



news month

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Independent Education Union
of Australia NSW/ACT Branch
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 SEND A MESSAGE TO NSW GOVERNMENT:
TAKE TEACHER PAY SERIOUSLY



Finding a way forward

On Friday 4 August the IEU Executive was addressed by the Secretary of Unions NSW, Mark Morey. He spoke of teachers' deep frustration and resentment since the NSW election.

The promise to remove the 2.5% wage cap has been disregarded.

It is appropriate to look briefly over our shoulder at the past three decades. In essence, the Catholic systemic schools wage parity principle has been in operation all that time.

This means that government school teachers and Catholic systemic teachers in NSW earn the same salaries.

The 2022-3 Catholic campaign (Hear Our Voice) placed IEU members on the street to signal their discontent with severe teacher shortages, workload and salaries not commensurate with other professions.

IEU members marching with the NSW Teachers Federation under a banner 'The Profession United' sent a powerful message to the then Coalition government that all was not well in schools and the communities they serve.

Teacher shortages and the impact on teaching and learning was complex. The profession was and remains in crisis.

This joint union activity appears to have been lost on the new Labor government.

A deal done with the NSW Teachers Federation has been torpedoed. The pay arrangement negotiated had a commencing salary of \$85K with a top of the scale teacher at \$122K (effective October 2023).

The significant uplift was necessary to reset salaries at a level to attract and retain teachers.

Meanwhile, in the ACT a pay salary arrangement has been negotiated that extends

teacher salaries from \$90K-\$129K by 2026. Queensland teachers have achieved similar outcomes. The notion that you can rebuild a profession without the foundations being securely in place is illogical.

Attracting and retaining the existing workforce in NSW hinges on achieving pay outcomes which are comparable to the outcomes in the ACT and Queensland.

Members are contacting the Premier and Education Minister directly by email to signal their disaffection. School communities across NSW deserve better.

The way forward entails restoring the agreement and prioritising the wellbeing of schools.

Schools thrive on certainty and predictability. Put simply, staffing underpins the operation of every school. The IEU calls upon the Premier to "take teacher pay seriously"!

At time of publication, the IEU Executive had passed the following motion:

"Executive notes that negotiations on teacher pay are continuing between the NSW Teachers Federation and NSW Government. This Executive authorises the Secretary to implement protected action should the dispute not be resolved by Friday, 18 August.

"In the meantime, all members are urged to show their support for the campaign by sending a photo of their IEU Chapter urging their local MP to resolve the dispute on teacher pay. IEU will endeavour to get maximum publicity for these actions."

Mark Northam Secretary

Kicking goals for gender equality

The huge improvement between the 2007 FIFA Women's World Cup in China and the current one taking place in Australia and New Zealand can be put down to collective bargaining, Professional Footballers' Association (PFA) Co-Chief Executive Kate Gill said.

Speaking to IEU journalist Sue Osborne on the morning after the Australia's win against Canada, the former Matilda was over the moon not only about her team's result, but the huge crowds and high profile media coverage being garnered by the women's event.

"It's a massive, massive difference. In China there was no real media coverage. There were different conditions around how the players were treated. There is a welcome and distinct difference compared to what the players have now," Gill said.

"We in the women's game always knew the potential was there. The US has always been a leader in the way it has professionalised the game both domestically and on an international scale.

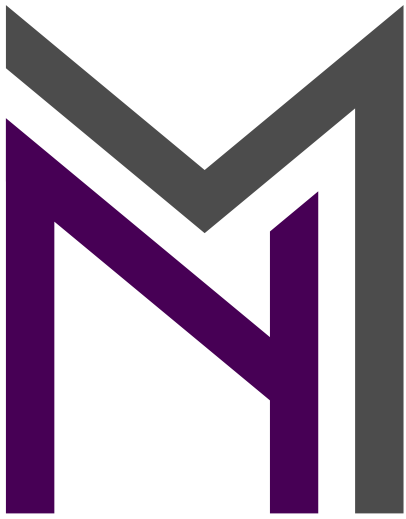
"In Australia it's been down to collective bargaining and the ability for the players to determine how they should be treated.

"Collective bargaining has played a huge role in getting the Matildas to where they are now."

"We're moving from this notion of gratitude, to being a worker, with labour rights. These rights need to be protected and you need to be able to negotiate and improve conditions. Collective bargaining has played a huge role in getting the Matildas to where they are now."

Continued on p5





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This publication was produced on the unceded lands of the Gadigal People of the Eora Nation. The IEUA NSW/ACT Branch acknowledges the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the traditional owners of the lands where we live, learn and work, and pay our respects to their Elders past and present.

The IEU stands with the Gomeroi against Santos

On Saturday 12 August, the IEU was part of a strong delegation of unionists to travel to Coonabarabran, through the Pilliga and on to Narrabri as part of the Stand with Gomeroi rally and road trip.

The union movement is supporting the Gomeroi people in their efforts to stop the Pilliga/Narrabri gas project, a project that will see Santos build 850 coal seam gas (CSG) wells on Gomeroi country in the Pilliga.

The delegation included members from Unions NSW, the Maritime Union of Australia (MUA), NSW Nurses and Midwives' Association (NSWNMA), the NSW Teachers Federation (NSWTF), National Tertiary Education Union (NTEU), United Workers Union (UWU), the Construction, Forestry, Mining and Energy Union (CFMEU), the Electrical Trades Union (ETU) and the Australian Services Union (ASU).

Matt Shields, a proud Gomeroi man and nurse, spoke passionately about why he opposes the project.

"For eons, the Pilliga forest has been a spiritual homeland and is intrinsically connected to the health and wellbeing of

my people. This project will see dramatic negative health impacts," Shields said.

"It's time for this country to respect First Nations people when they say no (to CSG projects). We are asking the government to respect the voice of Aboriginal people," he said.

"We will not accept that the decision by the previous Liberal government to approve this mine cannot be overturned. The NSWNMA are standing with the Gomeroi people in their struggle for self-determination and advocacy on their land."

Defending our frontier

IEUA NSW/ACT Branch Assistant Secretary David Towson spoke about IEU's commitment to stand with the Gomeroi.

"This whole country, every bit of it, has been a frontier at one stage. And here we are in the Pilliga. It remains a frontier which we must all fight to defend. We cannot afford to fail in this fight. We must endure. We must support the Gomeroi people in this fight. It's all our fight. It's our children's fight. We must prevail."

Where is the fight at now?

Although the NSW and Federal governments have made most approvals, the project has not yet cleared the Native Title system and there is no approval for the pipeline to connect it to the gas network. A decision is expected in 2024 – so the project can still be stopped.

It is worth noting that Santos already has more than 70 'exploration' wells. They have also been fined for contaminating an aquifer with uranium and heavy metals and for a 10,000 litre toxic waste spill that caused a 'dead zone' in the Pilliga. This alone shows how devastating the approval of the Pilliga/Narrabri gas project will be.

The IEU will continue to support the Gomeroi in their fight against Santos.

How you can support the campaign

- Join future solidarity actions
- Sign the petition at gomeroingaarr.org
- Write to your state and Federal MPs
- Share articles and social media posts from the IEU
- Read more info – <https://bit.ly/unionsnswpilliga>



Independent schools and the public sector teacher pay dispute

The recent pay offer from the NSW Government for teachers in NSW public schools puts pressure on bargaining for independent schools, as well as Catholic systemic schools. The proposed NSW Government scale contains seven incremental steps with increases of 12% for new graduates and 8% at the top and was intended to commence from October.

Although negotiations are continuing as we go to press and those pay rises are not guaranteed, the NSW Government and the NSW Teachers Federation are in talks to resolve the dispute.

Several groups of NSW independent schools are currently bargaining with the IEU about teacher pay - NSW Catholic independent schools (Models A, B and C) and NSW Christian schools represented by the AIS.

IEU will not recommend to members a pay offer which results in outcomes below the Department of Education and Catholic systemic rates, or which reduces existing relativities. So far, offers from these groups of independent schools are around 3% - 4% per annum, well short of the NSW Government deal.

Paid parental leave is also an issue. Catholic systemic schools agreed earlier this year that the 14 weeks paid parental leave for the initial primary caregiver of a baby after birth or adoption, usually the mother, would be exclusive of term breaks.

They have also introduced 12 weeks paid parental leave for the second primary caregiver of the baby if the mother goes back to work or study. This is an entitlement in the NSW public sector and common in large corporations and reflects changing societal attitudes about the importance of fathers caring for young children.

The IEU also welcomes the improvement in increasing paid maternity leave to 24 weeks that will be provided by Catholic Education Canberra & Goulburn from January 2024.

Independent schools cannot ignore these improvements when they formulate enterprise agreements for teachers and support staff. The IEU will resist the making of enterprise agreements that set in stone sub-standard conditions for three or four years.

Carol Matthews Deputy Secretary

Voice simply about fairness



Mark Northam
Secretary



It was a privilege indeed to be in conversation with Thomas Mayo and Kerry O'Brien. IEU members experienced an immersion deep inside the 'yes' vote campaign during an IEU webinar, In Conversation with Thomas Mayo and Kerry O'Brien, discussing the Voice to Parliament, on 1 August.

A simple analysis can be made – an injustice is being corrected. The opportunity for Australia to be perceived as being entirely fair and inclusive cannot be wasted.

Unions have and always will be vehicles for necessary reform. The following text is based on some of the discussion in the hour-long session, which I moderated with Professional Engagement Officer Pat Devery.

Mayo: "This is a really a commonsense proposal that we have a voice enshrined in the Constitution. Other nations, Scandinavia, Canada, New Zealand, have representative bodies from which the Indigenous peoples can be heard. It's fear mongering that this is going to be powerful enough to cause chaos in our democracy. The Solicitor General himself has debunked this myth of it causing chaos in our democracy.

O'Brien: Another one of the claims is that it would be somehow unhealthy for our Constitution to single out one group of people in Australian society. The Solicitor General says the Constitution would be enhanced and democracy

would be strengthened. Those who try to argue that there's some kind of special privilege being handed to Indigenous people, who have been the most downtrodden, the most marginalised group in this country, to our great shame ever since Phillip planted the flag, are wrong. Academics and the Solicitor General all say the same thing. There is nothing to fear or worry about in what this referendum would deliver. It would enhance us as a nation.

“Trade unions came into existence to represent the downtrodden and to represent the exploited. And that’s exactly what this is about.”

Nobody has made a dent in any of the statements of fact and claims that are being made on behalf of the 'yes' campaign. But I think it helps sometimes to look at the people who are speaking and make your judgments about whether you can believe them or not. It just seems to me that there's a sense of honour about the activists who have been fighting for a Voice, the Indigenous people who have been struggling to be heard for so long on this.

For the first time since white people arrived in this country, Indigenous people will be recognised as the first arrivals in this country, and those who had custodianship over it for 65,000 years. It is a right to be able to speak to the Parliament, to the government from outside Canberra, from all those communities that have been so devastated generationally.

Mayo: We cannot blame the media. We cannot blame the 'no' campaign. We've got to do the work ourselves. The media generally has not been helpful. The 'no' campaigners are contradicting themselves, are trying to scare people. Telling lies. We need to get over that. We're going to have one shot at this. Just one shot in our lifetimes to see Indigenous people included in our Constitution and to give them a say to be able to close the gap. And it's up to us. In our unions, in our organisations, we've got to pick this up and run.

O'Brien: I think it is an issue of fairness and fairness goes to the heart of what this nation is supposed to be or should be, or what we might want it to be. There's been a great deal spoken about egalitarianism in this country. What does egalitarianism mean? The trade unions deal in fairness and equity. Trade unions came into existence to represent the downtrodden and to represent the exploited. And that's exactly what this is about.

Many thanks to the large IEU audience. The importance of school communities engaging positively with the YES campaign cannot be underestimated.

Settlement close in the ACT

Carol Matthews
Deputy Secretary



The IEU has been negotiating in recent months with Catholic Education Archdiocese of Canberra & Goulburn (CE) concerning rates of pay for teachers employed in ACT Catholic systemic schools.

