



The facts about NESA compliance:
**ARE YOU STILL
DOING TOO MUCH?**
**PULLOUT
POSTER INSIDE**

news month

The newspaper of the
Independent Education Union
of Australia NSW/ACT Branch
(vol 43 #7) November 2023

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From the Playground to the Picket Line - Farewell Mark Northam P3



Catholic systemic schools members, through their solidarity and determination, have achieved significant pay rises this year.

They are reaping the rewards of the hard fought Hear Our Voice campaign.

In mid-November, Catholic systemic schools employees in all dioceses except Broken Bay will be asked to vote in favour of a new enterprise agreement (EA).

It is important that all members vote 'yes'. In the unlikely case of a dispute at the Fair Work Commission, the new EA is only enforceable if the majority vote in favour of it.

Let's celebrate our achievements and back the pay rise on 13 November. Look out for the email.

The NSW teacher pay rises will be backdated to the start of the first full pay period after 9 October. The exact date will vary depending on the pay schedule in your diocese. Support staff received pay rises on the first pay period after 1 July. The EA will be in place until October 2024.

Support staff received not only pay parity with government school support staff, but also the 4% general public sector increase from 1 July. School administrative, classroom and learning support employees received increases of between 10.2% and 27.5%, most of which was back paid until January. These increases were on top of the 2.54% increase the employers paid in January 2023. See table on support staff pay on p4.

Tackling overwork a priority

Addressing workload issues is now top priority for the union, with significant negotiations between the NSW Government and NESA underway.

The IEU's poster (p10), on accreditation gained a lot of attention this year, including a mention from NSW Education and Early Learning Prue Car. The poster has been a valuable tool in reducing the professional burden on teachers.

After consultation with the IEU, Minister Car provided the NESA Board with a Statement of Expectations which places limits on the administrative burden and work duplication. Expect more news in this space.

Meanwhile in independent schools . . .

The large pay rises achieved in government and Catholic systemic schools are influencing those who work in Catholic independent, independent and Christian schools. Teachers and support staff in these sectors expect equal treatment.

Some schools have already taken steps to increase pay and conditions for their staff. They don't want to lose all their staff to other schools.

However, some employers are still dragging the chain. The multi-enterprise agreements (MEAs) negotiated by the Association of Independent Schools (AIS) still have over a year to run (expiry January 2025), with one further modest pay rise of 2.53% next February. The IEU has sought meetings with the AIS about an interim pay increase, but they have refused to meet.

The Anglican Schools Corporation (18 schools) has agreed to pay an additional 3% to all staff from February 2024. Smaller schools have also agreed to increases and boards at other schools are currently considering their position. The IEU expects that many other schools will soon follow suit and raise salaries ahead of the MEA increases next year.

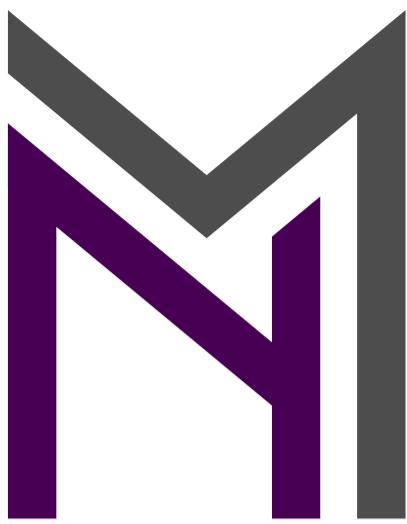
In Standards Model schools, both Band 2 (Proficient) and Band 3 (Experienced Teacher – STAA accredited) pay rates are now below the top Proficient band in government and Catholic schools (in the case of Band 2, \$17,000 below). In Hybrid Model schools Band 2 and Band 3 rates are also below by thousands of dollars.

The IEU has had preliminary discussions with Christian Schools Australia (CSA), which represents about 35 schools.

CSA said Christian schools will not match the rates in government and Catholic systemic schools for teachers in Christian schools until February 2025 – however, even then only the top and bottom steps would match, not the steps in between. CSA is reviewing its position.

On most steps there is now at least a \$10,000 gap between the rates in government schools and NSW Christian schools. This must be fixed.

If your employer is not considering a pay rise, contact your IEU Rep or organiser, if you don't have a Rep, and call a chapter meeting. Encourage your colleagues to join the IEU. Strength in numbers gives you a better chance of success.

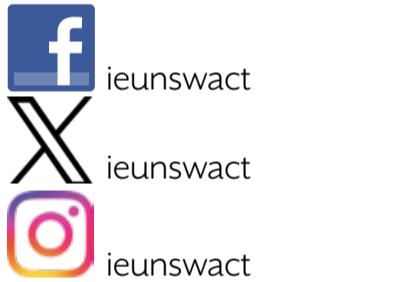


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This publication was produced on the unceded lands of the Gadigal People of the Eora Nation. The IEUA NSW/ACT Branch acknowledges the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the traditional owners of the lands where we live, learn and work,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



HSC markers update

As nearly all the written HSC exams are now being marked remotely on screen, there has been a noticeable drop off in members volunteering to be the IEU Rep for each of the marking centres.

There has also been a drop in the more commonplace inquiries the union has previously received, such as those concerning unsuitable venue conditions, access to food outlets, parking issues, etc.

While members are still able and encouraged to elect an IEU Rep for their marking operation, the IEU has also decided to streamline our processes for providing organiser support to HSC markers working remotely.

To that end, we have created a dedicated HSC markers IEU email address: hscmarkers@ieu.asn.au. Members can also call 02 8202 8900/1800 467 943.

IEU members from all marking operations are invited to contact the IEU through this email with their contact details. This email address will be regularly monitored, and an organiser will contact the member or members concerned.

Members are reminded that, as a matter of courtesy, minor concerns, in the first instance, should be raised with the Senior

Marker or Supervisor of Marking (SOM) to allow them the opportunity to address the issue at the local level.

If members believe the response to be inadequate, or the issue persists or reoccurs, they should contact the union office through the details provided.

HSC Award Negotiations

As this article goes to press, the IEU is confident that a 4% increase in the HSC Markers Award will be finalised.

This new agreement would be the largest increase for HSC markers since 2009 and would see the weekday rate for a marker increase from \$87.68/hr to \$91.19/hr while the Saturday rate increase from \$97.66/hr to \$101.57/hr.

As the agreement will run from December 2022 until December 2023, there is consensus between the unions that any increases reflecting the higher percentages recently won in government and Catholic systemic schools should be claimed in the negotiations for the 2024 agreement.

Pat Devery HSC Markers Organiser

Ground-breaking work for early childhood teachers begins



IEU Industrial Officer Michael Aird, Organiser Lisa James and Deputy Secretary Carol Matthews

IEU representatives met with early childhood education and care (ECEC) employers at the Fair Work Commission on 27 October to negotiate for better pay and conditions.

Talks will continue until at least the end of the year. The negotiations take advantage of the *Secure Work Better Jobs Act* introduced this June, under which unions can bargain for enterprise agreements with groups of employers, in this case 64 ECEC employers.

IEUA NSW/ACT Branch Secretary Mark Northam said the IEU is seeking substantial wage rises for ECEC teachers.

"This is a tremendous development in the industrial relations landscape, and we welcome the Fair Work Commission's support of the Federal Labor Government's new industrial relations laws," Northam said.

"Thousands of long day care teachers could benefit from

this decision. This is a critical step in addressing the crisis in the early childhood sector."

The IEU, along with the United Workers Union (UWU), which represents ECEC educators in NSW, and the Australian Education Union (AEU), which represents ECEC teachers in Victoria, jointly initiated the Fair Work Commission application.

The Federal Government, the funding body in this case, will also be a party to the discussions.

Northam said, "Early childhood education teachers have been leaving the sector in droves. We need to close the gap in pay and respect between university-qualified early childhood teachers and their colleagues in schools. We need to start valuing the incredible work our early childhood teachers are performing every day."



“But being in workplaces, having chapter meetings, working with individual members, is the secret to unionism. The workplace is where the magic happens.”

Welcome to a new staff member

MARK NORTHAM begins work as an organiser in the Newcastle office this year.

He has had extensive experience in a teaching career of 21 years, working in state and Catholic schools, the latter all in the Maitland-Newcastle Diocese. He has also lectured at Newcastle University in Diploma of Education courses.

A committed unionist, Mark has filled many roles in the IEU as a chapter rep, chapter president, Hunter Valley Branch committee member, Hunter Valley Branch President, Council delegate and a member of the Education Issues Committee. He has also been an IEU delegate to Newcastle Trades Hall Council for a number of years.

Mark's enthusiasm and extensive curriculum knowledge will



be valued by IEU members. He will replace Carmel Atkinson and be responsible for members in the Hunter Valley Branch as well as those in the Mid-North Coast and North Coast branches.

Members will have the opportunity to meet Mark at the upcoming branch AGMs, and his input will be valued by the IEU.



From the Playground to the Picket Line

From school teacher to organiser to Secretary of the IEU, Mark Northam has been a member of the union for almost 40 years. He's retiring to spend more time with his grandchildren. IEU Journalist Lucy Meyer spoke to Mark about his memories and lessons from a long and varied career.

LM: What is your fondest memory of working with students?

MN: Probably students who were less well off, who may have struggled, and then become engaged in education. And you might see them years later in another setting. They might extend their thanks or best wishes. So that's gratifying, where you see students who have struggled, but clambered through and been successful against the odds.

LM: Do you remember a particularly challenging moment from when you were teaching? Are there any that come to mind that you can share?

MN: Well, there was certainly a group of students. It was a transitional education program, so getting students to leave school equipped with life skills. All good kids. We mapped out where the main water pipe into the school was, but a crowbar went through the main water pipe. The principal at the time became deeply aggrieved that the school had no water. Even though they carefully measured it, the crowbar came in contact with the pipe.

LM: So, it was an accident?

MN: Presumably... (Mark starts to smile).

LM: Presumably. How did you deal with that?

MN: Probably with a lack of skill, because I was in my third or fourth year of teaching. It was an interesting few minutes until the plumber arrived.

LM: So after over two decades of teaching, what made you decide to come work for the IEU?

First strike

MN: I've been involved with the union since the late 1980s. I joined in early 1984, when I first walked onto a Catholic school site. Then the first strike of the IEU happened in 1989 and I got caught up in that. I was a rep in a large school. I suppose I was youngish. And, you know, Catholic systemic teachers and support staff were really turning a big corner to say, "we're out. we're done here". It was around money

and conditions. But it was the first time the union had called members out on the streets. It was a big event. But we did it.

LM: What did it feel like to be on the picket line for the first time with the IEU?

MN: Well, it was very empowering. I'd been involved with one strike with the Teachers Fed, which was an interesting experience because I was in a little country town. I went to the general store and there was only one general store. And they wouldn't serve teachers on that day. So, they said, "no, no... we're not serving you mate".

LM: Because you were striking?

MN: Yeah, yeah. You don't forget things like that.

But our first strike, the people that got involved in the 1989 stoppage, and there's still plenty around, they really should be applauded because it was the first time that the IEU had really moved from being an association of teachers to a union of teachers who were prepared to take a strike action to achieve some objectives. It welded a lot of people together for the first time to say, you can change things, if you act collectively.

Making work better

LM: You've worked in several roles at the IEU. What is it about being here that holds your interest?

MN: I've always been fascinated with work and how you could make work better. And that's what unions do; I think. And this union is particularly good at it. What can we unblock to make it better for teachers? So, it's clearing a way. Sometimes you have to use explosives.

