



APTA

AUSTRALIAN PROFESSIONAL
TEACHERS ASSOCIATION
www.apta.edu.au

"APTA is a federation of state and territory joint councils of professional teacher associations. Its vision is to provide national leadership that supports and advances the teaching profession".

NEWS IN BRIEF – MAY 2023



President's Report



APTA President, Cheryl Brennan

2023 has, so far, been a year of fewer COVID-19-related disruptions compared to the preceding couple of years. More teacher association events are returning to a face-to-face format, while several new event types that emerged during the COVID period are continuing in an online or hybrid format, which has provided added convenience and involvement of regional and remote teachers. An ongoing challenge has been the high workload for teacher association leaders. APTA has a key role to play in supporting teacher association leaders to maximise their efficiency and effectiveness, for example, through sharing best practice approaches in our recent webinars on governance, social media strategies and sustaining and regenerating our subject associations. Please speak to your state or territory APTA representative if you have further suggestions for how APTA can support teacher associations.

APTA Board for 2023

The APTA Board for 2023 is as follows:

President

Cheryl Brennan (PTC NSW)

Deb Hull (CPTAV)

Vice President:

Karen Yager (PTC NSW)

Carolyn Broadbent (COACTEA)

Treasurer

Phillipa Greig (JCQTA)

Jill Abell (NEAT)

Secretary

Steve Hawkins (PTANT)

Rod Nancarrow (Educators SA)

APTA's Strategic Plan

The three strategic pillars that continue to guide the direction of the APTA Board during 2023 are synergy (combining efforts and expertise to produce greater effectiveness of joint councils and their teacher association members); advocacy (speaking out and acting to ensure that the interests of joint councils and their teacher association members are considered); and support (providing support to our joint council members, teacher associations across the country and the teaching profession).

Strategic Plan



Department of Education

APTA met with staff from the federal Department of Education on 29 November 2022 and 30 March, 2023 with plans for continued termly meetings during the remainder of 2023. At the November meeting the focus was on the Draft National Teacher Workforce Action Plan, the Senate Inquiry into the trend of school refusal and the Grattan Institute Report on “Ending the Lesson Lottery”. At the March 2023 meeting, the focus was on recent reforms and inquiries, including the National School Reform Agreement, the Teacher Workforce Action Plan, and the Senate Inquiry into the issue of increasing disruption in Australian School classrooms. APTA was able to articulate many of the problems teachers faced from a classroom-focused, practitioner perspective, while also emphasising the important role that teacher associations can play in policy development and in the solution space.

National School Reform Agreement

The Productivity Commission released its report on the Review of the National Schools Reform Agreement on 20 January 2023, which can be read [HERE](#), including APTA’s submission. The report examines how well national policy initiatives by the Australian, State and Territory Governments have achieved the objectives and outcomes set out in the Agreement and makes recommendations to inform the design of the next School Reform Agreement. The review recommends redesigning the agreement to focus more attention on lifting academic results for all students, supporting quality teaching and school leadership, and promoting students’ wellbeing. APTA advocated for the important role of professional teacher associations in providing professional development, support for teachers through networking, and providing teacher perspectives on policy development that ought to be considered by federal and state bodies.



Hon Jason Clare MP

On 29 March 2023 the federal minister, Jason Clare, announced the establishment of an expert panel to advise Education Ministers on key targets and specific reforms that should be tied to funding in the next National School Reform Agreement. The expert panel is chaired by Dr Lisa O’Brien, AM and will deliver its report to Education Ministers by 31 October 2023. The recommendations of the Expert Panel will inform the negotiations next year between the Commonwealth and State and Territory Governments.

Teacher Workforce Action Plan

On 15 December 2022, Education Ministers agreed on a National Teacher Workforce Action Plan which sets out a clear pathway to addressing the national issue of teacher workforce shortages.