This follows the making of a new enterprise agreement between the Australian Education Union (AEU) and the ACT Government, applying to teachers in ACT government schools.

What has been agreed for ACT teachers in government schools?

In 2023, ACT Government teachers will receive an increase in salary of \$1,750 back-dated to January 2023, an increase of 1% back-dated to June and a further pay rise of \$1,750 in December. In addition,

ACT teachers in public schools will receive a one-off payment of \$1,250. By December 2023, the top step will be \$119,288, compared to the rate prior to the enterprise agreement (EA) of \$114,624.

From January 2024, a new shorter pay scale will be introduced which provides higher increases at particular steps, including a new graduate rate and a new top step. By the end of the EA in March 2026, the top incremental step will be \$129,107 and the new graduate rate will be \$91,937. This reflects an increase of 13% at the top step and nearly 20% on the starting rate over the life of the EA.

Negotiations with CE

IEU has been negotiating with CE to implement the same pay rises for teachers in ACT Catholic systemic schools. The existing ACT pay scale in the Catholic Systemic Schools EA is based on the model in NSW Catholic and government

schools. The Catholic systemic scale is shorter (so progression is quicker) than the current ACT Government pay scale and movement up the scale depends on a teacher's TQJ registration status as well as years of service.

The parties have been discussing how to translate the new pay rates into the Catholic pay scale.

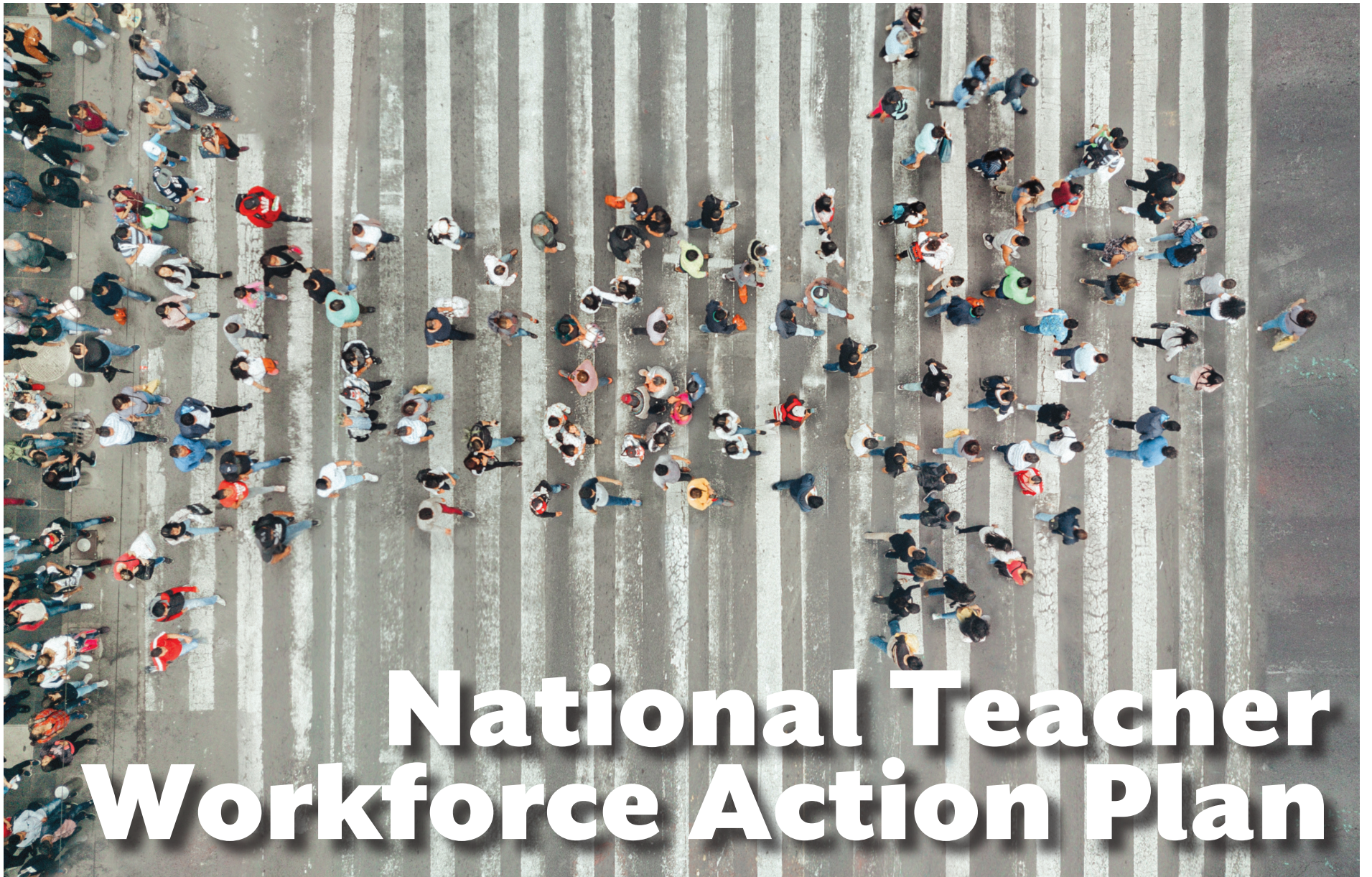
CE has been reluctant to pay the many small increases that will be paid by the ACT Government and would prefer to pay larger increases in August each year. For example, under the proposed CE model, the increases in 2023 will apply from the first pay period from 1 August 2023. New rates from August 2023 will include:

\$84,978 - new Graduate
\$119,288 - top Proficient step.

IEU has calculated the amount received by a teacher in a Catholic

school on each step in 2023 compared to the amount received by a teacher in an ACT Government school, including the one-off payment of \$1,250 and the back pay to January 2023 which is part of the Government deal. The IEU has some concerns about the 2023 rates for particular classifications, including backpay in 2023 for teachers on the top step of the teacher scale. We are continuing to meet CE to try to resolve these issues. A meeting is scheduled for 14 August.

Discussions will continue. A possible NSW public sector settlement will also be relevant to the structure of the teacher pay scale.



National Teacher Workforce Action Plan

Workload continues to be a critical problem for teachers in our schools. The National Teacher Workforce Action Plan (NTWAP), released in November 2022 on behalf of all education ministers (federal, state and territory), includes Priority 3, “Keeping the teachers we have”.

Specific objectives include “Reduce unnecessary teacher workload,” “Develop national guidelines to support early career teachers and new school leaders including mentoring and induction,” and “Examine how to support implementation of the national curriculum”.

NTWAP is just one of many reports that acknowledges that something must be done about teacher workload. The IEU is determined that measures to reduce workload are also implemented in the non-government sector. We recognise the commitment of NESAs to achieving real change in teacher workload but our employers must play their part.

In this context, the IEU is seeking employer action to implement measures resulting from the May 2023 release of the NESAs Fact Sheets on Curriculum – school registration requirements and Curriculum

– programming and record keeping as a starting point for school level discussions.

The IEU reprinted the Fact Sheets as a poster in our June and July issues of *Newsmonth* with explanatory comments, that have been reviewed by NESAs. We have also provided the NESAs Fact Sheets and poster to employers and discussed their content with groups of principals. See p7.

Please bring your June or July issue of *Newsmonth* to school to discuss how the Fact Sheets can help achieve real workload reduction. To accompany the poster, the IEU has developed a sample list of activities

which might be happening in your school, are not required by NESAs and which unnecessarily add to teacher workload.

For sample list and information, see bit.ly/nesa workload list. Are you doing too much in the name of compliance? If any of the sample list of activities are happening in your school, members are encouraged to commence a professional discussion with their principal and school leadership team to see if they can reduce unnecessary workload.

IEU organisers can assist at your Chapter meeting in the professional discussion.



Rugby League players’ dispute resolved

The Rugby League Players’ Association (RLPA) has reached in-principle agreement with the NRL on an historic collective bargaining agreement (CBA), following 18 months of negotiations.

The RLPA received backing from many quarters including St Francis Xavier’s College Hamilton, where teachers came out to publicly show their support to the players (pictured).

Many Catholic schools are breeding grounds for NRL and NRLW talent. St Francis Xavier’s College Hamilton is no exception, with current and former players Danny Buderus, Michael Hodgson, Tom Starling, Anthony Quinn, Clive Churchill, John Morris, Lachlan Fitzgibbon and Sam Stone all alumni.

Another former student and ex-player is Clint Newton, who played for the Newcastle Knights among others and is now CEO of the RLPA, heading up its negotiations.

St Francis Xavier’s College TAS Leader of Learning Rowan Kelly said the teachers love the game, and he had empathised particularly with the RLPA’s quest to have an independent industrial umpire oversee their negotiations.

“The NRL was saying ‘no’ to an independent umpire – that was the dispute we had three or four years ago, where our employer didn’t want us to have an independent umpire, so we took industrial action and won that into our agreements,” Rowan said.

In 2017 negotiations between the IEU and the Catholic Commission of Employment Relations (CCER) for a new

enterprise agreement for NSW and ACT Catholic systemic schools stalled because the CCER refused to recognise the power of the Fair Work Commission to arbitrate on industrial disputes.

The RLPA said once its historic collective bargaining agreement (CBA) is ratified, it will set rugby league up for the future, while ensuring the rights of all NRL and NRLW players – current and future – are protected.

The RLPA acknowledged the efforts of the NRL to resolve the CBA, and thanked its members for their resolve in ensuring a fair agreement that benefits the game and all of its stakeholders.

Sue Osborne Journalist

Continued from p1

Kicking goals for gender equality



Gill grew up in Newcastle and attended Hunter Valley Grammar School. She started playing football as a four-year-old with the New Lambton Falcons, thanks to the influence of her grandfather, who loved the game.

She said she was attracted to Hunter Valley Grammar School because it had “lots of grass, I fell in love with the playing field”. Teachers at the school supported her throughout her career and several still stay in touch with her now.

Playing with the boys

She loved the game and played with the boys until the age of 16.

“I was reluctant to join the women’s side of the game because I had no female role models, I didn’t know who the Matildas were.

“I thought I’d be playing in the men’s league my whole life and was aspiring to play for Everton in the [English] Premier League.”

Nowadays, of course, Everton does field a professional women’s team, so Gill’s childhood dream could have become a reality.

But back in the early 2000s, she played with the Women’s National Soccer League, with the Newcastle Jets in the W League (now A League Women) before moving to play with Swedish teams in 2009.

From 2004-2015 she was a striker for the Matildas, playing in the 2007 World Cup, turning out 86 times for the national side, and scoring 40 goals for the Matildas, but sadly ruptured her anterior cruciate ligament just before the 2011 World Cup.

She was always a member of the PFA, and when her playing career ended, moving full-time into union activism seemed like a natural next step.

“Once I stopped playing, I had about six months where I just wanted to break away from football, and then turned my attention to how I could improve football in this country.

“I was a delegate for the Matildas and then I joined our executive committee. I always really believed in the power of the union and the power of the collective.

“I approached the PFA and ask if they would consider a role for me organising female players. My attention was on the domestic game and the W League.

“We were losing a lot of our talent from that competition purely because they couldn’t afford to play in it anymore. They were getting injured, they didn’t have medical protection to allow them to keep playing or if they wanted to start a family.

“My challenge was how can we make sure that we can keep our players in the game by improving the conditions they’re entitled to?

“I thought the best way to influence and create change was through the union and giving the players a legitimate voice, so they had dignity and respect from their career.

“We had to make the players see themselves as workers and take Football Federation Australia, the competition administrator at that time, on that journey as well.”

The PFA covers the Matildas, the Socceroos, A League Men and Women and Australian players overseas. Gill is Co-Chief Executive with former A League player Beau Busch, and they equally represent all genders.

“It’s important we are both seen working for either gender.”

