



7 October 2026

SDN Children's Services Enterprise Agreement 2027

ECEC Organiser Lisa James and IEU Delegate Katharina Japri attended SDN enterprise agreement bargaining meetings on 8 September and 6 October.

Unfortunately, the response SDN gave to our claims was disappointing as they are seeking not to make any improvements to existing working conditions. SDN emphasised that their intention is to enable continued access to the Early Childhood Worker Retention Payment until 30 June 2028. In addition, SDN's 2026 budget is in deficit and there will be a significant financial impact in 2027 due to the loss of Start Strong Program funding for their long day care services.

IEU claim	SDN response
Minimum 15% above award rates from 1 July 2027	3% increase for teachers employed in preschools from 1 July 2027 (or annual wage review increase if more than 3% for any teacher currently on the award rate), ECWRP rates for teachers employed in long day care services.
SDN EA classifications to reflect the classifications in the Educational Services (Teachers) Award	SDN bands will be updated to provide greater clarity regarding classifications in the award
Ability to accrue 5 x RDO	Under discussion
60 minutes non-contact time per Transition to School Statement	SDN does not expect teachers to complete TTSS in their own time and more time will be provided than the one day of non-contact time in the existing enterprise agreement where needed
40 minute paid meal breaks	Not agreed, existing 30 minute paid meal break will continue
End of year closedown to commence on 24 December	Not agreed, closedown will continue from 25 December
Increase the Acting Director's Allowance and introduce a Room Leader Allowance for Teachers	Not agreed
15 days Personal Leave per year	Not agreed, current 12 days will continue to apply
14 weeks SDN paid parental leave	Not agreed, current scale of 8-12 weeks depending on length of service will apply
Increase quantum of long service leave	Not agreed, the current provisions will continue to apply
Pre-2015 redundancy to apply to all employees	Not agreed, NES scale will continue to apply for employees employed from January 2015

SDN is seeking to include more flexible provisions for part-time employees to work additional hours and the ability to move employees between services to cover staff absences and reduce reliance on casuals but has not provided the Union with draft wording to date.

Member issues

Members have raised concerns that they have been directed not to go to the bathroom when they are working directly with children and are afraid to drink adequate water during the day as a result. The Union considers this to be an unacceptable and serious breach of Work Health & Safety requirements.

The Education and Care National Regulation 122 does not prevent teachers and educators from being able to leave the room to use the bathroom. The NSW Government website states clearly:

In NSW there is flexibility for educators to take short unplanned breaks e.g. for personal hygiene, without their position being back-filled by another staff member.

<https://education.nsw.gov.au/early-childhood-education/regulation-and-compliance/regulation-assessment-and-rating/regulatory-framework/staff-ratios-and-adequate-supervision>

SDN Head Office has clarified their position is that teachers and educators may use the bathroom as needed during their shift. If your Director has instructed that you may only go to the bathroom during your lunch break, we encourage you to direct a written complaint to Senior Operations Manager Megan Zahra.

Next steps

The next bargaining meeting will be held on 20 October, and the IEU will provide feedback to SDN on their offer at that time. Please provide your feedback regarding SDN's offer by emailing ECEC@ieu.asn.au

Your union membership

Our ECEC Organisers are qualified and experienced early childhood professionals who are best placed to support teachers with any workplace issues. Please encourage your non-member colleagues to help us negotiate a better deal for SDN employees by advising them to: [Join the IEU](#)

