

NewsExtra

7 February 2024

Vote YES! – Model C MEAs

Following a protracted period of bargaining, the Model C schools multi-enterprise agreements (MEAs) have been finalised. Members may be aware that Model C schools have recently distributed proposed agreements for teachers and support staff following the conclusion of bargaining between the IEU and Catholic Employment Relations (CER). The new MEAs will have a nominal expiry date of 31 December 2026.

Pay increases

The percentage pay rises achieved are as follows:

| Teachers | Support staff |
|---|---|
| Rates increased to match Department from October 2023 | One-off payment \$750 in 2023, additional increases for Levels 4C, 5 and 6 and a new Level 7 backdated to July 2023 |
| 3% February 2024 | 4% 29 January 2024* |
| 3% February 2025 | 4% 29 January 2025 |
| 3% February 2026 | 4% 29 January 2026 |

**additional increases apply to general operational staff and maintenance and outdoor staff*

Traditionally, teachers in Model C schools have been paid the same as teachers in NSW Government and Catholic systemic schools. From October 2023, Model C teachers will be paid the same rate as NSW Government until February 2024 (see table below). The proposed MEA then provides a 3% advantage for Model C teachers for the majority of 2024.

| Classification | Current Model C rates | Proposed Model C rates October 2023 | Proposed Model C rates February 2024 | NSW Government & Catholic systemic rates October 2023 |
|---------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|---|
| Step 1 | 75,961 | 85,000 | 87,500 | 85,000 |
| Step 2 | 75,961 | 91,413 | 94,155 | 91,413 |
| Step 3 (Proficient) | 91,611 | 95,317 | 98,177 | 95,317 |
| Step 4 (Proficient) | 91,611 | 99,220 | 102,197 | 99,220 |
| Step 5 (Proficient) | 99,438 | 106,131 | 109,315 | 106,131 |
| Step 6 (Proficient) | 103,357 | 114,115 | 117,538 | 114,115 |
| Step 7 (Proficient) | 113,291 | 122,100 | 125,763 | 122,100 |

The 3% advantage above NSW Government schools may be reduced because of an anticipated increase for NSW Government and Catholic systemic teachers in October 2024. The rates for teachers in Model C schools should again be higher from February 2025. This pattern will repeat during the life of the proposed MEA.

The proposed MEA also introduces a new Graduate 2 classification which can be accessed by a Graduate Teacher after one year of full-time teaching service. Any existing Graduate Teacher will be able to transition to the new classification on completion of their full year of service.

Most support staff will receive pay rises of 4% in January 2024, January 2025 and January 2026 and support staff on Level 4C, Level 5 and Level 6 will receive additional increases which are backdated to July 2023. The proposed MEA will also introduce a new classification of Level 7 for Aboriginal Education Officers. However, instead of the 2024 increase of 4%, maintenance and outdoor staff will receive an increase in 2024 of 9% and general operational staff will receive an increase in 2024 of 13% in their weekly pay rates.

Part-time teachers

Under the proposed MEA, letters of appointment for part-time teachers will specify the teaching load as a percentage of a full-time (FTE) teacher at the school. Any changes to the part-time teacher's teaching load will require the employer to provide seven weeks' notice.

Improved paid parental leave

For teachers and support staff on averaged rates of pay, the non-term time that falls within the period of 14 weeks of paid parental leave will no longer count. In effect, these employees will receive an additional two weeks of paid parental leave.

Any personal/carer's leave taken in the four weeks prior to the expected date of birth will no longer be deducted from the 14 weeks of paid parental leave entitlement.

Additionally, the partner of the birthing parent will be entitled to two weeks of paid concurrent parental leave. This leave will not be deducted from the employee's personal/carer's leave.

Also, temporary employees whose employment ceases during a period of paid parental leave and have at least three years' continuous service at the cessation date will be paid the balance of the 14 weeks of paid parental leave as a lump sum.

Support staff – recognition of service in Model B and C Schools

Support staff in Model C schools may apply for recognition of prior service in Model B and Model C schools that is relevant to the duties of a new position. This means that you may be entitled to a higher rate of pay on commencement in the new job.

Updates to the legislation

In addition to the changes outlined above, the proposed MEAs reflect improved entitlements employees now enjoy because of recent changes to the *Fair Work Act* made by the federal Labor government. The changes include:

- greater rights for employees to request flexible work arrangements
- entitlement to paid family and domestic violence leave
- access to compassionate leave in cases of miscarriage or stillbirth
- limitations on fixed term (temporary) contracts
- new entitlements for employees to convert from casual to ongoing employment (casual conversion)
- employer must pay all outstanding wages and leave payments no later than seven days from the date of termination of employment.

Vote YES for your MEA

The IEU understands schools will put the proposed MEAs to a vote by employees covered by the MEA in the period **Tuesday 13 February to Friday 16 February**. The MEA must be endorsed in the vote of employees and then endorsed by the Fair Work Commission, in order to be legally binding. Please vote YES and encourage your colleagues to do the same.

