

2024 Annual Report

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Introduction



IEU Secretary Carol Matthews addresses the media and members outside the Fair Work Commission in Sydney on 5 July as the union filed a supported bargaining application for staff in community preschools.

We've seen great changes - and gains - throughout 2024 in both the political and industrial arenas.

Federal government initiatives

The election of the federal Labor government in May 2022 has seen improvements in the rights of workers, including IEU members.

There have been several tranches of legislative changes to the *Fair Work Act 2009*. These reforms have altered the industrial landscape, providing new opportunities for bargaining and introducing new rights for employees and union delegates.

Changes to multi-enterprise bargaining, effective from 6 June 2023, mean there are now three types of multi-employer bargaining that are more accessible than the bargaining streams which existed previously. There are also more rights for unions in the new procedures.

Importantly, even in the co-operative stream, where the union has the least bargaining rights, it is much more difficult for a multi-enterprise agreement to be put to a vote of employees without the union's agreement. This has assisted the IEU in bargaining in areas such as independent schools and Christian schools.

The union can seek to activate the single-interest bargaining stream, where there are greater bargaining rights, even if the employers don't agree. We will be taking this approach in independent schools in Term 4.

The new supported bargaining provisions were the basis of two separate applications by the IEU

in conjunction with other unions for members employed in long day care centres nationally and for members in NSW preschools.

Members have applauded the new right to disconnect, effective from August 2024. And, despite grumblings before August from a small number of non-government school employers, it appears staff and employers are embracing the new provisions.

As explained in the Professional engagement annexure, new delegates' rights provisions have enabled the IEU to train more reps, and given our reps more confidence in this role in their workplaces.

The federal government's announcement in August, that it would provide \$3.6 billion to support higher wages for teachers and educators in long day care centres and before and after school care (provided the wages were 15% above the relevant modern award rates), is a game-changer in this sector.

This decision was the direct result of the IEU and other unions making a supported bargaining application to the Fair Work Commission. The union is hoping for similar co-operation from the NSW government in relation to funding of pay rises in community preschools.

IEU work in achieving change in consultation with the federal government and its agencies in relation to compliance and workload requirements arising in the federal sphere is outlined in the National/international annexure. The range of subjects in which our federal union has been engaged is

extensive and I recommend this annexure for close reading.

The federal Labor government has shown a desire to address workload and teacher attraction and retention issues in consultation with unions. The IEU is pressing employers to ensure these policy changes result in practical improvements for our members in schools and early childhood education and care (ECEC) centres.

Election of the NSW government

The election of the Labor government in NSW in March 2023 has also been beneficial for members.

The pay rises promised by the new Labor government for teachers in government schools were finally delivered in October 2023.

There is a new focus on work health and safety with the government consulting extensively with unions. Industrial Relations Minister Sophie Cotsis has met with IEU representatives on several occasions and is committed to improving outcomes for working people, including in relation to psychosocial hazards.

As a result of our supported bargaining application for pay rises for teachers and educators in community preschools, Education Minister Prue Car and senior representatives from the Department of Education have met with the IEU to discuss government funding to support increased pay rates.

The NSW government has also committed to addressing teacher workload and teacher recruitment and retention, with relevant measures to address workload outlined in the Professional engagement annexure.

Pay and conditions for teachers

The NSW government provided pay rises for teachers in NSW government schools of between 8% and 12% from October 2023, and these increases were matched by Catholic systemic schools.

In the ACT, a new enterprise agreement, made in August 2023, provided an uplift in teacher salaries in ACT government schools over the period from 2023 to March 2026, with a new graduate earning over \$100,000 by the end of the agreement. Catholic Education Archdiocese of Canberra & Goulburn paid increases of the same value, but with a different configuration of increases.

As outlined in the Industrial annexure, teachers in Catholic independent schools subsequently received large pay rises because of the public sector and Catholic systemic increases.

The union has had some success in flowing on these increases to teachers in Christian schools, and finalised a new enterprise agreement applying to teachers in Christian schools represented by the Association of Independent Schools (AIS) in early 2024. However, although there have been pay rises in 2024, bargaining has not proceeded smoothly with schools in NSW and the ACT represented by Christian Schools Australia.

Workloads and teacher shortages

Teacher workload and teacher shortages continue to be a key focus for the union.

Some workload improvements were achieved in Work Practices Agreements negotiated with Catholic dioceses in late 2023 (for example, standard maximum meeting times and clearer guidelines on utilisation of release in some dioceses). However, ongoing teacher shortages are still frustrating the realisation of entitlements - in particular, release time and caps on class sizes.

Discussions with Council delegates in August 2024 and a survey conducted of members in Catholic systemic schools in September and October will enable the union to prioritise workload claims in coming negotiations with employers. The union has also assisted members to address workload concerns in individual chapters.

Notwithstanding the fact that independent schools were covered by enterprise agreements that did not expire until February 2025, in Term 1 2024, the union campaigned in schools for 'administrative' increases, in addition to the pay rates specified in the multi-enterprise agreements. About 50% of schools agreed to some additional increases of varying amounts.

The union is currently bargaining with the AIS for a new multi-enterprise agreement to cover 250 independent schools from the start of 2025. We're seeking that the increases in pay and conditions (including improved parental leave) of teachers in Catholic schools in 2023 be matched by corresponding percentage increases in pay by independent schools in the new agreement.

The union is also seeking changes to the teacher pay scale so teachers are not prevented from reaching the top pay step in a comparable time as would occur in government and Catholic schools (which has been agreed by the AIS). These negotiations are not yet resolved.

Workload varies across the independent school sector, but a lack of transparency about school requirements is a feature in almost all independent schools. The AIS has strongly resisted our claim for a school-based standard requiring schools to specify these requirements. This has necessitated the union utilising a new strategy in our campaigning. In addition to bargaining, the union supports many individual members in disputes with their employer and other matters. An analysis of the types of matters is included at the end of the Industrial annexure.

Pay and conditions for support staff

Support staff received increases in Catholic systemic schools in 2023, with many classifications receiving wage adjustments from the start of 2023 to match earlier public sector pay equity increases, as well as other general increases outlined in the Support staff annexure. There were delays in some members receiving back pay and union staff were kept busy checking payments.

The IEU successfully negotiated to match these rates in Catholic independent schools in late 2023 and is currently seeking similar increases for support staff in independent schools.

Early childhood education and care

Our members in early childhood education and care (ECEC) have had a year of successes.

As outlined in the Industrial annexure and the Early childhood education and care annexure, together with other unions, we lodged an application for supported bargaining for teachers and educators in long day care in June 2023. The terms of the new multi-enterprise agreement to be made have been the subject of intense negotiation over the past 12 months. The federal government's announcement of funding (referred to earlier) in August has been critical to the outcome.

At the same time, work has been proceeding on the NSW preschools supported bargaining, as well as enterprise agreements for single employers. Our group of campaign ambassadors has been instrumental in delivering the union message both to their colleagues and the community as a whole.

Our ECEC team has also been engaged in numerous consultations with state and federal agencies to address teacher workload, teacher attrition and issues relating to teacher accreditation. In addition, they have led very popular PD sessions for members.

Recruitment and organising

This annexure outlines the ongoing challenges the union faces in recruiting and retaining members, a fundamental part of our organising work. For the first time we are seeing more than just a handful of resignations from the union because of cost-of-living pressures. We continuously review our organising activities and approaches so we can be as effective as possible in both recruiting members and retaining them.

Professional engagement

Deputy Secretary David Towson will fill the vacancy on the NESAs Board created by the resignation of Veronica Yewdall (now Assistant Federal Secretary). Veronica has done an outstanding job on the NESAs Board representing our branch and has provided ongoing support to the branch on professional issues in her federal role.

Professional engagement coordinator Pat Devery continues his role at the NESAs Committee level and has been a driving force in engaging with NESAs, as outlined in the Professional engagement annexure.

The union is delighted with recent changes to requirements for accredited and elective professional development and will review demand for our own PD offerings to members in light of these changes.

As in previous years, professional officer Liz Finlay has supported members in nearly 40 AIS schools seeking accreditation as experienced teachers through the Independent Schools Teacher Accreditation Authority.

Pat Devery has also led the delivery of union training, a program which has expanded with the new delegates' right provisions.

Media and communications

You only have to glance at the Media and communications annexure to be overwhelmed by the output of this small team. Media coverage on radio and TV and in print, media releases, press conferences, social media, digital communications, resources for organisers and traditional print publications are all part of the story.

The new website, launched in December 2023, is much more accessible and the team is continuing to develop strategies to expand its reach - nearly half a million page views by 100,000 users in 12 months is a great result.

A continuing focus is the development and evaluation of the most effective ways to convey the union message to our members.

Social justice issues

Wages and conditions will always be the union's core business, but members also expect us to be active and informed on a range of social justice issues. The Women and Equity Committee, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Advisory Committee, the Environment Committee annexures as well as the Social justice annexure, outline just some of these activities.

The union is committed to ensuring all of our forums are accessible and relevant to members. We thank members who give up their time to support these campaigns and activities.

Regional offices

Our regional offices in Lismore, Newcastle and Canberra are thriving hubs of activity for our members.

Our staff in Lismore have only been back in the office since Term 2, following the devastating floods in Lismore in February 2022, which severely damaged our first-floor office and much of the Lismore town centre and surrounds. Dealing with the initial loss and heartbreak, then the tedium and practical problems of working remotely, along with the need to oversee the repair and refurbishment of the office, has been very trying. We thank our Lismore staff for their commitment and resilience during this difficult period.

Our Canberra staff deal with a plethora of issues, given they are responsible for representing the union on ACT government agencies as well as other organisations such as Unions ACT. They also organise members in three sub branches across NSW and the ACT.

Long-standing Organiser Berna Simpson retired at the end of 2023 and her wisdom and commitment in representing members is sorely missed, but she has been ably replaced by Angela McDonald, formerly Vice President ACT on the IEU Executive. We also thank office manager Susanne Radnidge, who left us in June, for her hard work for members.

As always, our Newcastle office is deeply involved in the local community of non-government schools and ECEC, leveraging these connections to achieve outstanding membership density and a high level of activism among members.

Sub branch officers and members actively participate in Hunter Workers, the local trade union organisation, to build connections with the broader union movement. The office has represented members in a range of disputes including, most notably, the bargaining involving strike action on behalf of members employed in the Maitland-Newcastle Catholic Schools Office. This was a complex dispute, with the organiser untiring in trying to achieve the best outcome for members.

IEU operations

The union needs to evolve continually and improve our effectiveness in terms of our own operations.

A key development in the last 12 months has been the long-awaited launch of the new website.

We have instituted a new records management system for union files and records that will make it much easier for all staff to find information. This system also improves the security of important governance records.

