



Ever wondered how your union works and who represents you? See pp8-12



UNITE FOR CHANGE

IEU launches pay rise campaign for preschools



Clockwise from top:
IEU members unite
for change at the pay
rise for preschools
campaign launch on
5 April; IEUA NSW/
ACT Branch Secretary
Carol Matthews talks
to members at
the launch;
members endorse
the campaign

The IEU has launched a campaign calling for a substantial pay rise for teachers and educators in community-based preschools in NSW.

On Friday 5 April a big group of passionate preschool teachers from across NSW gathered at the IEU's Sydney office to launch the Unite for Change campaign and prepare for their part in it.

Many teachers at the forum said that without urgent action they feared for the future of community preschools.

"We don't have enough students coming through the system who want to work in community preschools," said Tash Smith, a teacher at East Lindfield Community Preschool. "Once my generation finishes up, who will replace us?"

Many graduate teachers opt to teach in schools or preschools that are attached to public schools where they are paid the same as school teachers.

This pay inequity has led to a staffing crisis that is threatening early childhood education.

Beginning preschool teachers are paid just \$67,513 a year under the applicable modern award, while their colleagues in schools are paid \$85,000 a year.

For experienced preschool teachers under the modern award, the top rate is \$86,876 per year. In comparison, a teacher with the same level of experience working in a NSW government school is currently paid \$122,100 a year.

Many preschools, one agreement

Community-based, not-for-profit preschools are run by voluntary parent committees of mums and dads. Preschools provide high-quality early childhood education to many children throughout NSW, but they need help to address the workforce crisis that is threatening early childhood education.

"For too long, the work of preschool teachers has been undervalued," IEUA NSW/ACT Branch Secretary Carol Matthews said. "It's time for a fair deal for preschools. Respect the profession, pay teachers and educators properly and invest in the future."

The IEU is using industrial relations reforms passed by the federal Labor government in 2022. The 'supported bargaining' stream is designed to assist employers and employees who haven't been able to bargain successfully at the individual enterprise level to bargain as a group.

"It provides an opportunity for us to bargain for a multi-employer enterprise agreement," IEUA Assistant Secretary Amanda Hioe said.

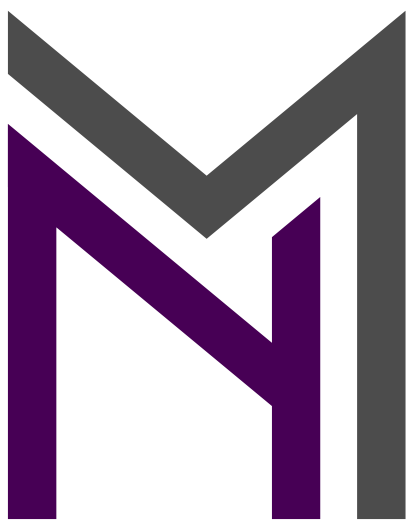
Victoria's 'gold standard'

The forum welcomed keynote speaker Cara Nightingale, the Australian Education Union's Vice President, Early Childhood.

Nightingale said the pay and conditions of early childhood teachers in Victoria are equivalent to school teachers under the hard-won Victorian Early Childhood Teachers and Educators Agreement 2020 (see page 5).

Nightingale said the Victorian agreement is considered to be "the gold standard we need to get the rest of the early childhood education and care workforce up to".

The Victorian model provides a reason for optimism. "If there's a model in Victoria that works, why not get that enterprise agreement here?" Lawson Community Preschool teacher Meg Lockley asked.



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What do we need? Time!

Tina Ruello
President



I'm sitting here at the dining room table, nominally so, since the table contains the overflow of marking brought home at the end of term one. A pile of Year 9 English assessment tasks is glaring at me as I think, "How the heck did I get to this point?"

Rewind to about four weeks ago when the first task of the year was in its seminal stages of production.

Two teachers of English meet to discuss the nature of the task. The 'when' and 'why' are covered, thanks to the assessment handbook which, to Year 9 students, is a mystery of metalanguage, dates and rules. Said teachers have to come up with at least four questions – 9 English is on two lines; alternate questions are required for make-up tasks, for students absent on the day. Check.

Said teachers pore over the 'Diversity' documents to identify students with learning needs – 15 students. Individual adjustments to the task are required, for example, wording, scaffolding, checklists, sentence stems, writing structures and so on. Check.

Draft questions, send out to teachers for comments, modify questions, talk through potential student outcomes. Time length? Line length? Structure?

It goes on and on, but we get there!

Admin. For want of using an expletive here, I'll use my husband's word, "Fudge!"

Typing. Printing. Writing paper and booklets. Class lists. Assessment Task sign-off document. Provisions paperwork. Marking criteria. Program. Scope and sequence.

All ours – we teachers are performing this work, all the while continuing to teach our respective six classes of English. By Week 11, the task is administered and done.

This leaves the "holidays" for the grunt work

– marking. I am thankful I have half a pile (about 100 papers) and not the full cohort.

For the purpose of not boring you any further, I will not go into the marking process, during and post, but there is further liaising between us as markers, checks and balances, keeping us frustratingly busy.

Why did I write this? This is about time. This is one task, for one year group, out of six. I am a highly capable teacher with more than 30 years of experience. Clearly, I am not a new to the profession. If I am drowning at times, what hope do younger teachers have? How do we regain time to do great things in the classroom without being burdened by administration and processes?

I totally understand why people are leaving the profession. It's not about money, it's about being time poor.

And by the way, the first script wrote about the wrong book.

Inclusive education IEU advocates at inquiry

Lyn Caton
Assistant Secretary



On 26 March, the IEUA NSW/ACT Branch was invited to give evidence at the first Portfolio Education Committee Inquiry into children and young people with disability in NSW educational settings.

I represented our members who work in a range of roles across non-government schools. I emphasised the importance of addressing the nuanced realities within educational contexts and the need for 'choice and control'.

For many years now, the IEU has actively engaged in issues of disability discrimination and played a role in the development and review of the Disability Standards for Education (DSE). These standards aim to ensure equal access to education for students with disabilities. With about 20 per cent of students in Catholic systemic and independent schools in NSW identified as having a disability, the IEU recognises the significance of inclusive education practices.

One concern the IEU highlighted at the inquiry was the definition of "reasonable adjustments", particularly in the context of the Nationally Consistent Collection of Data on School Students with Disability (NCCD) and the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS). The union supports individualised education plans tailored to students' needs, but emphasises the need to streamline documentation processes to prioritise direct support for students.

To address challenges such as workload intensification and inadequate staffing, the IEU has collaborated with education

departments, both state and federal, to develop guidelines and resources for non-government schools. These efforts aim to optimise teacher and support staff engagement with students rather than excessive paperwork.

At the inquiry, the IEU recommended the establishment of a centralised repository of resources to support educators in addressing specific learning needs and adjustments. The union also advocated for increased support for special education teachers and staff, adequate infrastructure and facilities, and access to allied health professionals, particularly in remote and regional areas.

Inclusive education encompasses small class sizes, individualised attention, and a focus on belonging rather than physical location. While mainstreaming is common in Catholic schools, the IEU acknowledges the value of specialist settings and rejects the pejorative language of "segregation" used in some contexts.

Parental collaboration is essential in addressing the needs of students with disabilities, with a focus on providing support and information during the enrolment process.

At the inquiry, the IEU called for increased funding and resources to support inclusive educational outcomes and emphasised the importance of 'choice and control' for parents in selecting appropriate educational settings for their children.

Ultimately, the IEU advocates for a comprehensive approach to inclusive education that prioritises our members and supports the needs and rights of students with disabilities while recognising the diverse contexts and challenges non-government schools face.

Through collaboration and advocacy, the IEU aims to ensure all students have access to quality education and support services and our members are supported with appropriate resourcing and time.



Let's get talking, Catholic systemic school staff

Liz Heggart
Vice President Systemic



With the ever-increasing busyness at the start of the school year, all things yellow from the Hear our Voice campaign may seem like a distant memory.

But it wasn't all that long ago that we were wearing our union t-shirts every Wednesday, plastering our laptops, noticeboards and chronicles with stickers and holding morning teas to progress our campaign.

The historic pay rises that support staff and teachers gained last October were obviously very welcome, especially considering our dedication throughout an extended campaign.

Now we are already four months into the new year and October doesn't seem that far away – that's when our enterprise agreement will be up for negotiation again.

During the few times I've heard Unions NSW Secretary Mark Morey speak, his narrative about campaigns and changing governments stays the same – we need to maintain the rage.

With our NSW Labor government celebrating its first year in power in March, there has never been a better time to up the pressure and push for the changes we need to address the crippling workloads experienced by both teachers and support staff alike.

We have a state government that appears serious about the pressures on teachers and the teacher shortage in government schools.

But we also need our employers to recognise and address the same concerns in Catholic systemic schools.

So now is the time to start the conversation with your colleagues about what exactly we want to fight for in the next round of negotiations. Coordinator workloads? Administrivia? Taking staff goodwill for granted, leading to extra stress and long hours? What would be your top three priorities to achieve real change?

For me the conversation will be what it has always been: workload, workload, workload!

Independent schools Dates set for bargaining to begin

Carol Matthews
Secretary



The IEU will be meeting with the Association of Independent Schools (AIS) in May and June as bargaining commences for new multi-enterprise agreements (MEAs) for teachers and professional, administrative and support staff.

The first meeting is scheduled for the week commencing 13 May. At this meeting, the AIS should give the union the list of schools involved in the bargaining – if your school is participating, you will receive a Notice of Employee Representational Rights (NERR).

IEU claim

By the time you receive this edition of *Newsmonth*, the IEU will have sent a *NewsExtra* to reps and members about our claim for the bargaining set to begin in the first week of Term 2.

- Our general claims will include:
- restore the pay premium for teachers in independent schools
 - provide a fair deal for professional, administrative and operational staff
 - address teacher workloads
 - improve paid parental leave in line with industry standards and pay superannuation on paid parental leave
 - guarantee fair processes.

The detail of these claims is set out in the *NewsExtra* and we'll post updates on our website throughout the bargaining period.

Members can of course add specific claims to the general claims we have identified, just contact your organiser.

Hold a chapter meeting, pass the motion

The *NewsExtra* came with a separate motion to support the union's claim. We urge reps and members to call a chapter meeting at your school to endorse this motion by the end of week 4 (Friday 24 May) and return it to the IEU (follow the link in the *NewsExtra*).

It is essential that as many members as possible attend these meetings to show employers just how important this bargaining process is to members.

We encourage the chapter to invite potential members to the meeting so they too can join the IEU and support this claim. Our bargaining power is greater when we have maximum member support in schools.

Under changes to the *Fair Work Act* that took effect in July 2023, we have more options in the bargaining process if we can demonstrate we represent the majority of employees.

In previous bargaining rounds, our rights were much more limited, hampering our ability to get the results members were pushing for in individual schools.

Now it's time for real change. We need to work together so we can achieve it.

Teacher workload

Teacher workload is a substantial problem in independent schools. Independent schools have long resisted the IEU's claims for greater regulation of workload, or even transparency about the expectations at a particular school.

Because of their independence, employers have refused to take coordinated measures to reduce teacher workload or negotiate with the union on the issue.

The IEU is calling on independent schools to agree to:

- establish school-based committees to identify measures to reduce workload
- set school-based standards on face-to-face teaching hours, release time, the number of meetings, duties, extras, and expected days of attendance including at weekends, recognising that excessive workload is a WHS issue
- ensure full implementation of the new right to disconnect provisions
- ensure work requirements are consistent with and do not exceed government expectations.

Next steps

IEU organisers will be visiting schools in the first weeks of Term 2 to discuss our claim and any issues you may like to add.

We ask you to ensure there is a union rep/chapter committee in your school. Ideally, the committee should include representatives of both teachers and professional, administrative and operational staff, as well as representatives from different sections or faculties within the school.