LM: Or maybe that student with the crowbar?

MN: The crowbar, yeah. I can still picture him, by the way. I can picture him to this day.

LM: What was it in your upbringing or your early experiences that made you want to join a union?

MN: My grandmother was a teacher. When she married, of course, you had to leave teaching because, it's hard to comprehend now, you couldn't have married female teachers. But her husband died. He died in one wing of a country hospital, and she gave birth to the fourth child in another wing.

I pressed her later: "how did you get back into teaching?" She said, "my friends in the railway union helped me".

That's all I know about it, but a union helped her. Anyway, they got her reappointed. And then she had an income, even though it was two thirds of a male teacher's income – which is just dreadful.

That sort of influenced me, that it was such an important thing that people got her re-employed as a widow. But they did it. They recognised that someone had to step in and say, well, "she's got four kids, she can teach, let her back in". So that was pretty significant.

LM: And now turning to your time here at the IEU, what would you say has been the IEU's biggest achievement while you've been Secretary?

MN: Oh, well landing the most recent dispute, which instigated what will be the highest pay rise for teachers and support staff in Catholic systemic schools for the last three decades. Absolutely huge.

And it was a pretty rare opportunity to be able to march with the NSW Teachers Federation as well. I think that was a very powerful moment where unions came together.

Marching shoulder to shoulder

LM: What did it feel like to be on the streets, shoulder to shoulder, with the NSW Teachers Fed?

MN: It was a big deal. It required a lot of complex organisation, but the rewards were greater than the effort.

So, when you saw thousands of teachers on the street, of either union, walking together at the top of Macquarie Street, it really sent the NSW Liberal Government, I'm sure, into a bit of a tailspin. They had no answer that would stop us coming back again if we had to. And we did twice. So there! (Mark chuckles).

LM: Can you tell me about a moment when you were working with an organiser who really inspired you?

MN: I'm in awe of what they do daily. And it's not an easy role either because often, by the time someone reaches you, they might be deeply aggrieved about a particular situation. That organiser has to unpack that grievance and try and make sense of it. So, organising is complex and difficult work.

But being in workplaces, having chapter meetings, working with individual members, is the secret to unionism. The workplace is where the magic happens.



Teacher pay moving across all sectors

Carol Matthews

Secretary



As the 2023 school year draws to a close, teachers in NSW Catholic systemic schools have received or will shortly receive increases in pay of between 12% and 8%, in line with increases received by Department of Education teachers. ACT teachers have also received significant increases this year.

The IEU is currently negotiating with other groups of schools to flow on these increases. Christian schools represented by the Association of Independent Schools (AIS) and Model A, B and C Catholic independent schools have all made pay offers which show some

recognition of the new reality that finally teachers' work is being recognised. These negotiations are continuing and we are not there yet. Christian Schools Australia, representing over 35 schools, is still considering its position.

The IEU is hearing every day about an independent school represented by the AIS that is increasing pay for teachers or all staff by up to 8%. However, other independent schools are keeping their cheque books closed and hoping the issue will go away. This is not good enough and schools will start bleeding staff if they cannot do better. Do not hesitate to contact your Organiser for assistance in pursuing this issue.

A big day at the AGM



Delegates to the recent Annual General Meeting of Council, on 28 October, heard the news of Mark Northam's resignation, announced to the Executive in recent weeks, with much emotion.

Mark (pictured left) received two standing ovations in the course of the meeting, reflecting the enormous support and affection that members have for him.

Carol Matthews (pictured centre), currently Deputy Secretary, was elected by Council to fill the vacant Secretary spot and David Towson, currently an Assistant Secretary, was elected as Deputy Secretary. Council was able to fill these positions, as given the proportion of the term remaining, a full election by members was not required. Carol and David will join Lyn Caton to form the new leadership team – Lyn was recently elected as Assistant Secretary. The remaining Assistant Secretary position will be filled at March Council.

The meeting was sad to hear that long term Executive member Bernadette Baker (pictured right), Systemic Vice-President, is resigning from Executive. Bernadette has been on the Executive for 30 years and has represented members with enthusiasm, expertise and integrity. Executive and her South Coast comrades will miss her.

Catholic systemic schools support staff: Find your correct pay rate

Classroom and learning support services

An employee whose principal duties are to provide support and assistance to Teachers and students in a classroom setting to individual students or groups of students, or to support the operation of curriculum-related services in a school, such as those provided by a library, laboratory or a technology centre.

| Previous classification | New classification | Roles | Criteria | Hourly rate from Jan 2023 term time only employees |
|-------------------------|--------------------|---|----------------------------------|--|
| Level 4.1 | 4.1 | School assistant, school support officer, learning support officer, aboriginal education officer, home school liaison officer, integration aide, food technology assistant, art assistant, TAS assistant, music assistant, agriculture assistant, laboratory assistant, library/audio-visual assistant, book room assistant, bi-lingual aides and teachers' aides | First year of service | 33.40 |
| Level 4.2 | 4.2 | | Second year of service | 34.00 |
| Level 4.3 | 4.3 | | Third year of service | 36.48 |
| | 4.4 | | More than three years of service | 38.81 |
| Level 5 | 5 | Senior school assistant, senior classroom support specialist, teacher aide coordinator, professional assistant, aboriginal education officer | | 38.81 |
| | 5A1 | Aboriginal education officer is appointed to a role that involves community liaison, family support or integration of aboriginal perspectives into the operation of the school. | | 42.21 |
| | 5A2 | | | 43.41 |

| Previous classification | New classification | Roles | Criteria | Hourly rate from Jan 2023 term time only employees |
|-------------------------|--------------------|--|---|--|
| Level 4.1 | 4.1 | Administration officer, school secretary, accounts clerk and ICT assistant or helpdesk support. | First year of service | 33.40 |
| Level 4.2 | 4.2 | | Second year of service | 34.00 |
| Level 4.3 | 4.3 | | Third year of service | 36.48 |
| Level 5 | 5 | Senior administration officer and ICT officer | | 38.81 |
| Level 5 Level 6 | 6A | Senior school secretary, executive assistant, financial secretary (however named), principal's secretary and ICT senior officer. | Primary schools of less than 400 students in Regional Dioceses ICT Senior Officer where that is in addition to one or more other Level 6 School Administrative Employees (Note: regional primary schools of less than 100 students, other than those in Newcastle/Maitland and Wollongong Dioceses, do not have to appoint a level 6). | 43.35 |
| | 6B | | All other schools | 44.58 |

School administrative services

An employee whose principal duties are in clerical or administration or information communication and technology (ICT) services within a school.



Teachers are teachers: **Early childhood team on the road**

The early childhood education and care (ECEC) team has been hitting the road to talk to preschool teachers in regional areas about improving their pay and conditions. Our organisers have been visiting preschools in Newcastle, the Hunter, Taree and the northern rivers.

The team has been speaking with teachers on the modern award — who receive the lowest wages — as well as those on expired enterprise agreements. As part of the campaign, organisers have been talking to preschool teachers about the potential benefits of multi-enterprise agreements. The IEU wants pay parity for early childhood teachers. As we've said before, teachers are teachers. Watch this space as there'll be more to come...



Accreditation supervisor shortage holds up pay rises

Early Childhood Education & Care

ECEC

IEU the union for early childhood teachers

Provisionally accredited early childhood teachers (ECT) are experiencing significant frustration. NESA (and some large employers) are not enabling them to achieve proficient teacher accreditation because they have not been allocated an accreditation supervisor.

Some provisional teachers have been teaching for more than four years, yet still have no supervisor to provide feedback on their documentation or observe their teaching.

For those employed on the *Educational Services (Teachers)* Award this involves a significant financial penalty. To move to the Level 2 rate of pay in the award, teachers must achieve proficient teacher accreditation, which can only be achieved with the assistance of an accreditation supervisor.

By contrast, teachers working in schools are allocated an accreditation supervisor by their school and the vast majority achieve proficient teacher status within two years.

The IEU has raised our concerns with the NESA Early Childhood Reference Group and at NESA board meetings. NESA adopted a Communities of Practice model and trained an additional 40 accreditation supervisors this year to address the delays.

All ECTs whose due date falls before the end of 2024 should have been allocated an accreditation supervisor. NESA said some teachers listed their work status as 'part

time' on e-TAMS upon graduating and they were allocated five years to achieve proficient teacher status.

This date is not automatically reduced to three years if your employment changes to full time, so teachers need to contact NESA to bring their due date forward.

If you are a provisionally accredited teacher with prior experience as a Diploma-level educator and you would like to be included in a Communities of Practice with other ECTs that have experience at Diploma level, please email lisa@ieu.asn.au, as NESA has indicated a willingness to facilitate this.

ACCC Childcare Inquiry Educator Roundtable

Lisa James (IEU ECEC Organiser) and Veronica Yewdall (IEUA Assistant Secretary,) attended the ACCC Educator Roundtable on 11 August. The IEU contributed to discussions on qualification requirements, including the positive impact of teacher qualifications on children's outcomes.

We reiterated the extensive documentation required of teachers (for example the 73-page self-assessment tool), and the lack of adequate non-contact time due to staffing shortages.

We stressed that it is vital to improve pay and conditions to attract and retain teachers in ECEC. Teachers who are

unable to take lunch breaks, access non-contact time to do documentation or leave at the end of their shift to maintain ratios will experience burnout and leave the sector.

We also drew attention to the inadequate support for children with additional needs, as funding does not cover the cost of employing a Certificate III for five hours when the child may attend up to 10 hours in a day.

The discussion then moved to the impact of COVID-19 on the workforce. The union said many teachers experienced decreases in their hours of work when parents removed their children from centres. ECEC employees felt unsafe working while most other employees were at home.

Early childhood teachers were working directly with children without adequate PPE and unable to implement 'social distancing' in services. The IEU also explained that we have negotiated enterprise agreements containing above-award salaries and conditions with many not-for-profit employers, while most teachers working in for-profit centres are paid award rates.

Lisa James ECEC Organiser



WA visit reaps mutual benefits

The federal IEUA is made up of state branches which support and cooperate with each other.

In September, NSW/ACT IEU Organiser Kendall Warren visited Western Australia to work with colleagues in that branch, with a focus on developing a larger presence in the post-secondary college sector.

As soon as he arrived in WA, Kendall dropped into the IEU office at Rivervale to meet Branch Secretary Rebecca Collopy and Lead Organiser Sonia Gurrin and their friendly and hard-working team.

The WA Branch is much smaller than the Victoria/Tasmania, Queensland and NSW/ACT branches, with around 4000 members, compared to NSW/ACT's 32,000 for example, but it punches above its weight.

Kendall conducted a short training session for the organising team, running through the peculiarities of the sector, focusing on the for-profit nature of the industry, and its volatility and insecure work patterns. He also ran through the award and the most relevant provisions.

He also provided training on how the union might best position itself in the sector, to increase membership and become a significant stakeholder.

At Lexis English, an ELICOS college near the beach in Scarborough, Kendall and some WA organisers met with teachers in their staffroom and discussed the value of union membership.

Later in the week, they visited Navitas English in Northbridge, Kingston International College in Highgate, and

various campuses of Stanley College, a large VET institution with centres in Northbridge, West Perth and Mirrabooka.

These various schools were a good cross-section of Perth, from the beachside suburbs like Scarborough, through upmarket inner-city Northbridge, to the more suburban Mirrabooka.

"It was a worthwhile trip for myself and the WA branch. I hope they got a lot of take-aways from it, and I certainly got some tips to bring back to NSW and the ACT," Kendall said.

