

Socialist Equality Party (Australia) resolution to AEU mass meeting

6 September 2012

The following resolution was moved by SEP supporters at the mass meeting of Victorian teachers and Education Support workers at the Rod Laver Arena in Melbourne on September 5. (See: “Victorian teachers’ union blocks fight against Labor’s assault on public education”)

1. This meeting rejects the 2.5 percent public sector wage ceiling, performance pay, increased teaching hours and all productivity trade-offs. We demand smaller class sizes and permanency for all teachers, including for young teachers and Educational Support staff currently on contracts.

2. This meeting calls for a boycott of the Gillard Labor government’s NAPLAN testing regime and the National Plan for School Improvement (NPSI). The NPSI is modelled on US President Obama’s “Race to the Top” and is aimed at privatising entire areas of public education across the country. At the centre of the Gillard-sponsored, AEU-supported Gonski report is a voucher funding system, which will eliminate any distinction between public and private education and undermine state schools.

3. This meeting rejects the proposed AEU campaign of rolling stoppages in Term 4, protests outside the offices of government politicians and ineffectual bans. The AEU campaign is not intended to oppose the government’s agenda but, as has happened in the past, wear down our determination to fight the assault on public education and our working conditions, while a sell-out is negotiated behind our backs.

4. The AEU’s so-called opposition to the Baillieu government’s “New Directions” discussion is a fraud! Baillieu’s policy simply extends the former state Labor government’s “Blueprint” for education, which was endorsed by the AEU in the 2008 Agreement. The union is assisting the government to enforce the regime

of “continuous improvement”, which obliges schools and teachers to compete with each other. The next stage will be the sacking of teachers deemed to be “under-performing”, a differential pay system, school closures and the imposition of business managers as school principals.

5. This meeting resolves to take matters out of the hands of the AEU, turn out to parents and students, the community and other education workers, such as TAFE and university staff, who are facing similar far-reaching attacks, and launch a genuine fight to defend public education. This requires the establishment of rank-and-file action committees of teachers, education workers, students and parents in every school community to plan out a coordinated industrial and political campaign against both the Baillieu and Gillard governments, and to defend the right of all young people to a free, high quality public education.

6. The assault on public education is part of the austerity agenda being imposed by governments around the world to make the working class pay for the global failure of the capitalist profit system. A fight to defend public education must be directly linked to the political struggle for a socialist program, aimed at defending and extending all the hard-won social rights of the working class.



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