Invite all your colleagues, including teachers and all school staff, to join the IEU.

Through new industrial relations laws passed in the last 18 months, we have a real opportunity for reps and members to campaign actively for better salaries and conditions.

The union encourages all members in independent schools to embrace this process. We are always stronger together.

WHAT YOU SAID Members in Christian schools

We surveyed our members in 35 Christian schools about the pay offer from Christian Schools Australia. Here's what you had to say (see Deputy Secretary's column, bottom left).

The NO vote

CSA are being foolhardy if they think they can retain a quality workforce whilst clearly paying them less than the government system which will offer more support and a greater number of teaching opportunities.

I think it is still undercutting staff. Our maternity and parental leave are still so low compared to other sectors, to not at least offer us competitive wages is a slap in the face to staff. Surely they can pay their staff fairly.

Very disappointed that CSA is lagging behind the huge bulk of the teaching world in recognising the enormous responsibility and task of being a teacher. I am sure this will create a great hesitancy in any new teachers to seek employment in CSA schools, and at the very least CSA will not be able attract quality teachers to work in their schools.

Dissatisfied with latest offer.

Thanks to the union for pushing for parity with other school systems.

CSA must guarantee that pay for CSA teaching staff will match the Department [government] and Catholic sectors.

The offer doesn't go far enough, because it is behind the salaries of the state and Catholic schools. If CSA wants to attract teachers they need to increase salaries.

I'm worried about the pay levels for newer staff and how much worse off they'll be than state teachers. The maternity/paternity leave also doesn't stack up.

CSA can't flip between the idea of teaching as 'ministry' and schools being run as businesses whenever it suits their (monetary) needs. They need to honour the work they ask their teachers to do (which generally goes well above and beyond what would be expected in the public sector) and offer equitable wages, particularly considering that many of the conditions (eg parental leave) are lagging behind other sectors.

I think teacher worth has been established and we deserve to be paid accordingly.

I think it is disgraceful for independent school teachers to be paid less than their state counterparts. It shows a distinct lack of respect for their staff. I've worked in both systems and the workload is considerably higher in independent schools and the wages should reflect this fact.

If other AIS schools can match the Department [government] and Catholic systems then so can CSA schools!

As an independent school teacher, to not match public school teacher increase is unrealistic and a slap in the face. From my understanding, CSA has not been able to come to a workload agreement for teaching staff and these are not sustainable for our profession. If this continues, I may leave teaching.

I would just like to thank the IEU for their steadfast position in these negotiations. The value of a teacher is at question here and I couldn't agree more with the IEU's position and opposition to another sub-par offer. Many thanks!

CSA must guarantee that pay for CSA teaching staff will match the Department and Catholic sectors.

Need to guarantee that we at least match state schools

You will struggle to get teachers if you don't offer parity within a reasonable time frame. Most staff understand that you can't just pull so much money out of thin air, but by the same token, they're entitled to at least parity with their state colleagues.

They need to match government schools.

Teachers in the middle of the pay scale are still significantly underpaid when compared to the government and Catholic sectors.

I think it is important to have in there that we will at least get paid the same as public school teachers.

I'd like to see CSA schools matching DET and Catholic school salaries and maternity leave arrangements. If they can't, I'd like to see an improvement in working conditions/hours be negotiated for CSA schools at a minimum.

It is not appropriate that teachers in CSA schools are paid less than our counterparts in other NSW schools. I am continually disappointed (and a little insulted) that our employers do not consider it important that we are paid and valued at the same level as teachers in other school systems. We should simply be paid an equal amount. By not paying us equally, we may well lose quality teachers to other systems, and may not attract quality new teaching staff, thus devaluing our own system. Please insist that CSA simply agrees to pay us as much as the other schools in our state. Thank you for all of your hard work.

The YES vote

The CSA offer is reasonable from the ability of schools to pivot in this space without impacting other conditions for staff.

It is a very fair offer and to go further may require offset actions by schools that could impact overall conditions.

The big picture counts.

Christian Schools Australia offer 92% SAY NO

David Towson
Deputy Secretary



In the last edition of *Newsmonth*, I reported that Christian Schools Australia (CSA) had offered teachers in 35 Christian Schools a 0% pay 'rise' in 2025 and a 3% pay rise in 2026.

The offer did not include a commitment to ensuring salaries in Christian schools do not fall behind those paid to teachers in Catholic systemic schools and government schools.

Pay rates for teachers in these schools are already lagging behind. While decent pay rises are being offered for 2024, our members do not appreciate an offer that would see them catch up only to then fall behind teachers in other sectors again.

The IEU has reached in-principle agreement with CSA on the Support and Operational Staff Agreement.

During our visits to Christian schools, we have become aware that many have already passed on pay increases this year. This tells us two things: first, that these schools have the capacity to pay competitive salaries; and second, that the principals and school boards understand the importance

of rewarding and retaining their dedicated staff, particularly considering the current teacher shortage.

CSA came back to the union and offered to split the 3% on offer in 2026 so that teachers would receive 1.5% in 2025 and 1.5% in 2026. Again, there was no commitment to match teacher salaries in government schools.

The union could not accept an offer without a guarantee that salaries will not fall behind those paid to teachers in government schools.

We surveyed our teacher members in these schools to hear their thoughts. We asked: Do you think the IEU should agree to the offer proposed on behalf of your school for 2024, 2025 and 2026?

Within hours, close to 50% of those members responded. By the end of the survey, an overwhelming 92% had rejected the CSA offer. We also invited members to make a comment, you can read a range of these responses (see box, right).

We have advised CSA that we cannot accept their offer when 92% of our members have rejected it. As *Newsmonth* goes to press, we are yet to receive an improved offer. We will consult with our members in early Term 2.

There is real strength in numbers. The more members we have, the greater our bargaining power. It's important to encourage all staff to join the IEU. We are stronger together.

DELEGATES ARE DIAMONDS

Meet the dedicated ambassadors who joined us for our forum and preschool campaign launch on 5 April



Michelle Thompson

**IEU Vice President
Early Childhood Services
Shore Preparatory Preschool
Early Learning Centre**

"The teacher shortage right now in our preschools is at breaking point and we need change urgently."

Bridget Isichei

**Byron Bay Preschool
President, Northern Rivers
Preschool Alliance**

"Supported bargaining has been on the Alliance's radar for some time and we were thrilled the IEU is taking up the case on behalf of preschool teachers. We are aware that joint enterprise bargaining is happening in long day care, and aged care just got a pay increase. Preschool teachers working for government preschools are getting pay equity with school teachers, so we are afraid community preschools will disappear. We are advocating for community preschools where they always put children first and offer the highest quality of care, so we want them to survive. We don't want to lose all our teachers to the public system. We are happy the IEU has stepped up and is doing something about it."



Meg Lockley

**Lawson Community
Preschool**

"There's a big issue around pay equity and the different roles that teachers and educators undertake. The role of educational leader is very fluid. Things can be lost and gained and I'm hoping today's forum is where things can be gained. If there's a model in Victoria (see p5) that works why not get that enterprise agreement here? This campaign, uniting with others, getting them enthused, gives us positive power."



Philippa Maher

Valla Community Preschool

"We need better pay and conditions in preschools. We have a workforce crisis and we won't sustain good quality early childhood teachers if we don't show that they really matter. It needs to start with better pay. I've been a teacher for over 30 years in early childhood. I would say workload intensification keeps us so busy and so distracted with so much work that there's no time to advocate and to collectively get together. You either get out, or you collectively get together and do something about it."



Melinda Gambley

**Clunes Community
Preschool**

"I've been working in this sector for a long time and I've seen a slow deterioration in the workforce – a staff shortage and pressures on staff. We are in crisis. We're desperate now and we have to do something about it. I'd

like to see the state government support community preschools. Other sectors get support from other places, but it's really up to the state government to support us because there is no one else. So I'd really love to see some conversations around that. We're not starting from scratch. There's a good precedent in Victoria (see p5) that we can copy. This gives us hope and optimism."



Janene Rox

Cronulla Preschool

"This is an opportunity to be part of the amazing next stage in our sector. There's lots of different ways to be part of the process. You can be loud and proud or quietly sharing in the background. Everyone can get involved."

Hannah Parkinson

**Birrahlee Preschool
Lane Cove**

"I've been a teacher for 27 years. We're calling for pay parity with school teachers and recognition of the importance of early childhood teaching and learning. That's it. We need recognition through pay parity with school teachers."



Tia Garrett

**Bellingen Community
Preschool**

"Our enterprise agreement is up for renewal, and we're really conscious of paying teachers adequately and aligning our wages with those of teachers in schools. We're also thinking about the NSW government's new public preschools announcement and how those

teachers will be paid the same as school teachers in that system, so we will be losing teachers from our community preschools into that sector. I'd like to see early childhood teachers acknowledged and valued for the work they do, and a lightening of the workload because it's quite crippling. I've been in early childhood education for 16 years but I'm already thinking about my exit strategy because this isn't sustainable. I am wondering if I should look at working in a school because in my small service, I'm the teacher and the educational leader, and probably like all of you, I do all of the things. How is this sustainable?"

Meredith Wakeman

**Gumnut Village Preschool
Wollongong**

"I'd like to see some recognition of the complexity that the department keeps pushing down on top of us, which makes our job so difficult. The number of different roles that we have to take on without support isn't realistic at all."



Tash Smith

**East Lindfield
Community Preschool**

"I am worried about the future. We don't have enough students coming through the system who want to work in community preschools. Once my generation is finished, who will replace us? I'm just hoping we can lift our pay. We're doing a very important job that is different to primary schools but just as vital and just as much hard work, so we need equal pay with school teachers."

Margaret Gleeson

Keiraville Community Preschool

"I believe we all have a responsibility to advocate for a professional wage for early childhood teachers and for appropriate working conditions, and I want the government to listen to the voices that have been calling on them for years and years and take some action on our behalf. I'd like to see state-funded wages for teachers and a reduction in the ridiculous levels of red tape and paperwork that take teachers away from the children."



Raelee Smith

**Muswellbrook Preschool
Kindergarten**

"I want us to work together to achieve equity for preschool staff compared with teachers in schools. Not just wages, but also the conditions and the challenges around being able to attract and keep staff in our area. And training. There are a lot of competing

industries where once upon a time it was near impossible to get a job in our particular service, but now it's hard to get educators because they're competing with mining wages and other industries in our area. We're losing people to go and drive trucks in the mines because the pay is just so much higher. They want to buy a home, but in our sector, it's not achievable, so they don't see a future in preschools. We need pay parity with teachers in schools. We need to think about the work environment in the future – we may not benefit, but we are creating a legacy."

Brenda Jones

**HopePoint Preschool
Georges Hall**

"I want to learn what I can do to support the cause. It's my first time doing something like this."



Stephen Gallen

**Cawongla Playhouse
Community Preschool**

"Early childhood education and care is endemically undervalued in the community. Any opportunity to advocate, to raise our profile is good, but particularly in the context of what's happening with long day care and public preschools. Community-based preschools are under threat, so it's important that we fight and advocate strongly for increased wages to retain this amazing sector. Strong and vibrant community-based preschools have a long history in NSW. It's incredibly precious in terms of the relationships, the fact that it's community run, many for 50 years or more. The rollout of new government preschools, which is a wonderful initiative, is likely to cause the community-based sector to lose a lot of our experienced teachers. We already have problems with recruitment and long-running staff shortages. I would like to see early childhood teachers in community-based preschools getting pay parity with government preschools and with a similar result in long day care. The IEU campaign is a really important plank in maintaining vibrant and high-quality community preschools."



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Continued from page 1

UNITE FOR CHANGE

IEU launches pay rise campaign for preschools



From left, IEUA NSW/ACT Branch Assistant Secretary Amanda Hioe; IEU members at the campaign launch; industrial officer Michael Aird



“People who are on early childhood wages can’t afford housing. They can’t afford mortgages and they can’t afford rent.”