"Co-operation is at the heart of unionism, and this particular exercise was beneficial all round," he said.

Present tense

More federal changes

The Federal Government has recently introduced into Parliament some further proposed changes to the Fair Work Act, with the Albanese government's 'Closing the Loopholes' bill. Some of these changes may have significant effects on the post-secondary sector.

Getting the most media coverage are proposed laws around wages theft, the situation when employers deliberately withhold pay to which employees are rightfully entitled. Anyone who has ever worked in the English Language intensive courses for overseas students (ELICOS) industry in Australia will know that there are many colleges that basically ignore the award and pay people at low step levels, regardless of what their qualifications and experience might entitle them to. Penalties for breaches are expected to be severe, with fines in the millions of dollars and even jail terms.

The government is also proposing better regulation around insecure work, with more rights for casual workers to convert to permanent, as well as clearer definitions about what casual work actually is. Related to this, it is intended there will be greater regulation around so-called "gig" workers (which in practice may assist students rather than teachers) and labour-hire companies.

The bill faces an uncertain path through the Senate. While the Greens are likely to support the legislation, the government will still need two of the four independent senators for it to become law.

Cleaning up the sector

The post-secondary education sector has long harboured some disreputable providers, colleges which are just fronts for funnelling international students into unregulated work. The Albanese government has recently announced a crackdown on so-called 'ghost colleges,' which have a lot of enrolments, but whose students rarely attend.

In August, Skills Minister Brendan O'Connor announced greater compliance measures for VET colleges, and beefing up the powers of the industry regulator ASQA.

In October, the government also announced greater regulation of the shadowy world of education agents, including the prohibition of onshore poaching of existing students, a common practice with some colleges.

Long-time observers of the industry will be aware that governments of either stripe have long threatened crackdowns on the sector, and while overall standards have improved over the years, it remains to be seen what sort of effect these most recent changes will end up having.

Bargaining update

Your union continues to bargain on behalf of members, and we have recently finalised new agreements at two colleges, UNSW College and Navitas English.

At UNSW College, teachers will soon receive a \$1000 'uplift' to all rates followed by an immediate 4% increase, both of which will be backdated to January 2023. From January 2024, pays will increase further by 3.5%, with another 3.5% increase in 2025.

Navitas English have also opted for a dollar amount increase, with all rates increasing by an average of 3.75% from July 2023 (with higher increases at the lower steps than at the top), followed by 3.5% in 2024, and 2.75% in both 2025 and 2026. Teachers will also get a sign-on bonus of over \$1000. There are also improvements in a range of other areas such as payment for additional shifts, and new 'MyStudy' arrangements.

The news is not so good at Taylors College, where negotiations have stalled over management's insistence on making significant (and retrograde) claims around term times, hours of work and paid parental leave, which teachers are not prepared to accept. The IEU has suggested rolling over the existing agreement with minimal changes and nominal pay rises, but so far neither side is prepared to budge.

Bargaining is also getting started at Navitas Skilled Futures, with organisers from the union visiting centres in October to seek feedback for our Log of Claims.

The Fair Work Act includes provisions pertaining to 'good faith bargaining,' under which an employer can be compelled to bargain when it can be demonstrated that the majority of employees (or group of employees, such as teachers) wish to do so. To find out how that might work at your college, contact your union, the IEU.

Kendall Warren Organiser

The push for paid pracs



Members of SAPP hold a banner, including Co-Founder Isaac Wattenberg third from right

"Students are skipping meals, they're having to toss-up between paying rent and putting petrol in their car."



Bachelor of Education student and mental health advocate Meg Southcombe



Callum Ward

When Master of Education student Callum Ward got his first opportunity to teach in a classroom, he knew he had found what he wanted to do for the rest of his life. The 22-year-old completed his first practicum earlier this year at a school in Sydney's inner west. The first-year student travelled almost an hour by train to get there. One day, he wasn't sure he had enough money to cover the fare. "I had to go, OK, do I want to eat some lunch today or do I want to get to prac?", said Ward.

It's a choice the Macquarie University student feels he shouldn't have to make, and he's not alone. Ward is a member of a national grassroots student collective called Students Against Placement Poverty (SAPP), which is campaigning for university placements to be paid. The group has members across a range of degree programs including Education, Social Work and Nursing. According to Co-Founder Isaac Wattenberg, many students are struggling to complete unpaid work amid a cost-of-living crisis.

Food or prac?

"Students are skipping meals, they're having to toss-up between paying rent and putting petrol in their car," said Wattenberg, who is studying social work at the University of NSW. Some students turn to university food banks to feed themselves while they are on placement. The SAPP spokesperson had to give up his part-time job when he went on placement. He says many students are forced to do the same — losing wages and jobs they rely on to support themselves. Students who continue to work while on prac face other issues.

Bachelor of Education student Meg Southcombe felt so exhausted during her first prac, that she struggled to walk the dog. The athletic 20-year-old is training to be a physical education teacher. She lights up when she talks about teaching, but going on prac took a toll. The University of Newcastle student, who is not a member of SAPP, was able to go home to Muswellbrook for her placement. During the week, Southcombe worked full-time at a school and then slept on the family couch each night. On the weekend, she drove over an hour and half back to Newcastle to work 12-hour shift in a pub each Saturday and Sunday, before driving back again.

On the last day of her prac, one of the kids said to her: "Miss, you've been sick the whole time". That's when she realised she'd been coughing throughout her prac. "You burn yourself into the ground," says the first-year student. Still, Southcombe considers herself one of the lucky ones as she doesn't pay rent. If she did, she doesn't know how she'd make it through.

Working nights

According to Wattenberg, some students need to work nights while doing their placement full-time and trying to keep up with coursework. As well as wages, SAPP wants to see a reduction in the number of hours required on placement. Wattenberg argues there's no evidence that a greater number of hours improves educational outcomes.

For teaching students in NSW, undergraduates must complete at least 80 days of professional experience, while postgraduates need a minimum of 60 days. The requirements are set by the Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL), but universities can choose to increase the amount. Danny Pinchas, the General Manager of Teaching and School Leadership at AITSL, emphasises that any potential changes would need to be endorsed by every education minister. Pinchas is not aware of any current plans to reduce hours.

Mental health toll

Students on prac often experience a lot of stress. According to research conducted by the Australian Council of Heads of Schools of Social Work, 80% of social work students surveyed said the financial hardship of their placement negatively affected their mental health. While similar research has not been done in the education field, SAPP hears from students across disciplines who are feeling anxious, depressed, and even suicidal. "I would say there's a severe mental health cost," states Wattenberg.

Southcombe is a vocal mental health advocate who believes the psychological impact on students shouldn't be underestimated. "I know fully employed teachers are burning out", she says, "but students are also burning out". Southcombe argues that when students don't have the time or money to feed themselves properly, exercise or spend time with their friends, their wellbeing suffers.

With unpaid placements posing so many challenges, some students aren't making it to graduation. They are burning out and dropping out, fueling staff shortages in critical sectors like teaching, says Wattenberg. Ward understands why students are leaving because he considered doing so himself. He worries about the impact unpaid placements are having on the teacher shortage. "Burnout is a really serious thing and it's terrible that we're losing so many great or even potentially great teachers," he said.

Broken system

Southcombe believes that there are young people who would make wonderful teachers, but they simply don't have the means or support to make it through. The system isn't working she says, "I mean, something's got to give".

She's not convinced that paid placements are the answer, but she'd like to see students at least receive enough to cover basic expenses. If students were paid, it would demonstrate a respect for the work of teaching, argues Southcombe, who recently went viral for talking about the need to respect the profession on ABC's The Drum.

The idea of paid placements is gaining traction. Minister for Education Jason Clare spoke about the need to address placement poverty in an interview with ABC News. Clare told the network that paid placements are being considered as part of the Universities Accord, the most significant review of the sector for many years. Findings and recommendations will be released in the final Universities Accord report, which is due at the end of the year.

Ward hopes that the government heeds the calls of students facing placement poverty. "They've just got to listen," he says. It remains to be seen whether paid placements will become a reality, but Ward hopes that SAPP's activism will make a difference for future education students. Teaching, he says, is a noble profession. "I think we do need more teachers, but we need to support them as they're coming through."

Lucy Meyer Journalist

Valuing and supporting principal members – some reflections



Principals' breakfast at Canberra 2022



Pam in her early years with the IEU



Principals' meet at IEU Council 2022



Principals Sub Branch meeting at Parramatta 2018

Pam Smith, retiring Principals' Organiser, reflects on her 28 years with the IEU and on our union's role in supporting principal members.

Last year when presenting a Catholic systemic principal member with her certificate in recognition of 40 years of IEU membership, she told me how passionate she was about the role but how the demands and expectations continued to escalate.

In her words, "I love my school community and being a leader of teaching, learning and wellbeing but the unrealistic workload pressures have an impact on my own health and wellbeing. I also worry that future school leaders will not find principalship attractive."

"We already have a teacher shortage and that will flow on to filling leadership roles in future if we don't address workload, remuneration and staff wellbeing issues in schools."

Similar issues and concerns have been raised by Catholic systemic principal members in recent meetings to discuss enterprise agreement negotiations and by IEU independent sector principal members.

The annual ACU survey report on principals' workloads, health and wellbeing, released in March this year, showed that the top stress factors for principals are:

- quantity of work reflecting the increasing expectations on principals
- lack of time to focus on teaching and learning rather than on administration and compliance
- staff shortages, and
- mental health issues affecting students and families.

IEU principal members across sectors have echoed these concerns and have indicated that increased administrative

and leadership support in schools would be of assistance, as would enhanced access to counselling and wellbeing services for students and families.

As one principal said recently, "Being a principal is a multi-layered role with intense time pressures and unpredictability. I can be very well prepared for the day and the week but something can occur, such as a crisis with a family, which can take me away from other tasks which I then often have to deal with into the night or try to give to other over worked staff".

"I have seen up close the work of principals in their schools and communities and know that they, together with teachers and support staff, are at the heart of quality education."

Principals also tell the IEU that there is a major need to 'audit' the burgeoning administrative demands on schools to ensure that they enhance teaching and learning and

student welfare and are not simply compliant without real benefit to school level outcomes. The most recent ACU survey report also recommended the elimination of 'low value' administrative tasks for principals.

Recent experiences of COVID and extreme weather events such as bushfires and floods have highlighted the leadership role of principals, as do the many other issues which affect families and communities. In the words of a principal in a small rural town, "It is a privilege, but we are a 'go to person', a community leader, in good times and bad but we also need recognition and support to continue to do our roles as principal as well as we would like."

In my 28 years with the IEU, I have seen up close the work of principals in their schools and communities and know that they, together with teachers and support staff, are at the heart of quality education. They should be valued and supported in that vital work by their employers, by their communities and by government. I especially acknowledge the advocacy role of the IEU Principals' Sub Branch and the principals' chapters and reps in each diocese and also the contribution of IEU principal members in independent schools.

The IEU looks forward to continuing to work with principal members to protect and enhance their employment, professional and wellbeing interests. Again, in the words of an experienced principal member "It is an honour to be a principal but we need to support each other and to work with our union to achieve the best for ourselves, our staff, our students and their families".

Professional Engagement

Accreditation to be streamlined

A significant development in the accreditation process is due to come into effect, and it will help restore professional autonomy for teachers.

While it will have far reaching benefits for all teachers, it will be of particular significance to pre-2004 teachers who are about to finalise their maintenance period.

From 10 November, teachers in NSW finalise their maintenance of accreditation directly from NESA, without having to also go through their employer or principal.