Global perspective

Gill said the success of the 2023 World Cup had the power to change the lot of women players globally. The PFA has been involved in a lot of international activism.

“In 2019, prior to the equal pay chant that rang around the stadiums in France, we had looked at fighting FIFA and positioning a legal case against them based on the discrimination that they’ve shown for the female players in relation to the prize money for the FIFA Women’s World Cup,” Gill said.

“We started that movement because we could see just how impactful that could be, and while the prize money has increased, I find it quite ironic that they’re [FIFA] championing equality when they’re paying the women 25% of what they pay the men.”

Equality at the 2027 Women’s World Cup (venue yet to be announced) is the PFA goal.

“FIFA say a lot without doing much, so it’s up to the PFA, and FIFPRO [Fédération Internationale des Associations de Footballeurs Professionnels, the global players’ union] to challenge them. If we can get to a position where we are collectively bargaining the rights of players in these tournaments, then that’s when things will really start to change.”

In 2019, the PFA was nominated for an award by the Human Rights Commission for its work supporting the release of Bahraini refugee Hakeem al-Araibi who was detained in Thailand at the behest of the Bahraini authorities, who accused him of vandalising a police station, even though he was playing football at the time of the crime.

PFA Champion Brendan Schwab, life member Craig Foster, former Chief Executive John Didulica and current Chair Francis Awaritefe were high profile voices speaking out on behalf of al-Araibi, who was eventually released and is now an Australian citizen.

The PFA also supports the Afghan women’s team, living in exile in Australia, and not recognised by FIFA. They have had to sit on the sidelines watching this 2023 World Cup. See p15 for more information.

The PFA has helped find them a home with Melbourne Victory and allowed them to play in the Melbourne competition, provided them with training.

“It’s disappointing that FIFA won’t recognise them as a national team, so there’s still a lot of work to do for them. We lobbied government to write to FIFA to reinstate the Afghan women’s team.

“FIFA has a lot of members who they try and keep happy and it’s extremely political and about shopping for votes. The current President just wants to remain in power.”

Even teams such as England, Canada, Nigeria and Columbia are still in pay disputes with their presiding authorities as the 2023 World Cup unfolds. Despite the massive commercial success and popularity of the event, there is still a long way to go in women’s football.

“It’s sad to see the sacrifices that all these players must make. They do it around the Women’s World Cup because it gives them a platform and exposure, but it comes with a consequence.”

Gill was hoping for a Matildas win against Denmark in their next match at the time of her interview, and said if they could make it to the quarter-finals, it would be “massive” for the Matildas and women’s sport in Australia.

IEUA NSW/ACT SAYS VOTE YES TO A VOICE TO PARLIAMENT

Authorised by Mark Northam, Secretary, Independent Education Union of Australia NSW/ACT Branch

Helping IEU Reps help you



Training for IEU Reps at Lennox Head on the north coast

North Coast Sub Branch President Kath Egan and Mid-North Coast Sub Branch President Markus Muschal with the new IEU Reps' Handbook at the north coast IEU Reps training day at Lennox Head.

The combined North Coast and Mid North Coast Reps training day was held at Lennox Head Cultural Centre on Monday 24 July

IEU Reps' training is back with a bang. Louise Hughes, President Central West Branch, said, "In today's ever-changing workplaces, the importance of training has never been greater.

"Training is a foundational step in ensuring that the Rep can fulfill duties with confidence and are made aware of constant changes that warrant action," Louise said.

"It's also a viable opportunity to ensure that you are updated with current and valuable information to support the best practices within your role as a Rep.

"Since becoming a Rep for my school, I have attended multiple training days where I have walked away with new-found knowledge that has enabled me to positively share with members.

"I believe that it is crucial to continue undergoing constant training to improve skills and personal attributes as they will further supplement understanding of IEU practices. It strengthens a smoother delivery of concrete information that will support the journey of fellow union members.

"Rep training days also enhance the provision of valued information to assist Reps to positively respond to queries within their fields of employment.

"Creating learning content is the most important element of training, but it can also signify challenge.

"This is purely due to the fast-paced nature of the modern workplace as well as the overall importance of ensuring that the training necessities are fully packed but concise.

"The workshop of scenarios helped to understand and grasp the possible issues that may arise within your school. For example; how would you deal with a support staff member has been asked to work overtime before the upcoming awards night. She is happy to work the hours but no payment has been mentioned and she is not sure how to proceed.

"The recent Reps' training day that I attended had relevant information that assisted an array of opportunities that instantly connected the interest of the Reps. To top off a wondrous day of training, Reps were

presented with a handbook that further supported their role. This proved to be a great asset to the existing Reps and to those that were new to the role.

"I would like to thank Pat Devery for his concise and knowledgeable content that he presented. Secretary Mark Northam was an added bonus on the day with insight into the latest enterprise agreements and his comprehensive understanding of all things that engulf the IEU. The presence of Jackie Groom was also enriching and the sharing of valuable knowledge was a credit to her years of experience.

"I would sincerely encourage all Reps to attend at least one training day as this would provide a deeper awareness to the spontaneous phenomenon that occur within the IEU."

AIS offer to Christian schools falls short

The IEU believes the Association of Independent Schools (AIS) offer to its Christian schools falls well short of what is required in the current climate of teacher shortages, cost-of-living crisis, and employer offers in NSW government schools, Catholic systemic schools and ACT government schools. Their offer is 4% January 2024, 3% January 2025 and 3% January 2026.

The following proposals have some merit provide that graduate teachers who are engaged on Band 1 and have at least two years of full-time service are able to progress to Band 2, Step 8 immediately upon becoming accredited as a proficient teacher.

However, the lack of movement on wage parity with government schools and parental leave is disappointing to say the least.

As was pointed out at the meeting, the ACT Government's recent offer to teachers includes percentage increases of more than 20% over three years for most classifications and will result in a C10 teacher being paid \$129,106 per annum by the end of 2025.

In relation to support staff, an experienced teacher's aide (Level 4.4) under the Catholic systemic agreement now earns \$88,852 per annum (unaveraged). The equivalent classification

in the AIS Christian Schools agreement earns \$74,037 (unaveraged).

The shortfall in parental leave benefits could not be starker, as the table shows Teachers on Step 12 AIS Christian Schools EA compared to Band 2 Level 5 Catholic Systemic Agreement – 18 weeks Federal PPL scheme.

Generally, government funding of independent schools has increased substantially recently, however, it appears AIS Christian schools are unwilling to commit this additional funding to their most important resource – their staff.

Agreement	Paid Parental leave initial caregiver	Paid parental leave – non initial caregiver
AIS Christian	\$35,010	\$4,045 (from personal/carers leave balance)
Catholic Systemic	\$46,245	\$26,016



Reps training is back

After a lengthy spell on the sidelines, due in no small part to the critical teacher shortages, Reps training is back.

The revamped course provides valuable information for Reps including exploring where employees secure their working rights, how to effectively support individual members, and activating and organising your chapter.

New Reps' Handbook

As part of the training the Reps have been reviewing draft versions of the new Reps Handbook which has now been finalised and circulated to Reps. From providing suggestions on planning Chapter meetings and visits from your IEU organiser to practical advice on how to support members in a meeting, this handbook will provide a valuable resource for all current and aspiring Reps. <https://bit.ly/2023repsbook>

To date Reps' training courses have been run in the North West, North Coast, Southern Suburbs, South Coast, Landsdowne, Central West, and Monaro Sub Branches and below is a sample of the feedback from some very satisfied Reps:

"Loved it! My first training day and I couldn't have asked for a better start to my time as a Rep."

"It was fantastic to be involved and to become more informed."

"As a school support officer member and Rep for our school I found today very informative and helped me understand problems facing our members, especially teachers, and how to assist them. Well done."

"I found the day really useful in answering questions and my next steps as a union Rep and how to best support my members. Thank you."

"Thanks to all the IEU staff for a well organised, informative, and educational day. Great discussion and nice to see so many Reps here."

"Thank you. Most worthwhile! Enjoyed the collegiality."

"Thank you for a great day's training. It is always good to have knowledge refreshed for confidence building."

"Very useful and motivating to be a Rep. The 'how to deal with situations' was very helpful and eye-opening!"

"Passion and knowledge from presenters and organisers present is clearly evident – made me feel inspired to speak out and up in my school."

"A very informative and very interesting way to present the issues that most of us need to know about. Keeping doing the good job."

"A great day. Thank you for supporting us country Reps. It was very informative."

We appreciate that some of the dates this year were somewhat hastily scheduled, preventing several Reps from attending. For 2024 we will return to the process of scheduling the training days on the calendar well in advance.

Pat Devery
Professional Engagement Coordinator

Professional Engagement 'Best Practice' replacing compliance

Since the release of the NESAs Curriculum Fact Sheets it has been encouraging to see Chapters engaging in professional discussions with leadership teams regarding the unnecessary workload generated in the name of compliance.

The IEU has commenced discussions with principals and employer groups to unpack these documents to address workload issues in schools.

Some systems continue to claim that their data collection and record keeping practices, above those required to satisfy minimum regulatory compliance needs, are essential to meet the high standards expected by parents and the school community.

Where this is occurring, the IEU would encourage school leaders to take the parent community on a learning journey so that they might better understand what best practice teaching and learning looks like.

Members are reminded that nowhere in the NESAs Fact Sheets does it mention the concept of 'minimum requirements'. NESAs requires schools to be compliant, period. There are no degrees of compliance. There are, however, many degrees of over-compliance and NESAs invites schools to consider the purpose of any additional expectations.

Continuous improvements, continuing workload

As excessive compliance issues begin to be addressed in schools, it is becoming obvious that the various professional growth in action or professional performance plans around the state continue to prove burdensome.

Members will recall that these processes were put in place some years ago, as part of AITSLs Teacher Performance and Development Framework, for systems and schools to qualify for funding.

Even though teaching is one of the most visible professions, and a teacher's adherence to the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers is discernible at every moment of the day, excessive processes were put in place requiring teachers to spend time and energy on administrative activities.

The IEU has offered to provide feedback to AITSL around these processes to develop compliance clarifying documentation. The IEU believes that a thriving culture of continuous improvement depends on respect for professional autonomy and the reduction of unnecessary and duplicative workloads. These principles will underpin any feedback we provide.

Pat Devery Professional Engagement Coordinator

Check out the IEU's NESAs poster

IEUA NSW/ACT PULLOUT POSTER

The facts about NESAs compliance: **Are you still doing too much?**

IEU members regularly identify NESAs compliance as a significant factor contributing to excessive teacher workload. NESAs has advised that they do not require the level of detail or duplication often requested at the school level for compliance purposes, Pat Devery writes.

Where then, is the workload being generated? To bring some clarity to what is and is not required for compliance purposes, NESAs has produced two curriculum fact sheets focusing on school registration requirements, programming and record keeping.

This double-page poster for your IEU noticeboard will assist members identifying which of their current practices might be set aside or modified to cut down on workload.

IEU
Independent Education Union of Australia NSW/ACT Branch

Remunerate, recognise and retain: **Independent schools step up**

Your union has recently been conducting a campaign in independent schools for recognition of increased workloads and the rising cost of living.

Independent schools are currently approaching the end of the third year of their four-year MEA (expiry January 2025), and the pay rises agreed for the MEA in late 2021 (3.28%, 2.28% & 2.53% next year) were considered reasonable at the time, but have since proved to be inadequate in the light of the spike in inflation over the last year or so.

IEU Council endorsed a plan to lobby (and if need be, pressure) AIS schools into giving some additional cost-of-living payments, over and above those in the MEA. A *NewsExtra* went out in May calling for a 1% one-off payment of salary (OOPS), or other arrangement as the Chapter might feel is appropriate.

