

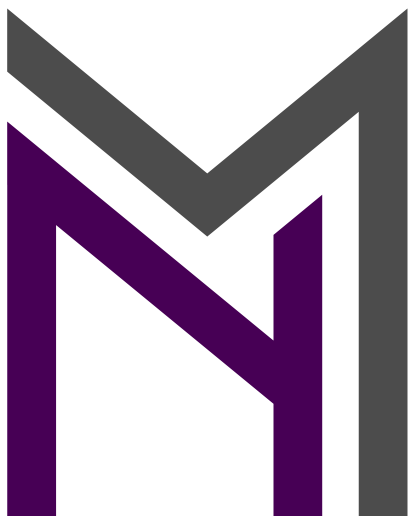
In 2024, the IEU recouped \$2.3 million in underpayments for members



# news month

The newspaper of the Independent Education Union of Australia NSW/ACT Branch  
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## Catholic systemic schools Making progress on new enterprise agreements

Carol Matthews  
Secretary



The IEU has been bargaining since October 2024 for new enterprise agreements (EAs) applying to teachers and general employees in the 10 NSW and ACT Catholic dioceses.

Catholic Schools Parramatta Dioceses (CSPD) is bargaining with the other employers but for a separate EA that the union expects will generally reflect the main EA.

Broken Bay has its own EA and Work Practices Agreement (WPA) finalised in 2024.

As at the time of writing, there are still key issues outstanding. The IEU hopes to be able to resolve those, but we have not done so yet.

### Pay increases for NSW employees

For teachers and support staff employed in NSW Catholic schools, dioceses have agreed to match pay rises received by teachers and support staff employed in NSW government schools:

- NSW teachers: 3% pay rise in each of October 2024, October 2025 and October 2026
- NSW support staff: 4% pay rise backdated to July 2024; 3% pay rise in each of July 2025 and July 2026 with a possible additional increase described as a COLA (a one-off payment or cost of living allowance) in the second and third year if the Sydney Consumer Price Index exceeds a particular rate.

### Pay increases for ACT employees

ACT teachers: The current EA provides rates in line with those applying to teachers in ACT government schools, although the increases are scheduled slightly differently. The EA contains an increase of about 3% in August 2025. Catholic Education Canberra Goulburn has asked the IEU to agree now to increases for teachers in 2026 and 2027. We have not agreed to this because we are concerned these increases may be lower than those that may be negotiated next year for teachers in ACT Government schools.

ACT support staff: In line with current practice, Catholic Education Canberra Goulburn is offering the same pay rises as have been offered for support staff in NSW Catholic schools.

### Reducing workloads

The IEU Council (comprising 130 members) has identified key workload pressures for teachers:

- out-of-hours work (both scheduled events and professional duties related to classroom teaching)
- diverse student needs
- data collection and compliance
- meetings and professional development
- extras in secondary schools
- class sizes.

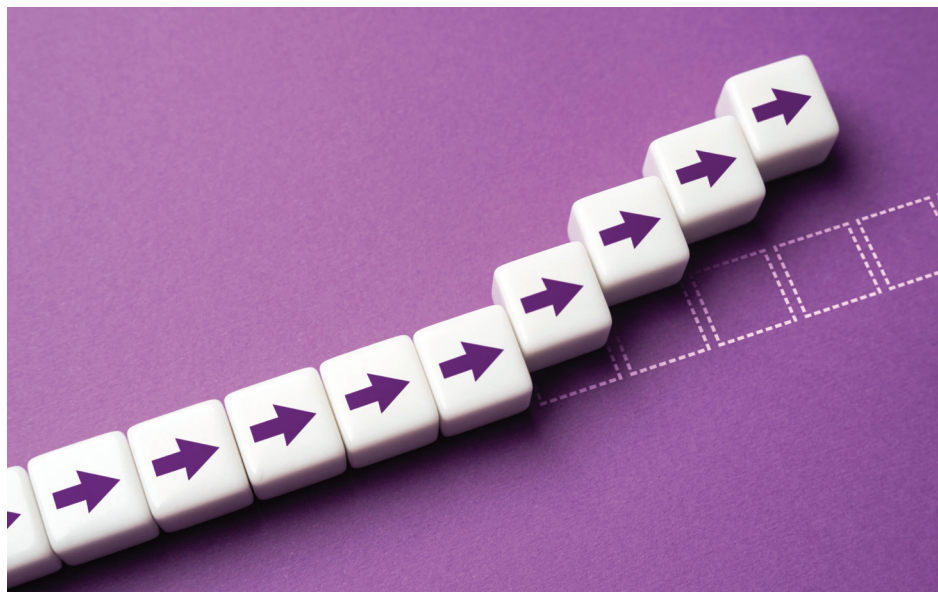
IEU officers continue to meet directly with dioceses to discuss how these workload pressures can be addressed.

### Matching workload measures in NSW government schools

The IEU has also sought to match workload improvements for teachers equivalent to the 2024 NSW government school settlement. The union is seeking that:

- briefings (and any other before and/or after school meetings) should be included within the 10 hours of meetings per term; and
- at least 50 per cent of the time of eight pupil-free days provided from 2025 to 2027 are to be teacher directed (that is, used by teachers for their own planning or collaborative planning or preparation, as a form of additional release).

Despite extensive negotiations, the IEU has not received a satisfactory response to these claims. Your union will be raising these matters directly with chapters in schools and asking members to show support for our claims. We are stronger together.



## Union claims and employer responses

### IEU key claims

**Pay increases:** No less than the increases applying to employees in NSW and ACT government schools.

**Release:** An additional two hours release from face-to-face teaching for teachers and additional release for teachers who hold coordinator and leadership positions

### Improved parental leave, including:

- superannuation on paid parental leave (that is, leave paid by the employer)
- the partner to be able to take paid parental leave within two years of birth rather than 12 months
- Catholic Education Canberra & Goulburn's more generous parental leave policy (up to 24 weeks of paid maternity leave) to be included in EA

### Other claims

Improved long service leave and personal/carer's leave for general employees

Strengthened email clauses to reflect the new right to disconnect

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural and ceremonial leave

Delegates' rights clause in EA

Measures to reduce workload

### Bargaining outcome

**Agreed,** except negotiations are continuing for ACT teachers

**Rejected:** The IEU is still pressing for increased release by direct discussions with dioceses but we acknowledge there has been no equivalent reduction in face-to-face teaching hours in government schools.

• **Agreed**

• **Agreed**

• CE Canberra & Goulburn has **not agreed** to include the policy in the EA

**Rejected**

Under discussion

**Agreed in principle**

**Agreed in principle**

Discussions are taking place directly with dioceses

## NSW Christian schools: Moving forward on new agreements

More than 17 months after previous multi-enterprise agreements (MEAs) for Christian schools in NSW expired, the IEU is still pushing for fairer pay and improved working conditions for teachers and support staff in the 40 schools represented by Christian Schools Australia (CSA).

### Fighting for fair pay for teachers

Bargaining was suspended in 2024 after CSA made an inadequate offer for teachers' pay – an offer that fell considerably behind the unprecedented pay increases awarded to teachers in government and Catholic schools in October 2023. IEU members in Christian schools demanded fair pay.

Since bargaining resumed in 2025, the union has secured some movement towards fairer pay for teachers.

With a proposed expiry date of 31 March 2027 for the new MEA, the proposed teacher salary increases are:

- February 2024: 7%
- October 2024: 4%
- October 2025: 3.5%
- October 2026: 1.5%
- February 2027: 1.5%

In addition to the 17.5% pay increases, the IEU successfully secured a commitment from CSA for staff to transition from the current 13-step pay scale to a more streamlined 7-step classification structure from 1 July 2026.

This will bring them in line with NSW government schools and enable teachers to reach the top of the scale faster. Alongside

this change, pay rates will be adjusted to ensure ongoing competitiveness with other education sectors.

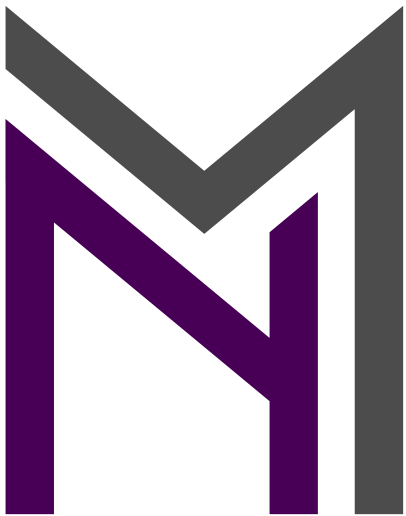
### Wage justice for support staff

The union has also made progress for a new support staff MEA. An in-principle agreement has been reached with pay increases of:

- February 2024: 4%
- February 2025: 4%
- February 2026: 4%

Continued on page 5





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## Join us



## Follow us



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



“There is no trade union without workers, and there are no free workers without trade unions.”

– Pope Francis

The IEU was saddened by the passing of His Holiness Pope Francis on 21 April. We extend our heartfelt condolences to all our Catholic members who are mourning his loss. His legacy of compassion and social justice will inspire generations. May he rest in peace.

# UNION WIN

## IEU member wins appeal to gain flexible work

**An IEU member has won an appeal in the Fair Work Commission (FWC) over a flexible work application.**

After a period of parental leave, an IEU member had asked to return to her Religious Education Coordinator role three days a week on a temporary basis because of her childcare arrangements.

The employer refused this request and advised the member that, if she wished to work part-time, she could only return to a part-time teacher role. The member challenged this decision by taking the matter to the FWC with the support of the IEU.

In February 2025, a FWC Commissioner upheld the employer's refusal of the flexible work arrangement request based on reasonable business grounds. The IEU appealed this decision to the Full Bench of the FWC.

On 22 April 2025, the Full Bench overturned the earlier decision of the single Commissioner on the basis that the employer had not considered the consequences for the employee of refusing her request as required in the Fair Work Act section 65A(3)(c).

The Full Bench ordered that the member's employer was therefore not entitled to refuse her request for a flexible work arrangement.

IEUA NSW/ACT Branch Secretary Carol Matthews said: “This decision makes clear that the employer must properly consider the impact on employees, predominantly women, in refusing an application for flexible work.

“This decision will provide greater protection for all employees who apply for flexible work arrangements, including those in leadership roles.”

## Relax, recharge, return to the classroom

Glenn Lowe  
President



**With Term 2 beginning, it's hard to believe how quickly the year is progressing.**

It almost feels like we're already at the end of Term 3, with the challenges we've faced, and the hard work we've all put in. But here we are, and congratulations to everyone for making it through.

Now, after hopefully enjoying some well-deserved downtime, it's important to reflect on some of the things we've accomplished.

For those in the early childhood education and care sector, the federal government has

been proactive, scrapping the punitive parental 'activity test' in favour of a three-day-a-week guarantee for most families (excluding those with a combined income above \$530,000).

In its March budget, the federal government also committed to better funding of government schools. The IEU supports a fully funded government school sector.

And, for our members in the Illawarra and South Coast regions, the IEU has opened a new office in Wollongong (see page 3, opposite).

Whether it's gaining better resources, improving professional development, or securing more time for teachers to focus on what truly matters – providing quality education and care for students – each of these

accomplishments is worth celebrating. And having hopefully just had that well-deserved break, it's crucial we all recognise our new right to disconnect.

Education takes a lot of energy, patience, and perseverance. It's easy to get caught up in the hustle and bustle, but it's essential to step back and spend quality time with loved ones.

Whether you caught up with family and friends or enjoyed a quiet moment to yourself over the Easter break, your relaxation needs to be a priority to recharge your batteries and prevent burnout. This means you can bring your very best to the classroom.

## Actions speak louder on workloads

Liz Heggart

Vice President Systemic



**As we come to the start of yet another busy term, I find myself wondering how much longer we can keep this up. There is simply just too much to do.**

All around me, teachers and support staff are drowning in work. Whether they're beginning teachers or they've been teaching for decades, the situation is the same.

And our employers' reluctance to meaningfully address these issues by increasing release time in our Work Practices Agreements, for example, is worrying.

While we gained strong pay rises in Catholic schools in 2023 (not without a fight, mind you) we're still having trouble getting meaningful action on workloads, and staff are at breaking point.

In this last term alone, I've had several members ask me to check their loads as it feels like they are over the permitted amount, but in most cases they were either on or slightly under. Yet this has meant multiple days of no breaks and on the one day these members finally had some planning time, they were usually given a lesson to cover because they were “under load”.

School holidays, especially around Easter (one of the most important times in the Catholic calendar), should be a time for teachers and support staff to rest, recharge, and take a well-earned break after a demanding term so they can enjoy precious time with loved ones.

However, the reality for many school staff is that it's far from restful. Increasing workloads, administrative demands, and the need to plan for the upcoming term often consume much of the break.

Instead of switching off, teachers find themselves catching up on marking, refining lesson plans, preparing resources – and fitting in moments with family only if they're lucky. The holiday becomes less about recovery and more about managing the relentless pressure.

We still have a teacher shortage, and support staff have often been required to fill gaps in supervision for sport and other duties. Where they once had this time away from classrooms and students to complete their admin work, some are now having to work over their contracted hours to get it done.

Under the enterprise agreement, support staff should not be required to perform supervision in addition to their normal duties; rather, it should be in substitution of other duties. If staff are working extra hours, they should be paid for the additional hours worked beyond their paid hours.

Many of the 11 Catholic dioceses in NSW and the ACT have a consistent message in their staff wellbeing policies: that while staff face increasing demands, their wellbeing, and particularly sustainable workloads, are a recognised and valued priority.

We call on our employers to deliver concrete ways for easing workloads, such as reducing the number of face-to-face teaching hours per week, reducing meeting and briefing times, and addressing additional administrative demands for learning support students. Actions speak louder than words.



# Union Town

## Welcoming our new Wollongong office



From left, CEDoW's Natasha O'Donoghue, IEUA Assistant Federal Secretary Veronica Yewdall, and IEUA NSW/ACT Branch Deputy Secretary David Towson at the opening.



The IEU's new Wollongong office is open for business.



IEUA NSW/ACT Branch President Glenn Lowe, centre, and Secretary Carol Matthews, in black, open the new Wollongong office.



Representatives from Teachers Health with IEU organiser Tina Smith, right.

### David Towson

Deputy Secretary



**The IEU officially opened its sixth NSW/ACT office on 10 April at 1 Lowden Square, Wollongong, on Dharawal Country. It's just a one-minute walk from Wollongong station.**

Branch Secretary Carol Matthews welcomed the 30 or so guests, including IEU reps and members, current and former members of the IEU Executive and current and former IEU staff.

South Coast Labour Council Secretary Arthur Morris joined us, along with our partners from NGS and Teachers Health, representatives from the Catholic Education Diocese of Wollongong (CEDoW) and colleagues from other unions, including the MUA and the Teachers Federation.

Carol acknowledged the strength of the South Coast Sub Branch and said setting up an office in Wollongong would deepen the IEU's connection to the Illawarra region.

