



02 July 2025

Unite for Change: Preschools supported bargaining update

On Wednesday 25 June, the Independent Education Union (IEU) participated in another conference at the Fair Work Commission before Deputy President Wright, regarding supported bargaining for NSW preschools.

Where things stand

Disappointingly, the NSW government has maintained its formal refusal to fund a supported bargaining agreement for preschools. Despite this, recent developments have significantly strengthened our position.

Government response exposes lack of foundation

In response to specific questions about the funding model, the government's position was deeply concerning – and telling. Government officials were forced to admit:

- they have no clear basis for the current funding model;
- they cannot say whether it fairly funds preschools;
- there are no costings, indicia, or modelling supporting the funding amounts.

It is a clear acknowledgement that the so-called “funding model” is, in effect, just a lump sum allocation with no transparent rationale. This is disconcerting and alarming, particularly given the critical role early childhood education plays.

Our case is only getting stronger

This lack of any proper funding rationale supports what the IEU and CELA have demonstrated through our case studies: the current government funding is manifestly inadequate to deliver parity in wages and conditions for preschool teachers and staff. The government's refusal to act undermines the very purpose of the supported bargaining laws – laws that explicitly identified this sector as needing reform.

What's next

A supported bargaining agreement that addresses the pay inequity in the sector cannot be made without government funding.

We are urging the government to review its position and fund community preschools, so you can receive the pay and conditions that reflects the critical work you undertake every day.

The government will be next required to appear before the Fair Work Commission on Wednesday 23 July.

If the government does not come to the table with a commitment to fund increases in wages and conditions in NSW preschools, we will need your support to step up our campaign. If you have not had the opportunity to brief your state MP about the need for increased funding now is the time to contact them.

With these proceedings, and the recent controversy over child safety standards in the long day care sector, the NSW government needs to address the professional recognition crisis for teachers in NSW preschools. We know the critical role university-qualified early childhood teachers play in securing standards in the sector – it's beyond time that this is reflected in pay and conditions that secure equity with school settings.

If you need more information on the *Unite for Change* campaign, or assistance in reaching out to your local NSW MP to seek their support, don't hesitate to contact our ECEC team. Please contact your IEU organiser, or call the IEU on **1800 467 943**.

Your IEU preschools bargaining team:

Janene Rox, Cronulla Preschool Kindergarten; Melinda Gambley, Clunes Community Preschool;
Jodie Cox, East Maitland Preschool; Margaret Gleeson, Keiraville Community Preschool;
Bridget Isichei, Byron Bay Preschool; Raelee Smith, Muswellbrook Preschool.
Kate Damo & Michael Aird of the IEU.

If you are not yet a member of the IEU, please [click here](#) to join today.