Pleasingly, some schools stepped up and have done the right thing by their staff by making some moves to rectify the shortcomings of the 2021 MEA. These include the 17 schools of the Anglican Schools Corporation, who paid a 1% payment to all staff earlier in the year. Since then, several other schools have followed suit, including:

- Al Faisal College (three campuses) – \$1000 payment to all staff (teachers and SAO)
- Al Zahra – 1% additional salary
- Central Coast Grammar School – 2 x OOPS payment, 1% in February, 0.5% in June
- Elouera Special School – Increases in salary in 2023 and 2024, amounting to a total of 3.5% in each year (roughly 2.2% over MEA in total)
- Emanuel School – OOPS payment of 1.5% in July
- Kincoppal – introduced over-MEA of 1% for the first time in 2022
- Knox Grammar (all campuses) – Increased salaries by 3% in 2023, 0.72% above MEA
- Malek Fahd (3 campuses) – 1% OOPS in June
- Orana Steiner School – paid 3.98% in 2023, about 1.7% above MEA
- Radford College – 1% salary increase for teachers over MEA paid in February
- Stella Maris, Manly – 1% additional into salary, and
- William Clarke College – 1% salary increase in both June and October 2023.

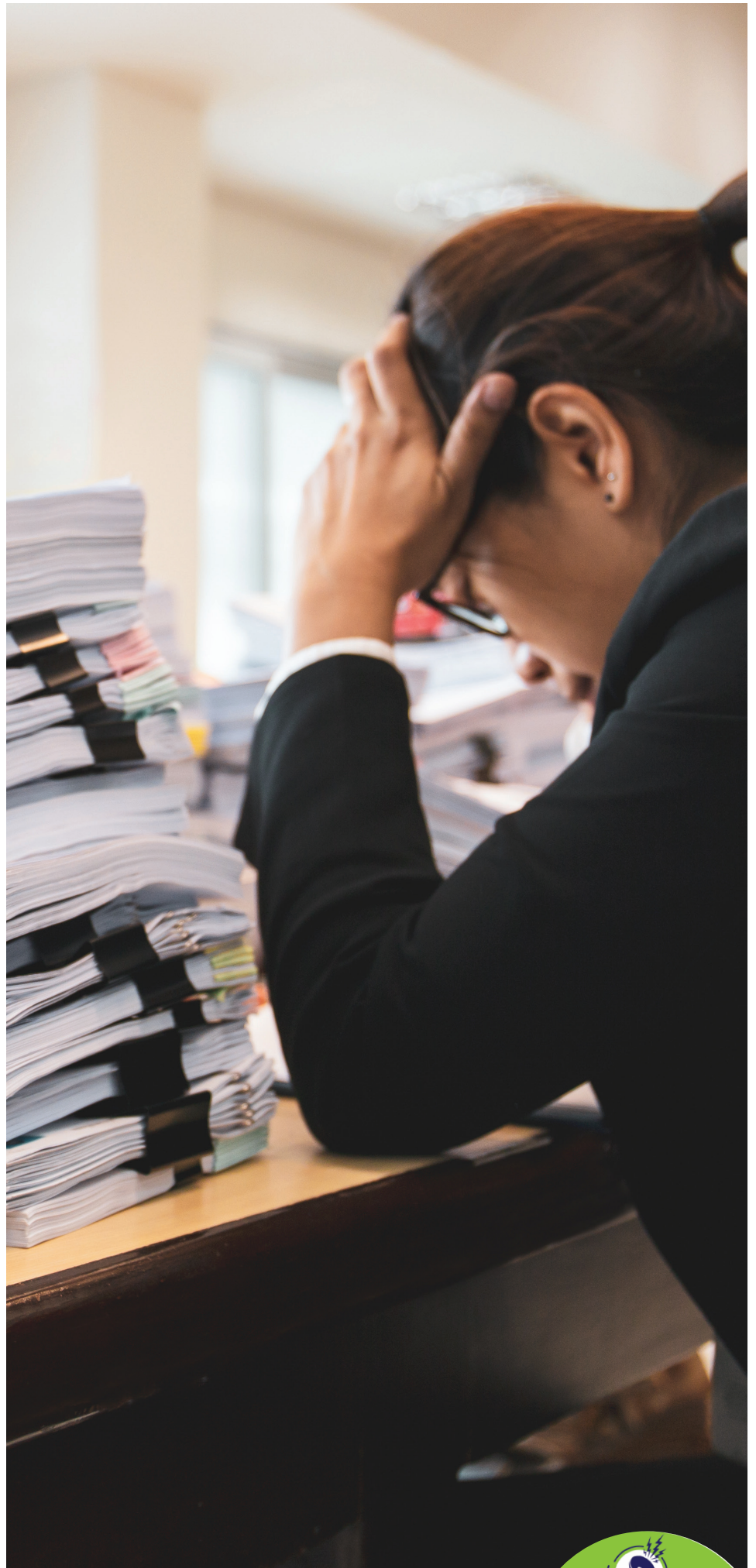
The IEU commends these schools for recognising the work and commitment of their staff and the cost-of-living concerns they have raised.

Unfortunately, most independent schools continue to sit on their hands and hide behind the MEA settlement. Members in independent schools should contact their Organiser to discuss how best to put pressure on your school to not only step up but keep up with schools in other sectors.

Agreeing to make payments like these would not only benefit staff, but also the schools themselves, given the well-documented staffing shortages that are being reported across all schools. Business as usual will no longer cut it, and staff are making their voices heard by going elsewhere.

The union is calling upon schools to 'remunerate, recognise and retain'.

Kendall Warren and **Lubna Haddad** Organisers



Support staff: Are you correctly reclassified and receiving the correct pay rate?

In late May, the IEU reached agreement with all NSW and ACT dioceses (except Broken Bay, which has a separate agreement) on the terms of an interim settlement agreement, which secured benefits for our support staff members, while discussions continue with dioceses about teachers' workloads.

Many support staff members in Catholic diocesan schools have now received

notice from their employer of the pay increases and any reclassifications as a result of the interim settlement. The pay rises and new classifications for support staff employed in the School Administrative Services Stream and the Classroom and Learning Support Services Stream were the result of a long campaign to establish pay parity with school administrative and support staff working in comparable roles in

NSW public schools. They apply to staff in these streams who are currently classified at Levels 4, 5 and 6.

The new rates are backdated to the first full pay period on or after 1 January 2023.

However, given the complex nature of the changes, some members are still waiting to receive their new pay rates and back pay. And others have been given the wrong classifications.

Dioceses (except Broken Bay) will now also be paying an additional 4% from July 2023.

Check this QR code to find your correct pay rate





Early Childhood Education & Care



IEU the union for early childhood teachers

UPDATE

A long and difficult road ends in success

The enterprise agreement (EA) for a community-based preschool run by a local church reached its nominal expiry date and members contacted the IEU to request that we write to their employer seeking to commence negotiations for a new EA.

The IEU wrote to the president of the management committee that month, who indicated they were meeting with their representative due to a lack of expertise with EAs.

Three months later bargaining commenced, and the IEU gave the management committee our Log of Claims. Agreement on conditions was reached and although the initial pay offer was rejected by members, employees later accepted an improved pay offer from the employer.

The management committee indicated their representative would draft the agreement. The IEU wrote to the committee requesting a copy of the draft agreement on several occasions. However, no draft agreement was forthcoming.

The IEU then sought to schedule further bargaining meetings. Unfortunately, the committee indicated that no meetings would be scheduled. The IEU wrote to them citing their failure to meet good faith bargaining provisions by refusing to attend meetings, and they promptly withdrew from the bargaining process.

The IEU continued to write to the committee seeking to recommence bargaining but no progress was made as they failed to respond to the IEU's letters.

Our members continued to indicate their dissatisfaction with the lack of progress on behalf of their employer. The IEU had no choice but to lodge a bargaining dispute with the Fair Work Commission (FWC). This resulted in a

bargaining meeting between the union, the employer's legal representative and the committee president within two weeks of the FWC case conference.

Subsequently, the committee's representative agreed to annual increases of 4% to pay and allowances, three-year trained teachers at the preschool to be paid on the higher four-year trained pay scale, 10 hours of paid leave for teachers to attend NESAC accredited training, employer to pay for mandatory and approved training and employees to access pro-rata long service leave after 7.5 years.

Members unanimously accepted the offer and most employees voted in favour of the new enterprise agreement, which is awaiting approval from the FWC. This is a big win for members in this preschool.

Paid lunch breaks

The IEU was contacted by a member employed in a long day care centre operated by a Local Health District (LHD) under the umbrella of the Ministry of Health to ask about whether lunch breaks should be paid. The early childhood teachers at the centre were rostered on 8.5 hour shifts with an unpaid lunch break and a paid 20-minute tea break.

IEU Organiser Lisa James advised that the *Teachers' (NSW health Early Childhood Service Centres) Salaries and Miscellaneous Conditions Award 2022* specifies that teachers receive a paid midday crib break. The IEU then wrote to Human Resources in the relevant LHD and advised them that IEU members had no agreement in writing for unpaid lunch breaks for teachers at their workplace. The union stated that as this is the case, teachers are entitled to paid lunch breaks as per clause 4.1 of the award, which states:

"Not more than 30 minutes nor less than 20 minutes shall be allowed to teachers each day for a midday paid crib break. Such crib break shall be counted as time worked.

"Provided however that a teacher may, by agreement with the employer, leave the premises or elect not to be on call during the crib break. Where a reasonable request has been made by the teacher, the employer shall give favourable consideration to any such request. During this time, the teacher cannot be counted as part of the child/staff ratios under the Education and Care Services National Regulations. Such time away from the premises or not on call shall not count as time worked nor shall any payment be made for such time.

"However if the teacher is called back to perform any duties within the centre of the break and it is interrupted for any reason, the teacher shall be paid at time and a half for a minimum of 15 minutes and thereafter to the nearest quarter hour until an uninterrupted break or the balance of the break is taken.

"Notation: It is agreed between the parties that any agreement between the teacher and the employer concerning an unpaid crib break must be genuine. For example, a teacher cannot be required by the employer to agree to an unpaid crib break as a condition of employment. Any agreement should be recorded in writing and kept with pay records."

As a result, members are in the process of receiving a significant amount of backpay for their unpaid lunch breaks. The IEU has written to other LHD centres to ascertain whether teachers are paid for their lunch breaks.

Lisa James Organiser

Bargaining bid for long day care centres

The IEU is keen to recruit Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) teachers who work for St Nicholas Early Education, which are administered by the Catholic Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle.

While many of the centres are situated on the grounds of Catholic schools, the teachers that work in them may earn \$22,000 a year less than their colleagues on the other side of the school fence.

Using the *Secure Work Better Jobs Act* reforms, passed by the Federal Government in June, groups of employees can bargain with a block of employers for an enterprise agreement.

The IEU, along with the United Workers Union (UWU) and Australian Education Union (AEU), has already lodged a separate supported bargaining application with the Fair Work Commission involving 65 employers in the ECEC sector.

Big Fat Smile, which runs centres around Sydney and Wollongong, is included in this application.

The IEU would like to lodge an application on behalf of St Nicholas Early Education teachers.

The union is also exploring opportunities in other parts of NSW where there are groups of teachers that would benefit from being part of a multi-enterprise agreement.

Preparing for the Voice resources

The Edmund Rice Centre (ERC) for Justice and Community Education has produced resources to help teachers and students understand the Voice to Parliament referendum and the Uluru Statement from the Heart.

ERC believes people can change the world through education, and is dedicated to raising awareness, leading to advocacy and social action.

ERC has a long history of working for reconciliation, even sending a group to Ireland in the 1990s to learn about its reconciliation process.

A group of dedicated staff and volunteers, including some former teachers, meet fortnightly in a Yarning Circle to discuss activism around the Voice and reconciliation in general.

Supporting the vote 'yes' campaign was just another step in the journey for the

group, which has a focus on social justice, Indigenous rights and eco-justice.

In Australia there are 55 EREA schools, (Christian Brothers) and many IEU members are employed in these schools.

All the resources produced by ERC are produced in collaboration with Dr Darryl Cronin, their Indigenous Research Officer based in Darwin.

