implement the Australian Curriculum in an unmodified fashion, it is important that we provide as much information as we can to ACARA. There is significant change within some of the learning areas, without even looking at the general capabilities and cross curricular priorities. QTU members continue to call for a decluttering of the Australian Curriculum – we cannot support a revised curriculum that does not do this.

Both the Department of Education and the Queensland Curriculum and Assessment Authority (QCAA) are offering multiple opportunities to provide feedback into the review materials. Face-to-face and online sessions will be offered to all members and different groups within the sector. The QCAA has also developed materials to facilitate feedback in staff meetings.

<https://www.qcaa.qld.edu.au/about/initiatives-reviews/australian-curriculum-review>

The feedback window is open until 8 July. The QTU will also provide members with advice to assist them in participating in this review.

## Respect@Work - stop sexual harassment

The Queensland Council of Unions (QCU), along with the Australian Council of Trade Unions (ACTU), continues to campaign for the adoption by the Morrison government of key recommendations from the Sex Discrimination Commissioner's Respect@Work report on sexual harassment to help prevent sexual harassment in workplaces. This work is relevant to our [Expect Respect campaign](#). A series of events is being held in May and June, with a rally held in Bowman last Saturday, sending a clear message that sexual harassment has no place in our society.

This Friday, the QCU will hold a rally at 12pm outside Federal Assistant Minister for Women Amanda Stoker's office on Eagle Street, Brisbane. We encourage members to join the campaign. To show your support visit: <https://act.stopsexualharassment.com.au/home>

## Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority (ACECQA) Workforce Strategy Survey

Significant work has been underway to develop a [National Workforce Strategy](#) for the early childhood sector. This work is now at the public consultation phase. ACECQA has undertaken extensive consultations with national sector stakeholders, including unions and government representatives. These groups have identified a range of actions and initiatives, in six focus areas, as possible opportunities for collective action over the next 10 years. It's not an exhaustive list and ACECQA will welcome additional suggestions.

Throughout May 2021, QTU members and the public are invited to provide feedback through the online survey. You can have your say as part of the consultation process. ACECQA want to hear your views on actions and initiatives that you believe will assist in improving the supply, retention and quality of the early childhood sector workforce. The experiences of our members will be an important perspective in this process and you are encouraged to participate.

Authorised by:

Kate Ruttiman  
General Secretary