Keep in mind

Pre-2004 teachers were able to submit from mid-2022 and were given a 12 month extension until 31 December 2023. These teachers can choose to submit any time between now and the end of the year. Once you submit your maintenance of accreditation, this will act as a one-time reset of your maintenance accreditation due date.

Check your eTAMS

All teachers whose maintenance is due after 10 November are encouraged to log into their eTAMS account and ensure they have received the "green tick" indicating they have met the professional development requirements.

This will mean you should have undertaken at least 50 hours of accredited PD. The remaining 50 hours no longer need to be logged on eTAMS and can be recorded on your elective PD log, which you should maintain for the five year period.

Once you have the green tick and are within three months of your maintenance due date, you then need to:

- ensure you have an elective PD log that completes your PD hour requirements (if required)
- confirm your employment details
- self-attest that you continue to meet the standards.

- you will then automatically roll into a new five-year maintenance cycle (seven years for casual or part-time teachers), and
- contact your organiser if you have any questions.

Hot new read

The new Reps Handbook contains valuable information which will assist reps in supporting members and building chapter capacity. It was developed and launched late last term and is worth a read.

If you do not have a rep in your school, you should consider discussing this with your organiser. You can take a look at the handbook and see if this important role might interest you.

The IEU runs dedicated training sessions for reps. Reps ensure there's a strong IEU presence in the workplace. They are vital to building union capacity to negotiate successful salary and conditions outcomes

Link to Rep's Handbook: bit.ly/2023repsbook



Reducing workload: A blueprint for change

The IEU welcomes the release of the NSW Government's Statement of Expectations and its focus on reducing teacher workload.

The Deputy Premier and Minister for Education and Early Learning Prue Car provided NESA with the Statement. It sets out the government's expectations of the education authority.

"It's about making things better. It's about getting initial teacher education more closely aligned with the work of schools and it's about increasing teacher supply," former IEU NSW/ACT Branch Secretary Mark Northam said.

"The profession welcomes the new approach. Managing change is complex but we now have a way forward."

The six points detailed in the Statement of Expectations capture what is necessary to drive change. The administrative burden on teachers should be reduced and the rationale and benefits of any administrative task should be clearly communicated to teachers before requiring them to undertake such tasks.

"The Statement embraces a revised way of thinking, a platform for professional discussions in schools, and importantly, a strong signal to employers that change is desirable," Northam said.

"Reducing unnecessary workload is a high priority for the Minister. Many such developments have no cost implications and are simply administrative in nature."

The Statement also foreshadows the possibility of establishing "maximum" requirements, which would provide an upper limit on the work required of teachers and schools.

"The IEU has been making a case for reform and refinement with NESA expectations for many years. We applaud the Minister for Education for listening to the profession."

Six points from the Statement of Expectations:

1. Reducing unnecessary workload.
2. Focusing clear and concise language.
3. Supporting teachers in implementing the new curriculum.
4. Addressing teacher supply challenges through teacher training.
5. Removing barriers for teachers in subjects of greatest need.
6. Successfully deliver the Higher School Certificate exams and credentials.

Details: www.nsw.gov.au/education-and-training/nesa/about/who-we-are/what-we-do/statement-of-expectations

New voice for teachers on ACT board

Organiser Anthony Telford is the IEU's new representative to the board of the ACT Teacher Quality Institute (TQI).

Anthony previously served on the TQI Professional Learning and Development Committee and looks forward to representing the interests of IEU members and the broader teaching community on the board.

TQI aims to be a responsive regulator which recognises the professionalism of ACT teachers and supports and builds the status of teachers. The IEU has an important role in ensuring that the voice of teachers is heard as TQI goes about their important role in the ACT community.

Anthony replaces fellow Canberra-based Organiser Berna Simpson who has made a significant contribution to the board over the past six years. This contribution was recognised by the TQI board chair Natalie Howson at a dinner following the most recent meeting.

Berna considers the introduction of TQI accreditation of early childhood teachers as the most significant changes in education in the ACT in recent years and has been pleased to have been able to be a voice for our members throughout this process. The board's recent move towards a more teacher-oriented accreditation process is another significant change.

Berna has also played a role in broadening the acceptance of a range of professional development that can be used as evidence for accreditation purposes. The change in the way this is managed has led to a pleasing reduction in the time teachers spend in compliance obligations, and will lead to more in-school processes being accepted as reflective practice.

Berna would like to thank the IEU for affording her the opportunity to serve in this capacity.

Anthony is looking forward to the challenges of the position and is excited by the prospect of presenting the members' voice to the committee. He acknowledges that the teaching profession is facing some obstacles and believes it is vital that the voice of teachers is heard in places that play such a significant role in shaping the direction of teaching in the ACT.

One aspect of particular interest to Anthony is the growing numbers of teachers at the 'Permit to Teach' level of accreditation working in ACT schools. This group of often made up of young members who are particularly vulnerable, and their progress needs to be monitored. The IEU has a strong interest in ensuring the long-term success of these teachers.

Anthony begins his appointment at the TQI Board meeting on 28 November.

IEUA NSW/ACT PULLOUT POSTER

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

IEU members regularly identify NESA compliance as a significant factor contributing to excessive teacher workload. NESA 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, NESA 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.



Independent
Education
Union of Australia
NSW/ACT Branch

**“Managing
teacher workload
one step at a
time.”** Mark Northam

School registration requirements

“Schools should not be creating additional documents solely for the purpose of registration or for NESA inspection.”

“Careful consideration should be given to the purpose of any additional expectations.”

IEU members are encouraged to engage in professional conversations at the stage, KLA, or whole school level to establish where the request for additional details is being generated, the purpose of such additional requests and their value and workload implications.

If a change to the planned program is necessary, only a brief annotation on the document is required. Detailed descriptions and a rationale as to why the change was made are not required by NESA.

It is important to remember that the primary audience for your teaching program is you, the teacher who is actually delivering the program. Since those reviewing the programs would be educational professionals it is reasonable to expect they have a sound knowledge and understanding of professional teaching conventions.

While teachers must ensure their programs clearly demonstrate the syllabus and relevant syllabus requirements are being met, the increasingly common practice of developing programs which resemble pre-service teacher lesson plans is not necessary.

NESA does not require “lesson plans and descriptions of repetitive and basic classroom practices.” It is a matter for the teacher as to the level detail they wish to include. The IEU consider lesson steps, detailed explanations as to why actions are being taken, and excessive detail describing the class activity as repetitive and basic classroom practices.

The routine collection of work samples is not required. Where NESA may request to view work samples as part of an inspection, they should be readily available from the daily work of students.

NSW Education Standards Authority

Curriculum – school regis

NESA's school registration manuals detail the current requirements for schools to demonstrate they are meeting registration requirements.

To assist schools, this fact sheet describes and clarifies the School Registration Unit about recordkeeping requirements.

Curriculum requirements

NESA's school registration manuals (the manuals) describe the evidence of compliance that is needed to demonstrate delivery of a school's curriculum in accordance with the Education Act 1990.

There is a manual for each school sector:

- [government schools](#)
- [individual non-government schools](#)
- [systemic non-government schools](#).

Schools that deliver courses for the Record of School Achievement (RoSA) and/or the Higher School Certificate (HSC), must also follow NESA's Assessment Certification Examination ([ACE website](#)) rules.

The manuals describe the curriculum documentation required to demonstrate that NESA syllabuses are being taught.

This documentation should typically exist in a school. Schools should not be creating additional documents solely for the purpose of registration or a NESA inspection.

School or school system expectations

Schools are responsible for ensuring processes are in place to implement NESA's curriculum and policies.

A school or schooling system may have expectations in addition to the evidence of compliance described in the manual. Careful consideration should be given to the purpose of any additional expectations.

NESA fact sheet – Curriculum

May 2023

Programming

Teachers include information in their programs to indicate the syllabus content they plan to teach and how they intend to teach it.

A teaching program typically details syllabus outcomes, syllabus content and teaching strategies. Teachers may choose to include other information in a teaching program such as assessment or they may choose to record this separately.

The amount of depth and detail included in a teaching program is a matter for the teacher.

Teachers should ensure that the teaching program clearly demonstrates that the syllabus is being delivered and any relevant syllabus requirements are met. Lesson plans and descriptions of repetitive and basic classroom practices are not required for school registration purposes.

Schools may require additional elements to be included in teaching programs. However, these should be carefully considered so they are not an unnecessary burden for teachers.

Student work samples

Student work samples are the natural artefact of implementing the school's planned curriculum.

For school registration purposes, NESA does not require student work samples to be routinely collected and kept by teachers.

During an inspection (including when a school is selected at random), an Inspector may request a few samples of student work that demonstrate implementation of the curriculum. The samples should be those available on a day-to-day basis and may include anything relevant to delivery of the teaching program that a teacher can readily access if required. Examples include current student workbooks, completed tasks, activities or displays on a classroom wall.

NESA fact sheet – Curriculum

May 2023

schoolregis

Registration requirements

Curriculum documentation and records needed by schools for registration purposes.

Paper or digital records

It is a matter for the school and/or teachers to determine whether curriculum documentation is maintained as paper or digital records.

NESA does not typically require schools to print documents for an inspection. Documentation and records may be presented in whichever format the school holds the records.

Aligning curriculum documentation

NESA's manuals refer to schools demonstrating evidence of alignment between NESA's syllabuses and the school's curriculum documentation.

This means that the various elements of curriculum documentation align with each other and reflect the relevant syllabus. For example, units of work (title, sequence, duration) correlate with those in the scope and sequence and assessment plan.

This does not mean that teachers cannot change the sequence of unit delivery or duration of time allocated to a unit of work. Adjusting curriculum delivery in response to student needs is good practice. Teachers have the flexibility to decide how such adjustments are made and recorded. Brief electronic or handwritten annotations on the scope and sequence or noting the change through program registration are both valid ways of recording such changes.

schoolrego@nesa.nsw.edu.au

Page 1 of 4

Differentiation – any differentiation adjustments need only be brief statements in the program. They do not require commentary.

For example, in an activity where the class is exploring numbers to 20 and two students, Cameron and Sadhika, have an adjustment, an appropriate wording to acknowledge the delivery of this differentiation in the program could be as simple as "CV and SJ – numbers to 10 using counters."

This fact sheet statement is self-explanatory. Members should read this, spread the word and smile.

NSW Education Standards Authority

Curriculum – programming and record keeping

The following advice from the Curriculum Standards Directorate relates to school-based decisions about programming and recordkeeping.

Evidence of compliance in the manuals does not include teacher evaluation and reflection, teaching program registration and curriculum differentiation.

It is a matter for teachers and schools to determine the method for recording teacher reflection and evaluation, teaching program registration and curriculum differentiation, and how often that is conducted.

Differentiation

Teachers will implement various methods for recording differentiation in their programs such as brief statements to indicate what changed since planning commenced. There is no expectation that a teacher writes comments regarding each aspect of each lesson or for each teaching strategy.

Teachers will develop programs inclusive of outcomes based on the most appropriate curriculum options selected for a student(s) with disability during the collaborative curriculum planning process. If a student(s) with disability requires adjustments to teaching, learning and/or assessment this should be reflected in the program.

Teaching program registration

Program registration certifies that a teacher delivered their program based on NSW syllabuses.

NESA does not have a requirement related to the method or how often a program is registered.

Where there is no change to the original plan, a simple record of date of completion.

indicates a program was delivered without amendment.

Program registration enables teachers to concisely record any significant changes to the planned program following implementation, and how these changes may require future adjustments in syllabus delivery across the Year or Stage.