We have also implemented improved cybersecurity procedures and adopted a systematic approach to addressing IT needs across the organisation.

In response to requests from our membership team, we now offer automatic deduction of union fees from members' bank accounts, timed to coincide with pay cycles.

This provides an alternative to payroll deductions and is more effective for the union (as transmission of funds is immediate and less administrative work is required). It is also attractive to some members as they don't need to inform their employer that they've joined the union. Given the availability of this option, we will be phasing out payroll deductions for very small employers.

IEU partners

The IEU maintains strong relationships with our partners, NGS Super, Teachers Health (also celebrating 70 years in 2024), Teachers Mutual Bank, Union Shopper, the Welfare Rights Centre and the Workers Health Centre. Details of the services provided by these organisations and our close connections with them are set out in the relevant annexure.

IEU Executive

I would like to thank the Executive for their strong leadership over the past year and their support of staff, including the other elected officials and myself. Their work has been outstanding, despite recent changes in the Executive team and the number of newly appointed members.

Tina Ruello resigned her role as President at the union's Council meeting in June this year. As both IEU President and a teacher in a Catholic systemic school, Tina was at the forefront of the historic Hear Our

Voice campaign in 2022-23. She also represented the IEU in the Unions NSW "Essential Workers Deserve Better" campaign in 2023. Tina relinquished her union role to concentrate on her two passions – family and teaching. Our new President is Glenn Lowe, long-time activist and Executive member from our South Coast Sub Branch.

Libby Lockwood resigned as Deputy President, as well as from the Executive in February, so she could devote more time to her new position in a regional school. Libby was also involved in lobbying NSW politicians in support of teacher pay rises in 2023 and she has always been a thoughtful voice on the Executive. Libby has been replaced as Deputy President by Denise McHugh.

Bernadette Baker resigned as Vice President Systemic Schools, after a long period of dedicated service. Angela McDonald, Vice-President ACT, resigned at the start of 2024 to take up a full-time organiser position in our Canberra office.

Longstanding Executive member Simon Goss resigned in March to focus on school demands.

The union welcomes the new Executive members elected over the past year to replace those who resigned: Amy Kermode, Raelene Maxworthy, Markus Muschal and Will Pollock as General Executive members, Andrew Dane as Vice President ACT and Amanda Hioe as Assistant Secretary. Liz Heggart, formerly a general Executive member, was elected Vice President Systemic Schools.

I thank all the departing Executive members for their work in leading the union on behalf of members and welcome the new members.

70 years strong

In this, our 70th anniversary since the establishment of the Assistant Masters' Association, I would like to thank all IEU staff for their commitment and work on behalf of the members.

The annexures to this report demonstrate the range of work undertaken by union staff and their dedication and skills. I would like to particularly thank the full-time leadership team of Deputy Secretary David Towson, and Assistant Secretaries Lyn Caton and Amanda Hioe for their support and hard work.

Helen O'Regan continues her excellent work to enable the union to run smoothly, including, in particular, Executive and Council meetings.

The achievements of the past year would not be possible without our great team.

Strategic Plan

As we look back over 2024, it's a good moment to reflect on how far we've come in 70 years, but also to look forward. For this reason, the Executive commissioned a Strategic Plan to celebrate our achievements but also to determine how the union can be its very best for members.

I commend this plan to Council and look forward to working with Executive and staff to make it a reality.

Carol Matthews Secretary

Industrial

Introduction

The 2023-24 period has been marked by industrial activity across all sectors of the IEU membership. Following unprecedented pay increases in NSW and ACT government schools towards the end of 2023, there has been a wave of bargaining in non-government school sectors to match these gains.

In the Catholic systemic school sector, the pay increases achieved in government schools were formalised in a one-year agreement that expired on 9 October 2024, aligning with the NSW government schools' timeline. Shortly after, the IEU successfully negotiated three enterprise agreements (EAs) for principals in Catholic systemic schools, resulting in similar pay increases of 8% for our principal members.

Teachers, general employees and principals employed in the Diocese of Broken Bay received an additional 1.5% increase.

Unfortunately, the 8% increase has not been offered to other groups of Catholic diocesan employees, such as Catholic Schools Parramatta Diocese counsellors or Catholic Schools Office Maitland-Newcastle employees, who took protected industrial action in June 2024.

Outside of the Catholic systemics, after three years of continuous bargaining in Catholic independent schools, the IEU successfully concluded all six multi-enterprise agreements (MEAs) for teachers and support staff in NSW Catholic independent schools. In the ACT, we have commenced bargaining for new MEAs in ACT Catholic independent schools to replace the MEAs which expired in June 2024.

In NSW and ACT Christian schools, following pressure by the IEU, members received substantial pay increases in 2024. However, paltry pay offers for subsequent years have delayed the finalisation of these enterprise agreements. The IEU anticipates ongoing campaigning in this sector for both NSW and the ACT throughout 2024 and 2025. For a small group of Christian schools in NSW who are represented by the Association of Independent Schools (AIS), new MEAs for teachers and support staff were made in early 2024.

From around May 2024, the IEU commenced bargaining for approximately 245 independent schools in NSW and the ACT. The applicable MEAs for NSW and ACT independent schools will expire in January 2025.

Over the past 12 months, IEU members and Australian workers have benefited from three major tranches of legislative changes to the *Fair Work Act 2009 (Cth)* (*Fair Work Act*) introduced by the Labor government. These reforms have altered the industrial landscape, providing new opportunities

for bargaining and introducing new rights for employees and union delegates.

Outside the schools' sector, the IEU remains actively engaged in bargaining within the English Language Intensive Courses for Overseas Students (ELICOS) sector, which is gradually recovering from the impacts of COVID-19.

We are making strides in the early childhood education and care (ECEC) sector. The IEU is involved in bargaining for the first MEA under the new supported bargaining stream for 64 long day care employers, which is close to finalisation at the time of writing.

The IEU, in collaboration with the United Workers Union (UWU), also applied to the Fair Work Commission (FWC) for a supported bargaining authorisation to cover 103 community-based preschools in NSW. This is a groundbreaking campaign for ECEC members, garnering positive media coverage.

The authorisation was granted on 23 September 2024, with dates set for bargaining to commence in October and continuing into early 2025.

In total, 38 EAs were made during this reporting year, underscoring the IEU's unwavering commitment to advocating for its members.

The IEU continues to advocate for members' industrial interests through enforcement and dispute processes.

New law, new opportunities in bargaining

As of June 2023, amendments to the *Fair Work Act* have introduced new bargaining streams, creating fresh opportunities for the IEU to list members' pay and working conditions through MEAs. These changes expand the scope of bargaining by offering three new ways for negotiating MEAs:

- single-interest bargaining stream
- supported bargaining stream, and
- cooperative bargaining stream.

The IEU has long utilised MEAs, particularly in independent schools. However, under previous legislation, restrictions on MEAs limited our ability to take protected industrial action, hindering capacity to push for more member engagement and recruitment.

With the introduction of the new bargaining streams, the IEU can now utilise single-interest or supported bargaining streams, providing key advantages such as:

- the ability to take protected industrial action
- the option to refer disputes to the FWC, and
- the potential to expand the agreement by including additional employers.

A significant new provision also requires employers to seek approval from employee bargaining representatives before any vote on an agreement is held. The IEU has already exercised this power to block less favourable agreements, ensuring better outcomes for members.

These new tools strengthen our bargaining power, and the IEU is committed to leveraging them to achieve the best possible outcomes for our members in all sectors.

New rights: Delegates' rights and the right to disconnect

The *Closing Loopholes Act 2023* and the *Closing Loopholes No. 2 Act 2024* have introduced new rights for workers and workplace delegates, enhancing the protections and rights of our members within their workplaces.

Delegates' rights

Effective from 15 December 2023, workplace delegates, that is, IEU-elected or appointed school representatives, are entitled to new rights and protections under the *Fair Work Act*. These newly established delegates' rights include rights to:

- reasonably communicate with members and potential members within the workplace
- represent the industrial interests of members, such as attending consultation meetings or participating in bargaining
- access the workplace and workplace facilities, including union noticeboards, and
- paid time for workplace delegate training during working hours.

From 1 July 2024, all modern awards and enterprise agreements will be required to include provisions for delegates' rights.

IEU representatives who exercise these rights are protected from any adverse action taken by their employers. Many of our representatives have already utilised these new rights, as evidenced by the numerous reps training sessions hosted by the IEU this year. Empowering our reps is vital to our growth and effectiveness.

Right to disconnect

Commencing on 26 August 2024 (or 26 August 2025 for small business employers), all employees attained the right to disconnect from work outside of their regular working hours, unless refusing such contact would be unreasonable.

On the same date (26 August 2024), all awards were to be amended to include a term conferring this right to disconnect.

As with delegates' rights, employees are protected from adverse action by employers if they exercise or propose to exercise their right to disconnect. This new right represents a big step forward in restoring work-life balance for our hardworking members, ensuring they have the time to rest and recharge without having to be constantly available.

Work health and safety (WHS)

IEU officers have attended SafeWork NSW consultation sessions regarding SafeWork NSW

strategy, as well as the launch of the SafeWork NSW Psychological Health and Safety Strategy 2024-2026 on 16 May 2024. The IEU attends monthly WHS committee meetings with Unions NSW and other unions to discuss WHS issues faced by union members and strategies to gain further improvements for workers.

The union also met with NSW Industrial Relations Minister Sophie Cotsis, whose responsibilities also include the WHS portfolio, to discuss WHS in non-government schools. The IEU provided examples of incident reporting culture in schools for special purposes, the reality of excessive workloads, and the rise of problematic student behaviour.

The union wrote to all Catholic systemic employers and the AIS, seeking a meeting to discuss how employers will address the rise of violence and harassment in schools, as well as the new positive duty to prevent sexual harassment. At the time of writing, several Catholic systemic employers had agreed to meet with the IEU.

Teachers and support staff in Catholic systemic schools

The *NSW and ACT Catholic Systemic Schools Enterprise Agreement 2023* (the *Catholic systemic EA*) was approved by the FWC on 21 December 2023, and expired on 9 October 2024. The expiry date aligned with the expiry date for the state award applying to teachers working in NSW government schools.

The Catholic systemic EA contained big gains, including teacher salary increases of between 8% and 12% from October 2023, general employee salary increases of 6.5% and up to 20% over 12 months, enhanced parental leave provisions and improved evidence requirements for personal/ carer's leave. The improved pay rates for general employees and improvements to leave were already in operation due to an Interim Settlement Agreement (ISA) endorsed by the FWC in June 2023.

The Catholic systemic EA was made following an extended industrial campaign in 2022. There were three stop-work actions, including two full-day stoppages, and an intense lobbying campaign with the NSW Teachers Federation of the new Labor government in 2023.