The Action Plan includes five priority areas:

1. Improving teacher supply;
2. Strengthening initial teacher education;
3. Keeping the teachers we have;
4. Elevating the profession;
5. Better understanding of future teacher workforce needs.

Details of the Action Plan can be found [HERE](#), including APTA’s submission which focused largely on maximising the time to teach as well as better career pathways to retain teachers in the profession. APTA advocated for the role of professional teacher associations on issues regarding out-of-field teaching, providing professional development, mentoring those new to teaching and resourcing teachers. APTA recommended that, 1. Policy makers consult with professional teacher associations when developing policies and strategies relating to the teaching workforce and, 2. Consider the role professional teacher associations can play in giving a practitioner perspective that is directly connected to classroom practice.

Senate Inquiry into the issue of increasing disruption in Australian School classrooms

APTA made a submission to the Inquiry which can be found [HERE](#). The committee will report on its findings on 16 November 2023.

Senate Inquiry into national trend of school refusal and related matters

APTA made a submission to the Inquiry which can be found [HERE](#). The committee will report on its findings on 21 June 2023.

Australian Curriculum

On 17 March 2023, APTA met with David de Carvalho, CEO of ACARA, and other ACARA staff, to discuss Action 19 in the National Teacher Workforce Action Plan and to examine ways to develop and make available to teachers, optional supports to assist the implementation of the national curriculum. APTA spoke about the important role of professional teacher associations in developing, sourcing, curating, and disseminating useful resources to support curriculum implementation, and that developing lesson plans for classes is a central and enjoyable aspect of the role of being a teacher. The fact that lesson planning takes up a lot of time does not mean that teachers want this role taken away from them, and to rely solely on a central bank of resources instead. APTA does not support the premise, inspired by the Grattan Institute report, that a central bank of teaching resources is the correct policy approach.

Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL)

APTA Board member, Deb Hull, will attend the AITSL Highly Accomplished and Lead Teacher Summit in Melbourne on 5-6 May to represent APTA. Speak to your state or territory APTA representative if you have comments on HALTs and how they relate to teacher associations. APTA is planning to meet with AITSL General Manager, Daniel Pinchas, later in the year to hear about AITSL’s upcoming projects.

Australian Teacher Workforce Data (ATWD) initiative



The ATWD initiative links initial teacher education (ITE) data with teacher workforce data across Australia. It provides a comprehensive picture of Australia’s teaching workforce, from ITE through all stages of the teacher career, across all states, territories, and employer sectors.

Since June 2022, all data access and reporting for the ATWD initiative has been provided **ONLINE** in an interactive digital format. This latest data release provides additional teacher workforce characteristics data including:

1. Fast-tracked preliminary data from the 2021 and 2022 ATWD Teacher Surveys;
2. Additional trend data for 2018-2020 including:
 - Demographic and employment information for teachers in the Catholic, independent and government sectors, and regional and remote teachers from 2018-2020;
 - Information on time spent by teachers on face-to-face teaching and non-teaching tasks, out-of-field teaching, induction experiences and professional learning.





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APTA webinars

On 30 November 2022, APTA presented a webinar on the topic: “Teacher Associations: Attracting, Sustaining, and Regenerating”, which supported teacher association leaders to be more effective in growing their membership, drawing members to take on new roles and appealing to the younger generation of teachers. Key presenters included Steve Hawkins (PTANT and APTA Board member), Amrita Moss (President, Psychology Teachers’ Associations of Queensland), Phillipa Greig (JCQTA and APTA Board Member) and Toni Robinson (President, Technology Educators Association NSW).

On 23 March 2023, APTA Board member, Deb Hull, presented a webinar on the topic: “All Good Things Grow from Governance”. This webinar covered legal obligations, best practice principles for financial governance, fostering a great culture, and how to get the most out of meetings.

APTA is planning further webinars throughout 2023 to support teacher association leaders. Let your state or territory Joint Council representative know if you have suggested topics or speakers.