Teacher evaluation

It can be useful for a teacher to personally evaluate their teaching programs and consider the scope and sequence. This helps determine if they would like to make changes to the way a program is delivered in the future. The focus of the evaluation is how effective the unit was in achieving its objectives and ways that the teaching program could be improved when taught again.

NESA has no requirement about how evaluation is completed or how much detail is required. These are all matters for the teacher and/or school to determine.

- Teachers and/or schools may choose to combine program registration and evaluation into a single process. It may depend on the length of a unit being delivered as part of a program.
- If the same program is delivered to multiple classes in a calendar year, it may be appropriate for teachers to register and evaluate on a single program rather than each teacher register and evaluate on their own copy of the program.

Page 3 of 4

Schools sometimes collect work samples for collaborative conversations such as grading. This is not a registration requirement and is a discretion matter for schools.

Schools offering courses for the RoSA must maintain a small number of work samples for moderation purposes. This only applies to Year 10 and Year 11 courses. The NESA website outlines requirements for retaining work samples for RoSA. These will not be requested as part of a NESA inspection for moderation purposes.

Sample of documentation requested at a NESA inspection

Curriculum documentation is being reviewed as part of an inspection, an Inspector will contact the school in advance to identify and clarify the specific materials to be provided.

In an existing school, an Inspector will typically ask to see curriculum documentation for one or 2 subjects from one Stage of learning to demonstrate implementation of NESA syllabuses.

Below is an example of what may be requested for a primary school being inspected in Term 2 with Stage 3 English identified as the focus key learning area: timetable, scope and sequence for the Stage 3 Term 1 teaching program or unit(s) of work assessment plan for the year 3 samples of student work to demonstrate delivery of the teaching program.

A sample of curriculum documentation provides a record of how the school delivers the English syllabus and allows an Inspector to assess curriculum alignment.

Further advice

For more information about school registration or inspection processes, please contact the School Registration Unit on schoolrego@nesa.nsw.edu.au.

Reflection and evaluation should not be a recount of each lesson or conducted in relation to each teaching and learning strategy delivered to the class. Rather, it should indicate whether the program was delivered in the scheduled timeframe and briefly state how the unit may be taught more effectively next time.

Some teachers and schools may choose to conduct ongoing evaluation as a unit is delivered, while others may prefer evaluating at the conclusion of the unit.

School-based assessment

Assessment naturally occurs when teachers deliver their programs. It may be as informal as an observation of the class or a scheduled activity and the teacher determines individual student progress. Formal assessment should be documented and align to the program but does not need to be integrated into programming materials. Teachers and schools may choose how they record and retain student achievement results.

School considerations

NESA encourages all schools and schooling systems to carefully consider any programming requirements placed on teachers including mandating daily or weekly evaluation and registration, and other activities related to programming.

Further advice

For more information about curriculum and school-based assessment, please contact the Curriculum Standards team at NESA on curriculum@nesa.nsw.edu.au.

If you continue to experience workload issues related to programming, contact your organisers.

For more information visit <https://bit.ly/nesafactsheet2023>

Effective evaluation is an important professional responsibility. It does not follow that this reflection needs to be a written document for an external audience. NESA only require brief comment to indicate where the planned program was changed.

Schools and systems are encouraged to carefully consider the need for daily or weekly administrative tasks.

The IEU has stressed that annotations in programs are not required unless there are changes.

Hear our professional voice

The IEU has argued for some time that the professional voice of teachers needs to be heard to genuinely address workload issues in schools.

The requirements set out in the NESA Fact Sheets are not minimum requirements. They identify the actions required of teachers to appropriately meet their professional obligations.

Where an individual, school, or system is requesting additional requirements to those NESA has outlined, the IEU strongly suggests a professional discussion should take place to determine the evidence basis for such a request and the workload implications.

Where there are issues with an individual teacher this is best dealt with as a performance management issue, not by implementing whole school processes which undermine professional teacher judgement.

What NESA actually requests for compliance

- Timetables for each Year/class showing the allocation of time and teachers for each KLA.
- The scope and sequence of learning/units of work in relation to outcomes of the NESA syllabus for each KLA for each year.
- An assessment plan indicating how students' performance in each KLA is assessed, monitored and recorded.
- An overview of the process for reporting student achievement.
- For relevant schools, assessment policies and procedures for the RoSA and wHSC which comply with the requirements on the ACE website.

IEU SPEAKS Collective struggles for change never easy

Union members fight for change in their workplaces, industries, professions, and communities. Our campaigns often come up against powerful interests determined to block such progress.

Sadly, the referendum didn't deliver our First Nations Voice. In areas with majority Indigenous populations, the 'yes' vote was successful. 67% of union members voted 'yes', however, our community campaign and solidarity actions weren't enough. This time.

Union activists know that tough campaigns can take years to win. This is a setback but not a defeat. The IEU will never stop fighting for Indigenous members, students and their school communities.

The high level of 'yes' support from younger Australians gives great hope that change will come. This new and growing cohort of voters strongly rejected the politics of division and negativity.

As educators, we are dedicated to making a positive difference for future generations. We have a powerful opportunity to impact the lives of thousands of Aboriginal

and Torres Strait Islander students in our schools, kindergartens and preschools.

- IEU members remain deeply committed to closing the gap in educational outcomes and the wellbeing of Indigenous students in our care.
- IEU members remain deeply committed to teaching about the struggles and proud history of our nation's First People, and how our community can embrace true reconciliation.
- IEU members remain deeply committed to our campaign for greater funding and targeted resources to address educational disadvantage through forums such as the National School Reform Agreement and Early Years (Childhood Education) Strategy.
- IEU members remain deeply committed to closing the gap in jobs, household earnings and living standards through better wages, secure work and fairer workplace laws.

- IEU members remain deeply committed to delivering better recognition and reward for our First Nations members working as Indigenous liaison officers, education youth workers and in cultural support roles in schools.
- IEU members remain deeply committed to creating pathways for more Indigenous people to become teachers within a more diverse and inclusive profession.
- IEU members remain deeply committed to improving the representation of First Nations People in our delegate structures, leadership roles and union workplaces.

Our core union values promote consultation, representation and inclusion. This is why the IEU, and our 75,000 members, will always stand in solidarity with our First Australians.

IEU Speaks is the mouthpiece of the union's federal representatives, based in Canberra.



The black mist and the ban

First Nations atomic survivors and civil society organisations are calling on the Australian government to sign the nuclear weapon ban treaty, 70 years after the first Emu Field atomic test.

The first nuclear weapons test was on mainland Australia at Emu Field, South Australia, on Anangu Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara (APY) lands on 15 October, 70 years ago last month.

The British government—with the willing support of the Australian government of the day—tested a 10kt atomic bomb, codenamed Totem I. Not only did the operation fail to seek consent from the Anangu people, but the resulting radioactive 'black mist' fallout had harmful environmental, health and social outcomes that persist today.

In the wake of the Voice referendum, it's important to prioritise the calls for justice of First Nations people and other nuclear survivors.

The International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons Australia (ICAN) released

a civil society statement, co-drafted by Karina Lester (Yankunytjatjara Anangu woman and second generation survivor of the Emu Field nuclear tests) to mark the anniversary. It urged the Australian government to sign and ratify the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW).

The statement has been signed by more than 130 civil society organisations, including the Australian Red Cross, Public Health Association of Australia, Health Services Union, Oxfam and Catholic Religious Australia.

The statement outlines the escalating threat of nuclear weapons use, which is "exacerbated by war, regional conflicts and a changing geopolitical climate. The continued possession of nuclear weapons by nine nations poses grave humanitarian, human rights and major climate risks. Use of even a small portion of global nuclear stockpiles would cause nuclear winter, agricultural collapse and catastrophic harm to life on this planet."

The statement calls on Australia to demonstrate its commitment to nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament by joining the TPNW.

Karina Lester's late father, Yami Lester, was blinded because of the tests at Emu Field, and Karina carries his story as well as her grandmother's story about the impacts of the tests on her people.

"Today is a very emotional day for my family. We carry the pain of what happened to my family and community as a result of those tests. Our communities are still suffering the health impacts from radiation poisoning," Karina said.

"This has been a generational journey for us, and a generational story of talking about the traumas and the suffering and the scars that have been left not only on our traditional lands, on Yankunytjatjara and Pitjantjatjara country, but also in Western Australia as well," she said.

"Our stories are stories that have been passed on from generation to generation. They're sad stories, but they're true

stories. This is about truth-telling, and this is our story.

"This is why I am urging the Australian government to sign and ratify the TPNW, as Prime Minister Anthony Albanese promised to do when in government. They must listen to First Nations voices who never want to see these most destructive, indiscriminate weapons ever be used again."

Authors of the statement argue that the TPNW "is the first treaty to set out a clear direction for the total elimination of nuclear weapons and to provide a framework for supporting survivors of nuclear weapons use, including the remediation of impacted environments. It is supported by most of our Pacific and South-East Asian neighbours."

It says: "70 years on from the first mainland nuclear explosion, let us put an end to any involvement with nuclear weapons, now and forever."

Future of game in safe hands



As a youngster, Clint Newton was determined to make his dream of playing rugby league come true, despite detractors, and that same spirit helped him get through a protracted and sometimes acrimonious dispute between the Rugby League Players Association (RLPA) and National Rugby League (NRL).

The battle to get a collective bargaining agreement (CBA) finally ended in August, with the RLPA stating the agreement 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 CEO said he owed a debt of gratitude to the other unions and their members that had supported the RLPA and its members during their long battle.

"The way in which they got behind us and normalised our claims and gave us the confidence to go after what our people rightly deserved can't be understated," Newton said.

Newton first started playing the game while a student at St Mary's Catholic College Gateshead, near Newcastle, and continued when he moved to senior school at St Francis Xavier's College Hamilton. Starting school at age four, he was small for his age throughout his education. Some people said he would never make it in rugby league, but with the support of his family, he stuck to his guns and eventually signed with the Newcastle Knights in 2001.

He became a union delegate as a 22-year-old, and returned to an active role with the RLPA after playing in the UK. He credits his parents for instilling a belief in workers' rights, social justice and integrity in sport in his personal credo.

"Sport gives you a mindset that when you must do things that are uncomfortable, you say the alternative – retreating or surrendering – is not an

"Sport gives you a mindset that when you must do things that are uncomfortable, retreating or surrendering is not an option. You have to stand your ground on things that matter."

option. You have to stand your ground on things that matter."

Clint said a breakdown in trust lead to the dispute dragging on for 20 months.

"It's been a systemic problem in our game for quite some time. I think it got brought to the forefront in COVID when the game was relying on players to pitch in even more than usual," Clint said.

"The players now are significantly more educated. They are much more aware of their rights, they have a greater level of attention to detail than they've ever had before.

"I think the inclusion of women has been a significant step forward for our game on multiple fronts, but from a representation perspective, the women bring a different mindset and a new lens when looking at different parts of the negotiations and the detail which I think really strengthens the association and the code.

"They have consistently stood up in a difficult and volatile situation where they didn't have the certainty that the men have, and they still managed to front up.

"We now have a strong, comprehensive, codified CBA that values the players from a respect perspective, but also gives them the safety and the protection that they deserve, particularly given the critical

role they have in the industry.

"Not many people know this, but [league legend] Dally Messenger [one of Australia's first professional rugby league players] was a huge advocate for workers' rights and a massive advocate for women. Women have been playing rugby league for 100 years, but somehow, they fell off the radar. Now, with everything that's happening, we've got a stronger playing group to ensure that the game keeps moving forward."