In anticipation of a new replacement Catholic systemic EA, the August IEU Council endorsed a claim for a new EA that:

- ensures teachers and support staff are paid no less than their colleagues in government schools and that wage increases do not fall behind the rate of inflation
- increases release from face-to-face teaching time for both primary and secondary teachers of two hours per week
- increases release time for those in coordinator and leadership roles
- updates paid parental leave provisions to reflect best practice in the education sector
- improves leave entitlements for support staff, and
- addresses key workload issues affecting members, including:
 - 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
- class sizes, and
- extras.

At the time of writing, the IEU has confirmed a pre-bargaining meeting with Catholic Employment Relations and is preparing the log of claims.

Catholic Diocese of Broken Bay

The single EA covering the Catholic Diocese of Broken Bay was approved by the FWC in June 2023, with a nominal expiry date of 31 December 2024. The diocese has confirmed it will continue to operate under and negotiate its own separate EA. In late September 2024, the diocese indicated its intention to commence bargaining and issued a Notice of Employee Representational Rights to staff.

The IEU has held initial meetings with diocesan representatives to commence the bargaining process. The log of claims for members employed by the diocese will mirror the claims for the main Catholic systemic EA, along with matters raised by members in the diocese. Bargaining will continue through the remainder of 2024, with the aim of finalising the EA in early 2025.

AIS bargaining - independent schools

The MEAs applying to teachers and support staff in independent schools in NSW and the ACT are due to expire in January 2025. In response to the unprecedented pay increases won in NSW government and Catholic systemic schools in October 2023, the IEU launched a campaign for independent schools to provide additional salary increases beyond the applicable MEA rates. Due to the IEU's efforts, about 100 independent schools in NSW and the ACT granted discretionary increases ranging from 2% to 9% above the MEA rates.

As the expiration of the MEAs approaches, the IEU has begun bargaining with the AIS for new MEAs under the cooperative bargaining stream. The proposed MEAs are expected to cover around 245 schools, including those previously covered under different EAs or modern awards.

At the time of writing, the IEU had begun campaigning for a single-interest MEA for teachers in NSW and ACT independent schools. If successful, this would mark a big step forward in securing improved conditions for our members because of our greater bargaining rights in this stream.

Teachers

Bargaining for replacement MEAs started in May. The AIS proposes that all teachers in NSW and ACT independent schools will come under a single MEA under one classification structure which replicates the 7-step model in NSW government schools (or 8 steps for the ACT). The proposal means the existing three-band Standards, Hybrid and Steps models will be replaced with a single streamlined classification structure.

While the IEU is not opposed to consolidating all teachers in NSW and ACT independent schools into a single MEA, the IEU's broad claims include:

- a pay offer that will restore the pay premium which has been historically awarded to teachers in independent schools
- improvements to leave entitlements, including paid parental leave and access to paid partner leave to reflect industry standards
- establishing school-based standards and school committees to address teacher workloads, and
- guaranteed fair processes.

At the time of writing, the AIS's latest pay offer fell below the IEU's claims in both NSW and the ACT. The IEU is also concerned about the translocation from existing models to the new proposed classification structure to ensure that members are not disadvantaged.

Further, under the AIS proposal, teachers with Independent Schools Teacher Accreditation Authority (ISTAA) accreditation will receive a new 'Accomplished Teacher' allowance. However, the AIS proposed that the allowance would not be paid to teachers who have been deemed Band 3. The IEU has vehemently rejected this proposal.

The IEU anticipates that bargaining will continue throughout 2024 and into 2025, with our ongoing industrial campaign to support the union's claim.

Professional and operational staff

Negotiations for replacement MEAs for support and operational staff commenced in May 2024, in line with the MEAs for teachers. The AIS has renamed 'support and operational staff' as 'professional and operational staff' to reflect the broader scope and coverage of the proposed MEAs. Consistent with the current arrangement, there will be one MEA for NSW and a separate one for the ACT.

The IEU's log of claims is focused on pay disparity across all occupational streams when compared with the same roles in other government and non-government school sectors. The claim demands recognition for the value of the work that our members undertake in schools, especially in the early childhood services attached to independent schools, and for those holding professional roles in laboratories, library and information management and technology.

In addition to the pay review, the IEU is also seeking modernisation of the outdated and ineffective classification structure of the current MEAs. The AIS intends to adopt the descriptors from the modern award which is under review by the IEU.

Other focus areas of the IEU's claim include learning support staff working in schools for specific purposes. The IEU has identified issues associated with work health and safety, plus supervision requirements where teachers are not present.

Work is still needed to ensure professional and operational staff members in independent schools in NSW and the ACT are paid appropriately. Bargaining is continuing.

NSW Catholic independent schools (Models A, B & C)

After a lengthy bargaining process, the IEU finalised agreements for teachers and support staff in NSW Catholic independent schools under Models A, B, and C MEAs in early 2024.

Model A Catholic independent schools

The MEAs for Model A schools have a nominal expiry date of 31 December 2025. Teachers in these schools received a 2% pay increase backdated to October 2023 and an additional 5% in February 2024. A new Band 2.2 was introduced in February 2024 to align with the top salary available to teachers in NSW government and Catholic systemic schools, with a further 5% increase expected in February 2025.

Support staff in Model A schools received a 5% pay rise in January 2024, with another 5% scheduled for January 2025. Additional increases, backdated to July 2023, were given to support staff on levels 4C, 5, and 6, while maintenance and outdoor staff received a 9% increase in 2024. General operational staff saw a sizeable 13% increase in 2024. All support staff in Model A schools can expect to receive an additional 5% in February 2025.

Improvements to working conditions include the removal of the cap on personal/carer's leave accrual for all staff. Starting 1 January 2025, teachers will receive a one-time entitlement of 15 days of personal/carer's leave in exchange for a reduced annual accrual. Other enhancements include better-paid parental leave, new paid emergency disaster leave, access to arbitration, and additional entitlements stemming from recent legislative changes.

Model B and Model C Catholic independent schools

The MEAs for Models B and C schools have a nominal expiry date of 31 December 2026.

Teachers in Model B schools received an immediate salary match with NSW government school teachers, plus a 1.5% premium from October 2023, followed by a 3.5% increase in February 2024. Further increases of 3% are expected in February 2025 and February 2026. The MEA also introduced a new graduate 2 classification for teachers after their first year of full-time service.

Teachers in Model C schools received pay increases matching NSW government school teachers' rates from October 2023 and an additional 3% in February 2024, giving them an advantage over their government school counterparts for most of 2024. Further increases of 3% are scheduled for February 2025 and 2026, along with the introduction of the new Graduate 2 classification.

Support staff in Models B and C schools received a 4% increase in January 2024, with additional increases backdated to July 2023 for those on Levels 4C, 5, and 6. Maintenance and outdoor staff saw a 9% increase in 2024, while general operational staff received a 13% increase. The MEA also introduced a new higher classification of Level 7 for Aboriginal Education Officers, with all support staff receiving a one-off payment of \$750 at the start of the MEAs. Additional 4% increases are secured for January 2025 and January 2026.

Other improvements include enhanced paid parental leave for all employees, recognition of service for support staff moving between Models B and C schools, and other benefits resulting from recent legislative reforms.

These achievements in pay and working conditions for teachers and support staff in

NSW Catholic independent schools reflect the perseverance and ongoing advocacy of our members in these schools.

ACT Catholic independent schools

With the expiration of the two MEAs for ACT Catholic independent schools on 30 June 2024, bargaining has begun for new replacement MEAs. Catholic Employment Relations (CER) has expressed a preference for consolidating the two existing MEAs for teachers and support staff into a single MEA covering all three ACT Catholic independent schools.

The IEU is currently developing a log of claims, including pay increases. Our aim is to achieve the substantial gains seen in other school sectors, along with improvements to working conditions. The IEU expects bargaining to continue through 2024 and into 2025.

NSW Christian schools bargaining

NSW Christian schools represented by the AIS

The *Christian Schools NSW (Teachers) Multi-Enterprise Agreement 2023* and the *Christian Schools NSW (Support and Operational Staff) Multi-Enterprise Agreement 2023* cover approximately 23 Christian schools in NSW represented by the AIS. Following negotiations with the IEU, the two MEAs were approved in early January 2024. They are due to expire on 31 January 2027.

Teachers in these schools received an uplift of between 8-12% (depending on their classification) in February 2024, which reflects the increases received by their colleagues in NSW government and Catholic systemic schools. However, the teacher pay scale still retains two more steps than the pay scale applying in government schools.

The new MEA secures a further 3% in February 2025 and in February 2026. It also introduces a new higher casual teacher classification for more experienced casual teachers with a daily rate of \$548.95 at the commencement of the MEA.

For support and operational staff, the new MEA guarantees annual increases of 4% in February 2024, 3.2% in February 2025 and 3.2% in February 2026.

In addition to the pay increases, the IEU has achieved improvements to the New Parent Bonus (NPB) of 20 weeks from 1 February 2025, two weeks of paid parental leave for a partner without debiting their personal/carer's leave, plus access to paid natural disaster leave and special education allowance.

NSW Christian schools represented by Christian Schools Australia (CSA)

The remaining Christian schools (about 35 schools) are represented by CSA. The two MEAs applying to teaching and general staff expired on 31 December 2023. Bargaining for both replacement MEAs resumed in February 2024 following the outcome in NSW government schools.

General staff

The IEU has reached an in-principle agreement for the *NSW Christian Schools General Staff Multi-Enterprise Agreement 2024*. The proposed

MEA includes an increase of 4% in February 2024, 2025 and 2026. For school psychologists, a new classification structure and rates of pay have been introduced which replicate the pay and classifications in NSW government schools.

Additionally, general staff in these schools will benefit from an increase to paid personal/carer's leave from 10 to 15 days per annum. The improved NPB will increase in line with the federal government's paid parental leave scheme to 22 weeks from 1 July 2024 then to 26 weeks by 1 July 2026.

Although the proposed MEA has been largely agreed to by the IEU and CSA, CSA awaits clarification from the federal government about accessing new worker retention payments for those working in the early childhood education and care sector (ECEC). The IEU anticipates that access to government payments will result in an improved pay offer for members in ECEC services operated by these schools.

Teachers

Bargaining for the *NSW Christian Schools Teaching Staff Multi-Enterprise Agreement 2024* has been suspended due to the parties being unable to agree on pay increases for 2025 and 2026.

During bargaining, CSA offered no pay increase in 2025 followed by a meagre 3% in February 2026. In a survey of members conducted by the IEU, an overwhelming 92% rejected the CSA pay offer. Accordingly, the IEU refused to consent to CSA putting the MEA to a vote.

