STRONGER TOGETHER
NewsExtra

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Bargaining for your next agreement

The IEU has commenced bargaining with Independent Schools NSW (ISNSW) for new multi-enterprise agreements (MEAs) covering teachers and professional and operational staff in approximately 250 independent schools across NSW and the ACT.

The current agreements expire in January 2028. Employers have issued Notices of Employee Representational Rights (NERRs) proposing replacement cooperative MEAs.

The IEU met with ISNSW on Thursday 29 October for an initial bargaining meeting. We outlined the key issues the union intends to pursue, reflecting priorities already raised by members, and discussed arrangements for future bargaining meetings.

Priorities for bargaining

Through IEU Council and feedback from members, the union has identified several priorities for the next agreements:

- Pay and conditions: We will be seeking salary increases that keep ahead of inflation, improved paid parental leave, stronger consultation provisions and better processes for resolving workplace disputes.
- Teacher workloads: Excessive meetings, unpredictable extras, inadequate support for students with disabilities and workload expectations for part-time teachers remain significant concerns.

  The workload transparency provisions secured in the last round of bargaining were an important achievement. We want to build on these protections and achieve further improvements to teacher workloads.
- Professional and operational staff: Pay and classifications remain a major concern. Teacher aides in independent schools are paid approximately 20% less than their counterparts in NSW government and Catholic systemic schools. The union will seek improvements to pay, classifications and conditions including personal/carer's leave and long service leave.

These issues provide the starting point for our claims.

Have your say

Please complete our survey to identify which issues matter most to you and please take the opportunity to raise any other matters you want the union to consider. This feedback will assist the union to refine our claims.

Single interest bargaining – reserving our rights

Members will remember the IEU's campaign for single interest bargaining in 2024. Strong member support enabled the union to apply to the Fair Work Commission for a single-interest bargaining authorisation in December 2024.

The application itself (and most importantly the member support prior to the application) placed significant pressure on employers and helped secure substantial last-minute improvements in the current CMEAs. The union therefore subsequently withdrew the application once agreement was reached with Independent Schools NSW.

Single-interest bargaining authorisations can only be granted when an MEA has expired – for the current MEAs, this will be in February 2028. Therefore, **seeking a single-interest bargaining authorisation is not our starting point.**

The IEU expressly reserves the right to pursue single interest bargaining, should it become necessary.

Building your IEU chapter

IEU organisers will be visiting schools to discuss the proposed priorities with members and build support for our claims.

Please hold a chapter meeting and invite your organiser. At the meeting:

- discuss the proposed claims, as set out above
- raise any additional issues or concerns for the claim
- identify any school-based issues that you can pursue with your principal (eg teacher workload concerns such as excessive meetings and extras)
- encourage all members to participate in the survey (see link above) AND, most importantly
- ensure you have an enthusiastic and representative chapter committee to support the rep in recruiting members across your school and building support for our claims.

Please speak with colleagues (teachers and support staff) who have not yet joined the IEU and invite them to come to the meeting and become members.

The last round of bargaining demonstrated what can be achieved when members stand together. Strong membership and active chapters give the union greater bargaining power to secure better pay and conditions.

Every member who joins the union helps to build their chapter. This strengthens the collective power of the IEU to win better pay and conditions for independent schools.

Not a member? Join your union now.

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