Can’t afford rent or mortgages

The supported bargaining process would enable the union, the NSW Government and employers to work together to lift pay and conditions across the sector and solve the staffing crisis.

“We see this campaign launch as an opportunity to make a difference. We would really like to see a much more systematic approach to getting better pay in preschools,” Matthews said.

“The aim of our preschool campaign is to create real, lasting improvements going forward. Enterprise agreements can be renegotiated and improved on a regular basis.”

The forum was covered in the *Sydney Morning Herald* on Monday 7 April, with two IEU members, Phillipa Maher and Melinda Gambley, as well as Matthews, interviewed.

Gambley, of Clunes Community Preschool near Lismore, said “people who are on early childhood wages can’t afford housing. They can’t afford mortgages and they can’t afford rent.”

The IEU is calling for NSW government-supported pay rises that properly value the work of preschool staff.

“We need a 25% increase for beginning teachers and more for experienced teachers working in preschools,” Matthews said.

“Preschool teachers in other states and territories receive pay rates comparable to school teachers.

“The NSW Government has already shown its commitment to teachers in schools by taking real action to address teacher shortages.

“Now we must focus on the needs of our preschools. We urge the NSW Government to step up and address the staff shortages caused by inadequate pay and conditions in community-based preschools.”

Quality counts

It is widely accepted that high-quality early childhood education is crucial to brain development and fundamental to achieving lifelong learning outcomes. It lays a strong foundation for academic success as children progress through school and beyond.

“If preschool teachers were paid comparably to school teachers, they would be more likely to enter the sector and less likely to leave,” Matthews said. “Teachers, children, parents and the community at large only stand to gain from a strong preschool sector. We need to unite for change.”

Addressing the forum, IEU industrial officer Michael Aird said: “The equity with school teachers is not there – it’s not a fair deal.

“Supported bargaining can change that. The government needs to take stewardship of the sector and tell employers to pay people properly. We need people doing degrees to want to enter this profession. We cannot win this campaign without building our community.”

Teachers at the forum were enthusiastic about the IEU’s campaign and determined to play their part in their preschools.

“Supported bargaining has been on our radar for some time and we were thrilled the IEU is taking up the case on behalf of preschool teachers,” Byron Bay Preschool teacher and President of the Northern Rivers Preschool Alliance, Bridget Isichei, said.

Sue Osborne Journalist

Monica Crouch Journalist

Game changer

Victorian preschool teachers set a precedent

Conditions in the Victorian Early Childhood Teachers and Educators Agreement 2020:

- Pay parity with teachers in schools
- Maximum teaching time: 25.5 hours per week
- Minimum planning time: 12.5 hours per week
- Paid term holidays: 50 days annual leave
- Time for educational leader and/or nominated supervisor: 1 hour per week
- Organisational days: 3 days

- Professional development days: 2 days paid
- Time for mentors: 4 days
- Personal leave: 15 days upon commencement
- Family and domestic violence leave: 20 days paid leave
- Family leave: 16 weeks and 4 weeks for secondary carer
- Employee assistance program
- Any required paid out-of-hours work to be by agreement, with 14-day written notice period
- Union training leave: up to 5 days per year.



Energy and excitement in uniting for change



On Friday 5 April, I could hear a buzz as I walked towards the meeting room in the IEU’s Sydney office. It was the excited and hopeful voices of our preschool teacher ambassadors ready to launch the IEU’s pay rise for preschools campaign, Unite for Change.

We’re calling for a fair deal for preschool teachers through a new supported bargaining approach for one agreement that would cover community-based preschools across NSW.

Supported bargaining is designed to assist employers and employees who haven’t been able to bargain successfully at the individual enterprise level to bargain together as a group.

The campaign launch day was filled with members and guest speakers exuding energy and passion.

Sharing stories of successful change along with critical reflection, speakers and members paved the way towards a 25% pay rise for beginning preschool teachers across NSW, with a call for the NSW Government to fund these increases. Key statements of the day included:

- The critical work undertaken by early childhood teachers does not match the pay and conditions of teachers in schools, highlighting a big pay gap for early childhood teachers across the sector.

- The Australian Education Union’s Cara Nightingale spoke about the journey in Victoria to establish the Early Childhood Teachers and Educators Agreement in that state, a landmark agreement achieving pay parity with school teachers (see above).
- We are all committed to action, no matter how big or small, in our collective approach to unite for change.



IEUA NSW/ACT Branch Secretary Carol Matthews, right, and IEU Organiser Charles Wheeler with our reps from St Lucy's School Wahroonga

St Lucy's members say yes to new EAs

After a battle lasting six months, teachers and support staff at St Lucy's School in Wahroonga have voted a resounding 'yes' to new enterprise agreements.

Teachers voted unanimously in favour of their new agreement, and 92 per cent of teacher's aides and support staff said yes to theirs.

Changing agreements and insulting offers

Until recently, St Lucy's, a Catholic independent school for students with disabilities, had been part of the Model C Catholic Independent Schools group for industrial purposes.

However, in September 2023, the employer announced they would move away from Model C and St Lucy's would have its own agreement. Staff initially greeted this move with optimism, but it soon became clear the offer was inferior, and teachers and support staff would be worse off than if they had stayed on the Model C agreement.

Teachers and support staff united in their push for a better deal, and the IEU Chapter at St Lucy's trebled – growing from 18 members in August last year to 63 in March 2024.

Unwavering unity

The chapter's rapid growth in membership along with members' determination and unity are a great source of inspiration and pride for the union.

Two members – both teacher's aides – attended IEU Council in March. As they spoke about their passion for their work and the challenges they face on a daily basis, a deep sense of solidarity and pride spread throughout the gathering of more than 100 delegates.

"It's a hard job but we love what we do, and we feel quite undervalued," said one member.

Another member said: "It's rewarding; all the children bring something to you every day. But I feel undervalued for the work we do and how hard we work."

IEU support for St Lucy's solidified through a motion passed unanimously by more than 100 Council delegates:

"The IEUA NSW/ACT Branch acknowledges the critically important work of the teachers and support staff at St Lucy's. We call on the employer to do the same by offering salary and conditions that at least match Model C Catholic independent enterprise agreements."

Hard-fought wins and improvements

Staff at St Lucy's have now voted on agreements with the following wins and improvements:

- Teachers: Pay in line with Model C
- Support staff: Pay in line with Model C in 2024 with smaller increases in 2025 and 2026
- Modest improvements for parental leave for teachers and support staff
- One-off payment for support staff
- Streamlined and modified classification structure for teacher's aides: there is now just one pay scale that will allow teacher's aides to progress up the scale more quickly and equitably. In particular, primary teacher's aides will benefit with increases of up to \$12,000 (or 15%) in the first year. The single pay structure is transparent and all teacher's aides can progress at the same rate.

The IEU congratulates everyone at St Lucy's – all the incredible members and the reps who have done an exceptional job talking with staff and developing a formidable chapter. There is power in a union!

Katie Camarena Journalist

New research Discrimination against parents and pregnant women rife at work

A recent report reveals that pregnant women and parent workers in Australia are experiencing a staggering level of discrimination.

Research from the University of South Australia shows that 89% of pregnant workers are being discriminated against. Further, 84.7% of parent workers report being discriminated against while on parental leave, and 91.8% when returning to work.

It was "certainly a shock to see the figures when we could quantify the amount of discrimination", said Dr Rachael Potter, lead author of *National Review: Work Conditions and Discrimination among Pregnant and Parent Workers in Australia*.

For Dr Potter, the stories of workers' experiences were the most confronting findings, including women being told to express breast milk in a cupboard, pregnant women being denied toilet breaks, and parents missing out on opportunities and being "ignored or left behind" after having a child.

Calling for change

In the report, Dr Potter and her co-authors call for major changes to workplace conditions, a transformative shift in workplace culture, a Fair Work Ombudsman focused on pregnant and parent workers, and practical steps employers should be taking.

It's been almost a decade since the last major Australian study into discrimination in the workplace against pregnant women and parents, released by the Australian Human Rights Commission in mid-2014. "And so, I really wanted to fill in the gap," Dr Potter said.

The national review reveals that pregnant and parent workers are experiencing many kinds of discrimination, including their job being altered against their wishes while they were pregnant, receiving no information about leave entitlements, being ordered to do work below their level of competence during pregnancy, having a position terminated or "restructured" during leave, and receiving negative comments about flexible and part-time work.

IEU members play key role

More than 1000 workers across the country from a range of industries and sectors participated in the research, including IEU members. The IEU's Queensland/Northern Territory Branch and the



South Australian Branch encouraged members to participate. The union is credited in the report for supporting the research and Dr Potter says she is grateful to the IEU.

"Unions are just such an integral part of making things better," said Dr Potter. She hopes the findings will bolster the work of unions representing the needs of pregnant women and parent workers. The review strengthens "knowledge and influence through evidence", she said.

Teacher and IEU member Liz Heggart knows the importance of unions in advocating for working people while they are pregnant or raising children. Heggart, who is also a member of the IEU's Executive, has supported pregnant members in

temporary roles who were told they wouldn't have a position when they returned from maternity leave.

Coming back but held back

Heggart, a mother of two, faced her own challenges when she returned to work after having her first child. "You weren't made to feel like you were welcome back," she said.

She has also seen how teachers who have flexible working arrangements to accommodate their childcare needs are not considered for leadership roles. She has not sought out those kinds of positions because "they make it hard for people who work part-time". Often, it's unspoken and subtle, she said, which is even harder to address.

Heggart believes working parents in part-time roles can

sometimes be too scared to speak up because they "don't want to rock the boat" or they fear losing their jobs.

Dr Potter agrees it's often hard for workers in such situations to feel they can speak up. Since the report was published, parents have reached out to her on social media to tell her they had no idea they weren't the only ones.

Dr Potter hopes the national review will help pregnant and parent workers encountering discrimination know they aren't alone.

If you have concerns about the issues raised in this article, we urge you to call the union.

Read the report: unisa.edu.au/research/cwex/projects/national-study-on-parents-work-conditions-pregnancy-leave-and-return-to-work/

Lucy Meyer Journalist

Flexible work rights bolstered

Changes from the Fair Work Commission have strengthened the right to request flexible work arrangements, including part-time work.

In the past, employers could deny requests for flexible work and not have their decision reviewed by the independent umpire, the Fair Work Commission. The new provisions, introduced last year and now part of the National Employment Standards, expand the scope of employees who can make a request, and are intended to assist employees to have

greater access to flexible work arrangements.

The onus is now on the employer to demonstrate why they are rejecting a worker's request. Employers cannot simply answer 'no' and offer unsubstantiated reasons.

Employers must show why they cannot grant the request and what accommodations they can make. They must extensively consult and seek to reach agreement.

Employers must give a reason within 21 days of receiving an employee's written request. If you believe your employer has rejected

your request when they can reasonably accommodate it, you can now seek assistance from your union to notify the Fair Work Commission, who can determine the matter.

Flexible work requests can be made by pregnant workers, parents, or those with a responsibility for caring for children of school age or younger, people with disability, carers, staff who are 55 or older, anyone experiencing family and domestic violence, as well as workers who are caring for those experiencing family and domestic violence.

Member issues surrounding requests for flexible work have been a constant union concern over many years.

For too long, employers have responded to requests for flexible work by telling staff, "we don't do that here". But the new rights mean that's no longer good enough.

If you're experiencing any issues with your request for flexible work arrangements, please contact the union.

Lucy Meyer Journalist



The IEU provides free training so reps can learn how best to support and strengthen their chapter. Big changes to the industrial landscape in the past 18 months mean reps have stronger rights and the voice of unions is once again being heard in decision-making forums across the nation.

