

Friday 8 March 2024

Union fights for meaningful action and real change on International Women's Day

On International Women's Day 2024, the Independent Education Union of Australia NSW/ACT Branch celebrates many union gains for women and looks forward to fighting for more.

With a total membership of more than 32,000, 76 per cent of whom are women, the IEU is proud to have achieved substantial pay rises in the Catholic systemic sector in 2023, including:

- NSW teacher salary increases in NSW of 8% to 12%
- ACT teacher salary increases of 11% to 19%
- General employee (support staff) increases of 6.5% to 20%.

These union-negotiated agreements also included improved parental leave for both mothers and their partners. The IEU also welcomes the federal government's announcement that [superannuation will now be paid on government-funded parental leave](#), a move designed to close the [25% gender gap in retirement savings](#). This is an essential step to help address the [retirement poverty suffered by many women workers](#).

"I acknowledge the hard work of our women members and staff and their allies in keeping gender equity front and centre," IEUA NSW/ACT Branch Secretary Carol Matthews says. "While we've achieved a great deal both recently and over many years, there is still work to be done."

In the early childhood education and care sector, the IEU is pursuing substantial pay rises for teachers in long day care centres and preschools. While these teachers have the same qualifications as their colleagues in schools, they are paid substantially less. We are fighting to change that.

New limits [on the use of fixed-term contracts](#) are important for IEU members. Many women working in schools can get trapped in insecure, short-term contracts, but they now have a clearer pathway to job security.

While the [gender pay gap shows some improvement](#), lower earning by women is still a national shame. On average (across all industries) women earn \$26,393 less per year. Across the independent school sector and early childhood education, women earn an average total remuneration of 5.9% less than men. We will not rest until this gap is permanently closed.

The IEU will continue to support its membership and broader union and social efforts to deliver equity for women in salaries and conditions.

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

Authorised by Carol Matthews, IEUA NSW/ACT Branch Secretary