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### **Union welcomes new funding model for community preschools**

The union representing teachers and educators in early childhood education and care in NSW welcomes the NSW government's announcement today of a new funding model for not-for-profit community preschools that will come into effect in 2027.

The new scheme includes:

- pay increases for early childhood staff
- full funding of the operating costs of not-for-profit preschools (conditional on meeting strict quality standards)
- new funding to expand access for three-year-old children
- increased funding to support children in priority cohorts, including a major reform to the Disability Inclusion Program.

"The union is optimistic that this substantial commitment from the NSW government will enable us to reach a new enterprise agreement for teachers and educators in community preschools that includes long overdue pay rises and better conditions," said Independent Education Union of Australia NSW/ACT Branch Secretary Carol Matthews.

"The IEU will meet with the NSW government at the Fair Work Commission (FWC) on Monday 29 June to discuss the new scheme. Greater detail is needed on the funding commitments.

"We still need to discuss the details of this new funding model."

This announcement comes after a two-year campaign by IEU members for greater NSW government funding to facilitate pay rises and better conditions for teachers and educators in community preschools. There is no federal funding for this sector.

"Our members have relentlessly called for pay rises for over two years through their Start Strong Pay Fair campaign," Matthews said.

"Community preschool teachers, educators, families and communities feel this issue deeply – they are rightly calling for an early outcome on pay rises and are watching closely for more details as to how the new funding model will help deliver them."

In February, the FWC recommended that the NSW government review and boost funding for community preschools so they can provide pay rises to teachers and educators.

There are over 700 community preschools across NSW that provide a vital service to families and communities by educating and caring for children aged 3-to-5.

More than 90 per cent of preschool staff are women. "We need to fix this gender-based pay undervaluation," Matthews said.

#### **Contacts**

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

**Authorised by Carol Matthews, IEUA NSW/ACT Branch Secretary**