The IEU has secured a pay increase for 2024 comprising a 7% increase from February 2024 and a further 4% in October 2024. During bargaining, the IEU ensured teachers received their pay increase of 7% in February 2024. However, given the IEU has not settled the pay claims for 2025 and 2026, the IEU agreed to suspend bargaining if CSA gave an assurance that schools will commit to:

- a further 4% pay increase from October this year, and
- honour the improved NPB from 1 July 2024.

At the time of writing, CSA had confirmed that schools will commit to the above conditions. The IEU considers that the suspension in bargaining will assist in placing greater pressure on CSA to improve its pay offer once the NSW government's pay offer comes to light. The IEU expects bargaining to resume in the near future.

ACT Christian schools teaching staff MEA bargaining dispute

Following finalisation of pay rates in ACT government schools in September 2023, the IEU and CSA progressed bargaining for *ACT Christian Schools Teaching Staff MEA 2023 (ACSMEA)*. Teachers received an interim increase of 3% from 1 July 2023.

On 17 November 2023, in response to the IEU's claim, CSA presented its formal offer for the salaries and terms of the proposed ACSMEA. The proposal can be summarised as:

- CSA's commitment to maintaining teacher salaries above the ACT government school rates, with a premium of 1.75% across most salary steps and 2.5% at the top step
- a revised classification structure effective from 1 July 2024
- the removal of 'additional personal leave' (five days personal leave in addition to the 'base personal leave'), and
- enhancements to parental leave.

In mid-December 2023, the IEU received the draft MEA, which did not reflect the CSA offer. The IEU formally communicated its concerns to CSA, noting that the proposed pay rates did not align with the ACT government teacher rates for substantial periods during the ACSMEA's term and proposed changes to personal leave and other terms.

The IEU made a counter-offer, urging CSA to align the frequency of pay increases with those of ACT government teachers to address this disparity. This proposal was rejected by CSA, which sought the IEU's consent for the ACSMEA to be voted on by employees.

An overwhelming 90% of surveyed IEU members indicated their disagreement with CSA's offer. On this basis, the IEU did not provide written consent for the ACSMEA to be put to a vote.

In July 2024, the IEU was advised by members at one of the participating schools that their school would not be seeking a replacement MEA. Instead, CSA wished to conduct a survey to pass on proposed improvements to pay and working conditions for all staff. The IEU objected to this course of action and sought an urgent meeting.

In early August 2024, the IEU met with CSA to address serious concerns regarding CSA's approach to bargaining.

Despite these concerns, CSA intends to proceed with implementing proposed improvements in two of the three ACT Christian schools. At the time of writing, the IEU is evaluating its options in the FWC, aiming to encourage CSA to return to the bargaining table for both MEAs.

Principals' enterprise agreements

The IEU negotiated and finalised three EAs for principals in NSW and ACT Catholic systemic schools.

The *Sydney Catholic Schools Principals Enterprise Agreement 2024* and the *NSW and ACT Catholic Schools Principals Enterprise Agreement 2024* cover all principals employed across the 10 Catholic dioceses. These EAs, which expire on 9 October 2024, align with the agreements for teachers and general employees and deliver an 8% pay increase backdated to 9 October 2023. The EAs also include improvements such as better paid parental leave, less stringent evidence requirements for personal leave, and stronger rights to request flexible work arrangements, alongside updates from recent legislative changes.

In addition, the IEU secured the first stand-alone EA for principals in Catholic Schools Broken Bay (CSBB). This EA, which expires on 31 December 2025, guarantees annual pay increases of at least 3% from 1 July 2024 and 1 July 2025, based on

adjusted rates from 9 October 2023, which included an 8% general increase plus an additional 1.5% for CSBB employees. The EA also allows for an annual salary review to potentially increase the guaranteed pay rise. As a result of this review, CSBB principals received a 4% increase on 1 July 2024. Similar improvements in working conditions were also secured in this stand-alone EA.

Long day care - supported bargaining

The Secure Jobs, Better Pay Bill saw the introduction of supported bargaining provisions which have ushered in transformative change in the early childhood education and care (ECEC) sector.

Supported bargaining provisions provide for multi-employer bargaining across a sector in which pay and conditions can be particularly low, and where the employers have common interests, which can include reliance on government funding.

The provisions are also targeted at sectors in which bargaining has proven to be difficult.

On 6 June 2023, the IEU, along with the Australian Education Union (AEU) and the United Workers Union (UWU), filed in the FWC for a supported bargaining authorisation to bargain with 64 long day care employers. These centres employ thousands of teachers and educators across the country. The authorisation for the bargaining to commence was issued by a full bench of the FWC on 27 September 2023. Intensive bargaining has been under way since 27 October 2023.

The supported bargaining provisions have seen the federal government, as the primary funder of the sector, ordered to participate in bargaining.

On 8 August 2024 the federal government announced it would fund a 15% wage increase for early childhood teachers and educators. The funding would be provided as a 'worker retention payment' for services that have a workplace instrument that provides for no less than 10% above the award by 1 December 2024 and 15% above the award by 1 December 2025.

Critically, the funding provides for a flow-on of the wage incentive payment for all workers. With the federal government funding commitment, a long day care supported bargaining agreement appears close to being finalised.

The parties, in particular the employers, are still seeking to clarify details of the funding arrangement. Provisions in the draft supported bargaining agreement include:

1. A minimum increase of 10% above the applicable modern award by 1 December 2024 and 15% by 1 December 2025 and also a full flow on of the funding for those on rates above the applicable award.
2. The right to arbitration for workplace disputes.
3. Career progression for teachers. There has been an ongoing concern with ECEC teachers not having access to supervisors to progress to proficiency. The long day care supported bargaining agreement will provide for deemed proficiency where supervisors are not available.
4. A commitment to address retention and attraction issues in the sector, which includes ongoing workload concerns.

The IEU is committed to finalising a supported bargaining agreement that will provide substantial wage increases and improved rights and conditions for long day care teachers and educators.

Preschools - supported bargaining

Following the long day care sector gaining access to the supported bargaining provisions, the IEU commenced work to secure access to supported bargaining for community-based preschools in NSW.

In April 2024, the IEU launched the Unite for Change campaign to support our claim for transformative, sector-wide pay rises and improved conditions. The IEU will continue this fight until teachers in preschools are paid comparably with their colleagues in schools.

The IEU identified members in community-based preschools who became ECEC campaign ambassadors. Our ECEC ambassadors have been advocating strongly in their workplaces and preschool community networks. Campaigning efforts have included surveys and workforce petitions, media appearances and lobbying the NSW government to address the current workforce crisis (noting that preschools are funded by the NSW government and long day care is funded by the federal government).

This created momentum that resulted in 103 NSW preschools signing up to be part of a supported bargaining application, exceeding the initial goal of 40 preschools. The IEU then filed an application for a supported bargaining authorisation on 5 July 2024, accompanied by a rally and press conference outside the FWC that again gained positive media coverage.

The IEU's application was heard on 2 September 2024 with support from UWU (representing educators) and preschool employers through their employer association, Community Early Learning Australia (CELA).

The FWC has issued the supported bargaining authorisation and bargaining will take place towards the end of 2024 and the start of 2025.

Department of Health Teachers Award

Teachers' (NSW Health Early Childhood Service Centres) Salaries and Miscellaneous Conditions Award 2023 covers teachers employed in early childhood education centres operated by the NSW Health Department and provides them with special conditions specific to the teaching profession. The making of this award is in line with all other NSW Health Awards which provide pay increases from 1 July each year. However, the IEU is concerned that the rates of pay contained in the award fall behind teachers in schools. The top rate for teachers under the award is currently \$95,000 (compared to \$122,000 in NSW government schools).

Given the department did not agree to the IEU's claim, the application for a new award was listed for conciliation before the NSW Industrial Relations Commission (IRC) on 25 September 2024. The IEU sought parity with NSW public school teachers, which is well above the NSW government's public sector pay offer of 3.5%, 3% and 3%. The IEU will appear before the IRC to advance the pay claims.

Support staff

In Catholic systemic schools (other than the Diocese of Broken Bay), an interim settlement agreement (ISA) was reached in May 2023. This settlement was formalised into a new one-year *Catholic Systemic Schools Enterprise Agreement* (CSEA) which was made on 21 December 2023, with an expiry date of 9 October 2024.

A key feature of the ISA was the establishment of wage parity for school administrative and classroom/learning support employees.

This group of employees received a wage parity adjustment back dated to January 2023, and the 4% public sector increase from 1 July 2024. Operational services employees received a 4% increase from 1 July 2023. These increases were paid on top of the 2.54% increase they had received in January 2023.

The significant wage uplift has also had an impact on groups of support staff member employees falling outside of the CSEA, including those working in diocesan offices and those providing services in schools such as information and communications technology (ICT) and student wellbeing.

Given the complexity of the translocation and back pay calculations, IEU members reported delays in receiving back pay. Many members across different Catholic dioceses sought the assistance of IEU officers in assessing their back pay and ensuring they were correctly reclassified. Some administrative staff members sought assistance in applying for reclassification to higher grades, such as Level 5.

The improved rates of pay achieved for support staff members in Catholic systemic schools were used as the benchmark for our negotiations in Catholic independent schools. The new classifications and higher rates of pay were incorporated into the three NSW Catholic independent schools (Models A, B and C) MEAs. These MEAs provided for the parity adjustment and back pay, and further annual increases of 4% or 5% for the next three years.

While bargaining for replacement MEAs for independent schools, the IEU is also seeking improvements in pay and conditions.

Catholic Schools Office Maitland-Newcastle bargaining

In October 2023, the IEU commenced bargaining for a replacement EA with the Catholic Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle (CDMN) for Catholic Schools Office (CSO) employees. The EA covers CSO staff employed as administration and support staff, education and professional officers, and school counsellors.

Employees covered by the EA have traditionally enjoyed pay increases equivalent to those paid to teachers in NSW government and Catholic systemic schools. Therefore, consistent with this nexus, the IEU claimed the historic 8% pay rise for employees covered by the CSO EA.

CDMN rejected the IEU's pay claim, and to date, this is the sole outstanding claim. With no movement from CDMN on the pay offer, the IEU applied for a protected action ballot order.

The FWC granted the order and IEU members took protected action, including putting up posters and wearing yellow Hear Our Voice Too t-shirts. Members also participated in a stop work rally on 6 June 2024.

The IEU proposed solutions that would deliver members the outcomes they sought and reached agreement with the CSO to finalise the EA.

Catholic Education Diocese of Wagga Wagga - pay dispute

Since December 2023, the IEU has been approached by members in the Catholic Education Diocese of Wagga Wagga (CEDWW) regarding repayment of overpayments arising from payroll adjustments. The IEU promptly raised the dispute with CEDWW in an attempt to resolve the issues.

As the information provided in payslips to staff was insufficient for the IEU to form a view as to the overpayment calculations, the IEU notified a dispute to the FWC seeking full details of any additional payroll information. The dispute resulted in the information being provided by CEDWW.