The IEU has recently achieved strong bargaining successes in Catholic systemic schools and Catholic independent schools. We can build on these successes through strong chapters led by well-informed reps.

As we commence negotiations with the Association of Independent Schools (AIS) in the coming months, we'll be working closely with our reps in these schools. See box below for how you can be part of it.

Reps – our most valuable resource

An active and informed IEU rep is one of the most powerful resources the union has in a school, college or early childhood education centre.

In our training, we provide an overview of the broader industrial framework, along with reps' rights and responsibilities.

We talk about strategies for running a successful chapter, growing your chapter's membership, and useful skills for supporting members in the workplace.

Do the new delegates rights apply to you?

The law makes crystal clear your right to discuss union business in your workplace.

An IEU member who is an elected chapter rep (according to IEU rules) is considered a delegate under the *Fair Work Act*. As a union delegate, a rep has specific rights to represent members.

What rights do delegates have?

Paid union training time: Reps are entitled to reasonable paid time during normal working hours for union-related training (except in workplaces with fewer than 15 employees). Where necessary, the union is happy to assist reps in accessing this entitlement by contacting employers to ensure reps receive their release time.

Communication rights and workplace access: Reps are entitled to conduct reasonable communication in the workplace with members and prospective members in relation to their industrial interests. Reps also have the right to reasonable access to workplace facilities, such as email and noticeboards. You can email members and prospective members, and pin up notices and posters on your noticeboard. This broader reach is crucial for fostering a more inclusive and informed union workplace.

Protection from adverse action: When a rep acts on behalf of the union, they are protected from adverse action from their employer, provided they do not act counter to their workplace's usual rules; for example, reps must speak respectfully and not intimidate colleagues.

What reps' rights mean in practice

Employers should allow IEU reps to communicate with members and potential members using work emails, handouts or posters/notices about their industrial interests; for example, information about union meetings, current campaigns, or workplace issues.

IEU reps can apply for paid leave to attend IEU training about their role as rep. Reps should follow their school's usual procedures for accessing leave for union training.

Remember, the union can contact your employer to ensure reps receive their release time entitlement.

If you have been elected as an IEU rep, make sure you let both the IEU and your principal know so you can exercise your rights as a delegate.

Any new enterprise agreements made after July this year will also need to include provisions for delegates' rights, and modern awards must have delegates rights clauses by July.

Get your Rep's Handbook

The latest edition of the IEU Rep's Handbook provides reps with all the information you need on your rights as a rep, including your right to paid union training, how the union works, tips on how to run a successful chapter, and important advice on supporting members in meetings. Get your copy today by contacting your organiser or email us: repstraining@ieu.asn.au



If you have any suggestions for a resource or fact sheet you need, please email us: repstraining@ieu.asn.au

Pat Devery Reps Training Organiser

AIS reps training

Save the date

Friday 17 May, 9am to 3pm

IEU Office, 485-501 Wattle Street, Ultimo

Register to attend today: ieu.asn.au/events/

Sydney reps skill up

Reps from schools in the Sydney metropolitan region gathered at the IEU's Ultimo office on Wednesday 3 April for a day's training. We developed our skills in recruiting and supporting members, workshoped common workplace scenarios, and shared experiences of challenges faced and successes enjoyed in the rep's role.

Missed out? For more training opportunities see box at right and: ieu.asn.au/events/

Calling all reps

Training dates

Metro reps Wednesday 8 May, IEU Office, 485 Wattle St, Ultimo

AIS reps Friday 17 May, IEU Office, 485 Wattle St, Ultimo

Cumberland, Penrith, Blue Mountains reps Monday 20 May, venue TBC

Monaro, South East reps Tuesday 4 June, IEU ACT Office, Units 11-12, 3-5 Phipps Close, Deakin

Armidale, Tamworth, North West reps Thursday 20 June, venue TBC

North Coast reps Tuesday 25 June, IEU Lismore Office, Unit 21, Lismore Professional Centre, 103-105 Molesworth Street, Lismore

Mid North Coast reps Thursday 27 June, Westport Club, 25 Buller Street, Port Macquarie

South Coast reps Friday 2 August, venue TBC

Register to attend today: ieu.asn.au/events/

Remember, you have the right to reasonable paid time for union training during normal working hours. If you need the IEU to contact your school, just let us know.

with Professional Development and Reps Training

www.ieu.asn.au

Stronger together: How the IEU works

Here is the organisational structure of the Independent Education Union of Australia NSW/ACT Branch. We're the union for teachers and professional, operational, administrative and support staff and principals in Catholic schools, independent schools, early childhood education and care centres and post-secondary colleges.

Sub branches

The IEU has 20 sub branches: 19 geographical sub branches (listed below) and one for principals. All the reps from a particular geographical area meet once a term at their sub branch, along with their union organiser. Sub branches elect a president, deputy president, secretary and committee once a year in Term 1.

Sub branch meetings are a way for reps and members to provide feedback to the union about what's happening on the ground in their workplaces, and to meet and talk to reps from other schools and sectors. IEU organisers also attend to share union updates and information.

All chapter reps and IEU members who'd like to develop their union activism are warmly invited to attend their region's sub branch meeting. Each sub branch elects four to six delegates to Council (see right).

IEU sub branches: Central Coast; Central Metropolitan; Central West, Cumberland; Hunter Valley; Ku-ring-gai; Lansdowne; Metropolitan East; Mid North Coast; Monaro; North Coast; Northern Beaches; Northern Suburbs; North West; Penrith/Blue Mountains; Riverina; South Coast; South East; Southern Suburbs; and Principals.

Chapters

A chapter is the group of IEU members in each school or early childhood centre (excluding principals, who have their own chapter). Chapters are the union's foundation. When new staff join your workplace, it's always a good idea to personally invite them to join the union.

The chapter elects one or more reps (see below) and may also elect a chairperson and a secretary.

Reps

Each chapter elects a union representative (or rep; sometimes called a delegate). Some schools have more than one rep: one for teachers and one for support, administrative and operational staff.

The rep arranges chapter meetings, keeps members informed of union issues and liaises with your union organiser. They are the first port of call for IEU members in the workplace.

Members

The IEU has more than 32,000 members in non-government schools, preschools and long day care centres, colleges and other educational institutions throughout NSW and the ACT.

Our members are teachers, principals, administrative and support staff, learning support and wellbeing staff, and maintenance and operational staff. They are administrative staff, Aboriginal education officers, teacher's aides, laboratory assistants and library assistants, canteen staff, nurses, counsellors, boarding-house supervisors, bus drivers, groundskeepers, archivists and many other non-teaching employees in the non-government education sector.

Council

Council is the ultimate governing and decision-making body of the IEUA NSW/ACT Branch, bringing together up to 115 delegates elected by our 20 sub branches every two years. IEU Council also includes 22 members of the IEU Executive, who are elected by the full IEU membership every three years. This means there can be up to 137 councillors.

Council meets four times a year in Sydney, on a Saturday, including an AGM in October, at which the union's Annual Report is presented. These meetings are an opportunity for delegates and union officials to exchange information and ideas and to consider and decide the business of the branch (excluding financial management: see Executive, below) in the interests of members.

IEU officers (organisers, industrial officers, some professional staff) also attend Council but do not have voting rights.

Each sub branch elects delegates to Council every two years (while the number of delegates is determined by the size of the sub branch, most are entitled to elect five or six delegates while principals elect four).

Executive

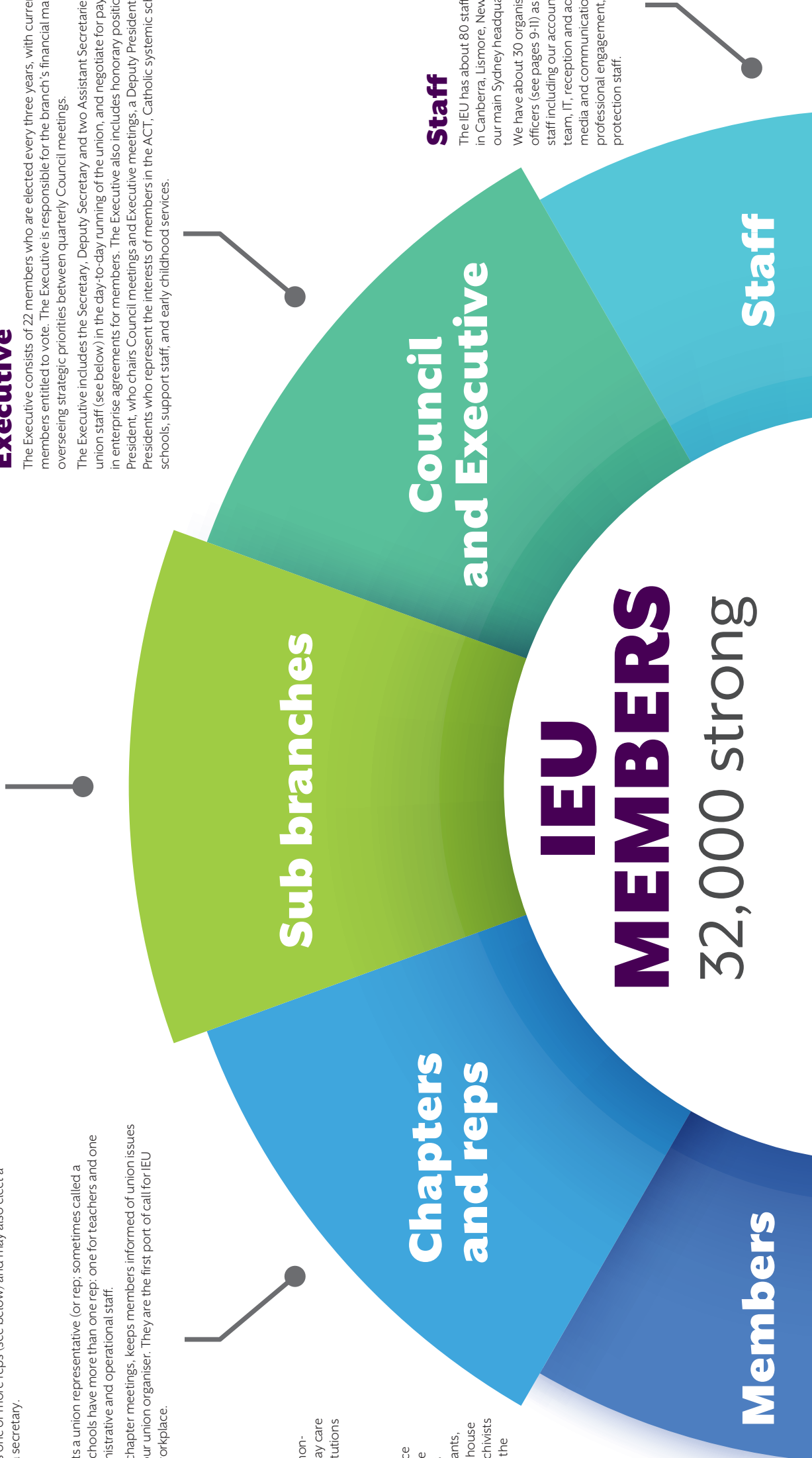
The Executive consists of 22 members who are elected every three years, with current financial members entitled to vote. The Executive is responsible for the branch's financial management and for overseeing strategic priorities between quarterly Council meetings.

The Executive includes the Secretary, Deputy Secretary and two Assistant Secretaries who oversee the union staff (see below) in the day-to-day running of the union, and negotiate for pay and conditions in enterprise agreements for members. The Executive also includes honorary positions, including the President, who chairs Council meetings and Executive meetings, a Deputy President and five Vice Presidents who represent the interests of members in the ACT, Catholic systemic schools, independent schools, support staff, and early childhood services.

Staff

The IEU has about 80 staff across our five offices in Canberra, Lismore, Newcastle, Parramatta and our main Sydney headquarters.