IEU organisers Tina Smith and Emily Cranney expressed their happiness at being able to work closer to members and workplaces in the region and, of course, closer to their homes.

IEU President Glenn Lowe toasted the new office's opening, noting it was only proper for the IEU to have an office in the centre of Wollongong, also known as "Union Town".

He also acknowledged the IEU's productive relationship with CEDoW.

Head of CEDoW HR Natasha O'Donoghue congratulated the IEU on the office opening and said she looked forward to shared hosting of regular IEU/CEDoW meetings at each organisation's premises.

These meetings are held once per term – they follow the South Coast Sub Branch meetings and provide an opportunity for IEU organisers and reps to discuss and resolve workplace issues with the employer.

#### New neighbours

The NSW Teachers Federation, the Australian Services Union and the South Coast Labour Council all have offices in the same building as our new office, which also includes a training room.

The building also houses the recently opened Wollongong Health Centre operated by Teachers Health, with dental and optical appointments available to fund members (Teachers

Health also provides health centres in Surry Hills, Parramatta and Hamilton).

Teachers Health is a not-for-profit, award-winning community health fund set up by the Teachers Federation in 1954 – the same year the IEU's predecessor union, the Assistant Masters' Association, was formed.

All IEU members can join Teachers Health.

#### Two strong sub branches

The IEU's South Coast Sub Branch and the Hunter Valley Sub Branch are the IEU's largest in terms of numbers.

The South Coast Sub Branch includes workplaces in the Illawarra region as well as the Macarthur region and in the Southern Highlands. The southern-most school in the sub branch is in Milton, with early childhood centres further south in Ulladulla.

If you're an IEU member in the Wollongong area, don't be shy about ringing the bell to have a look at the new office and meet your local organisers. If they're not out visiting schools, you'll receive a warm welcome.

And stay tuned for our next edition of *Newsmonth* to meet some of our great reps from the Illawarra and South Coast regions.

## Independent schools: Guide to navigating your new MEAs

### Amanda Hioe

Assistant Secretary



**With new agreements now approved for members in independent schools, here's a guide to ensure you're being paid correctly.**

The *Independent Schools (Teachers) Cooperative Multi-Enterprise Agreement 2025* ('Teachers MEA'), the *Independent Schools NSW Professional and Operational Staff Cooperative Multi-Enterprise Agreement 2025* ('PAOS NSW MEA'), and the *Independent Schools ACT Professional and Operational Staff Cooperative Multi-Enterprise Agreement 2025* ('PAOS ACT MEA') have been approved by the Fair Work Commission.

For teachers and professional and operational staff in NSW independent schools, these new MEAs will introduce new classification structures. If you are an existing employee, you will need to 'translocate' to the new classification structure, meaning you will transition from your current classification to the equivalent one in the new structure.

This guide will help you navigate the translocation arrangements under the new MEA classification structures.

#### Step 1: Is your school covered by the MEA?

Start by checking whether your school is covered by the relevant Teachers MEA or PAOS

NSW MEA. You can find the full list of schools and employers covered in Schedule 6 of the Teachers MEA and PAOS NSW MEA.

#### Step 2: Were you employed before, on or after 1 January 2025?

If you began employment *before* 1 January 2025, you need to translocate to the new classification. Proceed to **Step 3**.

If you commenced employment at any of the listed schools *after* 1 January 2025, you will be classified according to the new classification structure. How to find your new classification details:

#### Teachers

NSW: Refer to clauses 7.2 to 7.4 in the Teachers MEA.

ACT: Refer to clauses 7.5 to 7.7 in the Teachers MEA.

#### PAOS NSW

Refer to Schedule 2 of the PAOS NSW MEA.

#### Step 3: What industrial instrument applied to you before 1 January 2025?

You will need to identify which industrial instrument (eg an enterprise agreement, multi-enterprise agreement, or modern award) applied to you before 1 January 2025. If you are unsure, contact your union organiser.

#### Teachers

The translocation arrangements are outlined in Schedule 1A of the Teachers MEA, in Tables 1 to 8.

Most of you may be transitioning from the *Independent Schools NSW/ACT Standards Model (Teachers) Multi-Enterprise Agreement 2021* or the *Independent Schools NSW Teachers (Hybrid Model) Multi-Enterprise Agreement 2021*. Teachers moving from these instruments can find their translocation in Tables 1, 2, or 3.

#### PAOS NSW

Translocation arrangements for PAOS NSW staff are provided in Schedule 4 of the PAOS NSW MEA. As with teachers, specific tables apply depending on the instrument that was in place before the PAOS NSW MEA.

#### Step 4: Know your current classification

**Teachers:** To proceed with your translocation, you will need to gather the following key information:

**Current classification:** Know your current classification under the previous industrial instrument. If you're unsure, you may be able to find this on your payslip or by asking your employer.

#### Teacher Accreditation or Registration

**Status:** Have you achieved Proficient Teacher accreditation or registration?

**Teaching experience:** Determine the amount of teaching experience you have, measured in Full-Time Equivalent (FTE). This will play a crucial role in your reclassification.

Refer to Clause 7.9 of the Teachers MEA for details on which service counts towards your teaching experience.

#### PAOS NSW

For PAOS NSW staff, the only required information is your current classification.

You can then consult the relevant tables in Schedule 4 to determine your corresponding classification in the new structure under the PAOS NSW MEA.

With these steps, you'll be able to ensure how you will translocate to the new classification structure.

If you have any questions or need further assistance, don't hesitate to reach out to your union organiser. We are stronger together.

*See also:* High levels of membership vital for strong results, page 9.





National Tertiary  
Education Union  
Let's aim higher



## MEDIA RELEASE

### Education Unions Join Against Dutton's Attacks On Teachers

Thursday 3 April 2025

The Australian Education Union (AEU), National Tertiary Education Union (NTEU), and Independent Education Union (IEU) have joined together against Opposition Leader Peter Dutton's claims of indoctrination in education and his attacks on the teaching profession.

With more than 285,000 members between them from early childhood, school, TAFE and university, the unions are calling on Peter Dutton and Coalition members to end the vilification of education and research workers and the teaching profession.

Across the nation, the teaching profession is giving 100% every day to ensure that every student has access to a high quality education and they need the full support of our communities to do their jobs well. This political interference would not

# Education unions unite to condemn attacks on teachers

**The IEU has joined other education unions to demand politicians stop attacking the teaching profession as part of divisive so-called culture wars.**

At the start of the federal election campaign, the IEU, the Australian Education Union and the National Tertiary Education Union issued a joint media statement calling on politicians to respect the nation's qualified, professional teaching workforce.

#### Countering culture wars

With a collective total of more than 285,000 members from the early childhood, school, TAFE and university sectors, the unions called on Peter Dutton and the Coalition to end the vilification of education, research and the teaching profession.

"This political interference would not be accepted in any other occupation and it will not be accepted by teachers," the unions said in their joint statement.

IEUA Federal Secretary Brad Hayes said the challenges in education require a professional dialogue free from partisan attacks and teacher bashing.

"Peter Dutton seems intent on igniting ugly cultural wars for political reasons, at the cost of well-considered education policies," he said.

#### Criticising the curriculum

In April, the Opposition Leader said federal education funding could be withheld or reallocated from schools and universities to curb "woke" curriculums.

This is the very same curriculum that was reviewed, endorsed and implemented in April 2022 by the then Coalition government, in which Dutton was a senior minister.

He has also raised the spectre of job cuts to the federal Education Department, telling a live election forum it employed "thousands and

thousands of people in Canberra" even though the federal government "doesn't own or run a school".

#### Politicians pile on

The Opposition Leader is not alone in teacher bashing.

Former state MP Nathaniel Smith was named Liberal candidate for the seat of Whitlam despite once claiming school students were being "brainwashed" by Marxist and woke ideologies.

He replaced Benjamin Britton who was dumped as the Liberal candidate after his controversial views were revealed including that the education system was "indoctrinating" young Australians about Marxist ideologies.

Likewise, Pauline Hanson's One Nation claimed the education system was controlled by "the extremist left, causing brainwashing and exposure to extremist views".

Billionaire Clive Palmer's Trumpet of Patriots party claimed schools were pushing a "far-left, woke ideology".

#### Defending the department

Hayes said positive changes to the education system that are under way require adequate resourcing for schools and the federal Education Department overseeing the reforms.

"Undermining the department responsible for the programs on which schools, teachers and students depend undermines the whole education system," he said.

"The Department of Education has the main responsibility for delivering funding to non-government schools – it equates to 80 per cent of total school funding to the sector.

"The families, students and staff in these schools would be big losers if the department was to be cut back."

# Non-compete clauses Union welcomes proposed ban

**The IEU welcomes laws proposed in this year's federal budget to make it easier for low-paid workers, including early childhood education and care teachers and educators, construction workers and hairdressers, to switch jobs.**

The federal Labor government wants to ban non-compete clauses for employees earning less than \$175,000 a year.

#### Clauses create a trap

Non-compete clauses are hidden in the contracts of about 20 per cent of Australian workers. The use of non-competes by business has increased over the past five years.

These clauses trap workers in jobs they want to leave, stalling wages and career growth.

"These clauses simply handcuff low-paid

workers to their jobs, stopping them from seeking better jobs," *Sydney Morning Herald* economics writer Millie Muroi wrote.

A non-compete clause is generally not enforceable unless a court rules it is "reasonably required" to protect a "legitimate interest".

#### Threat of litigation

However, many workers lack the bargaining power to challenge the legality of a non-compete clause, as former Fair Work Commission president Iain Ross pointed out in *Non-compete clauses in employment contracts: The case for regulatory response*.

"For many employees, the mere threat of litigation is enough to secure compliance, irrespective of the enforceability of the non-compete," he said.

Ross said many countries impose restrictions on the use of non-compete clauses.

"The research literature suggests that non-competes are associated with reduced employee mobility, with consequential negative impacts on wages and productivity," he said.

#### Freedom to find a new job

The proposed reform will allow millions of workers to seek better-paying jobs without the threat of being sued by their old employers.

The Productivity Commission estimates a ban on non-compete clauses will add \$5 billion to the economy, with other modelling suggesting it will add as much as \$2500 a year to an individual's wages.

## IEU SPEAKS

### Stop political attacks on education

IEU members and our entire school communities rightly expect all of our politicians to focus on delivering a world-class education system. However, the public debate before the election descended into teacher bashing and the lazy politics of education blame games.

Echoing the Trump administration's moves in the US, the Coalition threatened to sack thousands of federal Department of Education staff, claimed students were being 'indoctrinated' and flagged that a Coalition government would take back control of what teachers teach.

The complex challenges in schools and early childhood education require an expert, professional dialogue free from partisan attacks.

Sadly, public comments designed to ignite ugly culture wars for political benefit, come at the expense of well-considered education policies.

#### Cutting education funding or jobs is simplistic and short-sighted

The idea that thousands of jobs could be cut from the Education Department without impacting school operations is fanciful.

While the IEU does not represent staff in the Education Department, their work has a direct impact on the operation of non-government schools and early childhood education.

The department oversees \$19.1 billion of funding to non-government schools throughout Australia every year.

Targeted support measures to tackle student disadvantage, academic outcomes and wellbeing are the core principles of government programs such as the Better and Fairer Schools Agreement.

For the first time, the department is applying work impact tests to all Better and Fairer Schools reforms and has been collaborating with the IEU to find new ways to clarify and reduce teacher workload. (See also Change without the churn: national Teacher Workload Impact Assessment tool, *IE* magazine, pages 18-21, packaged with this edition of *Newsmonth*.)

There is much to do to repair the education system. Positive changes will require adequate staffing and resourcing not only in schools, but also in the department overseeing and funding the reforms.

#### Teachers are not political punching bags

The Coalition's proposed takeover of the school curriculum is yet another attack on the autonomy and judgment of the teaching profession.

It was an unwelcome return to the dark days of teacher bashing.

Rather than focusing on unfounded claims of 'indoctrination' in universities and schools, politicians of all stripes should be talking with the profession about how we can better support graduate teachers as they begin their teaching career.

Governments should be focused on how they can help to attract, support and retain our next generation of teachers.

These are the discussions that need to happen, not unnecessary and inflammatory distractions.

**Brad Hayes** Federal Secretary



Continued from page 1

## NSW Christian schools Moving forward on new agreements

However, CSA is now seeking to align the duration of the proposed support staff MEA with that of the teachers' MEA – that is, with expiry in March 2027.

The IEU is therefore also seeking a pay increase for February 2027. The pay offer from CSA is still pending.

### Passing the BOOT test

In reviewing pay offers and resulting pay rates, the IEU conducts a comprehensive comparison between the proposed new rates of pay against the relevant modern award. The Fair Work Commission (FWC) also conducts its own thorough assessment. This is an important step in making any enterprise agreement.

Under the *Fair Work Act* an enterprise agreement will only be approved if it passes the better off overall test (known as the BOOT).

The FWC will only approve the enterprise agreement if it is satisfied that employees are better off overall compared with their entitlements under the applicable award.

### Other improvements

Through bargaining, the IEU has also secured better working conditions.

A key win is the significant improvements to the New Parent Bonus, which will increase to 26 weeks by 1 July 2026. This entitlement will be available to both teachers and support staff.

Additionally, two weeks of paid parental leave will be available for non-primary carers. This will no longer be deducted from the employee's personal/carer's leave entitlements.

For support staff, the amount of personal/carer's leave will increase from 10 days to 15 days per year.

### ACT Christian schools

The union hopes to make the same positive progress for staff in ACT Christian schools represented by CSA as we have for NSW schools, but bargaining is yet to recommence.

Uncertainty surrounding the governance of Brindabella Christian College (see this page), which is one of the schools covered by the proposed MEA, has led to delays in bargaining.

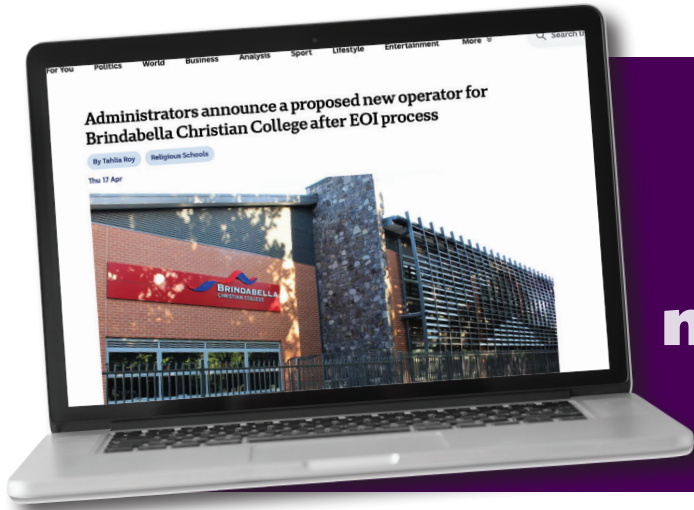
### Staying strong

The IEU's strength at the bargaining table is directly linked to the membership numbers we have in schools. The more members in each school, the louder our collective voice.