After review, the IEU found that, due to a misinterpretation of the ISA by CEDWW, some employees were significantly overpaid. Through the IEU's persistent advocacy following a second dispute notification to the FWC, CEDWW prepared additional explanatory information to be distributed to all affected employees.

Where discrepancies in pay were identified through this process, including any underpayments, CEDWW undertook to contact the affected employees to rectify these issues. Furthermore, the IEU secured an agreement from CEDWW to improve its processes regarding notifications of overpayments and back payments.

The union has advised CEDWW that it must provide notification and reach agreements with affected employees should an overpayment arise.

This is a great win for members, with the IEU showing its effectiveness in protecting members' interests.

NSW Health Department - crib breaks dispute

From late 2023, several IEU members who were early childhood teachers (ECTs) employed within the NSW Health Department's local health districts advised the IEU that they were not being paid for their crib breaks.

The entitlement in the relevant state award, the *Public Hospitals (Professional and Associated Staff) Conditions of Employment (State) Award 2023*, provides for ECTs to be paid for lunch breaks (crib breaks) for a period of at least 20 minutes, unless there was an agreement with the relevant childhood centre. Despite this, the practice followed by these centres was that an unpaid 30-minute break was provided. The IEU considered this insufficient to satisfy the award.

Following meetings with IEU officers in late 2023 and early 2024, NSW Health agreed to pay 20-minute crib breaks to all ECTs. The IEU ensured that roster practices were amended in these centres to satisfy NSW Health's obligations pursuant to the award, ensuring ECTs are paid correctly.

Brindabella Christian College - superannuation dispute

In late November 2023, IEU members at Brindabella Christian College (BCC) raised concerns regarding BCC's failure to pay superannuation for three quarters of the year in 2023.

The IEU promptly raised the issue in an urgent letter to BCC, highlighting problematic issues related to payroll and superannuation obligations. In response, BCC attributed the delay to software issues and the resignation of an accountant. BCC assured the IEU that the unpaid superannuation would be lodged with the Australian Taxation Office (ATO) as a matter of urgency. It further assured us that future superannuation payments would adhere to quarterly due dates, including the December quarter superannuation.

In March 2024, the IEU uncovered additional issues, identifying that salary-sacrificed superannuation payments and additional contributions under applicable MEAs had not been made. The IEU sought immediate rectification and requested undertakings from BCC to pay all unpaid superannuation and ensure the timely payment of the quarterly superannuation due on 28 April 2024.

When BCC failed to fulfil all requested undertakings, the IEU filed a dispute with the FWC. A conciliation was held on 17 May 2024. As a result of the pressure applied by our members and the dispute notification, the IEU secured assurances from BCC that all unpaid superannuation, including additional salary sacrifice contributions, had been paid.

Additionally, BCC committed to moving to fortnightly superannuation payments from 1 July 2024.

Despite BCC's undertakings, the IEU was notified by its members that superannuation and additional contributions had once again not been paid fortnightly in July and August.

The IEU filed another dispute before the FWC on 20 August 2024, seeking a fixed solution to these issues. During the conciliation on 30 August 2024, BCC agreed to move to fortnightly payments for additional superannuation amounts and salary-sacrificed superannuation amounts. At the time of writing, the IEU was awaiting written confirmation from BCC.

Catholic Schools Parramatta Diocese counsellors

On 15 February 2024, Catholic Schools Parramatta Diocese (CSPD) initiated bargaining with the IEU for a new EA for counsellors. Following thorough consultation with the IEU chapter, the union submitted a log of claims for a two-year agreement securing parity for counsellors with NSW government school psychologists, enhanced paid parental leave and compassionate leave.

On 14 June 2024, CSPD presented a detailed response to the IEU's claim. While CSPD agreed to some of the claims, including improvements to parental leave, it declined the proposal to align counsellor roles with school psychologists in the DoE.

On 8 August 2024, CSPD issued a pay offer of a 4% increase for all counselling staff, retrospective to

1 January 2024. Lead counsellors and coordinators were also offered a 5% increase for 2024, with a further 3% for all staff, starting 1 January 2025.

After further negotiations, CSPD increased the offer to all counsellors at levels 1-5 to 4.3%, with a 9% increase for lead counsellors and coordinators.

At the time of writing, the IEU supports this offer, which locks in pay rises as well as improved conditions, including parental leave, compassionate leave and long service leave.

St Lucy's School enterprise agreement

After a six-month battle, bargaining has progressed, with teachers and support staff at St Lucy's School Wahroonga voting for new EAs.

Until recently, St Lucy's, a Catholic independent school for students with disabilities, had been on the Model C Catholic Independent Schools MEA. However, in September 2023, the employer announced it would introduce its own EAs.

While the offer was initially met with optimism by staff, it soon became clear it was inferior, and that teachers and support staff would be worse off than if they had stayed on the Model C MEA. As a result of the insulting offers that followed, the IEU Chapter at St Lucy's trebled - growing from 18 members in August 2023 to 63 in March 2024.

Staff at St Lucy's have now voted on EAs with the following improvements:

- pay in line with Model C MEA for teachers
- pay for 2024 in line with Model C for support staff, with changes to structure and classifications that benefit support staff
- improvements for paid parental leave for both teachers and support staff
- a one-off payment for support staff, and
- a single pay scale for teacher's aides, allowing them to progress along the scale more quickly and equitably - primary teacher's aides will benefit with increases of up to \$12,000 in the first year (15%). The single pay structure is now transparent, and all teacher's aides can progress at the same rate.

The IEU congratulates members at St Lucy's and the incredible rep who has done an exceptional job communicating with staff and growing the chapter into a formidable force.

ECEC bargaining KU enterprise agreement

The IEU is bargaining for a replacement EA at KU Children's Services (KU). Following more than 90% of members rejecting KU's final offer, KU returned to the bargaining table with a revised offer that meets the IEU's claims for non-contact time for directors and educational leaders. Agreement was subsequently reached for the *KU Children's Services Teachers Agreement*, which includes 4% annual increases to salaries and allowances in 2024, 2025 and 2026. Other improvements include:

- director's office time will be increased to a minimum of two days per week plus 15 discretionary days per year that can be used to complete enrolments, fund applications for children with additional needs and Transition to School Statements

- educational leaders will be allocated four hours per week non-contact time and teachers' programming/planning time increases to five hours per week
- KU centres will have two child-free days per year, five days paid leave for declared disasters and five days paid leave for declared pandemics, two days of paid cultural leave for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees and four weeks of paid gender affirmation leave, and
- KU will also offer a 20% discount on the gap fee for KU employees whose children attend KU long day care centres.

Western Sydney University Early Learning (WSUPELL) EA

The IEU has reached agreement for the WSUPELL EA, including 5% above award rates of pay with a 4% increase in July 2024, 3% in July 2025 and 3% in July 2026 and the introduction of an educational leader allowance. Teachers will receive one additional paid day of leave, to be taken during the end-of-year closedown, an increase to 17 days' personal leave per year, an increase in long service leave to 10 weeks after 10 years of service and up to 14 weeks of paid parental leave at the minimum wage rate.

In addition, Transition to School Statements will be completed during rostered hours and 16 hours of non-contact time will be provided for provisionally accredited teachers to assist them to gain Proficient Teacher accreditation.

Goodstart bargaining

Bargaining for the new Goodstart EA began in the latter half of 2023 and continues to date. The unions' (IEU, AEU and UWU) claims aim to reduce workload and teacher burnout and therefore include:

- paid 30-minute meal breaks
- pupil-free time at the beginning and end of each day for preparation and cleaning
- increased non-contact time, a minimum of three hours a week
- four pupil-free days a year for teachers to complete assessments of learning statements
- rostered days off for all teachers
- an increase to the directors and educational leaders' allowances
- fifteen days personal leave
- shut down over Christmas/New Year
- establishing a teacher workload working party, and
- a working party to review inclusion support.

Goodstart has rejected the unions' claims but has agreed to establish a working party to review teacher workloads.

Bargaining stalled from May 2024 as Goodstart awaited the federal government's decision from the joint unions' supported bargaining application for long day care.

In June, the unions received responses to our claims for Christmas closure and inclusion support. The proposal for Christmas will make it easier for staff to take leave, with the addition of a 10% shift loading for those who work during Christmas week.

The unions agreed in-principle with the proposal but suggested the shift loading should be 17.5%, the

same as the current leave loading. Also, as part of the proposal, Goodstart will trial the shutdown of some services in 2025.

Goodstart's response to our claim for a review of inclusion support is to include a provision in the EA to make it clear that moving teachers and educators from inclusion support-funded positions into ratios should only be a last resort when other staffing options to cover absences have been exhausted. We consider this a positive step.

Bargaining will continue in 2024, as we hope to pass the full government increases on to our members.

South coast preschools MEA bargaining

A group of six community-based preschools operating in the Bega Valley requested that the IEU negotiate one MEA to cover all six preschools.

These preschools were seeking consistent terms, conditions and wages across all six neighbouring preschools. Five of the preschools had stand-alone EAs in place, providing similar rates of pay and conditions, but with inconsistent terms of operation and varying dates for the application of pay rises.

The IEU proceeded to negotiate and draft a new MEA providing a teacher classification structure and wages in line with those applying to teachers in NSW government schools and Catholic systemic schools. The finalised MEA also includes improved conditions around parental leave, personal leave and non-contact time.

The teachers at five preschools voted to adopt the MEA at the end of September. At the time of writing, the application for approval by the FWC is being prepared.

The sixth preschool is a small service operating five days a fortnight that employs only one teacher. As such, the preschool was unable to participate in the formal process of voting for the MEA. Despite this, the IEU negotiated with the management committee, which has agreed to enter into a formal Deed of Arrangement and apply the terms of the new MEA that applies in the other preschools.

English language courses (ELICOS)

The IEU remains active in the post-secondary sector, particularly in EA negotiations and pursuing individual claims.

The IEU negotiated three new EAs in 2023-24. The first of these was at Taylors College, and it was probably the hardest. The college was bought out by Navitas in 2023, and the new owner sought to tighten up several existing benefits. This was not acceptable to members.

Through bargaining, an agreement was eventually arrived at, with a 5% pay rise from July 2023, and a further 4% from July 2024.

At the University of Technology Sydney (UTS) College, the IEU secured a pay rise of 4% from February 2024, and a further 4.5% from February 2025. These increases will go some way to narrowing the gap between UTS College salaries and those in similar colleges.

Navitas English runs many government English programs, such as the Adult Migrant English Program (AMEP), and the Skills for Education and Employment (SEE).

