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Historic deal to lock in big pay rises for long day care staff set for vote

The first multi-employer supported bargaining agreement developed under new industrial relations laws, with pay rises of 15% over two years, is ready to be put to a vote by thousands of teachers and educators working for 63 employers in the long day care sector. Unions and the employers have endorsed the deal.

This historic agreement means thousands of teachers and educators in the long day care sector will gain a 10% pay rise in December, with a further 5% increase in December 2025. Improved conditions around professional development and teacher accreditation are also included.

“We’re seeing the groundbreaking outcome of unions, the federal government and a group of 63 employers working together to lift pay and conditions across the long day care sector,” said Independent Education Union of Australia NSW/ACT Branch Secretary Carol Matthews.

Under the Modern Award, an experienced teacher in a long day care centre is currently paid \$93,000 a year. The new top rate after the 15% increase will be more than \$107,000. It is a vital step towards closing the gender pay gap.

“The education and care of our youngest children is important and indispensable work,” Matthews said. “These long overdue increases better reflect the valuable work of early childhood teachers in laying the vital foundations for our children’s development and lifelong learning.”

The pay rises will help address critical teacher shortages in long day care centres across the country.

In August the federal Labor government announced a \$3.6 billion funding injection to provide for the pay rises, and centres are subject to a cap on fee increases of 4.4% to receive the funding.

The IEU, which represents early childhood teachers in NSW and the ACT, joined with the United Workers Union (UWU) and the Australian Education Union (AEU) to access the supported bargaining stream under new industrial relations laws passed as part of the *Secure Jobs Better Pay Act 2022*.

“This new agreement is a big shift but work still needs to be done,” Matthews said. “The gap in pay and conditions between many teachers in the early childhood sector and those in schools is still too big. Teachers are teachers no matter the age of their students, and we will keep fighting until there is equity between teachers in the early childhood education and care sector and those in schools.”

In [another announcement today](#), teachers and educators at the nation’s largest provider of long day care services, Goodstart Early Learning, have voted on a separate enterprise agreement with the 15% pay rises that will also be funded under the new arrangements.

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

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