

Thursday 26 May 2022

## Full-day strike: Catholic school staff demand better pay and conditions

**Rally (media are invited): 10am, Sydney Town Hall, George/Bathurst Sts  
(march to Polding House on Liverpool St)**

Some 18,000 teachers and support staff across 540 Catholic diocesan schools are gearing up for a full-day stop work this Friday 27 May. IEU members will attend 10 rallies and marches throughout NSW and the ACT. This is the first full-day stoppage since 2004.

Catholic school teachers and support staff have been joining the union in record numbers in support of its five key claims:

- Pay teachers what they're worth (an increase of 10% to 15% over two years)
- Give support staff a fair deal (pay parity with colleagues in public sector schools)
- Let teachers teach – cut paperwork
- Allow time to plan (two more hours release from face-to-face teaching per week)
- End staff shortages.

"Teachers and support staff are dedicated professionals who rarely take industrial action," said IEUA NSW/ACT Branch Secretary Mark Northam. "But uncompetitive salaries, unsustainable workloads and crippling staff shortages have pushed them beyond their limits."

The IEU, which represents 32,000 teachers and support staff throughout NSW and the ACT, is eagerly awaiting the handing down of the NSW Budget on 21 June to see if, as Premier Dominic Perrottet has hinted, the government will lift its meagre 2.5% pay cap, in place since 2011.

This pay cap applies to NSW public servants, including government school teachers. While Catholic employers are not legally bound by it, they have a long tradition of taking their cue from it.

One Catholic diocese this week offered an increase to school staff that would exceed the pay cap. "But this offer doesn't come close to our claim," Northam said. "We call on all 11 dioceses to make a realistic pay offer to teachers to meet our claim of a 10% to 15% increase over two years. No other Catholic employer among the 11 dioceses has matched this move.

"Employers need to understand how strongly our members feel about these issues," said IEUA NSW/ACT Branch President Christine Wilkinson. "Salary justice and substantially better conditions are crucial."

The employers' offer for support staff pay rises has still not been detailed.

"If there is no improved offer after Friday, the IEU Executive will meet to consider further industrial action," Northam said. "If at first we don't succeed ...".

### Contacts

**Sydney** IEUA NSW/ACT Branch Secretary Mark Northam 0427 667 061

**Canberra** IEUA NSW/ACT Branch Deputy Secretary Carol Matthews 0418 272 902

**Newcastle** Therese Fitzgibbon 0427 936 072 **Wollongong** Pam Smith 0418 297 409

**Media** (local contacts and list of participating schools): Monica Crouch 0411 645 751; Sue Osborne 0430 220 254

*The IEUA NSW/ACT Branch represents over 32,000 teachers, principals and support staff in Catholic and independent schools, early childhood centres and post-secondary colleges.*

**Authorised by Mark Northam, Secretary, IEUA NSW/ACT Branch**