Annexure | 1

During the pandemic, the IEU agreed to Navitas proposals to 'roll over' the 2018-21 EA, with pay rises matching the Wage Price Index. Navitas sought a further extension this year, but instead agreed to a formal, one-year EA, with interim pay increases (as well as a 4.1% increase from July 2024).

The sector is still rife with poor practices, and it is common for a teacher to be told, "we only pay Step 4 here". These members are often happy when told their employer cannot 'contract out' of an award right, and that members can claim any underpayment for up to six years after the fact.

Such underpayments can often run to many thousands of dollars, and the IEU pursued several such claims on behalf of members over the last year.

Likewise, the IEU continues to enforce the rights of members through unfair dismissal and general protections claims. Unfortunately, it appears many colleges still think the law does not apply to them, but fortunately our members know better.

Summary of disputes

Disputes by employer					
	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24
CEO	142	176	100	154	119
CER	27	25	14	16	5
AIS/non-systemic	150	161	62	81	83
ECEC	39	20	9	7	13
Special	2	1	-	2	-
Business colleges	3	4	-	1	-
English colleges	6	2	3	2	4
Post-secondary (other)	1	2	-	3	-
Miscellaneous	4	1	4	1	1
Total	374	392	192	267	225

Disputes by nature					
	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24
Accreditation	6	6	1	-	1
Assessment/appraisal	34	33	25	24	16
Child protection	55	52	36	58	54
Classification	16	30	2	6	5
Conditions	17	27	7	13	5
Disputes/grievance procedures	9	11	6	10	2
Enterprise agreements/awards	25	13	1	3	5
General protection		2	2	1	2
Harassment/discrimination/staff conflict	45	35	22	36	14
Leave: annual/maternity/sick/ long service/other	22	18	10	12	7
Letters of appointment	8	4	3	8	6
Money	20	27	16	16	19
Work health & safety	3	2	3	2	2
Promotions positions	2	2	3	1	1
Redundancy/amalgamation/ closure/redeployment	43	47	12	19	17
(Forced) retirement	1		-	-	-
Superannuation		1	-	2	1
Temporary appointment	2	14	2	3	1
(Threat) termination/suspension/dismissal	55	58	36	39	54
Transfer (forced)	-	-	2	-	-
Workers compensation	11	10	3	14	13
Total	374	392	192	267	225

Recovery of money

Monies recovered for the year September 2023 to September 2024 were \$2,322,297.

Workers compensation

The union referred 23 members to the union's solicitors for advice regarding disputed workers

compensation claims this year. As well, some 46 members have ongoing workers compensation matters.

Twenty members were referred to the union's solicitors under the Legal Benefits Scheme.

List of agreements

Multi-enterprise agreements

Christian Schools NSW (Teachers) Multi-Enterprise Agreement 2023
Christian Schools NSW (Support and Operational Staff) Multi-Enterprise Agreement 2023
Catholic Schools Broken Bay Principals Enterprise Agreement 2024
NSW & ACT Catholic Systemic Schools Principals Enterprise Agreement 2024
NSW & ACT Catholic Systemic Schools Enterprise Agreement 2023
NSW Catholic Independent Schools (Support Staff - Model A) Multi-Enterprise Agreement 2023
NSW Catholic Independent Schools (Teachers-Model A) Multi-Enterprise Agreement 2023
Christian Community Ministries Schools Enterprise Agreement 2024
NSW Catholic Independent Schools (Support Staff - Model B) Multi-Enterprise Agreement 2023
NSW Catholic Independent Schools (Teachers-Model B) Multi-Enterprise Agreement 2023
NSW Catholic Independent Schools (Support Staff-Model C) Multi-Enterprise Agreement 2023
NSW Catholic Independent Schools (Teachers-Model C) Multi-Enterprise Agreement 2023
Principals (Archdiocese of Sydney) Enterprise Agreement 2024
Support Staff (Daramalan College, Marist College Canberra, and St Edmund's College, Canberra) Multi-Enterprise Agreement 2023

Individual school agreements

Anglican Schools Commission Inc. NSW Enterprise Agreement 2023
St Lucy's School (Support and Operational Staff) Enterprise Agreement 2023
St Lucy's School (Teachers) Enterprise Agreement 2023

English colleges

Taylors College Waterloo Campus Enterprise Agreement 2024
The Navitas Skilled Futures NSW & ACT Enterprise Agreement 2024-2025
UNSW College Education (Teaching Employees) Agreement 2023
UTS College English Language Teachers Enterprise Agreement

Early childhood education and care

Berala Jack and Jill Pre-School Kindergarten Inc. Employee Agreement 2023
Berkeley Vale Preschool Staff Agreement 2023
Bexley Jack and Jill Preschool Inc. Employee Enterprise Agreement
Canterbury Community Childcare Centre Agreement 2023
Como Preschool Kindergarten Association Inc. Employee Enterprise Agreement 2023
Concord West Rhodes Preschool Teachers Agreement 2023
Kellyville Preschool Teachers' Agreement 2023
Kenthurst Preschool Teachers Enterprise Agreement 2023
Koala Playschool Inc. Employee Enterprise Agreement 2023
Lismore Preschool Incorporated Teachers Enterprise Employee Enterprise Agreement 2023
Narrabeen Community Kindergarten Employee Agreement 2023
Pennant Hills War Memorial Children's Centre Association Inc. Teachers Collective Agreement 2024
Singleton Pre School Inc. Teachers' Enterprise Agreement 2023
The Arndu St Paul's Preschool Enterprise Agreement 2023
The Burgmann Anglican School Early Learning Agreement 2023
The Jack and Jill Kindergarten Inc. Employee Agreement 2023

Early childhood education and care

Enterprise agreements

Goodstart Early Learning

Bargaining for the new Goodstart Early Learning agreement began in the latter half of 2023 and continues at the time of writing. The log of claims aims to reduce workload and teacher burnout.

So far, Goodstart has rejected all the union's claims except for a working party to review teacher workloads.

Bargaining stalled from May to September while Goodstart waited on the federal government's decision on the supported bargaining application.

The federal government announced the funding for higher wages in August and Goodstart was ready to recommence bargaining.

In June, the union received responses to our claims for Christmas closure and inclusion support. The proposal for Christmas makes it easier for staff to take leave with the addition of a 10% shift loading for those who work during the Christmas week. The union agreed in principle, but suggested the shift loading should be 17.5%, the same as the current leave loading. Also, as part of the proposal, Goodstart will trial the shutdown of some services in 2025.

Goodstart's response to our claim for a review into inclusion support is a provision in the enterprise agreement. This would make it clear that moving teachers and educators from Inclusion Support funded positions into ratios should only be a

last resort when other staffing options to cover absences have been exhausted.

KU Children's Services

After more than 90 per cent of members rejected KU's 'final offer', KU returned to the bargaining table with a revised offer, meeting the union's claims for non-contact time for directors and educational leaders.

Agreement was reached for the *KU Children's Services Teachers Agreement*, which includes 4% increases to salaries and allowances in 2024, 2025 and 2026. Directors' office time will be increased to a minimum of two days per week plus 15 discretionary days per year that can be used to complete enrolments, funding applications for children with additional needs and Transition to School statements.

Educational leaders will be allocated four hours per week non-contact time. Teachers' programming/planning time increases to five hours per week.

KU centres will have two child-free days per year, five days paid leave for declared disasters and five days paid leave for declared pandemics. They will also have two days of paid cultural leave for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees and four weeks of paid gender affirmation leave. KU will offer a 20 per cent discount on the gap fee for its employees whose children attend KU long day care centres.



IEU Vice President Early Childhood Services Michelle Thompson addresses a rally and media at the Fair Work Commission as the union filed a supported bargaining application for staff in community preschools on 5 July.



The Unite for Change campaign launch for pay rises for staff in community preschools on 5 April in Sydney.

Western Sydney University Early Learning Services Agreement has been reached for the *Western Sydney University Early Learning Services (WSUELS) Enterprise Agreement*, including 5% above award rates of pay with a 4% increase in July 2024, 3% in July 2025 and 3% in July 2026 and the introduction of an educational leader allowance.

Teachers will receive one additional paid day of leave to be taken during the end of year closedown; an increase to 17 days of personal leave per year; an increase in long service leave to 10 weeks after 10 years of service and up to 14 weeks of paid parental leave at the minimum wage rate.

In addition, Transition to School Statements will be completed during rostered hours and 16 hours of non-contact time will be provided for Provisionally Accredited Teachers to assist them to gain Proficient Teacher Accreditation.

Mission Australia

Negotiations reached a sudden end for the Mission Australia enterprise agreement. Mission Australia's offer includes: applying the national wage case outcome percentage to salaries each year; allowances to be in line with the award rates; pay for teachers to attend professional development and first aid training; a maximum of 38 hours per year of meetings/out-of-hours events; 13.5 minutes programming time per child per week and an additional seven minutes per child per week for children who attract disability inclusion funding; a paid 50-minute break per day (30-minutes paid lunch break and a 20-minute tea break); 12 days of paid personal leave per year and 11 weeks paid parental leave.

Unite for Change preschool campaign

The IEU launched a campaign for better pay and conditions in community-based preschools in NSW. The 'Unite for Change' campaign aims to bring employees, employers, and the NSW government together to lift pay and conditions in our sector and solve the workforce crisis. We are relying on new workplace laws to access a new stream of enterprise bargaining, called supported bargaining.

On Friday 5 April 2024, about 20 teacher and director members attended the launch as campaign

ambassadors. During the launch event, we heard from Australian Education Union Victorian Vice President of Early Childhood Cara Nightingale about the AEU's success in gaining pay parity with teachers in schools and improved conditions (such as 12.5 hours of programming and planning time per week) for early childhood teachers.

This was achieved through an enterprise agreement, the *Victorian Early Childhood Teachers and Educators Agreement (VECTEA)*, negotiated between the union, preschools and the Victorian government. We hope to follow a similar coordinated approach. Since the campaign launch, more than 100 NSW community preschools were named on the supported bargaining application. The application was filed on 5 July.

Long day care supported bargaining

The union continued to attend case conferences throughout 2024 to negotiate a supported bargaining agreement with the representatives of 64 employers, including G8, CELA (representing not-for-profit services and the Australian Childcare Alliance).

On 7 August, the federal government announced it would fund a 15% pay increase (10% from December 2024 and a further 5% from December 2025) for teachers and educators working in long day care services. The pay increase is a direct result of the supported bargaining application made by the IEU, Australian Education Union and United Workers Union. The next case conference was from 26-28 August in Melbourne.

Early Childhood Education and Care Council

The Council had four meetings during 2024, three in-person meetings and one via Teams. Councillors supported the launch of the Unite for Change Campaign and informed the union on relevant issues in early education, including shortages and workloads.

During the year, Council heard from a range of guest speakers, including IEUA Assistant Federal Secretary Veronica Yewdall. Council also assisted Veronica with the Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority (ACECQA) information sheets (see next page).