We have about 30 organisers and eight industrial officers (see pages 9-11) as well as professional staff including our accounts team, membership team, IT, reception and administrative staff, media and communications team and professional engagement, policy and child protection staff.



IEUA NSW/ACT Branch Executive

Meet your elected representatives who convene monthly to oversee the union’s strategic priorities, policy and direction, and financial management.



Secretary
Carol Matthews
Sydney
Eora Nation



Deputy Secretary
David Towson
Sydney
Eora Nation



Assistant Secretary
Lyn Caton
Parramatta
Dharug Nation



Assistant Secretary
Amanda Hioe
Sydney
Eora Nation



President
Tina Ruello
Catherine McAuley Westmead
Dharug Nation



Deputy President
Glenn Lowe
St Joseph's Catholic High School Albion Park
Dharawal Nation



Vice President Systemic
Liz Heggart
Penola Catholic College Emu Plains
Dharug Nation



Vice President Non Systemic
Helen Templeton
St Scholastica's College Glebe
Eora Nation



Vice President Support Staff
Kylie Booth-Martinez
Assumption Catholic Primary School and St Stanislaus
College Bathurst, Wiradjuri Nation



Vice President Early Childhood Services
Michelle Thompson
Shore Preparatory School
Early Learning Centre Northbridge, Eora Nation



Vice President ACT
Andrew Dane
Brindabella Christian College Lyneham
Ngunawal Nation



Financial Officer
Denise McHugh
NESA Liaison Officer
Kamilaroi Nation



Financial Officer
Suzanne Penson
Mackillop College Port Macquarie
Birpai Nation



Financial Officer
Nicole Downey
St Mary's Catholic Primary School Orange
Wiradjuri Nation



Financial Officer
Sarah Gardiner
Catherine McAuley Catholic College Medowie
Worimi Nation



Financial Officer
Amy Kermode
Mount St Joseph Milperra
Eora Nation



Financial Officer
Anna Luedi
Villa Maria Catholic Primary School Hunters Hill
Dharug Nation



Financial Officer
Raelene Maxworthy
Calrossy Anglican School Tamworth
Kamilaroi Nation



Financial Officer
Peter Moore
Our Lady of Mercy College Burraneer
Tharawal Nation



Financial Officer
Markus Muschal
St John Paul College Coffs Harbour
Gumbaynggirr Nation



Financial Officer
Christine Wilkinson
St Joseph's Catholic College East Gosford
Darkinjung Nation



Financial Officer
Amanda Wood
St Aloysius Primary School Chisholm
Awabakal Nation

Meet our organisers

The IEU has organisers in five offices throughout NSW and the ACT. Organisers are the link between reps, members and the union office. They attend chapter meetings to listen to your concerns and ideas and to provide union resources and information. The golden rule is, “when in doubt, call your organiser”. Our organisers cover metropolitan schools and they travel far and wide to talk to members in every corner of NSW and the ACT.

Canberra and the ACT

Units 11-12,
3-5 Phipps Close, Deakin
Ngunawal Nation
phone 6120 1500



Jackie Groom
Monaro, Riverina,
South East



Angela McDonald
Monaro,
South East



Anthony Telford
Monaro,
Riverina

Lismore

Unit 21, Lismore
Professional Centre
103-105 Molesworth Street
Lismore
Bundjalung Nation
phone 6623 4700



Steve Bergan
Mid North Coast



Richard Ryan
North Coast

Newcastle

8-14 Telford Street,
Newcastle
Awabakal and Worimi Nation
phone 8202 8900



Jim Hall
Central Coast,
Hunter Valley



Therese Fitzgibbon
Hunter Valley



Carlo Rendina
Hunter Valley

Parramatta

Level 2,
18-20 Ross Street,
North Parramatta
Dharug Nation
phone 8202 8900



Aidan Anderson
Cumberland,
Lansdowne



Luke Breen
Cumberland,
South Coast



Peter Criticos
Lansdowne,
Penrith/Blue Mountains



Lubna Haddad
Cumberland



Jennifer Tait
Penrith/Blue Mountains



Donna Widdison
Central West,
Penrith/Blue Mountains



Charles Wheeler
Central Coast, Cumberland,
Ku-Ring-Gai

Sydney
Head office
485-501 Wattle Street
Ultimo
Eora Nation
phone 8202 8900



Megan Bruce
Northern Beaches,
Northern Suburbs



Lee Cunningham
Central Metropolitan,
Northern Beaches, Northern Suburbs



Josef Dabbs
Central Metropolitan,
Southern Suburbs



Kate Damo
Early childhood education and care



Lisa James
Early childhood education and care



James Jenkins-Flint
Central Metropolitan, Lansdowne,
Northern Suburbs



Valerie Jones
South Coast,
Southern Suburbs



Sue McKay
North West,
Southern Suburbs



Tina Smith
Early childhood education and care,
South Coast, South East, North Coast, Riverina



Kendall Warren
Metropolitan East, ELICOS (English language colleges),
post-secondary colleges



David Whitcombe
Metropolitan East,
South Coast

Meet our industrial officers

Our industrial officers provide support, advice and representation to individual members and groups of members. They represent members in collective and individual meetings with employers and at tribunals if needed, and they advise on a broad range of industrial matters.



Michael Aird



Neal Bent



Liam Crisanti



Samantha Danalis



Emma Ford



Verena Heron



George Maniatis



Carolyn Moore

Meet our professional officers

The IEU's professional officers provide policy advice and professional development, guidance with career progression and accreditation processes, and our suite of publications, media and communications.



Monica Crouch
Media and Communications Coordinator



Patrick Devery
Professional Engagement Coordinator



Christina Ellul
Professional Engagement Officer



A little history

This year marks an important milestone for the IEU: our 70-year anniversary. And we need you to tell us your stories.

But first, a little history. On 24 September 1954, a group of male teachers held a meeting at Sydney Grammar School. They adopted a draft constitution of the Assistant Masters' Association (AMA) and elected an interim committee of eight men to "conduct the AMA's affairs". A full election for office bearers was to be conducted in March 1955.

By mid-November 1954, membership of the AMA stood at 51. The committee thought the AMA needed a minimum of 150 members to be viable. In April 1955 there were 157 members; but numbers fell below 150 later that year.

While women could join the AMA, they were not inclined to as they generally weren't employed in independent boys' schools. In 1965, a Mrs Martin from Queenwood accepted an invitation to attend AMA Council along with 20 other representatives from seven other independent girls' schools.

In 1966, in what was to be a pivotal year for our union, the AMA's annual general meeting agreed to admit women teachers from girls' schools by a vote of 21 to 8. A vote to change the name of the union to the Assistant Masters' and Mistresses' Association (AMMA) was subsequently carried 18 to 3. It would remain the AMMA until 1972 when it became the NSW Independent Teachers' Association (ITA).

In 1994, the ITA became the Independent Education Union, to reflect coverage of support staff in non-government schools.

From these humble beginnings, in 2024 the IEUA NSW/ACT Branch enjoys a collective strength of more than 32,000 members supported by 80 staff across five offices.

As we approach our 70-year anniversary, we're planning to share our history in the pages of *Newsmonth*, with the help of former office holders from the Assistant Masters' and Mistresses' Association (AMMA), the Independent Teachers' Association (ITA) and the current IEU.

But we need to hear from our members too. If you have any stories, articles or memorabilia that may be of interest to our IEU history project, please email us: history@ieu.asn.au



Liz Finlay
Experienced Teacher Accreditation



Russell Schokman
Policy Adviser

Photographer:
Patrick Elliott-Brennan

Don't miss IE magazine

You would have received your first edition of our professional journal, IE, for 2024. We publish three editions a year, and reading this publication can count towards your PD.

Read how education persists in war-torn Ukraine. Sometimes teaching can feel challenging in the face of heavy workloads and staff shortages but imagine teaching students who are in a war zone. We interview an Australian teacher educating Ukrainian students via Zoom. The students are determined to study, despite the devastation around them.

Last year's widely publicised Hollywood writers' strike was just one example of a surge in union activism across the United States, from autoworkers to baristas, teachers and support staff, Amazon warehouse workers and journalists. Could Australia follow suit?

IE recognises the vital work of support staff and looks at how their roles are changing. We also talk to a school maintenance officer about his daily life.

Meet poet, teacher, sociologist, administrator and social justice campaigner John Falzon, a former head of the St Vincent de Paul Society, who says he "just wants to be useful" to the union movement.

One Catholic school in Newcastle is setting the standard with period positivity, providing free tampons and pads for students. Is it time for other schools to follow this lead?

Other articles focus on unionism in the classroom, disruptive behaviour, and the rise of artificial intelligence and what it means for education.

Read the full issue online: bit.ly/ieimarch2024

Our next issue comes out mid-June.



Our first strike: 1967

In February 1967, 12 teachers from De La Salle College, Revesby, and five from Christian Brothers High School, Bondi, took strike action.

At the core of the dispute was a Sydney Catholic Education Office decision to centralise the wage payment system for all Catholic schools in the Archdiocese. Until then, school principals had responsibility for paying their staff; and principals determined suitable pay rates to attract staff to their schools (we had yet to win the first non-government schools teacher award). As a result of the change to payments, some teacher wages went backwards of up to \$5 per week – roughly equivalent to \$80 today.

The principal of De La Salle College, Brother Dunstan, wrote to parents supporting the teachers' strike and urging the parents to support them by writing to Cardinal Gilroy to outline their concern in attracting and keeping quality lay teachers in Catholic schools.

The striking teachers joined a 'steering committee' with teachers from other schools to pressure the Sydney Catholic Education Office to adjust their salaries to what they had signed on for by the next pay period.

These first strikes highlighted the need for the Assistant Masters' and Mistresses' Association (as the IEU was known in 1967) to focus on industrial issues. They gave impetus for those who sought to negotiate an award to ensure salaries and conditions could not be arbitrarily diminished as had just occurred.



Don't miss Bedrock, your early childhood education magazine

Our first edition of Bedrock for 2024 is out now and should have landed in your letterbox in late March.

Read about an incredible trio of women who run an early childhood education program for displaced children in refugee camps in Lebanon.

We talk to two Educational Leaders about the joys and challenges of the role, which varies widely throughout NSW.

Meet the wonderful Rachael Phillips at Birrelee Multifunctional Aboriginal Children's Service, the winner of the 2023 HESTA award for Individual Leadership. She advances culturally appropriate teaching and thinking every day.

This edition is packed with a variety of topics, including encouraging inclusion, healthy body image and trauma-informed practice.

Read the full issue online: bit.ly/bedrockImag2024

Our next issue comes out mid-June.



Annual Principals Survey Calls on employers to meet stubborn challenges

Threats of physical violence against principals continue to rise, according to the annual Australian Principal Occupational Health, Safety and Wellbeing Survey, carried out by the Australian Catholic University (ACU) and released in May 2024.

The 2023 survey reported the worst recorded levels of physical violence, threats of violence, and bullying in the 13-year history of the survey.

More than 2000 principals in government and non-government schools participated in the survey across Australia.

Educational psychologist and co-lead survey investigator Professor Herb Marsh said school principals were resilient, but increasing job demands and burnout are putting them at risk.

"It is deeply concerning that offensive behaviour towards school leaders and teachers persists and appears to be on the rise," Professor Marsh said.

Despite the spike in violence and the toll on their mental health and wellbeing, the survey found principals showed strong levels of resilience, and their work commitment remained high.

The survey also showed school leaders suffered higher rates of anxiety and depression than the general population, with early career school leaders most at risk.

Offensive behaviours towards principals escalated in 2023, with 48 per cent subjected to physical violence and more than half (53.9 per cent) experiencing threats of violence.

Of those reporting physical violence, a staggering 96.3 per cent was by students.