If you know someone who isn't yet a member of the IEU, now's the time to encourage them to join.

Together, we win fairer pay and better conditions for all.

Amanda Hioe Assistant Secretary



### The administrators of Brindabella Christian College have selected a preferred new operator for the troubled school, one month after it was placed into voluntary administration owing millions of dollars.

Christian Community Ministries (CCM) was chosen to take over the school pending public consultation following the closure of one of Brindabella's two campuses at the end of Term 1.

The 41 primary school students and five teachers at the Charnwood campus have been relocated to the school's Lyneham campus ahead of a longer-term decision.

CCM operates 14 colleges and early learning centres in Queensland, WA, SA and NSW.

### New laws to stabilise school

CCM was chosen after the ACT government passed new laws limiting the public consultation process from 60 days to a shorter period to expedite a change of ownership and ensure stability.

"Observing this full 60-day period would likely mean the school's finances are exhausted, resulting in closure of the school and a significant negative impact on the students, staff and families of this school community," ACT Deputy Chief Minister Yvette Berry said.

"I have said many times throughout this process that I don't want to see this school close – that's why we are taking this action."

The Deloitte administrators said on 17 April they would consult with the school community, including teachers and parents, and that the public consultation process would continue until 7 May.

"The administrators welcome the opportunity to further engage with parents, students, teachers, and other stakeholders about what this change will mean for them, and to receive any questions or feedback," they said.

### Pay staff accurately and on time

Brindabella was placed into voluntary administration in March after the union took it to the Fair Work Commission (FWC) over unpaid wages and superannuation.

Staff at Brindabella were not paid for almost two weeks until administrators were appointed to take over the running of the school.

The union has met with administrators to advocate for members at Brindabella who had been underpaid.

## Brindabella Christian College Administrators name new operator, close one campus

"Our message remains the same: pay staff accurately and on time," said IEUA NSW/ACT Branch Secretary Carol Matthews. "We will not hesitate to hold employers to account in the media and the Fair Work Commission."

Brindabella owes millions of dollars to about 200 creditors, including school camp operators, current and former staff, as well as \$8 million to the Australian Taxation Office, as reported by *The Canberra Times* in April.

Brindabella has also previously been investigated over a series of governance and financial breaches.

Matthews said the union welcomed action to stabilise the school's finances and ensure its future.

"We need the uncertainty over the school's future to end as quickly as possible so staff can fully focus on teaching and supporting students – and not worry about whether they will be able to pay their bills," she said.

### Restore certainty and trust

CCM chief executive John Lyndon said the organisation's priority is to restore certainty and trust at Brindabella.

"To the staff, students and families of BCC, please be assured that CCM has a strong commitment to Christian education where students develop spiritually, intellectually, socially, ethically, and physically," he said.

"We are equally as committed to providing the stability, financial resources and good governance needed to support the entire BCC community in the years ahead."

### No need to discriminate

In 2022, schools operated by CCM were accused of exposing students to potential discrimination after enrolment forms required families to support beliefs that denounced homosexuality and diverse gender identity.

"Schools of faith can continue to thrive without the need to discriminate," Matthews said. "School employers have nothing to fear from modern community standards."

Matthews said the union was monitoring the situation at Brindabella closely and advocating for the rights of members.

### Administration period extended

The administrators successfully applied to the Federal Court to extend the period of voluntary administration to 3 August.

## New Seventh-day Adventist deal Some gains, several shortfalls

### Teachers in schools operated by the North NSW Conference of the Seventh-day Adventist Church have voted to accept a new enterprise agreement that includes good gains but several disappointments.

#### On the upside

The new enterprise agreement (EA) will see more than 360 teachers move to a seven-step salary scale that aligns classifications and rates of pay with teachers in government schools and Catholic systemic schools.

The agreement also provides improved parental leave of 14 weeks for the non-initial primary carer on similar terms to the Catholic systemic agreements and the new multi-enterprise agreements in independent schools.

It also provides for a new monetary allowance for attendance at overnight camps and excursions.

#### Reluctant acceptance

Despite good increases to teacher rates of pay and improvements to parental leave, the new EA falls short in various other aspects, including:

- inequitable translocation to the new pay scale for existing employees to acknowledge their teaching service
- no improved access to long service leave and pro rata payment after five years
- lack of clarity around teacher workload requirements
- no improvements to release time
- lack of back pay of pay increase to the start of the 2025 school year, and
- no reinstatement of the Seventh-day Adventist 1.5% premium on wage rates.

As a result, the IEU could not recommend this agreement to our members.

However, many teachers told us they felt they had no alternative but to accept the proposed agreement, as they were already disadvantaged financially by the delayed pay increases. The employer stood firm on not providing increases until the EA was approved.

#### Light on horizon

Although workload issues have not been addressed in this EA, the employer has agreed to continue addressing concerns around work expectations, scheduled teaching hours and meeting times through policy and guidelines developed by engaging with staff and the union.

The new agreement has been submitted to the Fair Work Commission for approval.

Negotiations for a new agreement for support and operational staff will continue in Term 2.

Carolyn Moore Industrial Officer

## High levels of membership vital for strong results

Helen Templeton  
Vice President Non Systemic



### The importance of a strong and united membership cannot be overstated.

The IEU's success in winning significant improvements in new multi-enterprise agreements covering staff in independent schools is built on the collective strength of its members.

The union gained strong pay increases over the life of the agreements and greater workload transparency. Member engagement, workplace meetings and a clear and unified voice

are central to these wins. It is vital this momentum continues.

We need to celebrate our win and prepare to be in a stronger bargaining position when these agreements are renegotiated in less than three years' time.

High membership density directly correlates with increased bargaining power. As we stated in a media release: "Strong membership sends a clear message to employers: we are united, we are organised, and we expect fair and just outcomes."

### Employer resistance

Reps and members in some independent schools have reported increasing employer resistance to workload protections and pay.

To counter this, a strong and growing membership base is essential. It empowers the IEU to advocate more effectively, take coordinated action when necessary and secure outcomes that benefit all school staff.

With the conclusion of work on the AIS MEA, attention is now focused on negotiations for NSW and ACT Christian schools.

Now is the time for members in all sectors to remain active and for non-members to join.

The strength of the IEU lies in its people – standing together ensures a fairer future for all.

See also: Guide to navigating your new MEAs, page 3.





**The day is an initiative of Education International, the global federation of more than 370 education unions, including the IEU.**

Everything that happens in our schools that enables teachers to teach and students to learn starts with support staff.

From providing tech support to managing school finances and keeping our libraries running, support staff are vital to school communities.

“You’re the backbone of every school,” said IEU Deputy President Denise McHugh.

On 16 May, we urge everyone to say a big thank you to all support staff across NSW and the ACT for their incredible work.

### Thank you to support staff in our schools

Members offered messages of appreciation for support staff in their schools at the March meeting of the IEU Council.

“I’d like to give a big shout out this World Support Staff Day to all the Aboriginal education officers, all the IT workers, all the learning support assistants, all the grounds and maintenance staff. We couldn’t do our work without you.” – **Alex Thompson, rep at Canberra Grammar School.**

“Happy World Support Staff Day, particularly to those great people who are support staff in Brindabella Christian College.” – **Andrew Dane, Vice President ACT.**

“Happy Support Staff Day everyone, especially those at Penola. We can’t do our work as teachers without you. You are invaluable to us, so we hope you feel valued. Have a great day.” – **Liz Heggart, Vice President Systemic.**

“We can’t actually do the job without any of you. You are the integral backbone of our schools. So, thank you very much, especially to the Learning Support team at St Francis.” – **Jacob Betts, rep at St Francis Xavier College, Florey, ACT, and member of the IEU Executive.**

“A big shout out to St Carthage’s, to all the support staff at our school. You are wonderful.” – **Jennifer Allen, rep at St Carthage’s Primary School, Lismore.**

“Happy World Support Staff Day to our wonderful people at St Francis Xavier Primary School. You’re awesome.” – **Kath Egan, rep at St Francis Xavier Primary School, Ballina.**

“Thank you to all support staff at St Clare’s College at Waverley. You do an amazing job and keep us all running so smoothly.” – **Louise Armstrong, rep at St Clare’s College, Waverley.**

“Thank you to all of my support staff colleagues at Presbyterian Ladies College. Thank you for all the help that you give us each and every day. You’re wonderful.” – **Michelle Mella, rep at Presbyterian Ladies College, Croydon, and member of the IEU Executive.**

“Happy World Support Staff Day, but especially to my colleagues at Catherine McAuley College in Medowie. We love you and the place couldn’t run without you.” – **Sarah Gardiner, Religious Education Coordinator at Catherine McAuley College, Medowie, member of the IEU Executive.**

“Thank you to all the support staff in all our schools around Australia, but an even bigger shout out to all the Maitland-Newcastle support staff. You’re all gems and no schools can work without you. We love you.” – **Steven Newman, Hunter Valley Sub Branch Council member.**

**World Support Staff Day**

World Support Staff Day on Friday 16 May is an important day to recognise and celebrate our invaluable colleagues.



**The IEU continued its long tradition of joining the Palm Sunday rally and march for peace. The theme of this year’s event was ‘Educate for Peace’.**

Organisers called for humanitarian refugee policies and an independent foreign policy that promotes peace, not war.

Year 11 coordinator and teacher at St Scholastica’s College in Glebe, Quenten Watson, was one of the IEU members who attended the rally in Sydney’s Belmore Park on 13 April.

The event began with a reminder of the biblical underpinnings of Palm Sunday – Jesus’s triumphant arrival in Jerusalem – and this resonated strongly with Quenten.

He said the idea of hospitality and extending a hand to those in need was still relevant today.

Quenten echoed the sentiments expressed by speakers at the rally who said people fleeing war and violence in their home countries should be shown compassion and offered support when they arrive as asylum seekers.

The IEU has proudly supported the annual Palm Sunday rally for more than 40 years. Members know quality education requires communities that are peaceful and prosperous for everyone.

As a union committed to social justice, we advocate for policies that uphold the human rights of everyone.

The IEU recognises the fundamental right to education, and the right to live free from fear and conflict.

## Study abroad NSW Premier’s Teacher Scholarships

**The IEU encourages members to apply for a NSW Premier’s Teacher Scholarship to complete a study tour in Australia or overseas.**

Applications are open until 30 May for the scholarships, which offer \$15,000 for a five-week study tour.

The prizes are open to permanent and temporary teachers in NSW government and non-government schools, TAFE NSW campuses and early childhood education and care services.

Winners will undertake a study tour of up to five weeks between 1 January and 30 June 2026, and report back on their research within 90 days of completing their study tour.

Teachers can use their scholarship for a range of activities such as formal study or visiting sites, schools and institutions to conduct interviews, observe exemplary practices and collect resources for the preparation of teaching materials.

We particularly encourage members in early childhood education and services to apply for the Premier’s Early Childhood Australia Education Scholarship.

The scholarship, valued at \$15,000, is for study in any aspect of early childhood education, which may include children up to eight years of age.

IEU member Alex Sutherland, a teacher at The Discovery Garden Early Education, Care and Preschool in Floraville, won the ECEC Scholarship in 2023 to learn about the ‘Original Learning Approach’ developed by Swedish education consultant Suzanne Axelsson.

The scholarship funded Alex’s visit to the United Kingdom and Sweden in 2024 to research how the approach can be used by educators in Australia to understand the importance of play in children’s learning, including physically risky activities.

“Reflecting on this idea within my practice, I thought, ‘It’s about having a deep respect for children by honouring their right to play and trusting in their self-directed play’,” Alex told Bedrock magazine last year.

**Find out more and apply:** [bit.ly/4cw8cSl](https://bit.ly/4cw8cSl)



# IEU Executive

## A farewell and a warm welcome

**At the IEU Council meeting on 22 March, we thanked and farewelled a member of our Executive and welcomed two newly elected members (who are filling casual vacancies).**

The IEU 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 in the day-to-day running of the union, and negotiate with employers for pay and conditions in enterprise agreements for members.

The Executive also includes honorary positions, including the President, who chairs quarterly 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. For full list, see page 19.

### Anna Luedi

**Primary school teacher Anna Luedi steps down from the Branch Executive after six years of being a strong voice for young women within the union.**

Anna Luedi was first elected to the union's Executive in 2019 to fill a casual vacancy with the encouragement of her organiser.

"As we know with so many things, that personal conversation really was a big driver for me," she said. "I stood because I wanted to provide a voice for young female teachers on the Executive."

Twice re-elected, Anna said her six-year stint was also a way to boost the presence of the Northern Suburbs Sub Branch at Council. The IEU Council meets four times a year and includes about 130 members elected from the union's 20 sub branches.

"I think it's important for everyone to remain very engaged and informed about the bigger picture of education," she said.

Anna teaches Year 3 students at Villa Maria Catholic Primary School in Hunters Hill, where she is also the Religious Education Coordinator.

One of Anna's fondest memories was speaking in front of hundreds of IEU members at a rally at Town Hall during the "Hear our Voice" campaign for better pay and conditions in 2022.

Anna said she felt a bit nervous before the full-day stop work, especially as she did not have much time to prepare her speech.

"I just wrote it the night before and then I tried to rehearse it on the way there in the taxi," she said. "My mum came along, and she was listening and giving me feedback."

Anna said she had been inspired by women such as former Branch President Tina Ruello during her tenure as an elected member of the Executive.

The election of Carol Matthews as the first woman Secretary to lead the NSW/ACT Branch was "really beautiful", she said.

#### Collective action

A proud unionist, Anna emphasises the vital role of union members in achieving better pay and conditions.

"Every time we get a pay increase, maternity leave, lunch breaks, anything that is good, is because of collective action through our union," she said.

"It's not because our employers feel generous one day and just want to give us a little treat."

Anna also said the union is a powerful advocate for members

during difficult times, providing advice and a voice for those unable to assert their rights.

The rules governing the teaching profession are complex and Anna said it is not necessarily easy for some teachers to understand complicated enterprise agreements or work practices agreements.

"If you're not aware of the rights you have, how can you even enforce them, and how can you fight for better conditions?" she said.

Soon after her election in 2019, Anna told *Newsmonth* how heavy workloads were having a "massive impact" on teachers' wellbeing.

"The class sizes in Catholic schools are large, the learners' needs are diverse, the support for these learners is not consistent and the meetings related to data, programming and individual education plans are ever increasing," she said.

Anna said these issues remain a challenge.

"Workload is a huge issue for us in primary schools at the moment," she said. "Reducing class sizes would be immensely helpful, especially in infants grades which are really very large."

She also said the imposition of accountability measures on teachers in a bid to improve students' results ended up robbing them of time to develop lessons.

#### Teacher and traveller

Anna grew up in Munich, Germany, but on a visit to Australia as a teenager she met a young man who would later become her husband.

"I fell in love, and so I decided to become an international student at the Australian Catholic University," she said.

Anna initially wanted to be a marine biologist, but decided she could make a greater impact in education.

"I thought being a teacher would allow me to really influence the next generation by trying to teach them well and prepare them to fix the problems we have in the world," she said.