The IEU media and communications team worked with the group on the early childhood education and care Facebook group and ideas for the regular eNewsletter. Morgan Houston from HESTA spoke to the Council about superannuation.

Professional development and conferences

In March, Early Childhood Services, Training and Professional Development delivered a webinar on sleep and rest to 55 members. In July, 186 members attended two hours of NESA-accredited PD facilitated by Meryn Develyn on numeracy and thinking skills for 3-5-year-olds.

The early childhood team attended five training sessions on organising skills with Alison Rudman. The practical exercises, including recruitment and identifying and developing activists, supported the Unite for Change campaign.

Committees and round tables: NESA

ECEC organiser Lisa James is the representative for the NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA) Early Childhood Reference Group. Responsibilities include consulting on reforms to teacher accreditation, including the introduction of the new NSW Teacher Evidence Guide in 2024 and the transition process for early childhood teachers as NESA moves to training accreditation supervisors in small and stand-alone workplaces.

ACECQA information sheets

ECEC organisers Kate Damo and Lisa James provided feedback to Veronica Yewdall who worked with ACECQA to clarify what is - and is not - required for compliance with the National Quality Framework (NQF) and National Law documentation of the educational program.

The NQF was implemented in 2012, and the quantity and type of documentation demanded of teachers has intensified over time, increasing teacher/director workloads.

ACECQA published information sheets on the documentation required under the NQF on the educational program in July. We encourage members to share these information sheets and use them to review the amount of documentation in their service and for assessment and ratings visits. They are available online, as well as published in *Bedrock*, our early childhood magazine, which will be sent to members in November.

Authorised officers should be familiar with the information sheets and operate within the advice contained in them during centre visits. They should also have adequate training and experience in early childhood pedagogy to recognise how the learning cycle (including critical reflection) is demonstrated through the program/learning plans without the need for lengthy explanatory texts.

ORIMA Research

Organiser Lisa James assisted our federal office by meeting with research firm ORIMA. They were contracted by the federal Department of Education in July regarding their proposed surveys on workforce issues, including professional recognition,

attraction and retention, leadership, capability and wellbeing.

JSA Early Childhood Education and Care Capacity Study

ECEC organiser Tina Smith attended a meeting with Jobs and Skills Australia in March to provide information on a number of issues. These include increases in workloads, workforce attrition, low remuneration and impacts of housing and transport costs on the ability to attract qualified employees, in addition to the need to raise the profile of the ECEC sector and articulate clear career pathways.

National Model Code

Lisa was interviewed by Ros Childs on ABC News on 11 December 2023 regarding the proposal to address child safe practices for the use of electronic devices while providing early childhood education and care. Under the Model Code, teachers and educators are prevented from having personal mobile devices in their possession while working with children, except for essential purposes, such as communication in an emergency or for personal health requirements. The union welcomed the decision that only service-issued electronic devices are to be used to take images or videos of children in ECEC settings, with members having expressed concerns regarding using personal devices for work purposes.

Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership

Lisa and Veronica met with the Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL) in July regarding a national system for early childhood teacher registration/accreditation. These include resources that are helpful for demonstrating how the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers are applied in ECEC settings, challenges with the accreditation/registration system in NSW, such as the lack of an adequate number of accreditation supervisors, and difficulties accessing mentors in small services where the Provisionally Accredited Teacher may be the only qualified teacher employed.

Thrive by Five

As a partner of Thrive by Five, the union continues to support the Thrive by Five Workforce Action plan.

Goodstart Lobbying Day at Parliament House, Canberra

On 28 February, a joint delegation from the IEU, UWU and AEU, with representatives from Goodstart Early Learning, met with federal Minister for Early Childhood Education Dr Anne Aly and Education Minister Jason Clare about the need for professional recognition for early childhood professionals through a pay rise. Teachers and educators also had the opportunity to share their stories with Labor politicians Sally Sitou, MP for Reid; Lisa Chesters, MP for Bendigo; Senator Jess Walsh (Victoria); Senator Karen Grogan (South Australia); and Patrick Gorman MP for Perth.

Teachers in Department of Health centres

The IEU settled underpayment claims with two health districts, totalling more than \$90,000 on behalf of teachers who were not paid for their lunch breaks despite this being a clear entitlement in their award. The IEU also rejected the NSW government offer of 3% pay increases per year for three years and the award was listed in mid-August. There are many issues the IEU sought to have addressed in the award, including poor rates of pay, no educational leader allowance and a lack of non-contact time for directors and educational leaders.

KU

KU attempted to schedule their preschool terms, with non-term time overlapping with school holidays in only five out of 11 weeks without consultation.

This was a significant workforce change as it meant teachers would work when their school-age children were on holidays, then teachers would be on holidays while their school-age children were attending school. KU initially refused to reconsider their term dates until the IEU advised them that it would lodge a dispute at the Fair Work Commission if the situation was not resolved. The IEU met with KU to discuss our concerns in detail and term dates were adjusted to correspond with school terms as a result.

Kate Damo, Lisa James, Tina Smith Organisers

Support and operational staff



Support staff members and industrial officers at the IEU's Council meeting on 17 August.

Catholic diocesan schools

The employers reached an interim settlement on wage parity for school support staff in May 2023. Under the settlement, school administrative employees and classroom/learning support staff received the wage parity adjustment that arose from the NSW public sector pay equity case, as well as the 4% public sector increase from 1 July.

This provided school administrative, classroom and learning support employees with increases of between 10.2% and 27.5%, most of which was back paid until January 2023. All operational services employees received the additional 4% July increase. These gains were on top of the 2.54% wage uplift the employers paid in January 2023.

The interim settlement was formalised, and its terms were incorporated into the *NSW and ACT Catholic Systemic Schools Enterprise Agreement 2023*, which was ratified on 21 December 2023.

Given the complexity of the translocation and back pay calculations, some staff experienced considerable delays in receiving back pay. Many members sought assistance from union officers in assessing their back pay and ensuring they were correctly reclassified. Several administrative staff sought guidance when applying for reclassification to Level 5.

The wage uplift also impacted groups of support staff employees falling outside of the agreement, including those working in diocesan offices and those providing services such as information computer technology and student wellbeing.

Independent schools

The improved rates of pay achieved for support staff in Catholic systemic schools formed the benchmark

for negotiations for Catholic independent schools' multi-enterprise agreements during Term 4 2023.

The rates and new classifications were incorporated into the three NSW Catholic independent school multi-enterprise agreements to align with the parity adjustment, with additional annual increases of 4% or 5% for the next three years.

The new pay rates are also used as the benchmark for negotiations for a new agreement for support staff working in independent schools in NSW and the ACT.

The union's log of claims focuses on the pay disparity across all occupational streams when compared to the same roles in the government and non-government sectors and the outdated and ineffective classification structure of the current enterprise agreement.

Members across several occupational streams are seeking recognition for the value of the work they undertake, especially in early childhood services attached to independent schools, and those holding professional roles in laboratories, as well as library and information management and technology.

Learning support staff working in schools for specific purposes are also an area of focus, particularly around the issues associated with supervision and workplace health and safety when teachers are not present.

Industrial agreements

The union negotiated several enterprise agreements covering the terms of employment for support and operational staff during the 2023-24 year. For details of these agreements, please see the Industrial annexure in this report.

Member participation

Support staff activists have continued to provide guidance and support to officers about addressing the industrial and professional needs of non-teaching members, regularly informing union officers about issues as they arise.

Seven support staff members have been elected to IEU Council and there are two support staff members on the Executive. There is a range of representation from occupations and schools in various sectors and regions.

There are 82 support staff reps, five of whom are Indigenous. These reps support members and promote the union. Numerous support staff reps have participated in reps training sessions.

World Support Staff Day

International World Support Staff Day is celebrated on 16 May. Union members were encouraged to host a morning tea to celebrate the vital role support staff play in their schools. The official theme, established by Education International, was around ensuring recognition and appreciation of the incredible contribution support staff make to quality education, and demanding adequate salaries and quality working conditions, through governments fully funding education.

The IEU acknowledged the day for members in a video message, focusing on how teaching and learning couldn't happen without the hard work and dedication of support staff, and how our members are making a difference in their schools by becoming informed, active and engaged. We invited members to share photos of their celebrations.

Communications

Using a new email newsletter platform, Campaign Monitor, the IEU continues to send regular, targeted communications to our support staff members.

Our messages contain alerts, opportunities and news relevant to support and operational staff members. We encourage members to share these messages with their colleagues who may not be members as a way of promoting the benefits of the union. They supplement our publications, social media and website.

Articles on matters relevant to support staff are included in editions of *Newsmoth* and *IE*.

Social media is one of the primary tools for communication. As well as the IEU's Facebook page, the Facebook group for support staff members has seen good growth and activity over the past year.

The group currently has 466 members. It is an invaluable way to communicate directly with our support staff members, allowing for quick distribution of information. The format also allows for the sharing of member stories and experiences. It also enables them to ask questions and access information directly from the union in a safe and supportive format.

The group's administrators produce content, refer matters and seek advice from other officers. (See also the Media and communications annexure).

Training opportunities

The IEU Support Staff Conference is a key event for our support staff members. Planning for the

2024 conference commenced in 2023. Despite the advanced planning, the Executive made the difficult decision to cancel the event in August. One month out from the scheduled event, registrations were not at the level necessary to run a successful and meaningful day for participants. We are exploring alternative opportunities for our support staff members to gather, learn and share.

Membership

There has been minimal change in all sectors of our membership; however, membership data shows support staff numbers showing a marginal increase of 1.7% (78 new members) during 2023-24.

Support staff membership statistics at the time of publication were:

Category	NSW/ACT
Systemic schools	2988
Independent schools	1367
Christian schools	57
ECEC	37
English & business colleges	41
CEO offices	122
Other/retired members	92
Total	4704

On 1 September 2024, there were 4582 support staff members - 14.8% of the union's overall membership.

Carolyn Moore Industrial Officer

Principals



Principals' Sub Branch meeting in August.

The Principals' Sub Branch has had an active and impactful year, marked by several key meetings and initiatives. These activities are critical in ensuring that the voices of principals across various sectors are heard, and their concerns addressed.

Meetings were held on 17 February, 11 May, and 3 August, with an additional Term 4 meeting scheduled for 9 November. These gatherings served as platforms for discussing important issues affecting school leaders and provided an opportunity for the sub branch to coordinate its efforts. Special appreciation is extended to the officers who participated in these meetings, especially for their support on matters concerning NSW and ACT diocesan principals.

Throughout the past year, the sub branch has facilitated union principals' gatherings across multiple dioceses. These gatherings have been instrumental in bringing together principals from Wagga Wagga, Lismore, Maitland-Newcastle, and Sydney dioceses.