They even commissioned an artwork ER4 Uluru by David Riley, symbolising the ERC supporting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to support the invitation arising out of the Uluru Statement from the Heart. One of the staff members is from a Bangladeshi community, and he is trying to spread understanding about the referendum within that group, although he said so far knowledge levels are low.

ERC runs the Justice Through the Arts Program, where teachers and students

can learn about social justice issues and express their ideas and research through arts activities. The theme that is promoted in this program is hope.

ERC is also facilitating Kitchen Table Conversations, a process designed to allow small groups to respectfully discuss the Voice; and a national online youth forum, being hosted by Marcellin College in Melbourne, to try and get Year 12 students to understand that they can change history by voting in the referendum.

The resources ERC produces are not just for EREA schools. Any educational institution, including public schools, can access them.

"It's about spreading the message," Education Officer Marisa Brattoni said.

The ERC is currently working with and partnering with many other social justice groups, local community groups

particularly and unions, because of their strong support for the 'yes' campaign.

Marisa said the take-up of the Uluru Statement from the Heart Resource Kit for Teachers has been well received, with teachers using it to raise awareness about the Uluru Statement from the Heart in their school communities.

The group hopes that they can continue working with other groups, as well as promoting the resources and material that are available and emphasising that the 'yes' vote is a simple non-political message, putting hope in favour of fear.

To access teacher resources from ERC, see www.erc.org.au/resources_for_schools

Sue Osborne Journalist



Campaign conversations for 'yes'

A small group of IEU members was provided with information and strategies to become effective advocates for this historic vote at a two-hour workshop in July.

The workshop, at the IEU's main office in Ultimo, focused on the key campaign messages and having the most effective conversations to persuade workmates, friends, neighbours and fellow community members to vote 'yes'.

The workshop outlined the positioning of the Unions for YES! Campaign and included a basic overview of the Uluru Statement from the Heart.

Participants also learnt about connecting with the campaign and building conversation skills, explore the key campaign messaging and develop strategies to contextualise the campaign messaging for friends and colleagues.



10 Guiding Principles

- 1 Does not diminish Aboriginal sovereignty and Torres Strait Islander sovereignty.
- 2 Involves substantive, structural reform.
- 3 Advances self-determination and the standards established under the *UNDRIP*.
- 4 Recognises the status and rights of First Nations.
- 5 Tells the truth of history.
- 6 Does not impede on future advancement.
- 7 Does not deny opportunity of reform.
- 8 Provides a pathway for First Nations agreement-making.
- 9 Has the support of First Nations.
- 10 Does not conflict with current and future legal arrangements.



St Columba Anglican School proud recipient of IEU Environment Grant

St Columba Anglican School Port Macquarie is an independent school offering co-educational education from Kindergarten to Year 12.

Situated on 36 acres in a semi-rural expanse alongside one of the region's vast nature reserves, the school enjoys frequent visits from eastern grey kangaroos and various native bird species.

A designated koala corridor exists along the school's northern border. The school's commitment to sustainability, under the guidance of recently retired teacher Anni Kiehn and a group of enthusiastic students, aims to foster lasting changes for both present and future generations.

Their efforts in recent years encompass diverse initiatives. Among them is a Return and Earn bottle and can recycling initiative, complemented by recycling programs for items like pens and batteries.

Waste-free 'nude lunchboxes', hives of native bees, the flourishing Wambuyn bush food garden, and multiple vegetable patches all stand as testaments to their eco-conscious endeavours. The school also engages in planting and weed control in the adjoining reserve.

However, one aspect of environmental stewardship stands out as the students' focus — the preservation of koalas. The Port Macquarie-Hastings region has one of the largest koala populations in Australia. Recognising the shared responsibility for the survival of these iconic creatures, the whole school champions this cause.

As of 2022, the koala has been classified as an endangered species. Forecasts indicate a grim fate — koalas could vanish from NSW before 2050 unless swift and effective interventions are undertaken. Threats include habitat loss, disease, and road accidents. Recent adversities, including drought, the 'Black Summer' bushfires, and habitat degradation on neighbouring lands, have further encroached upon the koala habitat near the school.

Amid these challenges, the Year 6 Sustainability Committee sprang into action. The students seized the initiative to bolster the school's koala habitat. Their proposal involved replenishing the lost habitat by planting trees within the school's koala corridor. Collaboration with school leadership, the campus maintenance team, and the local Koala Conservation Hospital culminated in the

planting of six swamp mahogany trees (*eucalyptus robusta*) — a food source for koalas.

In 2022, IEU member Anni Kiehn applied for the IEU's Environment Grant on behalf of this cause. The grant, totalling \$2000, recognised the project's merits and its potential for sustainability advancement. The five students who were integral to the project, accompanied by Kiehn (pictured), were recently presented with the cheque by IEU Organiser Steven Bergan.

Eager to capitalise on this support, the students plan to expand the variety of native plants and trees on the campus to encourage more local fauna and insects. They also plan to install wildlife cameras to document the project.

The \$2000 grant provides a vital boost, underscoring the significance of collaboration between educational institutions and organisations committed to the greater good. As the school nurtures and observes the growth of these planted trees and the flourishing habitat they will foster, they extend their gratitude to the IEU for their support and belief in the power of education and environmental stewardship.



IEU members are invited to apply on behalf of their schools, colleges or early childhood centres for one of six grants of \$3000 each, sponsored by Teachers Mutual Bank and the union, to help with environmental projects. TMB and IEU have a proud history of funding education projects that bring sustainability initiatives to life.

Typical projects include habitat conservation; biodiversity and tree-planting; outdoor learning areas; vegetable gardens; water and energy saving; waste, recycling and composting; and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander environmental projects.

Eligibility criteria include the project's viability, a link to a broader environmental education strategy, and effective project management.

Applications open: **Monday 17 July 2023**

Applications close: **Friday 6 October 2023**

We ask successful applicants to provide a brief video presentation and photos at completion of the project so we can see its progress and benefits.

Winners will be announced in early October 2023, with a formal presentation proposed for the AGM.



For more information on the application process, please contact environment@ieu.asn.au

Unmasking the problems with anonymous surveys in addressing digital aggression

Digital aggression (DA), the use of information communication technologies to inflict harm on others, has emerged as a concerning public health crisis.

It is evident that DA leads to increased anxiety, depression, aggression, and even higher rates of suicidal ideation and attempts among its victims. As educators and researchers seek to understand the origins of DA, there is a growing concern about the role of anonymous surveys in exacerbating the issue. This article argues against the use of anonymous surveys in addressing DA, pointing out their limitations and potential negative consequences on both survey outcomes and participants' well-being.

The nature of digital aggression

Digital aggression takes various forms, including harassment, flaming, and exclusion, and it occurs through different information and communication technologies (ICTs) such as cell phones, computers, tablets, and across various platforms. DA has been particularly prevalent among adolescents and emerging adults, contributing to serious

mental health problems like depression, anxiety, and even suicidal tendencies.

The prevalence of anonymous surveys

Anonymous surveys have become a popular research tool to study sensitive topics like digital aggression, as they are believed to encourage more honest responses and higher participation rates. However, the use of anonymity in surveys, especially in the context of DA, raises several critical concerns.

The problem with anonymity

Lack of specificity: Anonymous surveys may lack detailed information about the context and individuals involved in the aggression, hindering researchers from fully understanding the dynamics of the incidents.

Inadequate assessment: Self-report techniques used in anonymous surveys might not accurately capture the extent and impact of DA experiences, leading to potential underreporting or misrepresentation.

Ethical concerns: Anonymity might embolden respondents to engage in harmful behaviours or provide malicious

comments that can be detrimental to the well-being of others.

Incomplete insights: The focus on technical versus social anonymity or self-versus other-anonymity in the context of DA. Lack of accountability:

- Without identifiable respondents, it becomes challenging to address and intervene in cases of severe digital aggression, leaving victims unprotected and perpetrators unaccountable.
- The case against anonymous surveys in my school surveys

There's a specific case concerning My School Surveys (MSS) and the concern raised by some principals about the ongoing defamatory and vitriolic comments in the anonymous submissions. The anonymity characteristic of the survey process is seen as encouraging negative responses, which have a detrimental effect on principal well-being.

Promoting constructive criticism and positive environments

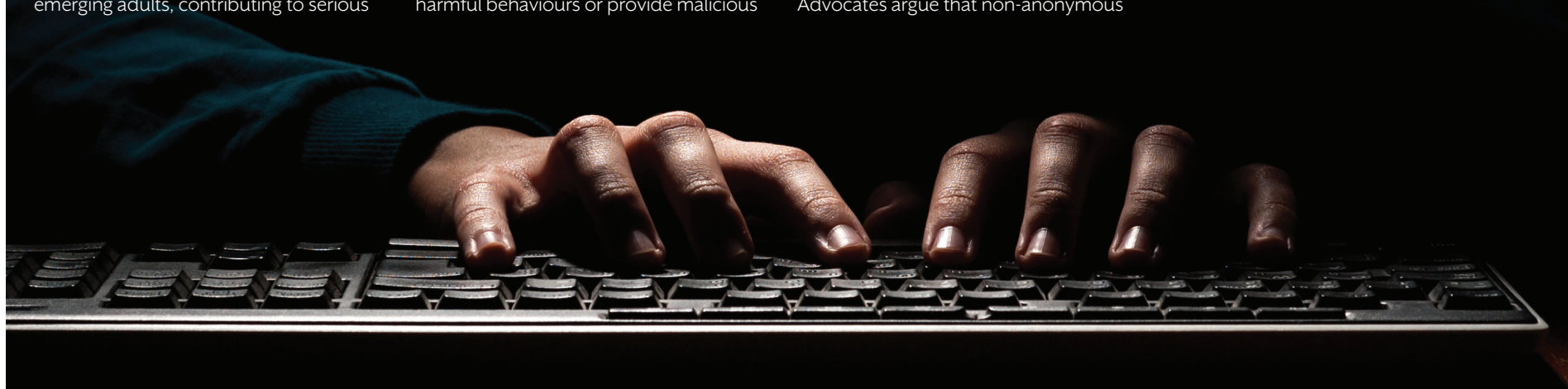
Advocates argue that non-anonymous

surveys foster trust and encourage respondents to provide constructive criticism within a positive learning community. When respondents feel safe to critique issues rather than attack individuals, the survey can be more beneficial for all stakeholders.

Conclusion

Although some argue that anonymity in surveys encourages honesty and higher response rates, it is crucial to consider the potential negative impacts on participants and survey outcomes. In the context of digital aggression, anonymous surveys may not provide comprehensive insights into the complex issue and might inadvertently perpetuate harmful behaviours. A re-evaluation of the use of anonymity in surveys, especially in addressing DA, is necessary to protect individuals from its toxic outcomes and to foster a safe and respectful environment for all stakeholders involved.

Lyn Caton Principals' Organiser



Present tense

Agreement round-up

Your union continues to bargain on behalf of members across the sector. At Navitas English, teachers will can soon vote on an agreement that will offer average pay rises of 3.7% (though paid as a dollar figure rise, so that teachers at the bottom of the scale will receive a higher percentage increase than those at the top), with other improvements in the so-called MyStudy classes, payment for extra shifts, and an improved disputes procedure. The IEU is seeking a few last-minute tweaks to further improve the offer, and we are hopeful that we can endorse the agreement when it goes out for a vote in August.

Negotiations at Taylors College (also recently purchased by Navitas) are not going so smoothly though. The employer is seeking significant changes to arrangements for the span of hours, non-term time, and paid parental leave, in return for an at-best moderate pay rise of 4% per annum. Teachers at the college have unequivocally rejected the management proposals, and the union will likely put forward a "roll-over" proposal in response.

Meanwhile, the IEU is also bargaining, alongside our sister union the NTEU, at UNSW College (formerly UNSW Global). These negotiations have been reasonably controversy-free, but the unions are awaiting a firm salary offer from management.

Assuming that this is adequate, this agreement may be finalised relatively quickly.