Outside of work, Anna is a passionate traveller and lover of the outdoors – both pastimes she hopes to continue after she gives birth to her first child in June.

"I'm determined to continue travelling, and my child can just hop along for the ride because I'm not stopping," she said.



### Jacob Betts

St Francis Xavier College, Florey, ACT



**Jacob Betts was elected to the IEU Executive at the union's quarterly Council meeting of about 130 members on 22 March.**

"I come from a very strong, union-based family," Jacob said. His father, Neville Betts, was an Assistant Secretary of the Electrical Trades Union for more than 30 years before he passed away in 2021.

"A lot of people came up to me at his funeral and said how much he had meant to them and

how much he had helped them," Jacob said. "Seeing how appreciative people were of him really opened my eyes. And while it was nice to see and hear the accolades for him, it also encouraged me to start doing more union stuff."

At the urging of his IEU organiser, Jacob became a rep at his school, St Francis Xavier College in Florey, ACT. "Then over time it just sort of evolved, and I became the main delegate at my school, then that evolved into joining Council and now on to the Executive," he said.

Jacob is hopeful about the future of teaching. "I want to see a profession that's more respected in the community," he said.

"A lot of people I talk to really support teaching, but it doesn't necessarily *feel* supported, and a lot of that comes down to the issues we're facing – the heavy workloads and the red tape we have with admin work."

Jacob finds it frustrating that not enough young people are joining the teaching profession. He'd like to be part of changing that.

"I hope that in the next 10 years, we'll have a profession that many people are trying to get into, that we'll have many people who want to do this really great job," he said.

### Michelle Mella

Presbyterian Ladies College, Croydon

**Michelle Mella was elected to the IEU Executive at the union's quarterly Council meeting of about 130 members on 22 March.**

"In an era with increasing political division and polarising views, we need to hold on to our union values – we stand for the collective and collective gains, for freedom of association and freedom of assembly," Michelle said.

"And we need to preserve these things, and the best way to do that is to grow our membership."

Michelle believes the independent school sector offers great potential for union growth.

"That's the sector I come from, and I'm very happy to remind teachers in my sector of the ideological and practical benefits of joining the union," she said.

"I talk to them about what the union can do for people on an individual level and also collectively."

Michelle believes not only in retaining the recent strong gains from the "Now's the Time" campaign, but also growing and strengthening for greater gains to come.

"I talk to colleagues not just about what the union achieved in the past but also what we're seeking to do in the future," she said.



Michelle sees the IEU's quarterly Council meetings, which are held on a Saturday so as many members as possible can attend, not as an imposition but an opportunity.

"I appreciate everything that unions have done in this country to secure living wages and decent working conditions," she said. "This is a legacy we don't want to squander."





# FOUR CORNERS EXPOSÉ

## Union calls for action on rogue childcare operators

**The IEU is calling for urgent reforms to the early childhood education sector after shocking revelations emerged from an ABC investigation, writes Andrew Taylor.**

The IEU has led calls for action to stamp out ruthless operators in the early childhood education and care sector following revelations of regulatory failings and the abuse of children in several centres.

An ABC Four Corners investigation in March exposed a flawed, inconsistent regulatory system for centres with allegations of mistreatment and exploitation of children.

The show found evidence of some centres seeking to boost profits by serving children nutritionally substandard meals, underpaying teachers and educators and hiring unqualified staff.

It was subsequently reported that some of the largest for-profit childcare operators were named in regulatory documents detailing hundreds of incidents of abuse of young children and, in some instances, inappropriate sexual behaviour.



### Union calls for action

The union, which represents teachers in the long day care sector and community preschools, is appalled and saddened by the reports of unacceptable treatment of young children in some for-profit centres.

"We share the anger and disappointment of parents whose children have been harmed by a sector in systemic crisis through the failings of some for-profit childcare centres," said IEUA NSW/ACT Branch Secretary Carol Matthews.

"Children should never be the victims of cost-cutting by private equity and other for-profit players to boost profits and shareholder returns."

The union's Council, comprising more than 130 members, passed two motions in March demanding action from politicians in the wake of the Four Corners investigation.

The first motion called on the federal government to withdraw access to the Child Care Subsidy (CCS) for services that repeatedly breach national regulations and any centre posing a genuine risk to children. It also called for greater funding for not-for-profit services.

The second motion expressed support for a parliamentary inquiry into the early learning system, and particularly into for-profit providers, as well as the pay and conditions of the workforce.

"The business model of for-profit childcare providers needs reform – the focus on profits rather than high-quality education and care is behind the serious safety breaches uncovered by Four Corners," Matthews said.

The union has repeatedly raised issues that impact the early childhood sector such as ongoing teacher shortages leading to inadequate staffing ratios.

### IEU backs NSW parliamentary inquiry

The union welcomes the establishment of a NSW Upper House inquiry into the childcare sector following the Four Corners revelations of serious safety breaches.

Submissions to the inquiry are open until the end of May and hearings are scheduled for later this year in Sydney and regional NSW.

The inquiry will be chaired by Upper House Greens MP Abigail Boyd who told the ABC she wants to uncover the "real reasons" behind the alarming rise in harmful incidents in early childhood education and care centres and "take decisive action to clean up this sector".

"The safety of our children and workers is non-negotiable," she said.

The Four Corners exposé of shonky for-profit providers also prompted calls for action from federal politicians.

Prime Minister Anthony Albanese said there needs to be an investigation and action taken if standards are not met but ruled out a royal commission into the sector.

Federal Early Childhood Education Minister Dr Anne Aly said the states were responsible for ensuring services comply with the National Quality Framework, including safety, security and child health measures.

### Calls for national body

Victorian Greens Senator Steph Hodgins-May in March called for an early childhood education and care commission with the power to crack down on rogue operators and shut down unsafe centres.

"The for-profit childcare sector is a playground for cowboy operators who are profiteering off our children," she said.

Teal MP Zoe Daniel backed calls for a commission to determine a national approach to regulatory standards and weed out "unscrupulous operators".

"It is reprehensible that some operators are putting profits ahead of children's safety and wellbeing," she said.

Daniel said Australia's current early childhood funding model had facilitated the rapid expansion of for-profit providers, who now operate more than 70 per cent of all childcare services.

### Quality concerns

Data from Australia's childcare regulator shows for-profit childcare services are, on average, rated as lower quality than not-for-profit centres.

The Australian Competition and Consumer Commission in 2023 found large for-profit providers spend far less on staffing than not-for-profit providers.

Large for-profit childcare companies have a higher proportion of part-time and casual staff and employ less experienced early childhood teachers.

Many for-profit childcare companies also have high numbers of staffing waivers granted by regulators, which permit them to operate centres without the required number of qualified staff.

Unpublished research by Macquarie University social policy professor Gabrielle Meagher last year found more than one-third of staff in for-profit services were not qualified.

The Parenthood chief executive Georgie Dent said funding the sector through the CCS is "effectively a blank cheque for unscrupulous providers who choose to profit at the expense of quality education and care of children".

"By moving to a fixed fee model where parents pay no more than \$10 a day, we can ensure early childhood education and care is affordable for families, address excess profits and drive quality," she said.

### What research reveals

Research led by University of Queensland professor Karen Thorpe found there was a greater likelihood of cutting corners – no cleaners, teacher-student ratios exceeded – in centres located in low-income areas where the capacity to charge parents is constrained.

"I am not sure there is a systemic crisis but there is much to improve upon in assessment and rating and monitoring," Professor Thorpe said.

The Productivity Commission last year noted many services assessed as "meeting" the national standards had a gap of more than four years between assessments – services with lower ratings are reassessed more frequently.

"This may be a matter of resourcing to regulatory authorities but there is also a need for a more efficient and educator friendly, collaborative system of assessment and rating and monitoring to support quality improvement," Professor Thorpe said.

"There are elements in the NQS [National Quality Standards] that are not predictive of child outcomes and yet staff morale, turnover and general wellbeing is missing."

Professor Thorpe said educators are at the heart of quality in the sector.

"Reasonable pay and conditions are a baseline for quality," she said. "Turnover and poor wellbeing limit potential for high quality."

"Most educators love their work despite poor pay. They want to do a good job but when they are treated poorly and given external pressures to perform that does not benefit children – or educators."



### Reversing the staffing crisis

The long day care sector has struggled with an acute staffing crisis due to low pay. But unions and the federal government have worked together to attract and retain the right staff through 15% pay rises for teachers and educators over 2024 and 2025 (for more information, see page 9, opposite).

The regulator also needs to ensure that all centres meet the accreditation standards required by the law and expected by parents. Highly qualified staff are crucial.

The union is also pursuing pay rises for teachers in community preschools, where there is a similar staffing crisis. These teachers have the same qualifications as their colleagues in schools but are paid substantially less. We are fighting to change that.

"The wellbeing of children should never be sacrificed for the sake of profit," Matthews said.



# Unite for change Preschool pay push continues



**In mid 2024, the IEU launched our “Unite for change” campaign to improve pay and conditions for teachers in community preschools.**

Members are united for change: 103 preschool services in NSW are part of this pay rise claim and a new multi-enterprise agreement.

These preschools are working together to seek stronger outcomes. The Fair Work Commission (FWC) is supporting the negotiation process between employers, unions and the NSW government.

## What do we want?

1. Overarching equity and parity with NSW government preschools and schools.
2. Pay: substantial wage rises to secure parity with teachers and educators in school settings.
3. Conditions and rights at work: substantial improvements to better support preschool teachers and educators by providing equity with school settings. Key issues include more

non-contact time, professional development, parental leave, personal leave and delegate rights.

The union is calling for pay rises and other costs associated with the claim to be fully funded by the NSW government.

## What's the latest?

On 26 March, FWC Deputy President Judith Wright presided over a meeting that included the IEU bargaining team, representatives from Community Early Learning Australia (the peak body representing employers) and officials from the NSW government.

Unfortunately, the NSW government has not committed to providing any additional funding to the preschool sector.

This news was very disappointing.

But Deputy President Wright made it clear to the government officials there are critical funding issues they need to address.

She asked the officials to return to the FWC

and provide further information, including the 'Start Strong' funding policies and guidelines that determine how funding can be spent.

IEU member ambassadors were asked to demonstrate, through their preschool's budgets, where funding is allocated.

This evidence will support the union's claim that current funding does not allow for wage increases without increasing fees for parents – and this undermines the government's own policy on universal access to early learning.

## The fight goes on

Rest assured, the IEU is continuing this fight for better pay and conditions for teachers and educators in community preschools.

In recent weeks, we've met with Greens MP Abigail Boyd, Labor MP Anthony D'Adam, National Party leader Dugald Saunders, Deputy Leader of the NSW Opposition Sarah Mitchell, and Labor MLC Emily Suvaal to brief them on our campaign for funded wage increases for staff in community preschools.

We return to the FWC on 30 April (This is after *Newsmonth* went to press – if you're a member in this sector, check your email for updates.)

## What you can do

We urge our preschool members to join the campaign. There is real strength in numbers.

Meet with your local NSW MP and invite them to visit your service. Showcase the work you do and tell them why you deserve equity and parity with your colleagues in NSW government preschools and schools.

Your union organiser can provide speaking notes and flyers to support you in communicating with parents and MPs.

If a politician visits your centre, let us know – and don't forget to send us photos so we can share them on social media.

## Stay tuned

The union will host a series of online meetings to update you on the campaign – check your email for details or contact your ECEC organiser.

## Professional engagement Have your say in the syllabus



**NESA regularly asks the IEU to recommend teachers to join technical advisory groups as well as syllabus and support material writing committees.**

These committees are valuable opportunities for union members to provide real-world classroom experience and advocate for the interests of teachers.

This helps to ensure any changes to the syllabus consider teacher and support staff workloads.

If you are interested in joining one of these committees, please talk to your organiser and keep an eye on our social media and website.

## Professional development

More than 300 members have participated in the first two courses presented by Professor Jim Tognolini from the University of Sydney's Centre for Educational Measurement and Assessment (CEMA).

The final two courses in the suite are:

## Achieving fairness and validity in assessments

Monday 16 June 2025, 3.30 pm–5.30 pm

## Achieving consistent and comparable judgements across the school

Monday 23 June 2025, 3.30 pm–5.30 pm

**Find out more and register:** [ieu.asn.au/events/](http://ieu.asn.au/events/)

For our members in the ACT, these courses are TQJ accredited. The courses also provide two hours of professional development for NSW teachers maintaining their accreditation at Proficient or above.

**Pat Devery** Professional Engagement Coordinator

## Long day care teachers and educators

Join the new agreement for a

# 15%

pay rise

**Unions, the federal Labor government and employers have worked together to make a new multi-enterprise agreement with 15% pay rises funded by the government.**

Is your centre part of this historic deal? It's not too late.

If your centre joins the new agreement, you'll get:

- a 10% pay increase backdated to 2 December 2024 (if your centre joins by 30 June 2025)
- another 5% increase from 1 December 2025
- improved pay progression for Provisionally Accredited Teachers
- paid release to mentor early career teachers, and
- paid leave to attend union training.

**Find out how we can help you get a 15% pay rise.**

Call the IEU on 8202 8900 or email [ecwcp@ieu.asn.au](mailto:ecwcp@ieu.asn.au)



## Scan to find out more



# SPOTLIGHT ON REPS

IEU reps share how they’re building strong chapters. Strong chapters make for a strong union and therefore greater bargaining power for all members.

## Siobhan Ni Mheachair

Our Lady of the Sacred Heart  
Catholic Primary School, Randwick

**Siobhan Ni Mheachair wants to empower fellow union members at Our Lady of the Sacred Heart Catholic Primary School in Randwick to exercise their right to switch off and say no.**

“My passion really is to help younger teachers understand that it’s within their rights to set certain boundaries around workload and expectations,” she said. “Know what’s OK and just give people a voice.”

As her school’s ICT/Science and Technology Coordinator, Siobhan said there had been a dramatic increase in teachers’ workload during her two decades of teaching in Australia.

She said she is fortunate to work in a school with good leadership but workload and managing parents’ expectations were challenges.

As a rep, Siobhan said she hopes to be the “voice of experience” to assist members “just to know what to say yes and no to, so they can have some work-life balance”.

This year marks Siobhan’s 30th year as a teacher, and she has been a member of the IEU since she began her teaching career in Australia.

Siobhan was previously a union member in Ireland, where she said there is a strong culture

among teachers of unionism and fighting for rights.

“I’ve always grown up with the belief that joining a union is how we make the world a better place for everyone who is working,” she said.

“I’m interested in ensuring everyone knows their rights and gets a fair go.”

Siobhan first came to Australia as a backpacker, returning in 2003 to teach at Christ the King Primary School in North Rocks before landing a job at her current school, “and I’ve been there ever since”.

Siobhan had assisted the previous rep at her school so when she retired and the position came up, she said: “I gladly put my hand up.”



## Michael Faccin

Santa Sophia Catholic  
College, Gables

**Michael Faccin believes supporting and mentoring new teachers is an important part of his role as rep at Santa Sophia Catholic College in Gables, north-western Sydney.**

“I see a lot of people who burn out and have left teaching,” he said.

