

**AUSTRALIAN COUNCIL FOR THE DEFENCE OF  
GOVERNMENT SCHOOLS  
PRESS RELEASE 923  
HAILEYBURY'S BUSINESS OPERATION  
FALLS FOUL OF THE LAW IN CHINA**

[Tom Cowie, in the Age of February 6](#), reported on a Chinese labour court which has ordered one of Melbourne's most prominent private schools to compensate a former teacher for wages that were unpaid at its international campus near Beijing. The report exposes the fact that some private schools in Australia, under the cloak of religion, are running multinational businesses at taxpayer's expense. So, what happened in China?

Haileybury College's China campus was taken to a provincial arbitration tribunal last year after one of its teachers resigned from his role at the Tianjin school earlier in 2021, claiming that Haileybury owed him money.

*The college has operated the Haileybury International School in China since 2013, in addition to its four Melbourne campuses and one in the Northern Territory. In November, the teacher, who asked not to be identified because he still works in China, was awarded nearly 37,000 Chinese yuan (\$8143) in lieu of wages not paid for several months in 2020 and 2021, according to the ruling.*

*The teacher was also awarded more than 40,000 Chinese yuan (\$8806) as compensation for the termination of their contract.*

*"The Respondent [Haileybury] shall pay the labor compensation in full and on time," the ruling said, according to a translation of the document made by The Sunday Age.*

*However, Haileybury has disputed the matter, claiming that the teacher owed the school money for a loan higher than the amount of unpaid wages.*

*The case is being appealed to a separate civil court and Haileybury did not comment on the proceedings directly.*

*The decision comes after some staff at the school expressed disquiet at the way the international school's principal, Peter Rogerson, cut wages during the COVID-19 pandemic if they did not return to China to recommence in-person teaching.*

*According to an email sent to staff by Mr Rogerson in October 2020 and seen by The Sunday Age, wages would be cut to either 75 per cent of their usual pay, 50 per cent or zero depending on their return date to China.*

*At the time, a number of staff were not in the country as the school had moved to remote learning during the early months of the COVID-19 pandemic. Mr Rogerson issued an ultimatum for them to return to China or not get paid.*

*“My expectation was that staff, on finally receiving their PU letters [a visa requirement], would be eager to return, but unfortunately I am hearing that for personal and family reasons (and I’m not questioning their decisions), some are not intending to hurry back,” wrote Mr Rogerson.*

*“And whilst you are entitled to make such decisions, they will have consequences beyond just extended leave without-pay that I need to outline to you in advance, to be fair.”*

*Mr Rogerson said in the email that his loyalty would be with those who had remained in China and those who had “moved mountains” to return by his October deadline.*

*“So for any staff still offshore, they will remain as ‘Absent, without pay’, and I make NO guarantee I will be able to find any remote work for them,” he wrote.*

*“This reduction was used to pay other staff overtime to run their classes in their absence.*

This is a very wealthy school as the figures for just the Victorian campuses indicate. But apparently they are not wealthy enough to be generous to their teachers.

#### **ACARA MYSCHOOL WEBSITE INFORMATION:**

**Enrolment : 4206, 2357 boys, 1849girls**

ICSEA value: well above average: 1131

Upper 25% parental income: 77%

Second level parental income 17%

Third 25% i.e. below 50% - 5% ( lower middle class )

Lowest 25% - 1%

So really a school with a vast majority advantaged students, but with 31% speaking a language other than English and no indigenous students.

FINANCES : Recurrent grants: Australian govt : 26.6 Million

Victorian govt: 3.8 m

Fees and parental contributions: 101.3m

Other private contributions : 6 m

Per Pupil : \$30,805 per pupil

Capital – 26.6 m over three years

These figures do not take into account the myriad taxation expenditures or exemptions enjoyed by private schools in Australia.

Children, teachers, parents and grandparents struggling to provide basic facilities in our public schools can only feel gobsmacked by the grand business plans of the Haileybury School administrators, built on the certainty of tens of millions of taxpayer dollars falling into their coffers every year. Teachers however, should note the treatment of their brethren in China and think twice about their employment contracts.

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