Your union will soon commence negotiations at UTS College and Navitas Futures. The *Fair Work Act* includes provisions for 'good faith bargaining', under which an employer can be compelled to bargaining when it can be demonstrated that a majority of employees (or section of employees, such as teachers) want that to happen. To find out how this might work in your workplace, contact your union: www.ieu.asn.au

The state of the industry

These negotiations are taking place against the backdrop of rapidly improving conditions across the sector. There is no question that the pandemic and associated lockdowns created a grave threat to the post-secondary education sector, as can only be expected for an industry almost entirely reliant on the arrival of international students.

How things change! According to figures from English Australia (the industry body for ELICOS colleges), the numbers of students physically starting in May was up nearly 200% on the previous year, while enrolments overall were up by over 270%. South America continues to be a fruitful source of students, with Colombia and Brazil providing increased numbers, while growth among

Chinese students continues to recover, following the Chinese government's relaxation of Covid rules late last year.

These increases are occurring across the international student market, with both universities and VET colleges also reporting big increases on 2022, and future projections for students across all sectors are highly encouraging.

IEU membership

With the industry undergoing a widespread recovery, now is the time to get organised at your workplace. There's little doubt that unionised workplaces are generally better rewarded and better run, with higher pay, higher productivity, and happier workers and students.

All IEU members can help by encouraging your colleagues who are not already members to join the IEU. They can join over the phone (8202 8900), via email (membership@ieu.asn.au) or at www.ieu.asn.au/join-page. There are many broader benefits to IEU membership (www.ieu.asn.au/member-benefits) and union fees are tax deductible. So join the IEU today!

Kendall Warren Organiser



IEU Committees: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Advisory

Several committees of practising teachers and support staff regularly consult with the union on its work, ensuring it reflects the current demands of the membership.

Those committees are: Professional Engagement, Environment, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Advisory and Women and Equity Committees.

In this series, we take a closer look the work of each committee. This week it's the turn of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Advisory Committee. Convened by Organiser Jackie Groom, the committee currently has 12 members.

The committee consults with union officials when they need write policy documents, need advice on protocols, or need tips on the best ways to encourage more Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to join the union.

One of its founding members is Aunty Mary Atkinson, who is an Aboriginal Cultural Advisor with the Catholic Education Office of the Diocese of Wagga Wagga.

"We are a minority group in the workforce, so we really need our voices to be heard and our concerns to be heard and for someone to lobby for us," Aunty Mary said.

The process is a two-way street. While the committee can advise the union about cultural safety, the committee learns about its rights in the workplace.

Aunty Mary said Aboriginal Education Workers love their communities, and knowing how to create boundaries between work and home can be difficult.

"It's good for us to get to know more about the industrial side of things, to know our workplace rights so we know when to draw the line," she said.

Another long-time member is Karen Andriske.

Karen said, "I have been working for over 26 years as an Aboriginal Education Worker at St Johns College Dubbo, a position that has been inspirational and enlightening.

"The rapport with staff, parents and community shows the importance of working collaboratively to embrace the social, emotional, physical and spiritual wellbeing of our youth," she said.

"It is an honour to be on the IEU ATSI committee, working towards enriching conditions that enhance equity, inclusion and fairness.

"Being able to initiate an ATSI perspective into matters that are raised by members and communicating that information signifies the importance of my representation at a state level.

"Being made aware of challenging issues and diligently offering guidance that supports positive achievement, further enriches my attendance.

"Acknowledging the diversity of opinions, vastness of opportunities and positive enrichment of inclusiveness enhances my status on such a valued and prestigious committee.

"As a member, my goal on the committee is to successfully network with an array of people who have the passion to make a difference.

"I'm grateful that the IEU embraces the input of the committee's knowledge and supports the diversity of all cultural customs," Karen said.

Michelle Thompson is a member of the ATSI committee as well as IEU Vice President Early Childhood Education and Care.

Michelle said, "I have been Director at Shore Preparatory School Early Learning Centre for five years.

"I have worked across many spaces including community based, not-for-profit and independent schools for over 20 years, with a strong focus on the all-important early years.

"In the past five years, my relatives shared our history, being descendants of the Stolen Generation at the Parramatta Girls Institute.

"While I am still on my personal journey of discovery, I know that I come from a long line of strong Wiradjuri women and have a strong spiritual connection to my father's home, Cowra.

"Fairness and social justice have always been key to who I am, and in joining this committee, I aim to be an advocate of Closing the Gap and supporting equal access and rights to all Aboriginal people, particularly children.

"I am in a unique position being a part of the IEU Executive, to play an important part in advocacy, and to help educate, create awareness with a strong focus on inclusion."

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Advisory Committee

Jackie Groom (Convenor)

Craig Duncan

Karen Andriske

Kathryn Baxter

Kylie Booth-Martinez

Lyn Caton

Mary Aitkinson

Megan Sampson

Michelle Thompson

Pam Smith

Vince Cooper

Invest in payroll systems to avoid trouble

Most wage underpayments could be avoided if employers "meaningfully invested" in "regular auditing, proper calibrated payroll and record keeping, and supporting the teams who use them", according to outgoing Fair Work Ombudsman Sandra Parker.

Reflecting on her five years as the FWO in an Australian Labour Law Association webinar this week, Parker said that although there have been some "positive signs of improvement", the watchdog is hearing reports of payroll workers feeling burnt out and under-supported, and considering leaving their jobs, which suggests that employers need to invest more to prevent shortchanging their workers.

Parker said that if companies expect their payroll teams to fix years of accumulated issues on top of their usual workload, "that could just make the issue worse".

"Systems are only as good as the information entered into them", Parker says.

"Often it's the human decision-making and actions that sit around those processes, which can have a huge impact on whether a business is compliant or is contravening its obligations."

Parker referred to the "influx" of significant underpayments by large employers, including the Coles matter currently before the courts, which involves more than \$100 million.

She told the ALLA audience that during her time as the FWO, the watchdog has shifted its focus from small and medium businesses to large corporates and universities, and from dispute resolution and mediation to compliance and enforcement.

When she took up the role in 2018, public interest shifted to wage theft and migrant workers, and "and there was pressure building for decisive action in response to pay scandals engulfing high profile employers, as probably best

illustrated by the incredibly strong and ongoing reaction to celebrity chef George Calombaris underpaying his workers".

At the time of the Calombaris wage theft scandal, Parker said the FWO was ill-equipped to handle such a large scale underpayment, and she quickly realised that it needed to "get equipped".

She claimed that at that time the public viewed the FWO as "toothless" and saw that "unscrupulous employers seemed to be getting away with a slap on the wrist".

In 2018, the FWO reviewed its "use of statutory compliance and enforcement tools and determined that we had been far too cautious in using compliance notices", only issuing about 200 a year.

The FWO now uses compliance notices as its "default tool" for small and medium businesses in matters that don't involve systemic or deliberate underpayments, evident in it having issued 2300 in 2021-22.

Compliance notices are "relatively simple to issue", legally enforceable and "ensure all monies owed to workers are recovered accurately and quickly".

"We use these because they give a business the opportunity to correct their mistakes, while also having the protection of immunity against further enforcement action from the FWO in that matter, by admitting the error and rectifying any underpayments," Parker said.

When it comes to substantial underpayments by larger businesses, "we work with them" and generally negotiate enforceable undertakings, but for employers that "fail to cooperate or refuse to meet" their obligations, the watchdog "will continue to take them to court".

This above article been reproduced with the permission of Workplace Express.

Newly appointed NGS CEO Natalie Previtiera talks to Newsmonth about all things superannuation related



When was NGS established and why is it important that unions and employers work together to ensure dignified retirements?

NGS Super was established 35 years ago, in 1988, to provide super to teachers in non-government schools and employees in community organisations. From humble beginnings, we've grown to a fund that supports 115,000 members, 17,000 employers and manages \$14 billion in funds under management.

As an industry super fund, we're run only to benefit members. All our profits go back to our members – everything we do is about helping our members prepare for their tomorrow and the retirement that lies ahead.

Most of us look forward to a retirement where we have the time to relax, pursue hobbies and interests or travel. But a comfortable retirement doesn't just appear out of nowhere. Building super throughout your work life is important. I always encourage people to understand and learn about their super, so they feel confident that when they get to retirement it will be the one they dreamed of.

This is where employers, unions and super funds can work together. Building strong relationships that give employees access to specialists who can help them when they have questions, and to education and resources that make it easier for them to make decisions. That personalised service and support which we're proud to offer at NGS is invaluable in getting the right start with super – which leads to better outcomes in retirement.

What are the key features of NGS that set it apart from other funds?

With 35 years' experience supporting the education sector, NGS has a deep understanding of the unique circumstances and needs of teachers. This underpins our commitment to offer products and services that deliver value to members.

It's important to us to offer low fees, award winning insurance and strong long-term performance. We're also proud to support our members with personalised service through our super specialists who are available online or over the phone or through face-to-face sessions. We try to make it as easy as possible for people to get the help and support they need around their super, in the way and time that suits them best.

Our focus on sustainability is another thing that sets us apart from other funds. Two years ago, we set the ambitious target to transition to a carbon-neutral portfolio by 2030 – 20 years ahead of most other funds. We believe this is the best action to take for our members and for our planet. And we're tracking well. We've just released an update which shows the carbon

intensity in the NGS Diversified MySuper portfolio has fallen by around 20% which is 13% ahead of trajectory.

Why is it important to reach a carbon neutral position by 2030 and in a practical sense how will this be achieved?

As a fund we decided that we couldn't ignore the science that was telling us that climate change was, and continues to have an impact socially, environmentally, and economically. We see our target to have a carbon neutral portfolio by 2030 as making sense for both our members and the planet.

To achieve our goal, we're applying the principles of responsible investing which means we identify investments that will retain their value and generate strong returns now and into the future. This is how we're making progress against our target and protecting members' returns.

In addition to aligning with companies who share our goals, we are moving away from those that don't. Last year we divested holdings in Woodside and Santos and others in the oil and gas exploration and production industry.

We regularly review our carbon neutral targets and investment strategies to make sure they are in the best financial interests of our members. This is always our priority.

The recent cyber security issue was a challenge for those impacted. Please comment on the incident and the steps taken to mitigate such events in the future.

We appreciate that the cyber attack was a difficult situation for our members.

We take the security of our members' data very seriously and as soon as we became aware of unusual activity within our network, we shut it down and commenced investigations. We also launched comprehensive cybersecurity protocols and enhanced network monitoring.

Our investigations quickly confirmed that our members' super savings and the Fund's assets were secure, however some limited personal data was taken.

We communicated with members about the cyber attack and made sure that they were aware of the support available to protect their information through organisations like IDCARE, Equifax and Experian.

We reported to regulators and were in constant contact with the ATO regarding protective measures that were put in place on member accounts. These have now been lifted for all but a small number of members. We also reimbursed costs to members who were required to replace documents.

Our members can be assured that we remain highly alert and continue to monitor our systems for any signs of suspicious activity.

IEU SPEAKS on initial teacher training

The IEU welcomed the opportunity to participate in the recent review of initial teacher education (ITE) undertaken by the Teacher Education Expert Panel (TEEP).

The insights and classroom experiences of members helped shape new measures proposed by the panel to better prepare early career teachers; however, the focus must also include a comprehensive plan to continue to support new teachers once they reach the classroom.

The Panel's report contains 14 recommendations for improving ITE programs. The recommendations, now agreed in-principle by the nation's education ministers, contain a mix of immediate actions as well as longer term reforms to be rolled out over the next three years.

IEU members support the call for greater national consistency across ITE programs and the stronger oversight of education courses to ensure high-quality programs and outcomes for new teachers.

The next generation of teachers must be fully prepared for the vital work they will undertake in schools. A renewed focus on the practical skills needed by classroom teachers will help improve teacher retention and lengthen teaching careers.

Moves to incorporate new employment-based options or accelerated pathways to teaching

qualifications must be carefully managed to protect the integrity and rigour of teacher education.