A PDHPE teacher, Michael wants to assist members to navigate the education system and manage their workloads.

Michael brings to the role a wealth of experience in understanding rights and obligations under workplace agreements from his previous job as a swimming coach employed by a local council.

Michael has been a union member “pretty much” since the start of his teaching career at Santa Sophia in 2013, just one year after the school opened.

“We were all part of the union and wanted to get a chapter up and running because there was an enterprise agreement being discussed at the time,” he said.

The school grew exponentially in the next three years, Michael said. “I was one of the original staff members who everyone came to for advice about how things work.”

A former long-distance swimmer, Michael is father to two children aged one and three.

“I used to be involved in quite a lot of sport, but [now] it’s looking after kids and living the life of a young family,” he said.



## Adrian Brombal

Marist College, Eastwood

**Adrian Brombal has a simple message for employers.**

“If teachers do not have work-life balance, they’re going to struggle to do their job effectively,” he said.

“First and foremost, it’s a social profession. You need to be a human being, so I think it’s really important that we have balanced lives to be effective classroom teachers and role models.”

Assisting fellow union members to deal with workload pressures at Marist College in Eastwood is one of the tasks Adrian has set himself as a new rep.

An “old boy”, Adrian started his teaching career at Marist College before taking a break to travel overseas.

He worked at another school before returning to his alma mater in 2018 where he is now in a leadership position as Leader of Learning – HSIE.

Outside of school, Adrian can often be found on the sidelines of the Alexandria basketball

stadium as a coach with City of Sydney Basketball Association.

“What’s drawn me to the union and essentially this role is just about having a really positive working environment where everyone’s happy to come to work and make an impact within the community,” he said.

“I know that teachers are really dedicated people, and if we’ve got great and fair working conditions then we are going to make greater connections with our students who are going to be the recipients of fresh-faced teaching, and they will flourish.”



## Angelique Ockert

Tara Anglican School for Girls,  
North Parramatta

**Angelique Ockert teaches English at Tara Anglican School for Girls in North Parramatta, where she’s also the rep.**

An IEU member for several years, Angelique took part in reps training in late 2024, so she could build the union presence at her school.

“Some of the other members thought I’d be good at this role, because I’m organised and I’m an open communicator and willing to push boundaries,” Angelique said.

“So I stepped in and thought I’d try, and I’m still learning. I’m still on my journey.”

Angelique and other members at her school were part of the successful Now’s the Time campaign for pay rises for teachers and professional staff in independent schools.

She said she especially values greater clarity around working conditions through school-based standards, which were a big breakthrough in the new multi-enterprise agreements covering 240 schools, including hers.

“We really need these published in an easy-to-locate spot, so teachers can make informed decisions about their work and lives,” she said.

Angelique keeps in touch with members at her school by email and in person through chapter meetings.

“We have two meetings per term with our IEU organiser so members can ask any complex questions they have, and we can all share information,” she said.

But that’s not all. Angelique keeps members informed through a union noticeboard and she hosts union morning teas to invite and encourage potential members to join.

“I try to create an environment where the union is just part of our professional discussion,” she said.

“I really do believe that it’s important for us as a profession, as a collective and as a community that we support each other.

“It’s important that we’re at the table and our voices are heard when it comes to deciding what our workloads look like.

“Because at the end of the day, it’s not just about the teachers but also the students – happy, well-treated staff deliver the best for our students, who are the future.”



## Caroline Brehaut

Redlands School, Cremorne

**Caroline Brehaut teaches Latin at Redlands School in Cremorne to students from Years 7 to 12.**

“I really like the kids and I like my colleagues, they’re fantastic,” said Caroline, who has been an IEU member since 2006 when she started teaching.

But workloads are a big issue, as they are for teachers across all sectors. Caroline worries that heavy workloads leave her colleagues feeling they don’t have time for union activism.

So after the previous rep went on leave and a younger colleague “picked things up and got people into meetings” but didn’t want to be the full-time rep, Caroline seized the day.

“I was like, OK – that’s my chance, here I am, I’m ready, I can do it,” she said.

With the Now’s the Time campaign for pay rises for teachers and professional staff in 240 independent schools in full swing in late 2024, Caroline was keen to see employers provide transparency around face-to-face teaching hours. This became a big win in the campaign.

“I want our staff to have clear, accurate information, so they can make decisions based on that information,” she said.

“And through our new multi-enterprise agreement, we are now embedding into it that employers have to be clear and transparent

about the hours expected.

“The result of not being transparent is exploitation, and it’s just not OK.”

Caroline knows there’s real strength in numbers. “I want to build union membership at the school so we can actively represent the staff,” she said.

While Caroline makes use of her rights as a union rep to email current and potential members, she also knows the power of conversations with colleagues.

“I’ve been literally spending hours visiting departments and talking to people in person, which has been great,” she said.

More staff are joining, and a committee has formed. “And they’ve been fantastic in hitting the pavement too and talking to people and reminding them that pay rises come through the work of union members – not the employer just deciding to give us a raise,” she said.

“Every right that we have as workers was fought for by a union.”



### Reps training

**Whether you’re a newly elected rep or you’d like a refresher, the IEU provides full training for reps in NSW and the ACT throughout the year.**

So far this year more than 160 reps have undertaken our comprehensive, full-day training. We explore the various instruments that underpin your rights and responsibilities in the workplace, and offer strategies for organising your chapter and supporting members.

Upcoming sessions include: Albury on Friday 23 May; Dubbo on Friday 30 May; and Lismore on Friday 6 June.

More details and how to register: see page 14 and our website: [ieu.asn.au/events/#training](https://ieu.asn.au/events/#training)



# Grace Siciliano

Clancy Catholic College,  
West Hoxton

Grace Siciliano continues a family tradition as the new union rep at Clancy Catholic College in West Hoxton.

“My dad was a union rep back in the day on the factory floor,” she said. “Trade unionism is very much in the genes.”

Grace teaches “a bit of everything” – HSIE, religion and Italian – at Clancy Catholic College in West Hoxton. “A triple threat – as the kids say,” she said.

An IEU member since she started teaching almost 20 years ago, Grace became a rep to support the school’s existing “great” rep.

“It’s also a good way to help younger staff – it’s easier to have that relationship where they know you are there to help them.”

Grace said it was important to stay vigilant about hard-won pay and conditions.

“We’re very lucky to have a good working environment in our school,” she said. “But things may also change. You may not always have the same boss.”

She said “workload creep” and maintaining work/life balance was a perennial challenge.

“Because the school is generally a good place to work, people are really happy to put their

hand up,” she said.

“But you say yes to one thing, two things, 10 things and before you know it it’s snowballed without you realising it.”

Grace likened the union to a community that provides its members with a “support network”.

“If your staffroom is collegial, that’s great – but not every workplace is like that,” she said. “It really is about having that support and someone you can turn to for advice.”

Outside of school, Grace can often be found in the kitchen “cooking and baking and all those sorts of things, when I get the time to do it”.

She is a member of a cookbook club with fellow teachers who meet regularly to sample each other’s dishes. Their latest culinary creations draw on recipes from Julia Busuttill Nishimura’s Good Cooking Every Day.

“I just made a tomato galette and a maple vinegar chicken,” she said. “As much as we love to read, we love to eat more.”



# April Lindsay

Wycliffe Christian School,  
Warrimoo

April Lindsay has been an IEU member since she began teaching music at Wycliffe Christian School in the Blue Mountains four years ago.

April said many colleagues who she respected were members of the union and “I figured it was somewhere I wanted to be, and it was probably doing good things”.

She was encouraged by the school’s former rep who thought she would be “a good fit” for the role.

“She felt that being a union rep is largely a pastoral and caring role,” she said. “It’s largely about walking alongside people when things are challenging or not going as smoothly as they could be.”

April said she felt “so much more comfortable” in the role after attending one of the union’s training sessions for reps.

“If someone had come to me a week ago, I would have been floundering a little bit, but now I understand the scope of what I’m doing,” she said. “I feel a lot more confident to do the job.”

April hopes to boost the presence of the union in the school, which she said has a “decent number” of members. “But I’d love it to be even more and to have a strong chapter and for people to understand the union is there for support.”

One the challenges for teachers at her school is working out what is required as part of their job and “what it is that’s nice for them to do”, April said.

Outside of the classroom, April can be found in the kitchen trying out new dishes from the bestselling Recipe Tin Eats cookbook *Dinner* “at least once a week to get some new, more interesting meals under my belt”.

She is also obsessed by *The New York Times’* puzzles, wordles and crosswords: “I have the app and I pay for a subscription so I can access the back catalogue of crosswords.”



# Burns McLean

Central Coast Adventist  
School, Erina

Burns McLean has long been a teacher his younger colleagues turn to for advice, so becoming a rep for the IEU was a natural next step.

“I guess I’m at the stage of my career where younger staff quite often will talk to me about stuff that’s bothering them,” Burns said.

“That’s been the case for the last maybe 10 years or so.”

A maths and science teacher at Central Coast Adventist School in Erina, Burns said he will continue to offer advice and support as the school’s new rep.

“The expectations may be a little more formal now,” he said.

“But as far as you know, trying to negotiate with people and looking for good outcomes and just sort of helping people where you can, it’s sort of more of the same”.

When Burns talks to his colleagues about joining the union, he tells them to check out

the IEU’s website and consider what the union stands for.

Burns points to the strong stances the IEU has taken on social justice issues such as gender equality and refugee rights.

“It’s very rare to find a teacher that will look at that sort of thing and go, that’s not for me,” he said.

One of the reasons Burns attended a reps’ training session in February was to “get some advice” on managing upcoming enterprise agreement negotiations.

Burns said he would like to see recognition that teachers at his school are performing extra tasks that those in a government school may not be required to do.



# Natalie White

St Luke’s Grammar  
School, Bayview

Natalie White jokes that she put her hand up to be the new rep at her school after “giving in to peer pressure”.

A Year 4 teacher at St Luke’s Grammar School in Bayview on Sydney’s northern beaches, Natalie hopes to increase union membership at the school by sharing what she has learned at reps training.

She also wants to remind colleagues about the benefits of joining the IEU “and get that union noticeboard refreshed”.

“Our school is lovely,” she said. “We have amazing leadership but it’s about being together with other schools – and making sure everyone has a voice.”

Natalie has been an IEU member since moving from the Education Department to St Luke’s three years ago.

Natalie said union membership makes a real difference to teachers’ working lives.

“I believe we should be backing each other,” she said. “And voices together in a group are stronger.”

She said maintaining work/life balance is one of the challenges in her workplace.

“You want to give it your all, but you’ve also got to realise when to stop,” she said. “Work smarter, not harder.”

Outside of work, Natalie is busy with a new addition to her family – a German shepherd named Bella – “and just getting her acclimatised to us”.

“I spend a lot of time being an Uber driver for my kids and driving them to kids’ sport,” she added.

Driving her children to soccer and basketball is a labour of love for Natalie.

“You’re in a different headspace and it’s not about school,” she said.



It takes two

# Brid Bowers and Joanne Gavros

St Charles Catholic Primary School, Ryde

“We’d do a good job together,” Joanne Gavros nonchalantly said to Brid Bowers recently – and thus a great co-rep partnership was born at St Charles Catholic Primary School, Ryde.

When the previous rep retired, Brid (pictured left) and Joanne took up the opportunity.

“We have two different roles, which means we can see lots of different people on staff,” Brid said.

Joanne is a teacher-librarian, with classes four days a week and literacy support on the other day.

Brid is a reading recovery teacher. It’s her final year in this role, and she expresses sadness that support for vulnerable students appears to be in decline.

Both have been IEU members for over 25 years.

“I haven’t really needed to use the services of the IEU, but I still

value the benefit of it,” Joanne said. “I became a rep because I know the value of what has come before me.”

Brid adds: “It was always nice to know someone’s there to support you if you need it.”

In turn, Joanne and Brid are keen to support their colleagues.

“It’s really important to educate the younger teachers,” Joanne said, “so they know that all the benefits in place have happened because of the IEU ...”

“... And because of those who’ve come before them,” Brid added. “Both of us speak about that.”

Brid and Joanne came to the IEU’s Sydney office for training in February.

“We want to educate ourselves and our staff about their rights and their responsibilities as well,” Brid said.

And both are keen to learn strategies for building the chapter at their school. They also have their sights set on nearby school Our Lady Queen of Peace in Gladesville – the principal of St Charles is the executive principal of both schools.

“That school doesn’t have a rep, so we’re thinking, since our principal is calling it our ‘precinct school’, and we’re doing a lot more together, perhaps we can go into that space as well and help out,” Joanne said.

“Or at least give union flyers and be the point of contact for them.”

Both Joanne and Brid are hopeful about the year ahead. “I’m looking forward to this role, and just being a different face,” Joanne said.

“As an experienced teacher, I know there are a lot of younger teachers who need support.

“Parents can be an issue. While the school supports us, and the executive are great, we are just at the coal face with younger teachers.

“We can talk to them about the issues with children and parents and how we can support them with our experience and wisdom.”



# PRINCIPALS UNDER PRESSURE

In the Australian Catholic University's latest survey of Australia's principals, released on 31 March, school leaders report escalating anxiety and depression resulting from high levels of physical violence, threats, and bullying.

Despite this toll on their health and wellbeing, principals also reported strong job satisfaction and their commitment to their work remained high.

As the IEU negotiates new agreements for Catholic systemic principals, concrete measures for safer workplaces and sustainable workloads are front and centre.

## Wellbeing at heart of EA negotiations

Lyn Caton

Assistant Secretary



**As negotiations begin for renewal of the three Catholic systemic principal enterprise agreements across NSW and the ACT, the IEU is putting the health and wellbeing of principals front and centre.**

Over recent months, the union has conducted extensive consultations with principals and diocesan representatives. These meetings have revealed a troubling picture of the pressures school leaders face – pressures that only intensify with each passing year.

From escalating workloads to staff welfare issues, verbal threats and physical violence, the working conditions of Catholic systemic principals have reached a crisis point.

Informed by direct feedback and the latest data, the IEU is crafting a comprehensive log of claims to address these issues in the upcoming round of bargaining.

### ACU survey confirms crisis

The 2025 Australian Principal Occupational Health, Safety and Wellbeing Survey, released by the Australian Catholic University (ACU), has confirmed what many principals have been voicing for years: their professional commitment is being tested by unsustainable conditions.

According to the report, 54.5 per cent of school leaders reported threats of violence in 2024 – the highest level since the

survey began in 2011. Nearly half (49.6 per cent) experienced physical violence, with 95.5 per cent of that abuse coming from students. Meanwhile, cyberbullying from parents or caregivers has reached an alarming 87.6 per cent.

Even more disturbing is the revelation that 45 per cent of principals triggered a “red flag” alert, indicating serious risks to their health and wellbeing, including self-harm and significant impacts on quality of life.