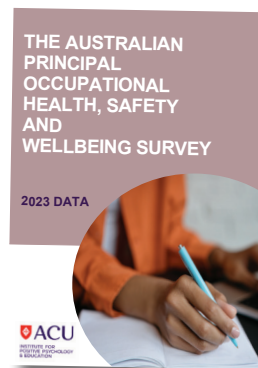
One IEU principal member says that while he is refusing to tolerate this type of behaviour, system leaders just appease students and parents rather than trust in their principals' professional judgement regarding appropriate disciplinary processes.

improvement and a firm line taken with the unruly behaviour of students and parents.

The survey also shows more than half of school principals intend to quit or retire early. Experienced school leaders, with over 15 years behind them, are leading the charge to get out.

There is concern about mid-career leaders turning their backs on long-term principalship,

"Experienced school leaders, with over 15 years behind them, are leading the charge to get out."



Heavy workloads and a lack of time to focus on teaching and learning remained the top two sources of stress for principals surveyed in 2023.

Mental health of students, followed by mental health of staff and student-related issues round out the top five sources of stress.

Our principal members say they are not "punching bags" and many report they are close to walking away if there isn't a massive

with almost 60 per cent of those with six to 10 years' experience wanting to leave the profession.

"Assuming only half of those who agreed or strongly agreed to quit acted on this response, there would be an exodus of more than 500 school leaders – the data strongly suggests this would be experienced school leaders," Professor Marsh said.

Professor Marsh said school principals needed credible proactive feedback about their sources of stress, resilience, and mental health – independent of state departments of education and other regulatory bodies.

ACU investigator and former principal Dr Paul Kidson called on education ministers to urgently take collective action to address the significant threats principals face.

"We've had a national spotlight on teacher education and workloads, disruptions in the classroom, campaigns to boost the profession's status, and a continued focus on students' mental health and academic outcomes – all noble and necessary," Dr Kidson said.

"Principals are being asked to do more with less. It's been over a decade since the Gonski Review, and we still do not have full funding based on student needs. It is naïve to think this does not translate into the increasing stress among school leaders today."

Inviting school leaders to co-design ways to overcome the challenges of inappropriate behaviour by parents and caregivers has proven to be successful, as evidenced by the Victorian School Community Safety Order, and this perhaps could be a model for NSW and the ACT.

Principal members can seek advice from their IEU organiser regarding WHS or workload issues.

Lyn Caton Principals Organiser

Present tense Deal done at Taylors College

The Boom continues – but for how long?

International student numbers are surging, with more than 700,000 such students living in Australia as of February. Enrolments continue to be healthy, with commencements up by 67 per cent (over 50,000 students) on this time last year. Nearly 6000 more students have enrolled than in the last pre-pandemic year of 2019.

But it could be that we are currently at the top of the wave. Late last year, the federal government announced changes to the student visa regime, and anecdotal evidence suggests this is already having an effect on projected enrolments. Meanwhile, English Australia figures show a fall of 68 per cent in ELICOS-only visa grants in December 2023.

All that said, the industry looks to be in rude health at the moment, so there's never been a better time to join the union that covers the private post-secondary college sector, the IEU. Encourage your colleagues to join – there really is safety in numbers!

Taylors College

Your union has recently agreed to a settlement with Taylors College, bringing to a close a long-running and contentious negotiation. The previous agreement at the college expired

in early 2022, and the college gave an administrative pay rise of 2.5% at the time. It then took several months to get them to the bargaining table, with discussions not starting until November.

The college then put forward several proposals which were unacceptable to members, and negotiations settled into something of an uneasy impasse. Matters were further delayed when Navitas bought out the college from Study Group in May 2023.

Towards the end of last year, members felt that they had had enough, and authorised a range of industrial actions via a Protected Action Ballot Order. This move appeared to make the employer soften their stance on several matters, and the parties were finally able to agree to terms in February.

The new agreement includes several benefits for members, including pay rises of 5% from July 2023, and 4% from July 2024, a lump sum payment worth about \$1500-\$2500 for most teachers, greater regulation around work during non-term times, and greater flexibility around work start times.

These negotiations were both difficult and protracted, but members held firm and were able to extract significant concessions from management to arrive at an acceptable

settlement. Such agreements are only possible with the help of a strong, active, and growing IEU membership.

From the International Desk

Teachers at British Council (BC) schools in Taiwan have agreed to unionise and have put forward a list of demands. High on that list is a decent pay rise and given that wages have reportedly not risen at BC schools in Taiwan for 20 years, such an increase is well past due. Teachers are also looking at greater regulation around workloads, and for work out of regular hours, such as weekends and evenings.

In this column last year, I reported on similar action taken by BC teachers in Portugal, and it's clear that the long-standing flat wages for ELICOS teachers the world over are no longer being tolerated by teachers, and they are doing something about it. This is no small thing in an industry which has traditionally been un-unionised.

The best way to push forward on matters like these is, of course, to join your union. The *Fair Work Act* here in Australia includes several provisions to help workers get a better deal. So, join your union today and find out how!

Kendall Warren Organiser

Time capsule: 1984

As we honour our 40-year IEU members, we cast our minds back to the year they joined the union: 1984



Let's start with what we know best: education and unions. The Independent Teachers Association (ITA), as the NSW Branch of the IEU was then known, had 11,010 members at the end of 1984. (We now have more than 32,000.)

There was one Award for teachers in non-government schools. The top salary rate for a four-year and five-year trained teacher was \$27,465 per annum. The starting salary for a one-year trained teacher was \$12,849 per annum. Back then, there was such a thing as a one-year trained teacher.

In 1984, teachers in government schools received release time. The ITA asked non-government employers to provide the same for primary school teachers in non-government schools who received no release and taught 26.25 hours per week.

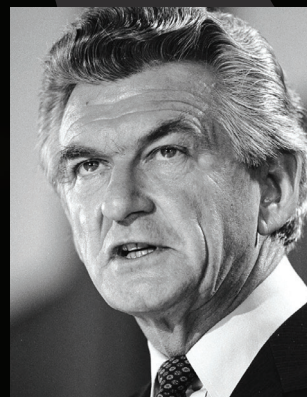
ITA members held mass meetings on the issue of redundancies in Sydney Catholic schools.

Computer technology was just beginning to find its way into homes and schools, and Federal Science and Technology Minister Barry Jones gave an opening address at the ITA's symposium on "Technology's Challenge to Schools" urging caution on computer education.

Union Aid Abroad-APHEDA was established in 1984 (see below), and the ITA affiliated with APHEDA. The IEU is proud of its 40-year partnership with APHEDA.

The ITA made a claim ("Keeping Teachers in Good Repair") for long service leave to be improved to catch up with entitlements for teachers in government schools. The union resolved at the Annual Conference, held on 24-25 November 1984, to make long service leave the number one industrial and professional issue for 1985.

The Independent Teachers Federation of Australia (ITFA), as the federal IEUA was then known, passed a resolution in favour of the elimination of corporal punishment in schools.



Federal and state arenas

In the national arena, Australia's Prime Minister was Bob Hawke, under whose leadership Labor introduced Medicare.

Hawke announced Advance Australia Fair as the national anthem (Queensland objected, preferring to keep "God save the Queen" a bit longer). The opening line of the anthem was also changed from "Australia's sons, let us rejoice" to the more inclusive "Australians all, let us rejoice". Hawke was re-elected in 1984, defeating Liberal Party Leader Andrew Peacock.

The Federal Education Minister in 1984 was Senator Susan Ryan, who opposed the reintroduction of fees for tertiary education despite strong support for the fees in Cabinet (HECS was eventually introduced in 1989).

In 1984, the Australian of the Year was Aboriginal activist Lowitja O'Donoghue, who became the inaugural chairperson of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission from 1990 to 1996. Dr O'Donoghue passed away on 4 February this year.

In NSW, Labor Premier Neville Wran won a fourth term in government, and the NSW Education Minister was Rodney Cavalier.

And on 14 May 1984, Australians welcomed the shiny gold \$1 coin into the economy, replacing the brown \$1 paper note.

Arts, sport and culture

In the cultural sphere, *Terms of Endearment* took out Best Picture at the Academy Awards, and *Hotel du Lac* by Anita Brookner won the Booker Prize.

In the Countdown Music Awards, Best Album went to INXS for *The Swing*, and Best Single to *Heaven Must Be There* by the Eurogliders.

Band Aid, a star-studded super-group of singers and musicians assembled by Bob Geldof, recorded the charity single *Do they know it's Christmas?* in London to raise money to combat famine in Ethiopia. It was released on 3 December and reportedly raised £8 million within a year.

The 1984 NSWRL Premiers were Canterbury-Bankstown.



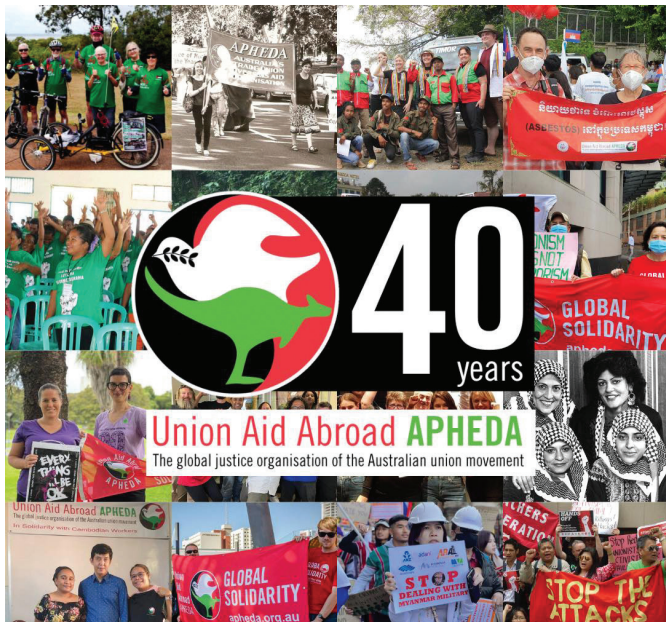
Elsewhere in the world

On the international stage, the Nobel Peace Prize went to South African Anglican Bishop Desmond Tutu "for his role as a unifying leader in the non-violent campaign to resolve the problem of apartheid in South Africa".

Indian Prime Minister Indira Gandhi was assassinated by two of her security guards, heralding the beginning of deadly anti-Sikh riots in India.

The Olympic Games were held in Los Angeles. Although boycotted by the Soviet Union, 140 nations still took part, an Olympic record of its own at the time.

David Towson Deputy Secretary
Monica Crouch Journalist



Commemorating 40 years of Union Aid Abroad-APHEDA



Nelson Mandela meets with APHEDA co-founder Dr Helen McCue in 1993, expressing gratitude for APHEDA and the Australian union movement for their support of South Africa's struggle for democracy and freedom during the years of apartheid (1948-1994).

Union Aid Abroad-APHEDA, the global justice organisation of the Australian trade union movement, was established in 1984. Here's how it started, and what it does.

In 1983, Australian nurse Helen McCue was working as a nurse educator with the World Health Organisation in the Middle East before being seconded to the United Nations Relief and Works Organisation (UNRWA) in Lebanon.

While working in refugee camps alongside nurses from Norwegian People's Aid, the overseas aid arm of the Norwegian trade union movement, Helen was inspired by the solidarity of workers in Norway. She felt the Australian union movement could also make a difference in the lives of marginalised peoples around the world.

When Helen returned to Australia later that same year, she took a proposal to Cliff Dolan, the then President of the Australian Council of Trade Unions (ACTU).

Inspired by the Norwegian People's Aid example with its focus on skills training, Helen proposed establishing an international solidarity organisation in Australia. With Dolan's support, Union Aid Abroad-APHEDA (Australian People for Health, Education and Development Abroad) was established in 1984.

APHEDA's commitment to democracy and global justice has spanned many movements and causes, from the Palestinian refugee camps of Lebanon to Cambodia, Vietnam, Timor Leste, the Thai-Myanmar border, Aceh and support for the anti-apartheid struggle in South Africa.