However, these changes are only half the story when it comes to attracting and retaining teachers. An education system that sends new teachers into classrooms to then immediately be overwhelmed by unsustainable workloads needs a complete overhaul.

We know that teacher workload and burnout are driving teachers away from a job they love.

New teachers need more support once in the classroom – access to best practice induction programs, paid mentoring time and reduced teaching loads are needed to help new teachers starting out in a complex and demanding profession.

It's difficult for experienced teachers to support their new colleagues when they are themselves drowning under administrative tasks and compliance red tape. Experienced teachers need dedicated release time to undertake mentoring roles with beginning teachers.

The repair of an education sector in crisis requires urgent and wide-ranging reforms.

Around the Globe

Hope and resilience in exile: the Afghan women's football team



Permission to use images by Adriano Del Monte, Italian-Australian international TV presenter and event host (FIFA, UEFA).

Banned from playing sport in their home country and with FIFA failing to recognise them, Afghanistan's women's national football team have been cheering on the Matildas and watching the 2023 Women's World Cup from their adopted homeland, Australia.

The Afghan Women's Team (AWT) is now based in Melbourne after being forced to flee from the Taliban during the fall of Kabul. In August 2021, Afghan players and staff jostled alongside desperate crowds of people attempting to make it onto a plane at Kabul airport in the final days of US occupation.

A new beginning in Australia

The team arrived in Australia in September 2021 with nothing but the clothes on their backs. They were welcomed by the Australian government and have been thrown a lifeline by several individuals and organisations who were quick to offer support. A-League club Melbourne Victory has taken on the AWT giving them access to their network of coaches and facilities as well as providing financial support. The team now plays in the Victoria State League 3.

Fatima Yousufi is the 21-year-old captain of AWT. She describes herself on X (Twitter) as "goalkeeper by day, peacekeeper by night".

Fatima was 19 when the Taliban came to power in 2021. As a child, she watched football on TV with her younger brother and dreamed of playing. She began playing in the schoolyard, was spotted by a scout and then invited to train with Afghanistan's under 17s team. In an interview with UNHCR, Fatima said her life changed in 2021. It was no longer safe to play football, so she buried her trophies and jerseys in the backyard and fled.

Taliban bans women in sport

Founded in 2007, the AWT quickly became one of the most successful teams in the region. The team qualified for the Asian Football Confederation (AFC) Women's Asian Cup in 2010 and 2014, and it finished third in the South Asian Football Federation (SAFF) Women's Championship in 2016.

However, the team's progress came to a halt in 2021 as the Taliban came to power and banned women from playing sports.

Why won't FIFA recognise the Afghan Women's Team?

The global response to the AWT's plight has been a heart-warming example of international solidarity, yet the denial of recognition by FIFA is a cruel setback. With a high level of interest in the 2023 Women's World Cup, the spotlight has turned on FIFA and why it has turned its back on the AWT. A FIFA spokesperson told SBS *Dari* that 'FIFA could only recognise a team once it was first recognised by the country's member association, in this case the Afghanistan Football Federation.'

United in the fight for FIFA recognition

A petition for FIFA recognition is currently gaining momentum on change.org. At the time of publication, close to 80,000 had signed in support of the AWT. This comes off the back of record-breaking crowds at World Cup games in Australia and New Zealand and reflects a growing global call for gender equality in sports and a stand against discrimination.

A beacon of hope

The story of the AWT serves as a shining example of courage and commitment in the face of immense adversity. Former Socceroo captain and human rights advocate, Craig Foster, helped bring the team to Australia and has been supporting them ever since. In an interview with UNHCR in July 2023, Craig said:

"They've become a symbol of women's and girls' rights in Afghanistan and all around the world and a very important group within Australian society."

While women and girls and in Afghanistan are prohibited from even kicking a ball, each time the AWT pull on their jerseys in Melbourne, they are sending a powerful message to the world that women's rights cannot be suppressed.

See: <https://bit.ly/AWTfifapetition>

Katie Camarena Journalist

Around the Globe brings you international news about injustices and workers' rights. If injustice exists anywhere, it exists everywhere.



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Don't pay full price! Put your union membership to work - register today and start saving now! Phone: 1300 368 117 or visit unionshopper.com.au

MEMBERSHIP news

As we all continue to attempt to manage the impact of the cost-of-living crisis now might be the time to health check some of your essential outgoings. Our affiliation partners at Union Shopper, Teachers Health, Teachers Mutual Bank and NGS Super can assist you, please check the links below for comparison calculators.

Union Shopper is Australia's largest union owned member benefits program and it's free to all IEU members. Not only do they offer savings on major purchases such as white goods there are also everyday savings to be had on household shopping using discounted gift cards with IGA - 5%; Woolworths and Coles 4%; Ticketmaster 5%; the Good Guys 5%; JB HiFi 5%; Rebel 7.5%; Myer 5%; Kathmandu 7.5%; Hoyts 8%; IKEA 5%; Dan Murphy 5%; Booktopia 10%; Bonds 8%; AMPOL 5%; Accor Hotels 8%; being just some of the companies participating. Join now for member only discounts and look out for the monthly specials. unionshopper.com.au

Teachers Health is a not-for-profit health fund with over 65 years' experience, both household and car insurance are also available. Built exclusively for the education community and their families they offer both hospital and extras cover to join visit www.teachershealth.com.au

If you're not already a member or thinking of changing funds, visit the link below to for a 20 second quote <https://www.teachershealth.com.au/live-quote-tool>

Teachers Mutual Bank membership is open to citizens or permanent residents of Australia who are current or retired employees of the Australian education sector and their families. Founded by teachers over 50 years ago Teachers Mutual is passionate about supporting the education sector, when you join you become a shareholder who benefits from profits which enjoy our competitive rates and low fees. Check their website www.tmbank.com.au for further details on savings accounts, credit cards, home loans, insurance, tax tips and more.

If you are thinking of switching home loans visit the link to access their loan comparison calculator

<https://www.tmbank.com.au/calculators-and-tools/loan-comparison>

NGS Super are a leading industry super fund for those in the education and community sectors. It offers competitive fees, award-winning insurance and strong investment returns with all profits going back to members. Now might be the right time to 'health check' your super - the super you currently hold, the amount of super you are being paid including any voluntary contributions, how many super accounts you hold and account fees you may be paying on multiple accounts and any insurance provided with your super. Compare your current details with the opportunities NGS can offer.

If you are looking to retire or just want to see how you are tracking, visit the link below to access the NGS calculator

See bit.ly/3OUdBIM

Membership team



40-year IEU member Therese Hawes, Glengaelon Rudolph Steiner School Middle Cove receives her gift from IEU Rep Noel Neilson



Chapter members at St Michael's Lane Cove acknowledging Linda Reneman's 30 years of continuous IEU membership



IEU staff with ASU's Angus McFarland at Unions NSW Interfaith Eid Dinner



40-year IEU member Nicoletta di Santo, St Columban's Primary School Mayfield



IEU Professional Engagement Officer Pat Devery, Dr Anita Collins, IEU members Teaghan Pugsley and Naomi Turner (IEU Conference Scholarship recipients) and Dr Peter Boonshaft at the opening day of the ASBOF Sydney Music Educators Conference at Monte Sant Angelo Mercy College (post)



Jessica, Teachers Health member

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Letters to the editor

A step forward for some early childhood teachers

I am an early childhood teacher in day-to-day charge of a rural mobile preschool and nominated Supervisor/Educational Leader at a rural preschool.

I asked my management committee several years ago about an enterprise agreement and I was told in no uncertain terms that "I was being paid the award and that was sufficient".

I have discussed this with IEU Organisers Tina Smith, Lisa James and Jackie Groom, and although I'd really love to do something further with an enterprise agreement, I know that this will cause 'angst' at the preschool within both the staff team (of two, myself and an educator who is also the clerical officer) and the committee, especially with the increase in modern award wages on 1 July 2023.

It was fabulous news (and it was great to see the IEU front and centre on the television news) about this wage increase and being able to join with other services to create an enterprise agreement, so we are not just 'islands' on our own.

My understanding is that it works for federally funded services only and not state funded services, such as stand-alone preschools like mine.

So, it feels like, yet again, two steps forwards and three steps backwards: with division in the early childhood education and care world.

Be that as it may, I would like to congratulate the IEU on all the hard work that it has done, and continues to do, regarding wages and fair pay to early childhood teachers.

I have been there for the long haul, and the dedication and commitment to early childhood members from the IEU is beyond outstanding.

Thank you for running PD sessions for early childhood members. I hope you often get a great response, and the sessions are a huge success, as I know everyone who attends learns a lot and gains a great deal from it.

Name and membership number supplied

Letter to Unions NSW Executive: Placement poverty

I am writing to update you on the progress we have made in our fight to end unpaid placement in higher education, and to express our gratitude for the support you have provided. We have achieved meaningful progress in our campaign and grown to engage over 1000 young workers across the country. By coming together, they have learned the value of unity and the strength it brings to our cause. The passion and dedication exhibited by these students and young workers are truly inspiring, and we firmly believe that this fight is a union fight.

Our efforts have not gone unnoticed by the government, as evidenced by the draft release of the Higher Education Accords. This signifies that our voices are being heard, and we are making tangible progress in our pursuit of justice for unpaid student labour. However, we are aware that there is still much work to be done, and it is only with the continued and unwavering support of the union movement that we can hope to provide a living wage to the 60,000 students who are currently providing their labour without remuneration.

The impact of unpaid placements on these students' lives is profound, often leading to financial hardship and impeding their ability to fully focus on their education. By standing together as a united force, we can bring about the changes necessary to ensure a brighter future for these young workers, and the generations to come. In light of our achievements so far, we are determined to keep pushing forward, bringing this fight to the conference floor and continuing to advocate for the rights and fair treatment of all students who endeavour to enter fields impacted by the essential worker crisis.

Once again, we express our sincerest gratitude to the Unions NSW Executive for standing by us in this campaign. Together, we can build a society where workers' rights are respected and where every individual is compensated fairly for their labour.

Thank you for your continued support.

www.facebook.com/StudentsAgainstPlacementPoverty/

Isaac Wattenberg Students Against Placement Poverty



Mentors are crucial, give them the time to do their job

Angela McDonald

IEU ACT Vice President



I recently said farewell to my most recent student teacher on her final placement. Unfortunately, many student teachers or universities are struggling to find teachers willing to take student teachers on for a placement.

I understand why – teachers are working hard and often don't have the additional time required to take on and mentor student teachers. However, these student teachers need to have practical opportunities to learn their craft. Schools need these student teachers to graduate and join the profession. We all see and feel the impact of the teacher shortage every day.

To manage their workloads many of these highly skilled mentor teachers are

saying no to taking on these additional duties. I don't blame them.

To my ACT colleagues, don't forget that mentoring a preservice teacher attracts up to five hours of TQJ teacher identified professional learning.

Whilst I commend the NSW, ACT and Federal Governments for their consultation with the sector around the teacher shortage and Initial Teacher Education, one aspect of these issues is somewhat glossed over – the mentors.

Without experienced, skilled staff, willing to mentor student teachers and new graduates, the system CANNOT work. These mentors are essential, and they need the time to effectively mentor. It cannot be another job added to the already never-ending list of things to do.

New Executive member from Hunter Valley Sub Branch



IEU Secretary Mark Northam, new General Executive Member Amanda Wood, Deputy Secretary Carol Matthews and President Tina Ruello

I am Amanda Wood, and I am incredibly honoured and excited to introduce myself as your new member of the Executive.

Hailing from the Hunter Valley Branch of IEU, I bring with me a journey that has been dedicated to teaching, advocacy, and the power of collective action.

My relationship with the IEU started during my days as a student at Newcastle University, where I pursued and completed my bachelor's degree in primary teaching. Ever since then, I have remained a steadfast union member, firmly believing in the strength that comes from standing together as educators.