While the survey found that job satisfaction among many school leaders remains high, those with low satisfaction reported much higher levels of anxiety and depression, with 82.3 per cent expressing an intention to quit – a figure that could signal a looming leadership crisis in schools.

### Action and advocacy

The union has already begun advocacy at both the systemic and individual diocesan level to ensure these issues are not only acknowledged but acted upon.

We're organising meetings with directors across dioceses to pursue matters that sit outside the scope of enterprise agreements but are nevertheless critical.

Principals are being asked to absorb the stress and trauma of entire school communities.

Key areas for advocacy include:

- reducing excessive workloads by cutting administrative burdens
- introducing alternate leadership models such as co-principalship

- prioritising wellbeing support services
- implementing stronger safeguards against parent and student aggression, and
- securing dedicated time for professional reflection and development.

The union is also pushing for greater government and employer accountability, echoing the ACU report's recommendation for urgent systemic reform.

### What comes next

The IEU will advocate tirelessly for principals throughout this negotiation period, ensuring their voices are not only heard but lead the conversation about leadership in Catholic education.

The data is stark, but the message from our members is clear: they love their schools, they are committed to their communities, but they must have more support. Our claim will reflect that urgency.

In the weeks ahead, members will be invited to provide further feedback during negotiations to strengthen the union's case.

This is not just about better conditions – it's about ensuring a sustainable future for principals and the broader school communities that rely on them.

### Tell us your story

Contact Principals' Organiser Lyn Caton: [lyn@ieu.asn.au](mailto:lyn@ieu.asn.au)

## Dialling down the stress

Denise McHugh

Deputy President



**School principals in Australia have a massive job. Not only do they oversee students' progress and safety, but they are also responsible for the performance of staff and wellbeing of everyone at their school.**

### High levels of stress

This year's Principal Wellbeing Survey found principals are stressed by their job and subject to regular abuse – often from parents. High numbers of principals are thinking about quitting.

Excessive workload, staffing challenges and red tape are major causes of stress. Managing student behaviour, dealing with aggressive parents, and resolving conflicts adds to the pressure. Many principals also report experiencing threats, abuse and even physical violence.

The survey also found principals report higher stress, burnout and emotional exhaustion compared to the general working population. Many are also at a greater risk of serious health issues due to prolonged stress.

On top of this, critical incidents in schools have increased – including violence and security threats, and suicide and suicidal threats.

“I do love what I do however, it is a seriously difficult role and only getting harder. I am only 59, but another two years and I am out of here, I can't continue due to the ridiculous workload and pressure.”

– **High school principal**

Schools are often not safe for principals. An increasing number of principals report being subject to offensive behaviours that are unacceptable in any workplace – let alone one that involves children and young people.

More than half those surveyed reported being subjected to threats of violence, gossip and cyberbullying. This is mostly coming from parents and caregivers.

“The major cause of distress are parents. Parents behave in an unreasonable manner, have ridiculous expectations and think that because they went to school, they can therefore run a school. Principals are constantly defending staff from parents.”

– **School principal**

### Systemic changes

What can be done to help? The demands on today's school principals are significant – the work takes an emotional toll.

Addressing high stress levels requires systemic changes, workplace support and professional development.

Here are some key strategies:

- reduce paperwork and compliance requirements to free up principals for leadership and student-focused work.
- provide more support staff, such as business managers, to handle operational duties.
- increase the number of deputy principals and administrative staff to share the workload.
- ensure adequate resources for student and teacher wellbeing programs.
- facilitate mentorship and peer groups where principals can share experiences and advice.
- enforce stricter policies against parent and student aggression toward school leaders.
- equip principals with de-escalation skills.
- set realistic expectations around working hours and after-hours availability, and
- adjust pay scales to reflect the increasing demands of the role.

At the end of the day, principals need to feel supported. Employers need to have their backs.

The IEU supports our principal members and we are prioritising your health and wellbeing in current negotiations for principals in Catholic systemic schools.

## IEU SPEAKS

### Pleas for support must be heard

**The annual study of school principal health, safety and wellbeing has once again highlighted the need for urgent action to better support school leaders dealing with escalating workload pressures and health and safety threats in schools.**

The Australian Catholic University (ACU) study included 2182 principals from across the Catholic, independent and state school sectors. The survey confirmed worsening staff shortages – with over 50 per cent of principals intending to resign due to adverse working conditions.

Pleas from school leaders for greater support and resourcing should be a top order issue for all politicians.

The ACU study and media reports confirm the disturbing experiences of many IEU members striving to teach and lead under workload pressures and threats to their health and safety.

Half of principals reported threats of physical violence. Rates of depression and work-related anxiety suffered by principals well exceed rates in the general population and other occupations.

The survey found school leaders work on average 54.5 hours per week, with the highest workloads reported in Catholic and independent schools.

A female Catholic school principal shared this telling response to the survey: “The workload, expectations and stress levels of the principal job are becoming unsustainable across the board. Something has to change or the system will fall over.”

The study calls on governments and school employers to address the heavy workloads that are the key driver behind work-related stress and career burnout.

### Our teachers and principals deserve no less

While school employers have the ultimate responsibility to reduce workload, the next federal government must also commit to the deep and widespread reform program needed in schools:

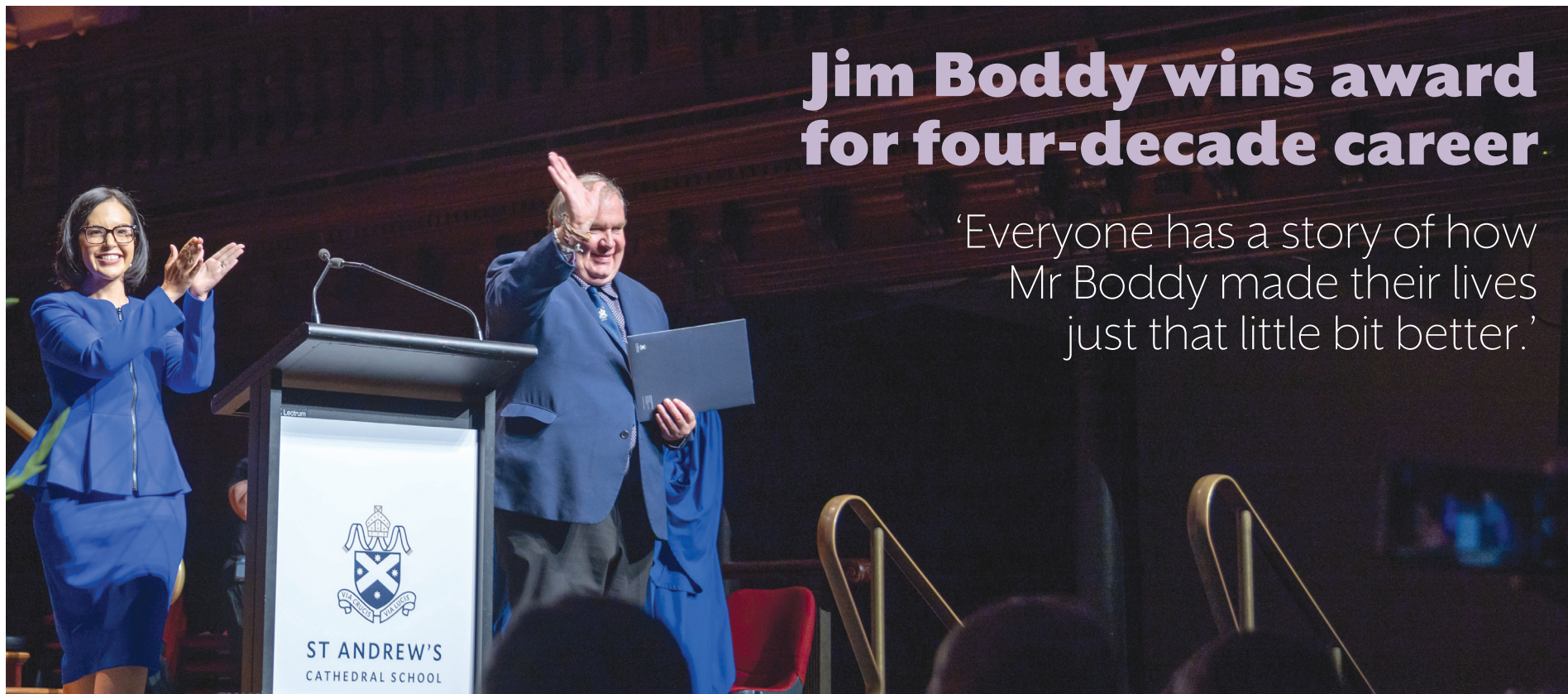
- The federal government should play a stronger role in tackling excessive compliance tasks and the duplication of administrative work. This can be driven by streamlining requirements from government departments and authorities, as well as imposing more rigorous obligations on school employers to demonstrate meaningful change.
- Work impact assessments should be extended to all areas of education policy to break the cycle of ever-creeping workloads and unsustainable work demands.

The ACU report concludes that “Australia risks losing an entire generation of school leaders without urgent reforms”. The federal government can start this reform process right now.

**Brad Hayes** IEUA Federal Secretary



# Meeting our members



## Jim Boddy wins award for four-decade career

‘Everyone has a story of how Mr Boddy made their lives just that little bit better.’

NSW Deputy Premier and Minister for Education Prue Car presents IEU member Jim Boddy with St Andrew's Cathedral School's inaugural Legacy of Light award.

**Jim Boddy's students would barely recognise the school where their science teacher began his career in 1982, writes Andrew Taylor.**

St Andrew's Cathedral School occupied just two floors of an office tower near the Sydney Town Hall and only taught boys, few of whom went on to sit the HSC.

Students used pen and paper, rather than laptops and Google, to learn.

"It was basically chalk and talk – writing notes on the board," Jim said. "It wasn't an easy thing for a young man to deal with 36 boys who were trying to do as little work as possible."

Forty-three years later, Jim is the longest-ever serving teacher at St Andrew's.

Jim's service to the school was recognised in March when he received the inaugural Legacy of Light award from NSW Deputy Premier and Education Minister Prue Car.

Jim said it was a "real thrill" to receive the award at a ceremony at the Town Hall from "someone so important".

"I just get on with my job," he said. "I'm basically an ordinary teacher."

### Transforming lives

St Andrew's Head of School Dr Julie McGonigle said great teachers transform lives "and Mr Boddy has done that for not just one generation of students but two".

"Everyone in the St Andrew's community has a Mr Boddy story," she said.

"Choristers, alumni, students from K to 12, staff, parents – literally everyone has a story of how Mr Boddy made their lives just that little bit better every day."

Jim said enthusiasm was the key to his long service as a teacher.

"You've got to have a love – a passion – for your subject, which for me is science," he said. "And you've got to like working with kids and see them develop."

Sitting in his classroom littered with scraps of colourful paper used to teach Years 5 and 6

students about cotton farming, Jim wears three woven friendship bracelets given to him by First Nations people.

"I wear them to stand with our First Nations people," he said. "That's just one way I can do it quietly without making a big song of dance."

Jim is particularly proud of his students who attend the Gawura School, a co-educational Kindergarten to Year 6 day school for First Nations children that sits within St Andrew's.

Jim has witnessed many changes in the profession since he first walked into a classroom such as the increasing presence of technology – computers, internet, artificial intelligence – and a more prescriptive curriculum.

### Proud union member

A proud IEU member for more than three decades, Jim said he values the union's advocacy and professional development opportunities.

"Our union is more than about getting better wages," he said. "That's part of its role but it

really has great courses and networking, which is really important for teachers."

He also emphasises the importance of mentors for early-career teachers. Jim said he used to walk to Wynyard Station "virtually every day" with his mentor.

"We'd analyse different lessons and that assisted me in being a better teacher," he said.

Jim said he enjoys hearing from former students who often thank him for his advice and guidance. One student recently sent him a message to congratulate him on the award and thank him for encouraging him to study at university.

"Students are very appreciative if you put the effort in," he said. "And that really makes it all worthwhile."

## Community celebrates Meredith Wakeman

**Meredith Wakeman's achievements in early childhood education are highly valued in her local community, writes Tania Yardley.**

Meredith Wakeman had never heard of Bowral before she applied for a job in a preschool.

She got the job and "literally moved here four weeks later".

Thirty-five years later, Meredith is the director of Gumnut Preschool and a much-loved member of her local area who has educated generations of young children.

"We have had multiple generations of families coming to this preschool, and they always look to come back to the same preschool again with their children," she said.

Meredith's achievements, both locally and overseas, were recognised this year when she was nominated for the Wingecaribee Shire Council's Citizen of the Year award.

### Recognising great work

Meredith hopes the nomination will raise the profile of early childhood education.

"It's recognition for the great work all of our early childhood teachers and educators are doing here at our preschool and across the state," she said.

Meredith's achievements include celebrating the preschool's 50th anniversary and overseeing an upgrade of Gumnut's playground to make the space "more child-centred".

"We now have more challenging play areas," she said.

The new playground is made of natural materials. It has raised ramps for riding bikes over a sensory pathway and tree stumps of varying heights for climbing and testing balance.

Meredith has plans for more improvements.

"We've just demolished another storage shed," she said.

"We're hoping to build a sheltered space for the children so they can access either an arts space or a flexible area that we

could turn into our woodwork space."

Meredith's influence extends beyond Bowral to Cambodia. She has twice visited a preschool there to mentor educators and maintains regular contact between visits.

In 2023, she raised \$1200 in funds for the preschool. Her students in Bowral then got involved, raising money for books and art materials.

Last year, her fundraising efforts expanded with the Gumnut community donating a further \$3500.

"All the funds raised at the parents social evening went towards the running of the preschool in Cambodia," she said. "Paying wages and funding breakfast for the children."

Meredith hopes to foster an ongoing relationship between Gumnut Preschool and its counterpart in Cambodia.

### A changing profession

Meredith has witnessed many changes since she began teaching preschoolers.

"We give the children a lot more agency than we used to," she said. "We're more responsive to what we see in the children."

Increasing cultural awareness and inclusivity are also important changes in the profession and "embedding Indigenous perspectives into our service", she said.

Meredith has been a proud IEU member for over 15 years. Last year, she was an ambassador during the IEU's ongoing Unite for Change campaign for better pay for community preschool teachers (see page 9).

Meredith said better pay and conditions for early childhood teachers are crucial to improving outcomes for young children.

"Early childhood is the time when the building blocks are established for lifelong learning," she said. "There's also the scientific data that tells us that the greatest amount of learning occurs in the first five years."



Member Meredith Wakeman was nominated for Wingecaribee Shire's Citizen of the Year Award.



# Reps training

Whether you're a newly elected rep or an old hand who'd like a refresher, we invite you to join us for reps training. We run training sessions across NSW and the ACT throughout the year.

Here's just some of what we cover:

- an understanding of your rights and responsibilities as a rep
- strategies for running a successful chapter
- strategies for growing membership
- useful skills for supporting members
- an understanding of the current industrial landscape, and
- an overview of your entitlements and where they come from.