Sue Osborne Journalist

Big Brother surveillance or creating a safer school?



The installation of CCTV in schools and early childhood settings is an issue that is intermittently raised with the union by its members.

Although they've been around a while, the installation of new cameras often sparks concern that they will be used to spy on staff or invade their privacy.

There are pros and cons to CCTV. It can increase security around the school, cutting down on vandalism and theft. It can also highlight bullying and be used to detect vaping.

If a teacher is accused of inappropriate conduct by a student, the CCTV footage may provide evidence to clear their name.

But there are also fears it could be used to critique a teacher's performance in the classroom.

Here's what IEU VicTas Senior Industrial Officer Denis Mason wrote for IE magazine on the topic in October 2017. The laws he cites are still current:

"In NSW, the *Workplace Surveillance Act 2005 (NSW)* dictates that an employer must give 14 days written notice to staff to let them know they intend to instal CCTV.

"The Act prohibits (with exceptions) covert surveillance without court approval and prohibits surveillance in a change room, toilet facility, shower or other bathing facility at a workplace.

"Under the Act, written notice must be given at least 14 days prior to any surveillance commencing.

"The notice must set out specified details. For new employees, notification must be given before they start work.

"Cameras must be clearly visible and signs must notify people that they may be under surveillance and must be clearly visible at each entrance.

"While it may be reasonable to use cameras in places where crimes may otherwise take place (banks, shops etc), classrooms are open places where theft and vandalism are relatively rare.

"Most things that happen in a classroom are witnessed by a teacher and several students. The justification for having cameras is much weaker.

"Employers with an enterprise agreement are generally obliged to consult employees over any introduction of major change. Introducing surveillance almost certainly constitutes such a change.

"The employer must consult with employees regarding the change and any measures to avert or mitigate adverse effects on employees. There have been cases where the failure to consult with employees has resulted in the employer having substantial penalties ordered against it by a court."

Things to consider regarding CCTV:

- the staff, children's and on occasion parents' rights to privacy would be affected
- staff argue that it threatens their professional freedom, and they deserve to be trusted. It's important to consider their concerns that CCTV would alter the character of schools which are fundamentally happy, safe places where children are treated well
- if staff and students are aware that CCTV is in place, then it would be expected that they would behave better
- some staff like this oversight by management as they see it as a form of protection against unfounded parental and student allegations/complaints, and
- any consideration for the installation should first involve discussion with staff, including what type of CCTV will be installed and where and what other limitations should be imposed.

If you have any concerns about the use of cameras at your school or centre, contact your IEU Rep or organiser.

2023 Environment Grant winners

Early childhood education and care

The Point Preschool, Oyster Bay: Energy From the Sun

Our Energy from the Sun project will make visible our recent carbon negative initiative. Collaborating with Solar Schools, the project will allow our preschool community to see our energy data using a display monitor. In real time the children will be able to turn appliances on/off and see the data change in 30 second intervals. This will show what's affecting our energy use and support our knowledge of energy consumption.

Lismore Preschool, Lismore: Keeping the Dream Going

This project aims to revitalise the outdoor learning environment of our preschool which was decimated by floods in 2022. Core to this is the need to replant gutted spaces/beds, the bush tucker garden, native trees, timber seating and bee hives using information from local Elders and community. This space will benefit the entire community through the re-use of a highly valuable, long-established preschool with a nature based, wellbeing focus.

Beresfield Community Children's Education Centre, Beresfield: A Native Connection

To create a sensory walk-through garden for our youngest children using native flora. This will build their connection to country while targeting their learning style. We have been learning to cultivate our own plants from cuttings to ensure we are able to continue topping up the garden as needed. We are sourcing further professional development for educators, so they know how to tend to the garden and convey bush tucker knowledge to the children.

Primary schools

St Christopher's Catholic Primary School, Panania: Trees for Bees

The aim is to educate students about how bees are part of the biodiversity that humans and animals depend on for survival. Starting with a lunchtime club, we would explore how we can play a role in helping to maintain the population of native, stingless bees by using a portion of our school grounds to plant native flowering trees and plants, and purchasing a native beehive. This project will allow the parent community to become involved, and provide endless learning opportunities for students, not least being the importance of making our world more sustainable for future generations.

Mt Carmel School, Yass: Extruder Club

We plan to put the money towards buying a benchtop plastic extruder for the school. We will use the extruder to recycle plastic container lids into plastic filament that can be used in moulds to make a variety of objects such as key chains, pens and combs. The moulds created will be sold to our school community through our website. Proceeds will go back into the project to buy more moulds and maintain the club.

Secondary schools

Northside Montessori School, Pymble: Planet Fashion

Students will recycle pre-owned fabric, accessories and clothing purchased from charity shops to create a range of bespoke outfits. They will then hold an Upcycled Fashion Show complete with a student - designed recycled runway for Fashion Week 2024. Students will also sell a range of recycled and

upcycled products at the fashion show and display environmental education material including infographics, brochures, and posters.

O'Connor Catholic College, Armidale: Tukka Garden and Yarning Circle

This garden will be a learning space for multiple faculties to engage in meaningful learning about the local Anaiwan Nation, learning about bush medicine and tucker and then having a yarning space to discuss this learning. It will also make Aboriginal culture visible to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, encouraging inclusivity. It will provide a native, usable green space in the school which is aesthetic, maintained and of benefit to the school and the environment. This space will have input from our students, giving them agency in their learning and cultural experience.

Lumen Christi Catholic College, Pambula Beach: Native Plants in Nature

We have recently started setting up a yarning circle for outdoor big and small group discussions. It is quite bare and would benefit with some native plants. We are hoping to involve the students in planting and creating a natural space that incorporates learning in the outdoors and prevents erosion. The students will benefit by being involved in the process and seeing the result of their work for years to come. The environment will benefit because we all need more native plants!



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 at the work of each committee. Last issue we featured the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Advisory Committee. This issue it's the turn of the Environment Committee.

One of the main roles of the committee is to oversee the IEU's Environment Grants, sponsored by Teachers Mutual Bank. Each year about 40 schools and early childhood education centres apply for a grant to carry out environmental and sustainability projects (see above).

The committee also organises conferences and workshops for members on environmental and sustainability issues and participates in political and social justice action.

For instance, the committee supports the School Strike 4 Climate, and this year participated in the huge May Day march opposing a nuclear submarine base at Port Kembla.

Members of the committee have been travelling to the Pilliga region to support the

Gomeroi people's fight to stop Santos drilling for coal seam gas in their area.

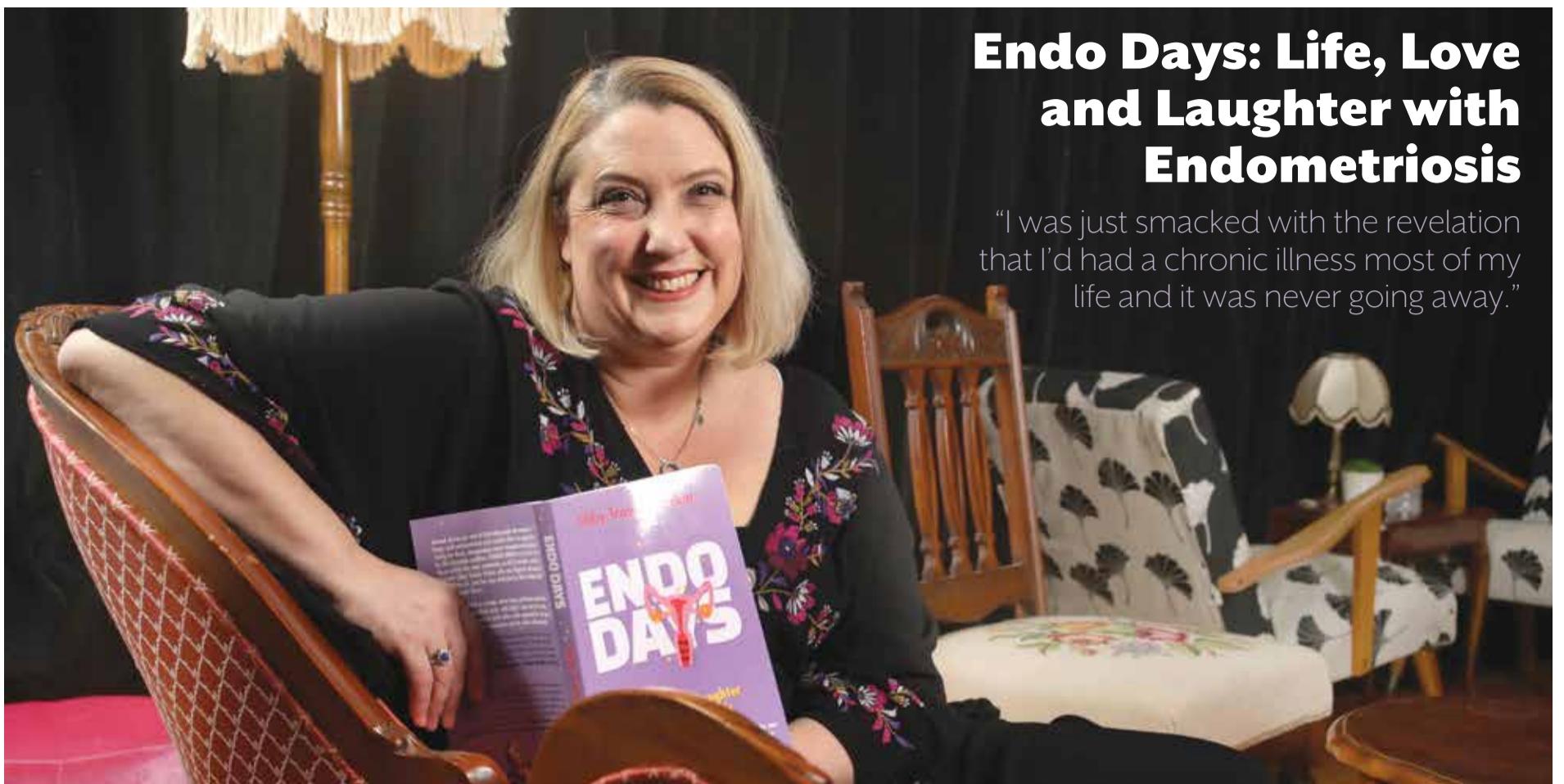
Members also participate in the ACTU Climate Action Group. IEU member Will Pollock said, "I saw the 'sign-up sheet' for the environment committee and thought it would be a wonderful opportunity to become more engaged in both the work of the union, but also in promoting awareness of environmental issues locally and more broadly".

"I've been a geography teacher for 23 years and have a great interest in the ways in which humans interact with the environment and vice-versa," Will said.

"I thought joining the committee would be a great way to develop some personal skills and have a greater understanding of grassroots responses to environmental issues that I could use to assist in my teaching."

"I was deeply moved by the talk about the Santos gas project and its impact in the Pilliga, and although I wasn't able to get out there with the union, I'm hoping to be able to show solidarity in other such actions in the future."

The members of the committee are: Richard Ryan (Convenor), Anthony Telford, Berna Simpson, David Whitcombe, Jackie Groom, Josef Dabbs, Katie Camarena, Liam Griffiths, Lyn Caton, Will Pollock and Alex Wharton.



Endo Days: Life, Love and Laughter with Endometriosis

"I was just smacked with the revelation that I'd had a chronic illness most of my life and it was never going away."

Endometriosis, comedy, songs and a book. Not the most obvious bedfellows, but teacher, comedian, cabaret performer and author Libby Trainor Parker has reacted to years of undiagnosed pain and medical gaslighting by combining education with humour.