In 1990, after being released from prison after 27 years, South African anti-apartheid activist and politician Nelson Mandela visited Australia. He thanked the Australian union movement for being one of the first groups to support the democratic movement. APHEDA was a leading agency in this support.

In a statement, Mandela said:

"APHEDA has a long history of support for the anti-apartheid struggle. APHEDA's development assistance programs have made a very significant contribution. Assistance is not only material, or helping realise the ultimate goal of freedom in South Africa – assistance is about people, about people in Australia caring enough about our people to contribute financially, to contribute their time, their skills and emotions. This is what sustains us. This is what is irreplaceable in human endeavour. This is the true meaning of solidarity. We thank you and the people of Australia, and will be eternally grateful for your magnificent contribution."

Today, as the global justice organisation of the Australian union movement, APHEDA works to support stronger union and social movements in Southeast Asia, the Pacific, the Middle East, and financial support comes from individuals throughout Australia, the ACTU, Australian unions and workplaces, international grants as well as from the Australian government's Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT).

The IEU congratulates APHEDA on its inspiring tale of Australian workers uniting against injustice across the globe. The IEU is a long-time supporter of APHEDA: www.apheda.org.au

Katie Camarena Journalist



40-year IEU member Ian Hunter of Sacred Heart Parish School, Broken Hill, left, receives a gift from the school's principal and member, Trevor Rynne



40-year IEU member Margaret Gray with IEU organiser Lisa James and Linda Margan at Jack and Jill Kindergarten, Berala



40-year IEU member Carmen Parker of Children's House Montessori, Faulconbridge, centre, with IEU industrial officer Michael Aird and organiser Lisa James



40-year IEU member Angela Bonfiglio, right, at IEU March Council with IEU organisers Lee Cunningham and Richard Ryan



**UNION
SNAPS**



40-year IEU member Karin Watts of Norwood Preschool, Asquith

Celebrating

40

year members



Two of our own

A special shout out to two IEU members who are celebrating 40 years of membership this year: IEUA NSW/ACT Branch Secretary Carol Matthews (right) and organiser Megan Bruce.

Both joined the IEU in 1984; Carol as an industrial officer/organiser while Megan was a teacher. Carol has held several positions and is now the Secretary of the IEUA NSW/ACT Branch and President of the IEUA federal union. Megan was a teacher and IEU member for 20 years before becoming an organiser in 1999.

Carol Matthews: "This milestone has come around surprisingly quickly and it's an honour and a pleasure not only to be a union member for 40 years, but also to celebrate alongside my friend and colleague Megan. As the Secretary of the NSW/ACT Branch, I come to work every day to support and fight for the rights of our 32,000 members."

Megan Bruce: "I am proud to work with women IEU members and how they are represented as they make up more than 72 per cent of our membership. Marking 40 years with the IEU is something to be proud of and I couldn't have wished for a more deserving woman to have shared those many years with – Carol is a friend, a mentor, and a leader. It is an honour to work alongside her."



‘Stand with Gomerioi’ campaign wins NSW Environment Award

The IEU was proud to stand with the Gomerioi people and other unions to receive an award for the campaign to protect the Pilliga forest from a major gas development.

The 2024 NSW Environment Awards, awarded by the Nature Conservation Council of NSW, held on Wednesday 17 March, celebrated the achievements of grassroots environmentalists and community groups across the state.

With broadcaster, author, journalist and stage performer Wendy Harmer as MC for the evening, there were laughs aplenty as award winners were announced and their tireless work protecting the environment acknowledged.

The Unions NSW Pilliga Campaign Committee was listed among the finalists for the Jack Munday Award, which recognises collaboration between the environment and trade union movements. The campaign has stood with Gomerioi leaders to protect the Pilliga Forest on the NSW north-west slopes from a proposed coal seam gas project by energy giant Santos.

The Pilliga campaign was nominated alongside the Hunter Jobs Alliance, Janine Kitson and Frontyard Films.

With delivery akin to a Hollywood Oscar presentation, Harmer made the announcement: “And the winner is ... Unions NSW Pilliga Campaign Committee!”

Cheers erupted from unionists in the audience as committee

members took to the stage (pictured above). “Why do we love this campaign so much?” Harmer asked. “Because it brings together the unions, the Gomerioi people, environment groups and the Country Women’s Association in an alliance against a proposed coal seam gas project.”

Gomerioi Elder Raymond Weatherall accepted the award. He thanked all who had been involved and explained how the union movement came to stand with the Gomerioi people.

“I live on Country and the campaign seemed to be going nowhere, we needed more numbers, so I had a few yarns with the union – they wanted to come up to the Pilliga,” Weatherall said.

“I acknowledge Gomerioi leader Suellyn Tighe who’s not here tonight. Suellyn and I knew that if we took people out there that they would see the beauty that we see as Gomerioi every single day. After a couple of trips, Gomerioi gets into the spirit of you,” Raymond said. “My grandchildren, their grandchildren and their grandchildren to come will benefit from what we do today, tomorrow and the next day.”

Unions NSW Assistant Secretary Vanessa Seagrove acknowledged the work the Gomerioi people have done to save the Pilliga and other spaces over thousands of years.

Seagrove explained that when the Maritime Union of Australia brought the campaign idea to Unions NSW she knew it was union

business to protect the Pilliga, and support the Gomerioi people and their rights to protect the land.

“I just really want to thank all the unions involved for their support, and Jack Munday, we love you!” Seagrove said.

The late Jack Munday (1929-2020) led the Builders’ Labourers Federation in the 1970s with their ground-breaking “green bans” that saved parts of the Rocks, Woolloomooloo, Centennial Parklands and the State Theatre (among many other sites) from the bulldozers.

The collaboration between unionists, the Gomerioi people, environment groups and community organisations in protecting the Pilliga has been historic and offers inspiration to many.

“The IEU is proud to have been part of the campaign from the outset,” said IEUA NSW/ACT Branch Deputy Secretary David Towson. “We’ve been part of a number of trips to the Pilliga, seeing firsthand the importance of standing with the Gomerioi people to protect the forest ecosystem and the Great Artesian Basin.”

The IEU congratulates all Environment Award nominees and everyone involved in the Unions NSW Campaign Committee and commits to standing with the Gomerioi people to protect the Pilliga.

Katie Camarena Journalist



Top, International Grammar School students Maddy Hayen and Hugh Gibbons at the Climate Fresk workshop with the IEU’s Neal Bent, Liam Crisanti, Katie Camarena, Lee Cunningham and David Whitcombe; above, IGS Head of Sustainability Carmelo Fedele

Role reversal

Students educating teachers on climate change

In early April, IEU staff participated in a Climate Fresk workshop facilitated by two students from International Grammar School (IGS) in Ultimo.

Maddy Hayen and Hugh Gibbons are both members of the IGS Sustainable Futures Club which is run by IEU member and IGS Head of Sustainability, Carmelo Fedele.

Through Sustainable Futures, Fedele encourages students to take the lead on sustainability initiatives within the school and beyond. Now he has taken his students on a new journey – training them as facilitators to deliver participatory educational workshops on climate science.

Fedele became aware of Climate Fresk through professional development training. “I liked it so much that I trained to be a facilitator,” Fedele said.

“I then delivered the course to students. They loved it and really engaged with it. So we then ran a facilitators’ course for the students.”

The workshop at the IEU was the first one the students facilitated. “It’s very exciting,” Fedele said.

What is Climate Fresk?

When Maddy and Hugh said “Let’s Fresk!”, IEU staff David Whitcombe, Lee Cunningham, Neal Bent, Liam Crisanti and Katie Camarena were guided through a workshop that challenged their knowledge of climate science.

Climate Fresk is a powerful collaborative tool designed to increase understanding of the causes and effects of climate change. Participants work constructively together to assemble a large fresco (‘fresk’) from a deck of 42 cards with images on the front and established scientific facts on the back.

More than 1.5 million people in 157 countries have taken part in a workshop since 2018, when French lecturer in energy and climate, Cedric Ringenbach, founded the Climate Fresk non-profit organisation.

Climate Fresk’s vision is to create a “network of

people that is growing exponentially who can pass on quality climate education in order to reach a social tipping point that will help guide us to a low carbon world”.

Australia’s biggest Climate Fresk

Under Fedele’s guidance, students from IGS will soon facilitate the biggest Climate Fresk in Australia to date. Maddy, Hugh and their peers will help run a Fresk for all staff at IGS – about 180 participants – with half of the facilitators being students from Sustainable Futures.

Maddy is in her final year at IGS and is the Sustainability Leader. “I was part of School Strike for Climate, organising the student strikes,” she said. “They encouraged us to do stuff within our own schools. So I joined Sustainable Futures.”

Hugh became involved after taking part in a waste audit in year 5 or 6. “I started to learn about all the problems we have with climate change,” he said. “Ever since then I have been interested in the concept of sustainability.”

Climate change is union business. Through our Environment Committee, the IEU is proud to support IEU members and young people tacking action to tackle climate change.

You can find out more about the IEU’s environment and sustainability initiatives on our website: bit.ly/ieuenvironment

We also invite you to join our Facebook group for environment educators: www.facebook.com/groups/IEUEnvironment



Katie Camarena Journalist



Around the globe: Gaza

Unionists call for an end to the war amid catastrophic conditions

In a letter to Australia's Foreign Minister, Senator Penny Wong, dated 9 February 2024, the IEUA (the IEU's federal union) called for support and protection for children and educators in Gaza. The letter said in part: "We acknowledge and support your strong advocacy for the immediate and unconditional release of all Israeli hostages held by Hamas. The terrorist attack on 7 October 2023 on Israeli civilians was reprehensible and must be unequivocally condemned."

The article below was published by Education International (EI), the global federation of 380 teachers' unions, of which the IEU is a member. It was published on 28 March 2024 and updated on 4 April 2024.

"After 173 days of the war on Gaza, more than 32,414 people have been killed, more than 74,787 wounded, and more than 10,000 are missing ... More than 5,826 students and 264 teachers have been killed, and 9,570 students and 960 teachers are trying to recover from their injuries." This is the alarming situation described by Saed Erziqat, General Secretary of the General Union of

Palestinian Teachers (GUPT), addressing the Education International (EI) Executive Board meeting on March 28th.

Thanking EI and its member organisations for their support and solidarity with Palestine, the GUPT leader went on to describe the harrowing conditions in Gaza where education has been completely halted and more than 625,000 students have lost their right to education. "The situation in Palestine is a humanitarian disaster, a real famine. The United Nations confirms this. People cannot find food," he added.

In addition to the devastating human toll, the Israeli bombing completely and partially destroyed more than 286 government schools and 65 United Nations run schools. The remaining 133 schools were turned into shelters. All 12 universities in Gaza were destroyed and 95 academics and staff were killed, he said.

Union-led relief efforts

Thanks to the support from EI members around the world, GUPT has provided direct financial assistance to more than 1,077 teachers – 913 in Gaza and 164 in the West Bank, Erziqat explained.

In addition, "we carried out psychological support activities in 5 shelter centres for more than 2,000 children in the city of Rafah. We trained 64 teachers in the West Bank on social emotional learning skills, and they applied that to students in West Bank schools that were subjected to violations by the occupation army."

Erziqat also called for continued support of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) an institution supporting Palestinian people with food and education "because it is in real danger after some donor countries announced a suspension of their funding."

He also urged EI members to "increase pressure on governments to work for a permanent and compulsory ceasefire. The ceasefire must be very quick, and food and medical aid must be brought in. Your voice is very important because you represent truth, law, and human conscience."

Restore peace, end the war

Erziqat insisted that "killing and destruction will not create peace. Peace can only be achieved through acceptance of international law, UN

resolutions, and the two-state solution. Our people want to live in peace and love life. What is spilled is not water, but our blood, and what is cut is not branches, but our remains. Do not remain silent but demand an end to the war."