To register for training, you need to be recorded as an elected rep within the IEU database – check this with your organiser. To register, find your session here: [ieu.asn.au/events](http://ieu.asn.au/events)

Rights for union reps legislated by the federal Labor government mean IEU reps are entitled to reasonable access to paid time during normal working hours for training relating to their role as a union delegate. Please contact the IEU if you experience any issues accessing your leave entitlements.

## Upcoming reps training

Albury: Friday 23 May, 9am to 3pm, Atura Albury, 648 Dean Street, Albury

Dubbo: Friday 30 May, 9am to 3pm, Dubbo RSL Club, cnr Brisbane and Wingewarra Streets, Dubbo

Lismore: Friday 6 June, 9am to 3pm, Lismore Workers Club, 231 Keen Street, Lismore

## More information

IEU website: [ieu.asn.au/events](http://ieu.asn.au/events)

Contact your IEU organiser

Call us on 8202 8900

Email: [repstraining@ieu.asn.au](mailto:repstraining@ieu.asn.au)



Sydney reps training



Newcastle reps training



Penrith reps training



Sydney reps training



Port Macquarie reps training



Gosford reps training



Canberra reps training

# AROUND THE GLOBE

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

## Myanmar: Earthquakes and a revolution



**On 28 March 2025, Myanmar was rocked by two devastating earthquakes. A magnitude 7.7 quake struck Mandalay and Sagaing followed minutes later by a 6.4 quake further south.**

In a country already grappling with conflict and economic hardship, the catastrophe has killed over 2800, injured 4600, displaced millions, and exacerbated the humanitarian crisis, especially for women and girls who are disproportionately impacted.

Before the earthquake, 19.9 million already required humanitarian assistance due to ongoing conflict triggered by the coup in February 2021.

The earthquakes have decimated critical infrastructure, leaving survivors in urgent need of food, shelter and water as they attempt to rebuild amid a continuing war.



### Airstrikes continue after earthquake

In the days and weeks after the earthquakes, the illegitimate Myanmar military regime has kept up its campaign of terror and continued to bomb its own people, despite announcing a ceasefire.

In early April 2025, Tom Andrews, the UN Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Myanmar, urged the UN Security Council to take action.

"This is making a terrible situation devastatingly worse," Andrews said. "The Security Council should urgently consider a resolution that demands that all parties to the conflict in Myanmar cease offensive military operations and that the junta immediately end its human rights violations and obstruction of humanitarian relief efforts."



### Bypassing the military regime to deliver aid

In the two weeks following the earthquakes, the Myanmar military killed more than 100 people through airstrikes and shelling.

This horrific disregard for human life has made it difficult for the international community to provide humanitarian assistance. The Australian government was quick to recognise that any assistance must be provided directly through thoroughly vetted organisations and not the military regime so as not to legitimise it.

The Australian Council for International Development (ACFID) is working with its partners to respond to the situation on the ground. Visit the Emergency Action Alliance, a group of 15 Australian not-for-profit organisations, to donate: [myanmar.emergencyaction.org.au](http://myanmar.emergencyaction.org.au)

### Women's voices from the revolution

In March 2025, ALTSEAN-Burma, a human rights organisation that campaigns for a return to democracy in Myanmar, launched *Burma: Women's voices from the revolution*.

This anthology is made up of a collection of writings by first-time writers. It is a powerful testimony to women's resistance to

military rule and the oppression and sexual violence women in militarised societies face.

The stories highlight the unwavering courage of women who have joined the armed resistance, shattering traditional gender roles, to fight on the frontlines. Some tell of mothers organising aid networks in displacement camps, healthcare workers risking their lives to treat the injured, and journalists bravely documenting atrocities committed by the regime.

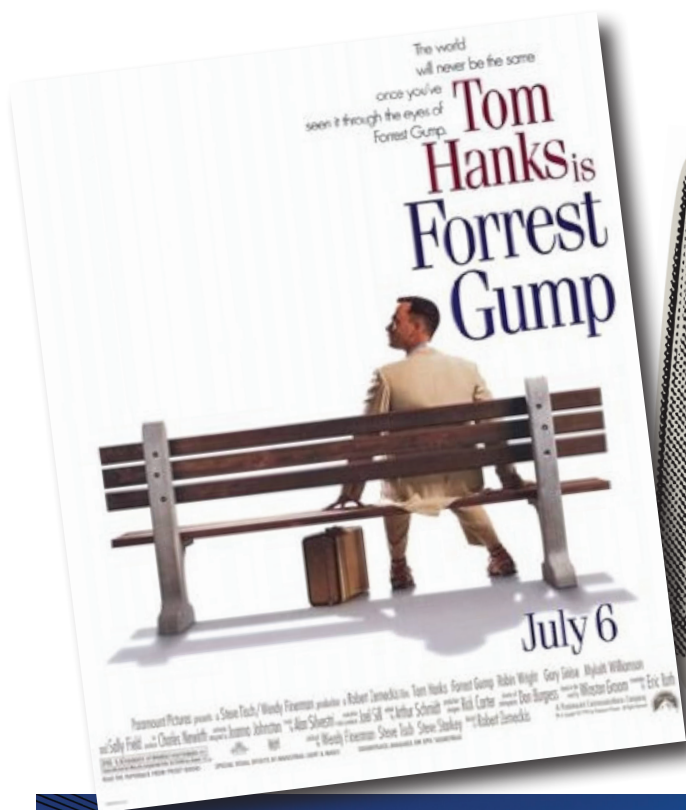
May Zin Win Thet, a nurse in the Civil Disobedience Movement, shares the deeply personal account of her son who was killed by a bomb blast in her village.

"How many families like mine have lost children due to the war in our country?" she asked. "How many people and precious children who represent our future have been killed and injured due to bomb blasts, mine explosions, and indiscriminate artillery shelling? How much more do our people have to sacrifice?"

See Giveaways on page 19 for your chance to win a copy of *Burma: Women's Voices from the Revolution*.







# Time capsule: 1995

**It was a year when Paul Keating ruled the roost in Canberra, while Bob Carr began his decade-long reign as NSW Premier.**

It was the tail end of Keating's tenure as Australia's prime minister, but 1995 produced one of his classic barbs when he called Liberal leader John Howard a "political blancmange" and "a witch with all the rotten apples" who wanted to destroy the union movement.

The year also heralded the beginning of NSW Labor's 16-year stint in power after Carr narrowly defeated then Liberal premier John Fahey in the 1995 state election.

John Aquilina replaced Virginia Chadwick as the NSW education minister. A chant at a teachers' strike held a year later went: "No one could be meaner than Johnny Aquilina".

The NSW government commissioned Barry McGaw to undertake a review of the HSC in 1995 – his report *Shaping Their Future: Recommendations for Reform of the Higher School Certificate* was published two years later.

## Making the news

In Sydney, the Anzac Bridge opened to traffic, Telecom Australia changed its local name to Telstra and the Australian Grand Prix moved from Adelaide to Melbourne.

In popular culture, Ray Martin won the Gold Logie for his work on *A Current Affair*, and *Home and Away* was the most popular series on Australian TV.

At the 1995 Academy Awards, hosted by David Letterman, *Forrest Gump* won six Oscars including best picture, best director (Robert Zemeckis) and best actor (Tom Hanks).

Jessica Lange won the Oscar for best actress for her performance in *Blue Sky*.

The Canterbury Bulldogs won the Australian Rugby League premiership and Carlton won the AFL grand final.

## In the workplace

The *Teachers (Independent Schools) (State) Award* replaced nearly 300 individual school agreements. The top rate of salary (ST1) in the award was \$43,868, although 2-year-trained and 3-year-trained teachers' salaries topped out at \$36,317.

Full IEU coverage for support staff was won in 1994 and in 1995 the union delivered significant pay rises in the vicinity of 9% for this important sector of school staff.

Support staff membership went from about 300 to 1072. Today it stands at 4570 members.

Most support staff were on temporary contracts and hours were regularly varied from year to year. Securing permanent employment for these members would be an ongoing struggle for years to come.

Adrienne van Gelder was elected as the new IEU President, taking over from John Quessy who stepped down to work as a full-time organiser with the union, becoming Branch Secretary from 2012 to 2019. Pam Smith was also employed as an organiser that year. Pam went on to become an Assistant Secretary, retiring only recently. She is still a proud IEU member.

The union also took an important step into the future when it advised members of its new OzEmail address.

## Shout out

In 1995, 1697 members joined the IEU – 203 of whom remain financial members today. Begging the reader's indulgence, I am one of those members.

Returning to NSW after an eight-year absence, I took up a temporary role at a school in the Broken Bay Diocese. At the time, the diocese was offering voluntary redundancies and threatening compulsory redundancies.

I would like to send a shout out to my colleagues who worked at Mater Maria Catholic College at the time.

I would particularly like to acknowledge Michael Hagan. He was the IEU rep at Mater as well as being an elected member of the union's Executive.

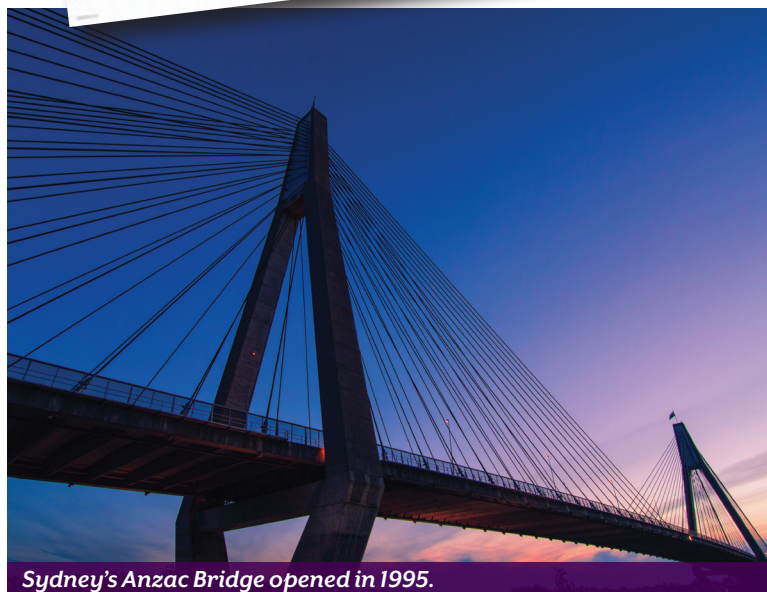
A respected teacher and year coordinator, Michael had the chapter humming.

He supported all the chapter members, which seemed to me to be just about every employee at the school.

He encouraged members to attend sub branch and Council meetings and kept them across union business.

The IEU had just over 16,000 members in 1995. Thanks to reps and activists like Michael we now have close to double that number today.

**David Towson** Deputy Secretary



## From the archives: It's all about workload

**"Let teachers teach," declared page one of Newsmonth in August 1995.**

The headline was accompanied by a cartoon listing the pressures placed on teachers: outcomes, devolution, civics education, restructuring, 300 hours sport, Mayer key competencies, Asian language for every student, profiles.

All sources of mounting stress.

The issues may change, but the union continues to fight against workload intensification and the burdens placed on teachers and school support staff.

Elsewhere, the union's acting General Secretary Patrick Lee wrote about the trend of increasing work pressures "to extract even more from the individual teacher".

He discussed the development of "more elaborate and explicit agreements" around working conditions – an early form of what we know as work practices agreements.

In the past, such issues were "left to school discretion, or unilaterally declared by the employer", Patrick wrote.

He also raised the issue of diocesan demands on top of those from the Education

Department and curriculum changes. That sounds awfully familiar.

Primary schools in 1995 faced a staffing crisis, with teachers needing release time from face-to-face teaching (RFF).

In some ways, not much has changed. Pushing back against the tide of demands is as necessary today as 30 years ago.

**Cover of Newsmonth, August 1995**



# Organise your money and grow your savings



## Bucketing your savings means dividing your money into separate accounts earmarked for specific goals.

It's a smart savings strategy that helps you reach your goals faster because when your savings are squirreled away, they're less likely to be spent on other things.

And if you automate payments into each bucket, you can sit back and watch your savings grow.

### How you can get started

Setting up a bucket strategy is easy. Here's how:

- Identify your goals: Determine what you're saving for – a holiday, home deposit, your children's education or money that you can splurge with or spend on Christmas presents. It's

also worth having an emergency fund that can cover three months' worth of your usual living expenses if you need it.

- Set savings targets for each bucket: Decide how much you want to save in each bucket.
- Give each bucket a name such as 'First home deposit' or 'Holiday fund' to keep you motivated.
- Automate transfers: Set up an automatic payment into your savings buckets just after your pay goes into your transactional account. That way your savings won't get spent on other things.
- Celebrate success: When you reach a savings target, celebrate your achievement. That way you'll stay committed to your overall strategy.

### How to set up buckets for your savings

Set up your buckets: It's easy to create a savings account for each of your goals. Simply become a member to get started.

### Important information

This information is general in nature and does not take your personal objectives, financial circumstances or needs into account. Consider its appropriateness to these factors before acting on it and seek professional advice before deciding.



Above and right: Under-12's art prize winner Eric Yu Dong with his winning artworks. Below: IEU members Kate MacDonald, right, and Emma Allcock at the Canberra Show.



## Don't miss IE magazine

The latest issue of your professional journal, *IE*, is packaged with this edition of *Newsmonth*. Remember, reading *IE* can count towards your PD.

Australia attracted global attention when it banned children under 16 from using social media. Learn why politicians, parents and many researchers are weighing up its impact on young people.

Assistant Federal Secretary Veronica Yewdall explains how the national Teacher Workload Impact Assessment Tool can address initiative churn and workload burdens.

Meet maths teacher Anja van Hooydonk and history teacher Natalie Fong whose dedication and excellence have been recognised with prestigious awards.

Find out why employers need to do more to fulfil their legal obligations to prevent sexual harassment and ensure schools are safe workplaces.

Discover Australia's most sustainable schools and why maintaining beehives and raising poultry for eggs are crucial learning experiences for students.

School excursions are a powerful way to engage students, especially with Indigenous history and culture. Find out the benefits of place-based learning from the experts.

Other stories focus on mental health first aid, the long-running Life Education program spearheaded by Healthy Harold and how members can still support reconciliation.

We hope you enjoy this edition of *IE* and find it valuable for your professional practice.

Our next issue comes out in November.



## Show time

IEU member Kate MacDonald took time out of her classroom to become an official at this year's Royal Canberra Show.

A teacher and union rep at St John the Apostle Primary School in the Canberra suburb of Florey, Kate was appointed section head of the show's art and photography exhibition and a council member of the Royal National Capital Agricultural Society.

"I was granted this exciting opportunity by, as the old saying goes, being in the right place at the right time," said Kate, who is also a member of the IEU Council.

At Kate's suggestion, the IEU was a sponsor of the show's art and photography prizes. Winners included Eric Yu Dong (pictured) for his artwork inspired by Vincent van Gogh.

"I proudly displayed our logo on our online Canberra Show brochure, and in the art and photography section of the show," Kate said.

"Thank you IEU, for all that you do."





