

INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS REPS AND MEMBERS UPDATE

1 August 2014

NO AGREEMENT YET

Despite misinformation that has been circulated by the Association of Independent schools, the Union has advised the Association of Independent Schools (AIS), representing approximately 200 independent schools, that the current proposed rates in the multi-enterprise agreements are too low.

UNION POSITION

The Union has told the AIS that we are aware that many members are unhappy with the proposed increases of 2% One Off Payments of Salary ("OOPS") in 2015 and a 2% increase in 2016. Members have also complained that the presently proposed increases are lower than those that teachers in DEC schools will receive over this period and lower than projected CPI.

The Union acknowledges the AIS argument that at least some schools cannot afford higher increases and that some schools are facing financial difficulties. For this reason, and to maintain the MEAs as agreements applying across all schools in the industry, the Union agreed to the OOPS payments in 2015 rather than a pay rise. OOPS have a major disadvantage for employees in that they are one - off lump sum payments and, unlike ordinary pay rises, do not contribute to base salary in future years.

The Union considers the proposed increases should be at least 2.5% (2.5% as OOPS in 2015 and 2.5% from 1 February as a pay rise in 2016), closer to the NSW Government increases.

OFFSET FOR SUPER

Under current federal legislation, compulsory superannuation increases of 0.5% are expected from 1 July in each of 2015 and 2016. If this legislation remains in place, then NSW DEC teachers will receive a 2% pay rise from January 2015 and 2.15% from January 2016 (because under state law public servants can receive a maximum 2.5% pay rise, inclusive of increases in super).

The Union has therefore indicated to the AIS that if the super increases remain in place we would recommend that members accept an increase of 2% (OOPS) in 2015 and 2% salary from 1 February 2016. **However if the Federal Government removes or delays the super increases, we would insist on a payment of 2.5% in each year.**

MY SCHOOL CAN AFFORD MORE

The Union is aware that some independent schools can afford to pay more than the AIS is offering. In 2011 approximately 20 schools signed "side deals" with the Union that provide for additional pay on top of MEA rates. These schools may be prepared to increase the side deals and other schools may be prepared to enter similar arrangements that sit alongside the MEA. If you think your school is in this category, call your Union Organiser immediately for assistance with a way forward.

AIS EXAGGERATES PAY LEVELS

The Union does not accept the AIS argument that AIS enterprise agreements currently provide for rates 8% and 10% above rates in government schools. It is a question of comparing apples with apples.

The application process for Band 3 in the Standards Teachers Agreement is onerous and some members do not apply at all, or do not apply when they first become eligible, because of the workload requirements. The effort required to apply can affect classroom teaching and performance of other leadership roles within the school as well as family responsibilities.

The Band 3 rate cannot simply be compared with the top incremental step (Step 13) in the DEC pay scale that is reached by automatic incremental progression. To a lesser extent, in the AIS Incremental Model Teachers Enterprise Agreement, the top step is Senior Teacher 1 and only available on application - not all teachers on Step 13 in AIS schools know they are eligible or choose to apply for Senior Teacher 1. The AIS Step 13 rate is only 2% above the corresponding DEC Step 13 rate.

In our view, the constant references by the AIS to the Band 3 rate being 10% above the DEC rate and Senior Teacher 1 being 8% above the DEC rate are not valid comparisons.

ACT TEACHERS

The AIS proposal for ACT teachers is not yet finalised.

The Union will advise members in ACT independent schools of any developments.

SUPPORT AND OPERATIONAL STAFF

The AIS has offered support and operational staff pay rises of 2% per annum from the first pay period on or after 1 February in 2015 and 2016. The Union has claimed 2.5% each year with the proviso that if super increases by 0.5%, the pay rise will be 2% per annum. Unlike the OOPS payments for teachers, both increases will be recurrent in that they contribute to the base salary for future increases.

WHAT SHOULD MEMBERS DO?

The Union is calling for members to meet in the next fortnight to discuss the pay claim with Union members and non-members. It is crucial that these are large and well-attended meetings.

Members need to let their principals know pay issues are important. Union officers are available to attend meetings to discuss with members strategies to achieve the best possible outcome.

Please see attached meeting notice for the Union Noticeboard.

For the Union
notice board



SPECIAL ENTERPRISE AGREEMENT MEETING

Date:

Time:

Place:

Agenda

1. hear a report on the Union/ AIS negotiations
2. discuss views of members on the proposed pay rises

All members should attend this important meeting.