Libby suffered for 36 years before she found out she had endometriosis. The diagnosis helped explain so much: chronic pain that had contributed to dropping out of high school and quitting jobs she loved, multiple pregnancy losses, and the shame and self-doubt that came with being told, over and over, that her pain was 'all in my head'. One doctor told her, "you've just got your knickers in a twist".

She even had a perfectly good appendix removed following a misdiagnosis.

The endometriosis diagnosis was also terrifying. "I was just smacked with the revelation that I'd had a chronic illness most of my life and it was never going away".

Endometriosis is an incurable pain condition that affects one in nine people who menstruate. Tissue like that of the endometrium grows outside the uterus, causing symptoms which can include

chronic pain, inflammation, fatigue, fertility issues, low mood and comorbidities.

Libby was sent away from the hospital, where she was diagnosed via laparoscopy, with "no information and no hope".

After years of coping with the stress of teaching as well as endometriosis, Libby quit because she "just couldn't do it anymore" and used her journalism degree to start writing freelance articles and speeches for a politician.

Aware of some political moves to advocate for women with pelvic pain, Libby decided to write a comedy show about endometriosis.

"There's nothing funny about chronic pain, but comedy diffuses pain. It's my therapy. It makes things accessible."

Libby said the show makes endometriosis sufferers feel less alone.

"We all share and talk about our experiences."

Libby joined forces with the Pelvic Pain Foundation of Australia to write schools program PPEP Talk (Periods, Pain and Endometriosis Program), which she delivered in South Australian schools.

It was later rolled out nationally. She also joined the Australian Coalition

for Endometriosis advising on the National Action Plan for Endometriosis led by former Health Minister Greg Hunt. And she took over the administration for online support group Endo Support SA.

The school program is aimed at students in Year 10, boys and girls.

"We have education about asthma and diabetes, why not this? If one in nine people are suffering, we need to talk about it."

"It's delivered by dynamic young educators, it's medically supported and it's informative, not catastrophic."

"It provides tips about dealing with pain that everyone wants to know."

Libby has also written the book *Endo Days: Life, Love and Laughter with Endometriosis*.

She shares her battle to be diagnosed, her successful journey to get education into schools, her struggles with fertility through 11 pregnancy losses – and her eventual acceptance that she'll never have a baby of her own, countered by loving relationships with her two stepchildren and a foster child.

Libby interviewed patients, parents, partners, health practitioners – and her own stepchildren – to create a journalistic memoir that's part narrative, part instruction

manual and part comedy routine.

Endo Days threads the story of Libby's life with endometriosis through interviews with a diverse range of 'endo friendos' across Australia, including the experiences of trans, queer, neurodivergent, younger, older, First Nations, metropolitan and rural Australians. And she offers tips and tricks for living well.

"Endo can be an isolating illness and so many of us feel lost, frustrated and confused. So *Endo Days* is a bit of a guide to life, but from someone who got it all wrong and then learned how to live better after a few false starts," Libby said.

"I have tried to share everything I have learned along the way, but, more importantly, give a voice to the many endo patients who have told me their stories. We want our community to know they are not alone and that there is hope."

For more on PPEP Talk see www.pelvicpain.org.au/ppeptalk-schools-program/.

For more support see: endometriosisaustralia.org

Newsmonth has free copies of *Endo Days: Life, Love and Laughter with Endometriosis* to give away. See p20 for details.

School Band and Orchestra Festival great contribution to music education

During the Australian School Band and Orchestra Festival (ASBOF), on 12-14 July, I had the incredible opportunity to expand my knowledge on various aspects of music education.

Through workshops and presentations, I learned about the importance of advocating for music, seeing as it has such a profound impact on individuals and society.

I was fascinated by Dr Anita Collins' explanation of how music activates multiple areas of the brain, fostering enhanced cognitive skills, emotional intelligence, and even boosting memory retention.

This reinforced the notion that music is not merely an extracurricular activity but an essential component in the holistic development of students.

One of the key takeaways for me during the conference was Jacki Cooper's presentation on 'If you can sing it, you can play it' which was a delightful addition to the event's line-up.

Jacki demonstrated how singing and playing are inherently interconnected.

Through interactive exercises, she encouraged participants to vocalise various instrumental parts, instilling a sense of rhythm and musicality that laid a strong foundation for effective ensemble playing.

By encouraging students to vocalise the melodies they are about to play, they gain a deeper understanding of the music's structure, phrasing, and nuances.

Participating in the 'how to' series of workshops during the conference was enriching. These workshops provided a wonderful opportunity for attendees, including myself, to delve deeper into specific ensemble instruments and gain valuable insights from experienced musicians and educators.

The variety of workshops offered, focussed on percussion instruments, the clarinet, flute, trombone and trumpet.

Before attending the presentation, I had a general sense of what I wanted to achieve as a music teacher, but I lacked a concrete vision that could guide my actions and decisions.

After attending Paul Vickers' presentation and mentoring workshop, I now understand the importance of building a vision statement and objectives.

Ultimately, I learned about jazz ensemble development and explored the concept of flexible ensembles, discovering innovative ways to adapt and modify musical arrangements to accommodate different skill levels and instrumentation.

Another engaging topic was physical gestures and expressions for ensembles, where I discovered the power of non-verbal communication in conveying musical intent and fostering a deeper connection between performers.

Lastly, I gained valuable strategies on how to help primary school children achieve their best in music education. Understanding their developmental needs and tailoring instructional approaches to engage and inspire them will undoubtedly enhance their musical growth and passion for the art.

Throughout the ASBOF conference, the shared experiences of educators and professionals illuminated the irrefutable evidence that music education goes beyond the classroom walls.

Overall, the conference provided a comprehensive experience that has equipped me with valuable tools to elevate my teaching practice and enrich the musical journey of my students.

Teaghan Pugsley IEU member

Lower limits, live longer

The Australian Manufacturing Workers' Union's (AMWU) campaign Lower Limits, Live Longer, highlights the dangers of welding fumes.

AMWU National Work Health and Safety Coordinator Dave Henry answers questions about the campaign.

Why is the AMWU concerned about welding? What is the problem?

In 2017, the science was settled, and welding fumes were reclassified as a group 1 carcinogen by the International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC) part of the World Health Organisation (WHO).

Research published in 2022 by the WHO identified welders having an 48% higher risk of developing lung cancer than those not exposed to these fumes.

The current reliance on a workplace exposure standard (WES) that was established to protect workers (and students) against a significant increased risk of metal fume fever in the 1990s is indefensible.

Under the current WES for welding fume, welders and others exposed are notionally 'allowed' to breathe up to 11 grams of a known carcinogen every year.

How many people are affected by welding-related health issues?

Research from Canada's Occupational Cancer Research Centre estimates 1.3% of lung cancers are caused by exposure to welding fumes, which in Australia would translate to 189 people diagnosed each year.

Other avoidable chronic industrial diseases include occupational asthma, welder's pneumonia, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), manganese poisoning (which resembles Parkinson's disease), industrial deafness (due to some fumes being toxic to the ear) and changes in the kidney due to cadmium. The Australian Institute of Occupational

Hygienists has expressed concern that the amount of workers suffering COPD are likely to drastically outnumber those with lung cancer.

Few workers than ever receive Workers Compensation, as a result the health burden of welding fumes is unknown. This is because these illnesses tend to present later in life and our medical practitioners rarely link workers' industrial histories when their patients present with an illness.

As a result, we have established the National Welding Fumes Exposure Register. Over time this register will provide a longitudinal research base for welding fumes and related illness, as well as provide personal industrial history information for future workers compensation claims.

The register is open to all workers who are or have been exposed to welding fumes.

Is there a way of eliminating this problem?

Yes. We are campaigning for an immediate lowering the current WES for welding fumes by 80% from the current 5mg/lm³ to a contemporary level of 1mg/m³, reflective of what has been established in some European countries.

Further, we want the establishment of a welding fumes work health and safety regulation, requiring welding fumes to be maintained at the lowest level reasonably achievable.

Research shows that the current hazard controls as recommended by the Welding Processes Code of Practice 2020, where applied, are effective in reducing welding fumes to levels below 1mg/m³.

What do VET teachers need to know about this problem?

VET teachers need to be aware that welding fumes are a known carcinogen as well as causing other diseases.

They should realise that welding fumes don't just affect the person welding, but all people within the work environment exposed to those welding fumes which can be present for hours after welding has finished.

Welding can be done safely, and others don't need to be exposed to these deadly fumes. More information can be found at bit.ly/3suMzPv.

Is there anything IEU members can do to help?

We currently have a petition as part of the campaign. We are calling on Work Health & Safety ministers in every state and territory to:

1. Direct their representatives at SafeWork Australia to support lowering the limit now from 5mg/lm³ to 1mg/lm³.
2. Make sure this change is immediately implemented in every state and territory.

We're also calling for a new regulation that will require welding fumes to be kept to the lowest possible level to make sure we see follow through in our workplaces.

The AMWU would welcome the support of IEU members, adding their voice to our campaign by signing the petition at www.megaphone.org.au/petitions/lower-the-limit-for-welding-fumes.



Around the Globe

Teachers in South Korea demand change

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



Credit: Raphael Rashid, Seoul-based freelance journalist via X (@koryodynasty)

In recent months, teachers across South Korea have been taking to the streets to demand better protection at work from the bullying and harassment by overbearing parents.

The protests were sparked by the death of a 23-year-old teacher who was found dead in her classroom. The young teacher was in her second year of teaching. She apparently took her own life, having reportedly expressed anxiety after dealing with complaints by parents. A diary found in her apartment described how she felt overwhelmed by parents' complaints.

Tragically, this teacher's death is not an isolated incident. South Korea is notorious for its high-pressure education system driven by a hyper-competitive society. The rate of suicide among teachers is alarmingly high; more than double the national average. Data published by The Korea Times shows that 144 teachers have taken their own life in South Korea in the past decade.

Teachers have been holding vigils and demonstrations every weekend since the young teacher's death, culminating with a rally that saw around 200,000 teachers gather near the National Assembly in Seoul on 2 September. Two days later, on Monday 4 September, more than 120,000 teachers walked off the job despite being threatened with disciplinary action by the government.

In the lead up to the 4 September strike, Secretary General of Educational International David Edwards said, "the teachers of South Korea are not just mourning a tragic loss; they're demanding real change. Our teachers educate, but also change lives. This is a call for the rights and recognition they rightfully deserve. They embody the value of unity, the power of collective action, and the resilient spirit of educators".

Collective action brings about change

After nine weeks of demonstrations, vigils and protests, a new law has been passed to protect teachers. The Korean Federation of Teachers' Unions welcomes the new legislation, the Teacher Rights Restoration Bill. In an interview with the BBC, chairperson Kim Yong-seo said that though there were still areas that needed improving, the new legislation is "a great step forward in protecting teachers and students."

If you need someone to talk to, call:

- Lifeline on 13 11 14
- Beyond Blue on 1300 22 46 36

Katie Camarena Journalist



IEU Reps from Central West Sub Branch hold up the IEU's new Reps Handbook at Reps training



Peter Holmes acknowledged for 40 years of continuous membership at Our Lady of Fatima Primary School Kingsgrove



Congratulations to Sarah Thompson (30-year IEU member) and Brian Doughan (retiring IEU Rep and 40-year IEU member) of Domremy Catholic College Five Dock



IEU Organiser, Tina Smith, (centre) with members Elizabeth Price and Rosanne Pugh (left)



Paul Rumore of Holy Spirit College receives his 40-year membership award

Spreading the word in SA

IEU Organisers Kate Damo and Tina Smith attended the Early Childhood Australia (ECA) National Conference in Adelaide, hosting an IEU Stand.