# Why your workplace needs a rep for WHS

**Health and Safety Representatives (HSRs) give members a stronger voice on safety issues, making workplaces safer. All schools should have an HSR.**

The most important thing to remember about the HSR role is that the rep must be properly elected by staff.

HSRs then have legal rights and powers to represent staff and advocate for safer conditions.

**How to recognise an HSR rep**

- An HSR rep is elected by employees (not appointed by the employer).
- An HSR rep is trained to undertake their role.

**Roles and responsibilities of HSRs**

HSRs help to maintain workplace safety by:

- Identifying hazards: Inspecting workplaces, recognising risks (eg workload stress), and working with employers to address them.
- Consulting and communicating: Acting as a link between workers and management, participating in safety committees, and sharing safety policies.
- Monitoring compliance: Ensuring employers follow safety laws and assessing the effectiveness of workplace safety measures.
- HSRs don't enforce rules or implement solutions – that's the employer's duty.

**Legal protections for HSRs**

- Protection from discrimination: Employers cannot punish or discriminate against HSRs for their safety activities.
- Training and resources: HSRs are entitled to paid time off for training and the provision of necessary resources.

**WHS rights in NSW**

All working people have the right to:

- a safe workplace with monitored conditions and proper amenities
- be consulted on safety matters and refuse unsafe work
- elect and be represented by an HSR.

**Purpose of WHS laws**

WHS laws ensure workplaces are safe, covering employer and staff responsibilities.

Employers must provide safe conditions, control hazards, and offer access to training. Staff must follow safety procedures and report risks.

Common workplace hazards:

- Physical: Slips, falls, noise, and heavy lifting
- Chemical: Exposure to harmful substances
- Psychosocial: Stress, bullying, fatigue
- Biological: Viruses, bacteria, other risks

**Risk management and reporting**

Workplaces must identify, assess, control, and monitor risks.

Serious incidents must be reported to SafeWork NSW or WorkSafe ACT, and injured staff can access workers' compensation.

**WHS in schools**

Every school should have a WHS management system, which covers:

- 1 Building and maintaining a health, safety and wellbeing culture
- 2 Managing hazards
- 3 Managing incidents and emergencies
- 4 Review and ongoing improvement

**Union advocacy for safe workplaces**

It is a fundamental principle of the union movement that working people have a right to safe and healthy working lives.

Australian unions have long fought for stronger workplace safety laws, ensuring better protections and monitoring mechanisms.

These reforms were achieved through union-led campaigning, advocacy, and policy development to ensure every worker goes home safe.



“It is a fundamental principle of the union movement that working people have a right to safe and healthy working lives.”

## Harm reduction Inquiry examines impact of pornography in schools



**A parliamentary inquiry into pornography has been told that teachers identify exposure to explicit material as a key driver of the rise in harmful sexual behaviours in schools.**

The Sexual Harassment of Teachers Report, released by Collective Shout late last year, revealed widespread sexual harassment of female teachers by students, mainly teenage boys – prompting the union to demand employers fulfil their legal obligations to provide safe workplaces.

It is one of the issues being investigated by a NSW parliamentary inquiry into the impacts of harmful pornography on mental, emotional and physical health.

The NSW government set up the inquiry in response to growing concern about the exposure of children to violence and extreme pornography.

The inquiry, led by Upper House Labor MP Sarah Kaine, is examining the relationship between pornography use, respect and consent education, and production of deepfake and AI-generated pornography.

“The inquiry will also evaluate the effectiveness of current education programs,

and restrictions on pornography access and explore potential improvements,” she said.

The inquiry’s next public hearing is scheduled for 19 May.

**Harmful messages**

NSW Women’s Safety Commissioner Hannah Tonkin said children were exposed, often inadvertently, to extreme forms of pornography.

“The increasingly young age of exposure is concerning because pornography often contains harmful messages and representations that normalise violence against women,” she said.

Dr Tonkin said this exposure came at a crucial time in children’s lives when they are developing attitudes about gender roles, sex and relationships.

“There is an urgent need to improve our understanding of the impacts this is having on attitudes and behaviour, particularly those of boys and young men,” she said.

**Devastating impact**

The IEU shares the NSW government’s concern about the impacts of harmful pornography, in particular, the gendered harassment of women teachers.

The union is also concerned about the cyberbullying of teachers, including the creation of fake sexual images.

IEUA NSW/ACT Branch Secretary Carol Matthews said AI-generated fake pornography can have a devastating impact on victims and their families. This trauma is made worse by employers who do not take such incidents seriously.

“Students must be made aware that this sort of behaviour is criminal and that it will be reported to police,” she said.

A 2023 eSafety Commissioner report found nearly one-third of children surveyed had seen online pornography before the age of 13.

**Educating for change**

Consent education – part of the NSW primary curriculum, starting in kindergarten – is also undermined by students accessing pornography at an increasingly young age.

Pornography education expert Maree Crabbe last year told the union’s *IE* magazine: “Pornography’s influence has serious implications for young people’s capacity to develop a sexuality that is safe, respectful, mutual and consenting.”

IEUA Federal Secretary Brad Hayes said women members around the nation have experienced “disgusting verbal, and even physical, attacks and intimidation” and are reporting “increased examples of inappropriate behaviour seemingly fuelled by online ‘anti-feminist’ activists”.

He said employers must address misogyny and sexual harassment, and that they are also “serious issues across our entire society”.

**More information**

Sexual Harassment of Teachers report: [collectiveshout.org/shot-report](https://collectiveshout.org/shot-report)

NSW Upper House Inquiry, Impacts of harmful pornography on mental, emotional, and physical health: [bit.ly/NSW-inquiry-harmful-pornography](https://bit.ly/NSW-inquiry-harmful-pornography)

Sex education: Countering pornography’s insidious influence, *IE* magazine, issue 3, vol 54, 2024: [publications.ieu.asn.au/ie-3/article2/sex-educationcountering-pornographys-insidious-influence](https://publications.ieu.asn.au/ie-3/article2/sex-educationcountering-pornographys-insidious-influence)



# Welcoming new staff

The IEU is pleased to welcome two new staff to our media and communications team this year: digital communications specialist Zoe Hercus and media advisor Andrew Taylor. Both are based in our Sydney headquarters.



## Zoe Hercus

### Digital communications specialist

**Zoe Hercus is the IEU's new digital communications specialist who is keen to use her strong content creation skills to make a difference for IEU members.**

"I went to high school at St Scholastica's College in Glebe, so this role is a fantastic opportunity to give back, in my own way, to the amazing teachers and staff who supported me there."

Zoe studied Communications and English at the University of Sydney, where she was awarded first class honours for her thesis exploring the impacts of digital platforms on the working conditions of content creators. She said her research was a "huge contributing factor" in seeking out union work.

A very welcome addition to the IEU's media and communications team, Zoe said she's looking forward to developing the union's presence on social media.

"I'm focusing on content creation, especially video content," she said. "I want to make our social media not just a source of updates but also a resource for members, especially our growing cohort of younger members."

Before coming to the IEU, Zoe was a producer and social media creator for small publisher Spineless Wonders, where she helped produce audio books as well as promote them online.

Outside of work, Zoe hosts a popular weekly trivia night in Maroubra, where a recent question was: "Which singer partnered with Mountain Dew to become an unholy CGI animal in this year's weirdest Super Bowl ad?" (Spoiler alert: Seal.)

She's also a keen reader, with a recent favourite being *Dune* by Frank Herbert. "Sci-fi is probably my favourite genre, but I read everything," she said.

## Andrew Taylor

### Media advisor

**Andrew is the IEU's new media advisor and resident canine enthusiast – he is the proud guardian of Maggie, a one-year-old groodle.**

Andrew joined the IEU after an extensive career at the *Sydney Morning Herald* where he covered subjects as diverse as planning and property development (and its shonky operators), the arts and travel and tourism.

After growing up on a dairy farm in Victoria where he "learned to drive a tractor at the tender age of six", Andrew relocated to Canberra to attend university where he studied law and politics. He also spent a year studying in Sweden.

Graduating with a law degree, Andrew had a brief career as a lawyer before becoming a journalist. He attended Bendigo Senior

Secondary College where his teachers encouraged, inspired and occasionally tricked him into studying.

"Good teachers are a standout in everyone's upbringing, but as a child you don't appreciate just how hard they work to bring out the best in their students," he said.

"I feel privileged to work with the IEU to advocate for teachers and support staff whose hard work and dedication are the foundation of strong communities."

At the IEU, Andrew is already contributing to the union's publications – *Newsmonth*, *Bedrock* and *IE* – and is keen to amplify the voice of members in the media.

"Strong unions are the reason we enjoy living wages, weekends and time with our loved ones," Andrew said. "This is why it's so important to work together to both protect our rights at work and progress them."

Outside of work, Andrew can be found lifesaving at Bronte Beach and exploring Sydney's parks with Maggie. He is also an aspiring baker who hopes to live up to the exacting culinary standards of both IEU members and his new colleagues.

# How Bell Shakespeare can help you teach 400-year-old plays



**Hazem Shammass in Bell Shakespeare's Macbeth**  
Photo Brett Boardman

### From comedy to tragedy, Shakespeare is an integral part of the learning experience for students.

Bell Shakespeare is one of Australia's premier theatre companies, and it works with primary and secondary schools around the country as part of its education program.

Every year Bell Shakespeare provides a range of face-to-face in-school programs that students and teachers can access to support the teaching of Shakespeare, as well as free digital open-access resources.

Bell Shakespeare's artistic director Peter Evans said the company worked with more than 800 schools with its face-to-face programs last year.

"Our programs are taught by teaching artists who are professional artists, adding value to what a teacher is already doing in the classroom," he said.

"It's a dynamic and supportive approach, and it brings these plays to life in exciting, powerful and meaningful ways."

Bell Shakespeare's education programs are designed to ensure students experience Shakespeare through live performance and active learning.

Evans said the theatre company does not treat Shakespeare's plays as "museum pieces" to be studied through desk-bound analysis.

"We are all about using these great works as a lens to reflect on our contemporary experience, our humanity, our glories and flaws," he said.

"We should question and challenge them, and we should collaborate with Shakespeare."

"We use these plays in a range of settings, frequently with students who for many reasons have been excluded from Shakespeare, with some astonishing results."

### Education resources Shakespeare hub

Bell Shakespeare offers extensive online resources about Shakespeare's plays, life and language. It features 15 plays, with a wealth of resources including synopses, character analyses, themes, language techniques, historical background and classroom activities.

Earlier this year Bell Shakespeare launched the Teacher Membership, providing access to exclusive production recordings and premium professional learning resources. Annual membership is \$35, as part of Bell Shakespeare's 35th anniversary in 2025.

### The players

Bell Shakespeare's national touring ensemble of actors delivers 500+ performances in primary and secondary schools each year. Shows are performed in school halls, gyms and community centres, with a range of subsidies available for schools that might not be able to afford an in-school performance can access the program.

### Student workshops

Two-hour in-school active workshops on a range of Shakespeare's plays, with tailored content for each student group.

### National teacher mentorship

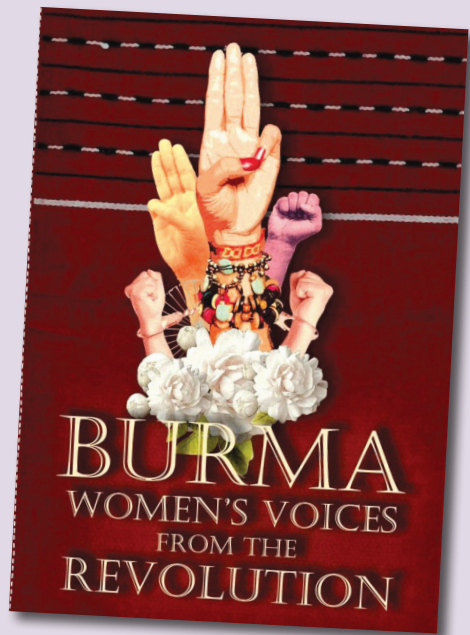
Bell Shakespeare offers a renowned, year-long mentorship for 30 teachers nationally. Designed to train teachers in innovative strategies, it also provides a support network, transforming their teaching practice. Entries are by application.

### More information

[bellshakespeare.com.au/shakespeare-hub](http://bellshakespeare.com.au/shakespeare-hub)



# Giveaways



## Burma: Women's Voices from the Revolution

Publisher: Alternative ASEAN Network on Burma (ALTSEAN-Burma)

This groundbreaking book contains a collection of memories by first-time writers. It is a powerful testimony to women's resistance to military rule and control and against the oppression and sexual violence faced by women in militarised societies.

ALTSEAN Burma is a human rights organisation that campaigns for a return to democratic and civilian rule for Myanmar.



## Ruby and the Pen

Author: David Lawrence  
Publisher: Exisle Publishing

Ruby and the Pen is the story of a 12-year-old, cartoon-drawing girl who buys a pen from a mysterious market stall. She soon learns that the pen has a magical power: whatever she draws, happens!

Initially the pen protects Ruby from the meanest girls at her new school, but over time the pen's power becomes dangerous.

Soon, Ruby has problems galore and one big question to be answered — should she fix all her problems with the stroke of a pen?



## Lintang and the Forbidden Island

Author: Tamara Moss  
Publisher: Random House Australia

The time has come to visit the forbidden island of Allay. But first Lintang needs to find her captain, and it seems the only way to get to the Winda is to join – then escape – the Vierzan navy.

Only then will Captain Shafira set sail for Allay, where the crew of the Winda must uncover what really happened to the country's missing ruler.

Lintang was left behind once. She won't let it happen again.



To go in the draw, email entries to [giveaways@ieu.asn.au](mailto:giveaways@ieu.asn.au) with the title of the book you would like to receive in the subject line. Write you name, membership number and postal address in the body of your email. All entries must be received by 6 June 2025.

## IEUA NSW/ACT Branch Executive

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David Towson  
Eora Nation

### Assistant Secretary

Lyn Caton  
Dharug Nation

### Assistant Secretary

Amanda Hioe  
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Sarah Gardiner  
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### Our locations

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Parramatta: Level 2, 18-20 Ross Street, Parramatta NSW 2150 P 8202 8900

Newcastle: 8-14 Telford Street, Newcastle East NSW 2302 P 4926 9400

Wollongong: 1 Lowden Square, Wollongong NSW 2500 P 8202 8900

Lismore: Unit 4, Lismore Professional Centre, 103-105 Molesworth Street,  
Lismore NSW 2480 P 6623 4700

Canberra: Units 11 & 12, 3-5 Phipps Close, Deakin ACT 2600 P 6120 1500



# Join your union for

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Jess, Teachers Health and union member



## Great value health cover for IEUA NSW/ACT members

At Teachers Health, we're passionate about supporting your physical and mental wellbeing through quality, value-for-money health cover.

We were created by the education community for the education community, so we're all about you. Another great benefit of your union membership!

**TEACHERS  
HEALTH** 

We're for teachers



To learn more about  
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[teachershealth.com.au](http://teachershealth.com.au)

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