Driven by a desire to continuously grow and improve, I pursued a Masters in Education from Charles Sturt University. This furthered my understanding of the education landscape, enabling me to better support my fellow teachers and advocate for their professional development needs.

My teaching adventure has taken me to various corners of this beautiful country. I spent time in the Northern Territory, where I embraced the uniqueness of outback education. Later, I found myself in the vibrant communities of the Lismore Diocese, where I dedicated eight years to shaping young minds and nurturing their growth.

Currently, I serve as a teacher and leader in the Maitland-Newcastle Diocese, and it fills my heart with pride to be part of such a supportive and inspiring educational community.

Outside the realm of education, I cherish my roles as a spouse and a parent to two wonderful children. Finding balance in life has been essential, and my current creative outlet is ceramics. I also love watching sport and taking some time to recharge in our natural environment.

As your General Executive member, my commitment is unwavering. I am determined to amplify the voices of all teachers, ensuring your rights, welfare, and aspirations are at the forefront of our endeavours. Together, we will create an environment that values and empowers educators, fostering a community of mutual support and growth.

I am grateful for the opportunity to represent you all, and I humbly ask for your trust and support as we embark on this journey together. Let us stand united, embrace our collective strength, and make a lasting, positive impact on the lives of teachers in NSW and the ACT.

Amanda Wood
General Executive member

Professional dialogue. Professional learning. Professional development

Tina Ruello
President



A few things piqued my interest this week: equally vexing and satisfying, and part of my ongoing professional learning. It began with an opinion piece by Jenna Price (SMH 1/8) that caught my eye by its headline, Why are teachers struggling? Because your children are awful.

While a few might ascribe to the dictum, 'every child is sacred' and tut-tut in quiet disapproval, I thought, isn't this, to an extent, true? Some students are becoming empowered by a sense of entitlement and unequivocal support by permissive parenting. I'm witnessing this in my classroom, as are my peers.

I read on, "It's not just rudeness or a lack of cooperation or even respect. It extends all the way to violence. We have record levels of assaults at schools and violence both within and outside school," writes Price. Absolutely! Evidenced by recent attacks online and social media, closer to home. Schools are becoming dangerous workplaces in some respects. So, where is this heading?

Where does an early career teacher or an experienced teacher find support to deal with issues in classrooms, when the channels at school are exhausted, and leave them disillusioned, if not unsafe?

The union. The IEU provides excellent workplace and industrial support that ensures protections, conditions and rights. Moreover, the union fills an important space in the professional landscape of teachers. Just check this semester's range of professional development opportunities for our members – All on behaviour management: getting it right;

keeping it right; making it right and upholding the right. All NESAs and TQI accredited. A practical, and union-timely way of tackling the 'awfulness' in children that Price opined.

The most satisfying learning experience I gained in the same week was another exceptional professional development opportunity provided by the union: Getting a handle on the Voice Referendum. The dialogue between Thomas Mayo and Kerry O'Brien and the IEU (namely, Mark Northam and Pat Devery) was grand (Thanks, Mark). See p3.

Thomas Mayo made an important link between the union movement and unions generally to the campaigning around the Voice to Parliament. As a trade union, we share in the understanding that campaigns take a lot of work, time, meetings, explanations, strategies, to shift the discourse and to bring along the people on the right side of justice. That we stand for fairness and equity, and we represent the vulnerable, the downtrodden. Mayo and O'Brien implored participants to have conversations with individuals who are ambivalent about the referendum. Change their minds.

Turn the tide

In Kerry O'Brien's words, to paraphrase, that there is a richness waiting to be developed and experienced; it will enhance democracy and strengthen the nation. O'Brien is right, "It's a no-brainer. Nothing to lose. Everything to gain."

Mayo concluded stating, "The union movement is vital to this. We will be on the right side of history."

What a week of Professional dialogue. Professional learning. Professional development.

Thanks IEU!

No more excuses

Bernadette Baker

Vice President Systemic



We, as teachers, know that we usually do not see the final outcomes of our hard work. We work in the present for the future: ours, students, families and our colleagues. It seems that we will need to continue to work and protest and demonstrate and campaign for the future of the teaching profession.

We will need to continue to demand better from our employers and the government to match their actions to their rhetoric.

I am constantly impressed by the everyday efforts of teachers across all schools but particularly in Catholic systemic schools. We have a history of achieving so much with so little. Our workload is presumed to be able to take more and more pressure. The cracks are becoming more evident. The campaign to reduce teacher workloads is making some inroads but salaries are stagnant, and we need relief.

We as Catholic systemic teachers, who have for decades worked with diligence for the mission of the church, call upon employers to fulfill their obligation to their employees. No more excuses.

Employers may play deaf . . . but Hear Our Voice.



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Approaching the R word? Retirement?

Demographic predictions indicate that millions of Aussies will be approaching retirement in the next five years. The challenge for them will be to replace their current salary with a superannuation income stream or government pension or a combination of the two. And the other challenge will be about lifestyle/wellbeing once retirement begins.

In terms of adequacy of savings and general preparedness for this new phase, I am reminded of a Disney cartoon I saw as a child – *The Ant and the Grasshopper* – which is derived from one of Aesop's fables.

It must have made a deep impression on me as I still remember it clearly. The ant works assiduously to save and store food during the summer in the knowledge that winter will come; the grasshopper, on the other hand, enjoys the beautiful summer days and occupies himself by playing his fiddle in the sunshine.

The ant warns the grasshopper of his frivolous ways while working steadily to store his food. The inevitable happens and the harsh winter comes on leaving the grasshopper starving and begging for food at the ant's door.

At this point the heartless ant slams the door on the grasshopper leaving him to his fate in the frigid winter. Both characters represent extremes and I think a hybrid position is preferable. Play the fiddle, enjoy life during the summer years, but at the same time save enough to provide for yourself in the colder years which some would call 'the golden years'. This is what superannuation is about.

So in the countdown to the R word, it is important to take stock of your financial position and you may need the assistance of a professional, licensed financial planner. If they were to provide personal advice to you this would be contained within a Statement of Advice (otherwise known as a financial plan).

This will start by detailing what you own and what you owe. This statement will look at your primary residence, financial aspects such as bank accounts, share portfolios, rental properties, personal assets and the total of your superannuation accounts.

It will then note your liabilities such as personal loans, mortgage balances,

car loans and any other debts you may have. Personal insurance policies will also be considered. The subtraction of your liabilities from your assets will provide a realistic evaluation of your current, and possibly future, financial position.

A good financial planner will also ask you about your planned and anticipated future expenses. Things such as capital repairs to your house, a new car, any medical needs and the frequency of your planned travel will also be considered in any advice provided to you.

And perhaps the most important aspect of the Statement of Advice will have to do with your risk tolerance. Will you keep your portfolio invested in the same manner as it was while you were accumulating super, or will you want to change and either increase or lower your risk during the retirement phase?

In order to do this, you will have to consider the returns you require to meet your financial objectives, how long your funds will be invested, and also how comfortable you are with the possibility of negative investment returns. Is the super fund's default option right for you, are you aiming for more capital growth (and more risk) during your retirement years, or do you seek more consistent returns with less volatility? And roughly how much income will you need per annum to achieve a comfortable retirement?

These questions are difficult, but help is available through NGS Super Financial Planning. The NGS financial planners are salaried employees and work with you to help achieve the retirement you are after. They work on a fee-for-service basis – you pay a fixed fee for your individual financial plan based on whether it is a limited, standard or complex advice. During your initial meeting with your NGS financial planner and after they get a better understanding of you, your goals and objectives for the future, they will quote a fee to prepare personal advice for you which must be agreed upon by you before proceeding. The peace of mind a tailored financial plan can provide will help you to better enjoy your 'golden years'. NGS Super can be contacted on: 1300 133 177.

Bernard O'Connor
(former NGS Super Company Secretary)

(Important information: the information in this article is general information only and does not take into account your objectives, financial situation or needs. Before making a financial decision, please assess the appropriateness of the information to your individual circumstances, read the Product Disclosure Statement for any product you may be thinking of acquiring and consider seeking professional advice. Past performance is not a reliable indicator of future performance. Any opinions are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the view of NGS Super.)

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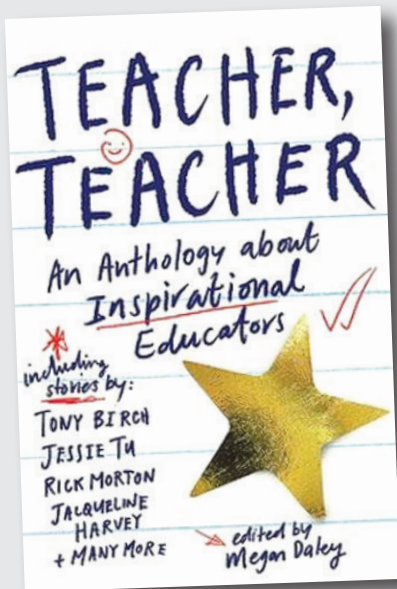
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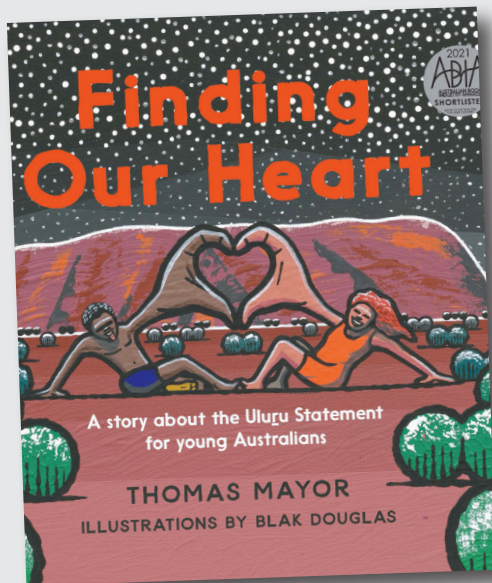
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Edited by Megan Daley

Publisher: Affirm Press

An anthology about the power of teachers and their capacity to shape lives. The power of an exceptional teacher cannot be overestimated. Sometimes it is not about what they taught you, but about how they made you feel as a person.

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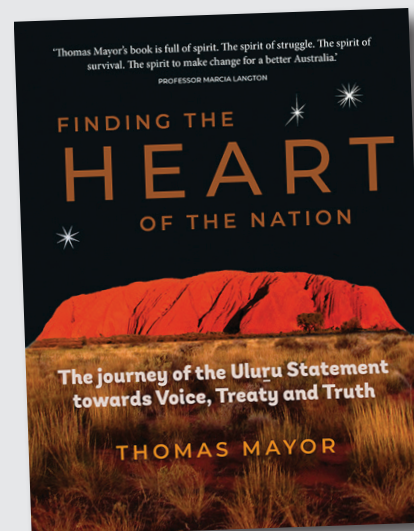
Finding Our Heart

Author: Thomas Mayor

Illustrator: Blak Douglas

Publisher: Hardie Grant Books

"When we all came together at Uluru, we invited all Australian people to accept our voice and culture as a gift." Can you help us find the heart of the nation? A book for young people about understanding Australia's past, so we can have a shared future.



Finding the Heart of the Nation

Author: Thomas Mayor

Publisher: Hardie Grant Books

This is a book for all Australians.

Since the *Uluru Statement from the Heart* was formed in 2017, Thomas Mayor has travelled around the country to promote its vision of a better future for Indigenous Australians. He's visited communities big and small, often with the Uluru Statement canvas rolled up in a tube under his arm.

Thomas believes that we will only find the heart of our nation when the First peoples – the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders – are recognised with a representative Voice enshrined in the Australian Constitution.

"Thomas's compelling work is full of Australian Indigenous voices that should be heard. Read this book, listen to them, and take action." – Danny Glover, actor and humanitarian.



Email entries to giveaways@ieu.asn.au with the title of the book you would like to receive in the subject line. Write your name, membership number and postal address in the body of your email. All entries must be received by 25 September 2023.

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