The IEU was the only union represented in the exhibition hall which attracted a lot of interested teachers from NSW/ACT.

More than 500 of the conference attendees were from NSW. Some members stopped by for a chat and more information on the recent NSW Department of Education pay increases for teachers.

They also sought more information on supported bargaining (see p2) and what it means for early childhood teachers. Our members in NSW preschools are interested in being a part of a supported bargaining agreement for teachers in preschools.



30-year IEU member Wayne Rice receives his badge from IEU Organiser Luke Breen (left) and IEU Rep Simon Leibrandt at Holy Family Primary School Ingleburn



Mary Hudd of St Paul's Primary School Milton receives her 40-year membership recognition from IEU Rep Lisa Alvaro



Nicoletta Di Santo of St Columban's Primary School Mayfield receives her 40-year membership award



Central West Sub Branch acknowledged IEU Organiser Jackie Groom's (far left) 60 years in education



Members at Holy Spirit Catholic Primary School North Ryde celebrating the Hear Our Voice campaign and Go the Matilda's. Giovanna D'Angelo was not able to be at this meeting, but her colleagues acknowledged her 40 years of continuous union membership and accepted a gift on her behalf

Teacher salary gap widening further

Michelle Thompson
Vice President ECEC



All eyes are on the early education and care (ECEC) sector regarding teacher salaries, after the much-awaited salary increases for government school teachers.

As other key systems follow with salary increases of their own, the gap has widened further between teacher salaries in ECEC settings and school teachers.

In a climate where the ECEC sector is suffering critical shortages of qualified teachers, the struggle will be felt even more. Will we continue to see our long-standing teachers and new graduates enticed to leave our ECEC settings for schools where the grass is so very much greener? How is this going to impact the children in the ECEC settings?

Preschool Outcomes Measure (POM)

A new trial program 'Preschool Outcomes Measure' (POM) is planned in 2025, a joint key reform across Australian states to monitor student outcomes the year before school in order to meet children's continuous educational and developmental needs.

This targeted pilot initiative has followed the recent Productivity Commission Inquiry into Early Childhood Education, along with the Draft National Strategy for the Care and Support Economy.

The pilot program will be focusing on two key age/stage components:

- Executive function – relating to the abilities involved in planning and following instructions.
- Oral language and literacy – children's, and communication abilities and creation through a variety of 'languages' (this is referring to the many ways a child can convey communication/dialogue).

Time to reflect on what's been achieved

Tina Ruello
President



To state the bleeding obvious, it's Term 4. How did we get here?

In trying to complete registers and evaluations punctually (I'm failing), reflecting on teaching practices and strategies becomes second nature; we do this instinctively or consciously when we walk out of class.

But what about reflecting on the other aspects of life? Where's the proforma for this? So much happens that it is astounding when things get done when they do.

In looking back on the union's work in the last few months, things are getting done or have been completed. There are still outstanding issues with sectors – namely to progress the outcomes in Catholic independent schools around salary increases. The union is most successful when chapters create momentum to drive change in their schools. 'Pester-power', perhaps, is another way of seeing things.

In the recent past, the union has had significant influence in driving a reduction of teacher workloads. On 20 October, the Deputy Premier and Minister for Education and Early Learning Prue Car provided the NESA Board with a Statement of Expectations. This is movement in the right direction for the teaching profession. Two standouts are:

Point one states – verbatim – "The administrative burden placed on teachers should be reduced as far as possible" and that any administrative work must be relevant and there should be a reason or a logical basis for this work to be completed.

Point two states "to avoid duplication, the creation of unnecessary work and any misunderstanding of what is actually required ... NESA should consider setting and communicating "maximum" requirements." Let's hope that the "should" becomes definitive in this document.

And so, the school year is coming to an end – and there's so much still to do!

Members, keep up the great work in your respective workplaces and sectors!

You are doing great!

ACT community stands out

Angela McDonald

IEU ACT Vice President



I want to congratulate the ACT on the referendum results. To say I am proud of the ACT community is an understatement. While the national referendum results were disappointing, I took solace that my community voted in support of the Voice.

Aboriginal people practice deep listening, an almost spiritual skill, based on respect. 'Dadirri' is an Aboriginal word meaning

'inner deep listening and quiet still awareness and waiting'. How can we use 'Dadirri' to help us listen to our First Nations People?

How can we help address the inequity and other injustice experienced by First Nations Peoples in Australia?

There is not any moment in time that can extinguish the vast history, or the ancestral ties to land, culture and traditions, of this nation's First Peoples.

Our greatest strength – solidarity – is how we turn this result into a day of hope and action, despite the result.

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Death benefits: a case study

I have recently read that there have been many complaints to ASIC regarding the time it took to process the payment of a death benefit. This is especially critical in the case of a 'dependant' who relied on financial support from the deceased.

However, the fund trustee has a statutory duty to investigate the circumstances of the deceased member, such as children or a spouse or a person in an interdependency relationship with the deceased, to ascertain who should receive all or part of the benefit and to pay it to the correct 'dependant'.

To this end, 90 day letters of intention to claim the benefit are usually sent to potential beneficiaries to find out if they intend to make a claim on the benefit. It can only be paid to a spouse or de facto spouse; a child of any age including step-child; or a person in an interdependency relationship with the deceased.

A death certificate is also required. A valid binding death nomination eliminates problems of disputed claims and removes trustee discretion. It is a clear and unequivocal statement of what the deceased member wanted. And it can also be made to the estate and distributed according to the terms of the will.

Here's a hypothetical of what can happen without a binding Death Nomination:

Christy was a bright young PE teacher who got her first job teaching right after her graduation. The business manager provided her with the paperwork for the school's default super fund as soon as she started work.

She had been living with Mark for the previous 18 months so she nominated him as her preferred beneficiary (non-binding) and left it at that. After another 20 months Christy and Mark decided that their relationship was not working out, so Christy moved out and stayed with her family temporarily for a few months.

She talked to her close friend, Mi, at work and they both decided that it would be a good idea to rent a flat together. As they got along so well, they set up a joint bank account to pay for rent, food and other expenses. They also went in together for the purchase of a car.

Christy and Mi largely kept to themselves as two hard working teachers in the same school and their relationship became closer. One night on her way home from basketball practice with a group of Year 12s, Christy was tragically killed in a car crash.

The trustee, via the fund administrator, was advised of the tragic death and the Fund's insurer was also informed. Upon the receipt of the death certificate, the insurer checked Christy's status as a member and found that she was fully insured for

a substantial insured benefit. The insurer forwarded the insured benefit to the Fund's bank account.

The trustee began to investigate Christy's circumstances after her untimely death and sent 90-day letters of intention to make a claim to Mark, who was named as the preferred beneficiary but was now estranged, to Christy's mother and father, and to her sister living in England.

The trustee was told by the parents that Christy had no other 'dependants' and claimed the entire benefit (super balance plus insured component) for themselves as they had transferred \$10,000 for a large dental bill and \$8000 for the purchase of a new car to their late daughter.

They had never approved of the relationship which developed between Mi and Christy and so did not advise that Christy and Mi lived together. Mark also made a claim on the basis that he was named as the preferred beneficiary although the couple was separated for over five years. There was no response from the sister, Emma, living in England.

The enlightened school business manager happened to mention to Mi that anyone in a personal relationship with Christy should contact the fund. Initially Mi didn't want to as she was still in shock from the tragedy, but she decided to, and the fund asked for proof of interdependency.

Mi advised that she had been in a close personal relationship with Christy for the past six years, sent in the bank statements from the joint bank account, sent in copies of the ownership papers for the car and also more bank statements which showed that the couple was building up a deposit to buy a flat together.

Christy's parents advised that they would make a formal complaint to AFCA (Australian Financial Complaints Authority) if the benefit was paid to Mi.

So, who should get the money?
The principle is this: the person in an interdependent relationship with the deceased is the person who suffers most from the loss of the deceased's income and support. Therefore, Mi should get the death benefit. A valid binding death nomination in favour of Mi would have eliminated all the above problems.

Bernard O'Connor
(former NGS Super Company Secretary)



IEUA NSW/ACT Branch Executive

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Assistant Secretary

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Vice President Systemic

Position vacant

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Early Learning Centre Northbridge
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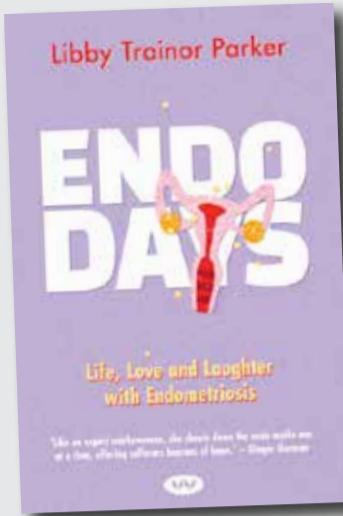
Newcastle: 8-14 Telford Street, Newcastle East NSW 2302 4926 9400

Lismore: Unit 4, Lismore Professional Centre, 103-105 Molesworth Street, Lismore NSW 2480 (temporarily closed due to flood damage, call the IEU on 8202 8900)

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Giveaways

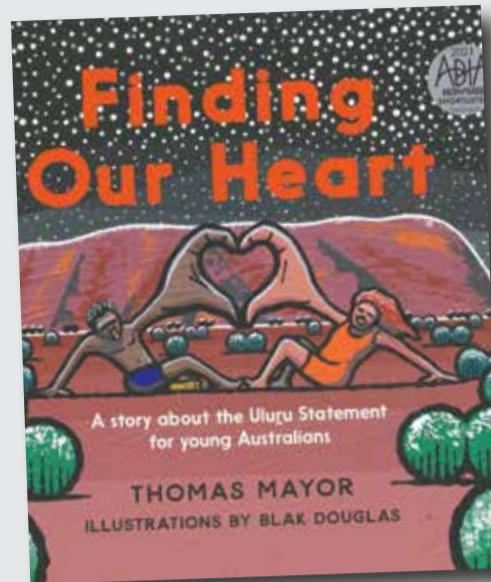


Endo Days: Life, love and laughs with Endometriosis

Author: Libby Trainor Parker
Publisher: Wakefield Press

One in nine people in Australia are living with endometriosis and countless others are supporting them, caring for them, championing various treatments and being impacted by this incurable condition.

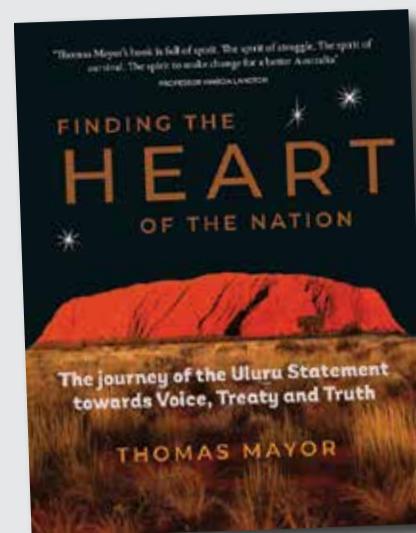
Endo Days is a frank, often funny and honest memoir told in a narrative journalism style, with Libby's own story as the central narrative, drawing on interviews with others with endometriosis (both women, men and non-binary), their partners - male and female, doctors and specialists, researchers and the wider endo community.



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 30 November 2023.

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