

Stronger together: How the IEU works

Here is the organisational structure of the Independent Education Union of Australia NSW/ACT Branch. We’re the union for teachers and professional, operational, administrative and support staff and principals in Catholic schools, independent schools, early childhood education and care centres and post-secondary colleges.

Sub branches

The IEU has 20 sub branches: 19 geographical sub branches (listed below) and one for principals. All the reps from a particular geographical area meet once a term at their sub branch, along with their union organiser.

Sub branches elect a president, deputy president, secretary and committee once a year in Term 1. Sub branch meetings are a way for reps and members to provide feedback to the union about what’s happening on the ground in their workplaces, and to meet and talk to reps from other schools and sectors. IEU organisers also attend to share union updates and information.

All chapter reps and IEU members who’d like to develop their union activism are warmly invited to attend their region’s sub branch meeting. Each sub branch is represented by four to six delegates to Council (see right).

IEU sub branches: Central Coast; Central Metropolitan; Central West, Cumberland; Hunter Valley; Ku-ring-gai; Lansdowne; Metropolitan East; Mid North Coast; Monaro; North Coast; Northern Beaches; Northern Suburbs; North West; Penrith/Blue Mountains; Riverina; South Coast; South East; Southern Suburbs; and Principals.

Reps

Each chapter elects a union representative (or rep, sometimes called a delegate). Some schools have more than one rep: one for teachers and one for support, administrative and operational staff.

The rep arranges chapter meetings, keeps members informed of union issues and liaises with your union organiser. They are the first port of call for IEU members in the workplace.

Chapters

A chapter is the group of IEU members in each school or early childhood centre (excluding principals, who have their own chapter). Chapters are the union’s foundation. When new staff join your workplace, it’s always a good idea to personally invite them to join the union.

The chapter elects one or more reps (see above) and may also elect a chairperson and a secretary.

Members

The IEU has more than 32,000 members in non-government schools, preschools and long day care centres, colleges and other educational institutions throughout NSW and the ACT.

Our members are teachers, principals, administrative and support staff, learning support and wellbeing staff, and maintenance and operational staff. They are administrative staff, Aboriginal Education Officers, teacher’s aides, laboratory assistants and library assistants, canteen staff, nurses, counsellors, boarding-house supervisors, bus drivers, grounds-keepers, archivists and many other non-teaching employees in the non-government education sector.



Advisory committees

The IEUA NSW/ACT Branch also has several advisory committees:

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Advisory Committee
- Early Childhood Education and Care Council
- Environment Committee
- Women and Equity Committee.

Federal union

The IEUA NSW/ACT Branch is part of a federal union that includes delegates from each IEU branch from states and territories throughout Australia. The Federal Executive meets regularly and Federal Council meets once a year.

Council

Council is the ultimate governing and decision-making body of the IEUA NSW/ACT Branch, bringing together up to 115 members elected by our 20 sub branches every two years. IEU Council also includes 22 members of the IEU Executive, who are elected by the full IEU membership every three years. This means there can be up to 137 members of Council.

Council meets four times a year in Sydney, on a Saturday, including an AGM in October, at which the union’s Annual Report is presented. These meetings are an opportunity for members and union officials to exchange information and ideas and to consider and decide the business of the branch (excluding financial management: Executive, see below) in the interests of members.

IEU officers (organisers, industrial officers, some professional staff) also attend Council but do not have voting rights.

Each sub branch elects delegates to Council every two years (while the number of delegates is determined by the size of the sub branch, most are entitled to elect five or six delegates while principals elect four).

Executive

The Executive consists of 22 members who are elected every three years, with current financial members entitled to vote. The Executive is responsible for the branch’s financial management and for overseeing strategic priorities between quarterly Council meetings.

The Executive includes the Secretary, Deputy Secretary and two Assistant Secretaries who oversee the union staff in the day-to-day running of the union, and negotiate for pay and conditions in enterprise agreements for members. These are paid, full-time positions.

The Executive also includes honorary positions, including the President, who chairs Council meetings and Executive meetings, a Deputy President and five Vice Presidents who represent the interests of members in the ACT, Catholic systemic schools, independent schools, support staff and early childhood services.

The Executive usually meets in Sydney on the first Friday of the month (except January). Additional meetings on urgent matters may occasionally be held online. Members of the Executive are also automatically voting members of Council.

Staff

The IEU has about 80 staff across our six offices in Canberra, Lismore, Newcastle, Parramatta, Wollongong and our main Sydney headquarters.

We have about 30 organisers and eight industrial officers as well as professional staff including our accounts team, membership team, IT, reception and administrative staff, media and communications team and professional engagement, policy and child protection staff.