EI General Secretary David Edwards answered this call reiterating EI's demand for an urgent humanitarian cease-fire in Palestine and will continue to advocate for the funding of UNRWA.

EI continues to advocate for an end to this terrible war, the release of all hostages, and an end to indiscriminate violence to prevent the continued humanitarian catastrophe and loss of life.

EI article: ei-ie.org/en/item/28471:palestine-unionists-call-for-an-end-to-the-war-amid-catastrophic-conditions

IEUA letter in full: ieu.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2024/02/IEU-Letter-Minister-Wong.pdf

ACTU statement: actu.org.au/media-release/actu-statement-on-gaza

Union Aid Abroad-APHEDA: www.apheda.org.au/?s=gaza

UN Photo-Shareef Sarhan

PEACE, SOCIAL JUSTICE, DECENT WORK FOR ALL

10
The Sydney Mail, August 13, 1917.

18

SYDNEY 2024

MAY DAY

WEDNESDAY MAY 1ST
10:30AM BELMORE PARK
MARCHING TO HYDE PARK

WOMEN'S DEMONSTRATION IN FRONT OF PARLIAMENT HOUSE. These women, supported by a large number of men, were the first to march in the Sydney May Day demonstration. The demonstration was held in front of the House of Representatives on Wednesday, May 1st, 1917. The women were carrying banners and flags, and the men were carrying a large banner. The demonstration was a success, and the women were praised for their courage and determination.

Sydney
Wednesday 1 May


Newcastle
Sunday 5 May

May Day 2024

May Day recognises the history of working people organising and fighting to achieve a better way of life, as well as decent pay and working conditions. It's also a timely reminder for all of us about the need to continue fighting for a society that meets the needs of all working people.

Our Communities Our Jobs Our Future

HUNTERWORKERS MAYDAY



10am Newcastle Museum
March to Newcastle Tramsheds
BBQ, Rides, Ice Cream,
Entertainment

**Sunday 5th
May 2024**

Supported by Turner Freeman Lawyers, Unity Bank, Protect
Workers Health Centre, HunterLink

Palm Sunday 2024

The IEU is proud to attend the Palm Sunday Rally and March for Peace every year. This year's rally called for peace not war; and permanent visas for all refugees.

Addressing the crowd, young refugee Ada read a passionate personal message to federal governments past and present. Ada was just six years old when her family embarked on a dangerous boat trip, miraculously surviving. Ada and her family reached Christmas Island and were taken to a detention centre. When she was 12, Ada was medevacked to Sydney's Westmead Hospital.

From age 14, Ada was supported by the Blue Mountains Refugee Support Group throughout high school. She has recently finished her HSC but the pathway to university or TAFE is blocked by the prohibitive cost – refugees are counted as international students, who pay high fees.

Human rights advocate and former Socceroo Craig Foster addressed the crowd, reiterating that there are still 10,000 refugees who need permanent visas and who remain captive within our society. "The door between incarceration, imprisonment, indefinite detention and freedom is illusory," Foster said. "It is just a piece of paper. It is a stroke of a pen."

Foster also reminded us that "we are a beautiful, multicultural nation and we should be the model for the world as to upholding basic human rights, humanitarian law, and international law".

"Seeking asylum is a human right," Foster said. "Let's go forwards and make sure we give human rights to all refugees."

The General Secretary of the NSW Nurses and Midwives' Association, Shaye Candish, was the final speaker, leaving us with a powerful message to reflect upon: "We need to wrap our support around them [refugees] as they navigate a new life in Australia and begin a long journey to healing. The power of kindness can never be underestimated, especially for those who experienced so much pain."

Other speakers included Aunty Rhonda Dixon-Grosvenor who gave a beautiful Welcome to Country, Sister of St Joseph Susan Connelly, Sri Lankan Tamil asylum seeker Thamilselvan Selvakumar and Palestinian activist, leadership coach and author Reem Burrows.

Katie Camarena Journalist



Human rights advocate and former Socceroo Craig Foster



IEU members and friends



Palestinian activist, leadership coach and author Reem Burrows

Ways to make your money go further



5 tips on saving from Teachers Mutual Bank

Membership criteria, fees and T&C's apply. T&C's and the TMD are on tmbank.com.au. General advice only. Teachers Mutual Bank is a division of Teachers Mutual Bank Limited ABN 30 087 650 459 AFSL 238981 | BE03165-TMB-2024

bank differently | Teachers Mutual Bank





Superannuation not only provides you with security when you retire, it often includes insurance. Understanding your insurance cover and what you’re paying for is important and mid-year is a good time to think about your cover and what you need for your situation in life.

Insurance through your super fund is a genuine benefit which protects your most important asset – you and your family. It should provide some peace of mind to members who are covered and, at a national level, it plugs some of the under-insurance gap in Australia.

Most industry funds do not self-insure; they outsource and provide what is called group insurance from a professional provider. As part of its due diligence and fiduciary duty, fund trustees search, negotiate and scrutinise insurance providers to ensure the best product, the best service and the best price for members under an insurance contract – group life and group salary continuance.

NGS Super’s selected insurer is a highly respected international insurer, TAL. Due to the size of the group insurance policies, the fund can provide insurance benefits to eligible members at a discounted price.

An insurer will look closely at the membership of the group to be insured – age, gender, nature of work, illness/injury history – and decide whether they will take the risk for the whole group and at what premium.

The insurer will set conditions such as “actively at work” and other criteria and, if acceptable, take the risk of insuring the group subject to the terms of the contract. This is often done without the need for individual medical examinations. Default insurance is provided to eligible members automatically to make it easy for members to obtain cover, but members can cancel their insurance at any time.

If cover is cancelled, a member may re-apply for it, but acceptance will be subject to approval by the insurer based on the medical information provided. Group insurance provided through a superannuation fund is complex and impossible to scope in a single article, but some simple points about how it works may be useful. If you want to learn more about the terms and conditions of your insurance, I recommend looking at NGS Super – Insurance Guide.

Life insurance

Life insurance can provide a lump sum if you die or become terminally ill. The cover is age-based according to units held and members can find the amount of cover on their annual member statements.

Levels of cover can also be found in the NGS online insurance section. It’s good to check this so you can be sure you have adequate cover. As a rule, financial planners recommend having at least enough cover to pay off your mortgage in the case of your death.

For example, NGS Select cover would insure a 40-year-old for \$550,000 at a cost of \$6.29 per week; a 50-year-old for \$390,000 at a cost of \$8.71 per week; and a 60-year-old for \$50,000 at a cost of \$3.22 per week.

As the cover is age based, it is designed to peak then decline as the member’s age increases.

The levels of cover and the costs are all disclosed in the NGS Insurance – Insurance Guide (Product Disclosure Statement) for members’ information. It’s good to have a look and take some time to understand how it works. If your cover is not enough to cover your needs, it is possible to increase or “dial up” the level of cover subject to the insurer’s approval, which will be based on medical information.

Use the TAL insurance portal to apply for an increase or decrease in your insurance cover. It is also possible to ‘fix’ your cover, again subject to acceptance by the insurer, so that the death benefit remains the same ‘fixed’, but the premiums increase annually.

Members can also have an automatic increase based on ‘life events’ such as marriage, birth of a child, divorce and several other categories. Again this depends on meeting the terms and conditions set in the Group Life Policy.

Total and permanent disability insurance

Total and permanent disability insurance (TPD) provides a lump sum if you are permanently unable to work due to illness or injury. This condition will have to be corroborated by medical evidence stating that the member will never be able to work again due to illness or injury.

Income protection insurance

Income protection (IP) insurance can provide you with an income if you are temporarily (or permanently) unable to work due to illness or injury. Default cover for NGS Select is for a two-year benefit payment period after a waiting period of 90 days.

It will provide a monthly income of up to 80 per cent of your pre-disability salary income, plus up to 10 per cent of pre-disability salary which will be paid as a super contribution. These figures are subject to a cap.

Again, you can change the waiting period, change the level of cover or reduce the cover as your work situation changes subject to the insurer’s acceptance. For a quote on how much any changes would cost you can use: ngssuper.com.au/calculators.

Valuable benefit

The provision of insurance through superannuation funds’ group policies is not a simple matter. However, it is a valuable benefit which has helped hundreds of thousands of super members and their families in times of illness, injury and death.

Think about your levels of cover, read the NGS Super – Insurance Guide if you have any questions, or better yet, contact the fund on 1300 133 177 or via e-mail (www.ngssuper.com.au).

Bernard O’Connor
(former Company Secretary NGS Super)



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

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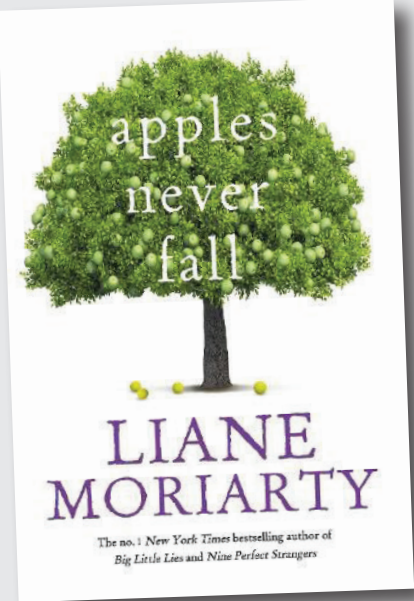
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Giveaways



Apples Never Fall

Author: Liane Moriarty
Pan Macmillan Australia

The Delaney family love one another dearly – it’s just that sometimes they want to murder each other.

If your mother were missing, would you tell the police? Even if the most obvious suspect was your father?

One night a stranger named Savannah knocks on Stan and Joy’s door, bleeding after a fight with her boyfriend. The Delaneys are more than happy to give her the small kindness she sorely needs. If only that was all she wanted.



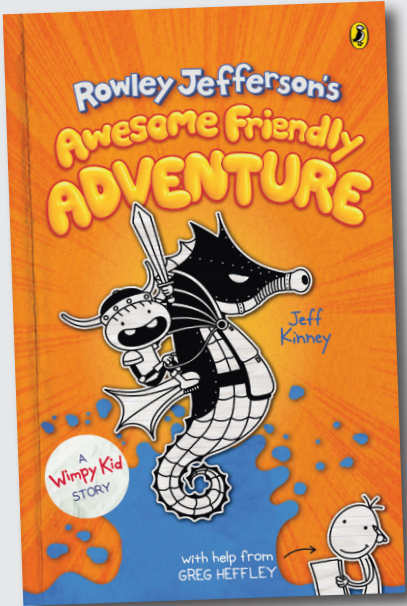
Fox Kid and the Rat Bot

Author Adrian Beck
Publisher: Learning Logic

A new series of books has been launched designed to help struggling readers and those with dyslexia.

Fox Kid is a new series specifically designed for readers who’ve ‘missed the boat’ in the early years of school. The series also includes companion reading and writing workbooks and card games. Each title cumulatively builds reading skills, following the tried and tested Little Learners Love Literacy® 7-stage explicit teaching sequence.

Fox Kid and the Rat Bot is the first book in the series: Following a disastrous try-out for the basketball team, Dan takes a sleepwalk that changes his life.



Rowley Jefferson’s Awesome Friendly Adventure

Author: Jeff Kinney
Publisher: Penguin

Beloved characters Rowley Jefferson and Greg Heffley are reimagined in an epic quest by internationally bestselling author of the *Diary of a Wimpy Kid* series, Jeff Kinney. Adventure awaits!

From the imagination of Rowley Jefferson comes an adventure of epic proportions. Join Roland and his best friend, Garg the Barbarian, as they leave the safety of their village and embark on a quest to save Roland’s mom from the White Warlock. Will our heroes survive? Find out in *Rowley Jefferson’s Awesome Friendly Adventure*.



To go in the draw, 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 1 June 2024.

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