These meetings have not only fostered a sense of community among school leaders but served as a crucial forum for addressing common challenges and sharing best practices. During Term 4 2023, the sub branch embarked on a comprehensive consultation program across each of the 11 dioceses.

This initiative was aimed at collating the concerns and claims of principals in preparation for the upcoming negotiations for the three enterprise agreements (EAs). The feedback gathered during these consultations has been invaluable in shaping the union's approach to the negotiations.

The sub branch is proud to report that membership continues to grow among principals in non-Catholic schools, including Islamic and Christian schools. This expansion reflects the broader relevance of our work and ability to advocate for principals across different educational settings.

The sub branch has maintained regular communication with principal members in special schools, such as Aspect, through teleconferences

conducted over the past 12 months. These interactions have provided essential support and guidance to principals dealing with unique challenges in their respective educational environments.

The union extends its gratitude to Noeleen O'Neill, Anthony Weir and Peter Webster for their exemplary leadership of the sub branch executive. Their dedication has been pivotal in advancing the sub branch's agenda and ensuring that principals' voices are heard at the highest levels of the union.

The contributions of Council delegates Noeleen O'Neill, David Johns, David Crawford and Anthony Weir are highly valued. Their insights and advocacy have influenced the union's policy direction and actions on behalf of principals.

Since its launch in 2016, the *Headlines* eNewsletter has provided regular updates on issues relevant to principals and other school leaders. This communication tool has become an essential resource for keeping members informed about developments in the education sector and the sub branch's ongoing efforts.

The IEU's media and communications team has recently adopted a new platform, Campaign Monitor, to communicate with members, ensuring messages are relevant and timely. (See also the Media and communications annexure.)

Catholic systemic negotiations

The EAs for principal members in Catholic systemic schools were due for renegotiation in October 2023, making this a key focus for the sub branch meetings over the past 12 months.

A noteworthy development during this period was the Broken Bay Diocese's decision to withdraw from the *NSW/ACT Catholic Systemic Schools Principals Enterprise Agreement 2021-2022* and pursue a stand-alone agreement. After considerable negotiations, a two-year agreement was reached, offering salary increases of 4% in the first year and a minimum 3% adjustment in July 2025.

This agreement was overwhelmingly endorsed by Broken Bay principals, highlighting the effectiveness of the sub branch's negotiation efforts.

Sydney Catholic Schools (SCS) also continues to offer a stand-alone agreement for principals in its 151 primary and secondary schools. This agreement, like the *NSW/ACT Catholic Systemic Schools Principals Enterprise Agreement 2024*, expired on 9 October 2024. In preparation for the next round of negotiations, a draft principals' claim was being developed as this report went to press.

Discussions will commence in Term 4 2024 with principal members and Catholic employers to

progress these negotiations. Key issues identified by principal members for the upcoming EA negotiations are:

- A genuine employer commitment to wellbeing, with specific practical measures to support principals. There is growing evidence that principals are increasingly dealing with difficult student and parent situations, including instances of threatened or actual physical violence. Principals have requested that Codes of Conduct for parents/carers be developed and implemented across all dioceses.
- Addressing classification and remuneration issues, such as correcting current anomalies in the salaries of principals in smaller primary schools within the Sydney Archdiocese. Additionally, the implications of emerging leadership models, such as 'school networks' in the Sydney Archdiocese or 'co-principals' in primary schools in some regional dioceses, need to be carefully considered.
- Greater clarity and consistency regarding principals' access to professional development opportunities, as these provisions vary greatly from diocese to diocese.
- More support staff to assist with the work of schools.
- Increased release for promotions positions to allow for the aggregation and incorporation of the complex expectations placed on individual school leadership teams.

Independent schools

The union has also been supporting principals in independent schools, including those in Christian, Islamic, special needs, and other independent institutions. These efforts have focused on a range of concerns, such as:

- raising awareness and ensuring the enforcement of current industrial provisions within schools
- assisting principals with issues related to letters of appointment and employment contracts
- addressing school governance challenges, particularly in relation to dealings with school boards and councils, and
- providing support for restructuring and redundancy concerns.

Workload and wellbeing

In various surveys on work intensification, principals have consistently highlighted the need for measures to address workload pressures for both them and their staff. These needs include:

- improved access to professional support and assistance in areas such as finance, staffing, and information and communications technology (ICT)
- additional allocation of executive/administrative assistance for principals
- better support in dealing with challenging students and families when difficulties arise, and
- assistance in managing the lack of consultation around the introduction of initiatives such as casual staff management.

The 2024 Australian Catholic University Australian Principals Health and Wellbeing Survey is available online, and the IEU has encouraged its principal

members to participate. The data collected from this survey will be critical in informing future advocacy efforts to address workload and wellbeing concerns.

In response to these issues, the IEU acknowledges the general improvement of all wellbeing policies for diocesan principals, as this has provided some additional resourcing, support, and initiatives to address principals' wellbeing concerns. These policies represent a positive step towards creating a more sustainable working environment for school leaders.

Dispute resolution and support

Over the past year, the IEU has been involved in the resolution of numerous disputes relating to individual principals in various Catholic and independent schools. The outcomes of these disputes have varied, including continuation in the current position with appropriate support, alternative principal positions, transfers to other roles with some form of salary maintenance, various leave arrangements, and financial settlements.

The union has engaged in discussions with SCS and Parramatta, Lismore, Wagga Wagga, and Wollongong dioceses regarding a range of specific issues raised by principals. These discussions have covered topics such as staff relations, dealing with difficult parents, and concerns about employment terms and conditions, and performance reviews.

Educational and professional issues

The sub branch has remained engaged with a range of educational and professional issues throughout the year. These include:

- advocating for adequate funding and resourcing of schools
- engaging with the NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA) on matters such as school registration, teacher accreditation and maintenance, and concerns regarding the suspension and revocation process
- supporting students with disabilities and other special needs, particularly in relation to funding and the Nationally Consistent Collection of Data process, and
- addressing cyber safety concerns for staff and students, including social media attacks on principals by parents and community members.

Lyn Caton Principals' Organiser/Assistant Secretary

ELICOS

It was another year of stabilisation in the post-secondary sector, the area of education made up of ELICOS (English colleges), business schools, vocational education and training (VET) colleges and community colleges, following the effects of the pandemic and associated border closures.

The sector faces a new challenge, with the federal government lowering numbers of international students (who, as always, make a large proportion of international arrivals), putting a massive squeeze on the post-pandemic recovery.

Membership saw minor growth during 2024, with overall membership edging up to 212. This included some 61 new members; however, 35 former members resigned, mostly because they left the sector. Despite this effective flatlining of membership numbers, this is an improvement on recent years, which have often seen a decline.

ELICOS still makes up the lion's share of membership, with 109 members, though VET colleges are probably the fastest-growing sub-sector, with 61 members at the time of writing.

Proactive approach

In 2024, organisers have taken a more proactive approach to engaging with the sector, making several right-of-entry visits to various colleges to

talk about the benefits of IEU membership and seek feedback from staff about how best to serve the sector. These calls have had some effect, with some new joins coming after these visits.

The bulk of membership in the sector remains at the large colleges, primarily UTS College, UNSW College, Taylors College, and Navitas Skilled Futures. The union has been able to engage with members at each of these colleges in 2024, with enterprise bargaining taking place (see the Industrial annexure for details about these agreements).

Sadly, the sector is still rife with sharp practices, and the IEU has assisted several members with unfair dismissal and general protections claims. Given how close to the wind some colleges sail regarding their industrial obligations, this element of the IEU's work will be ongoing.

We are well-placed to build on membership in 2025.

Kendall Warren Organiser

Membership statistics

Member Type/School Category

Teachers

Early childhood centres	1086
ELICOS/Business colleges	207
Miscellaneous/IEU	46
Non-systemic schools	8,226
Principals	542
Systemic schools	14,346
Unemployed/Leave without pay/Parental/Retire/Life	1,278
Without category	303

Subtotal	26,034
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Support staff

Early childhood centres	44
ELICOS/Business colleges	22
Miscellaneous/IEU	19
Non-systemic schools	1,449
Systemic schools	2,996
Unemployed/Leave without pay/Parental/Retire/Life	73
Without category	34

Subtotal	4,637
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Students

Students	319
Subtotal	319

Grand total	30,990
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Members by classification	
Classification	Number of members
Teacher	
Full time	17,268
Part time	5,990
Casual/extended casual	1,426
Leave without pay/parental leave	542
Unemployed	167
Retire	630
Support staff	
Full time	1,957
Part time	2,526
Casual	80
Leave without pay/parental leave	19
Unemployed	19
Retire	37
Trainee	1
Exempt from dues	
Students	319
Life	9
Total members	30,990

Schools by category	
Systemic schools	621
Students	95
Non-systemic schools	609
ELICOS/Business colleges	553
Early childhood centres	3616
Miscellaneous/IEU	3
Total schools	5,497

Members and Schools by Branch										
Sub Branches - City										
	Schools	Members	EC Centres	Members	Colleges	Member	Other	Members	Total Schools	Total Members
Central Coast	40	859	130	24	2	0	0	0	172	883
Central Metropolitan	94	2,040	264	100	229	63	4	1	591	2,204
Cumberland	87	2,491	292	41	34	13	0	0	413	2,545
Ku-Ring-Gai	50	1,055	144	59	11	3	0	0	205	1,117
Lansdowne	92	2,361	281	26	34	10	0	0	407	2,397
Metropolitan East	59	1,293	158	44	24	49	0	0	241	1,386
Northern Beaches	38	611	126	37	11	4	0	0	175	652
Northern Suburbs	60	1,224	208	87	31	3	0	0	299	1,314
Penrith/Blue Mountains	78	1,786	212	34	12	1	0	0	302	1,821
Southern Suburbs	60	1,726	279	100	14	6	0	0	353	1,832
Total City Schools	3,158									
Total Members in City Schools	16,151									
Sub Branches - Regional										
	Schools	Members	EC Centres	Members	Colleges	Member	Other	Members	Total Schools	Total Members
ACT/Monaro Branch	66	1,473	97	33	13	4	0	0	176	1,510
Central Western	90	1,186	146	39	4	1	0	0	240	1,226
Hunter Valley	120	2,719	305	137	30	4	0	0	455	2,860
Mid North Coast	50	932	121	27	3	0	0	0	174	959
North Coast	60	1,024	122	56	8	1	0	0	190	1,081
North West	45	743	102	23	2	0	0	0	149	766
Riverina	55	1,036	124	71	7	3	0	0	186	1,110
South Coast	96	2,723	394	105	25	2	0	0	515	2,830
South East	45	732	112	42	3	0	0	0	160	774
Total Regional Schools	2,245									
Total Members in Regional Schools	13,116									
Sub Branches - General										
	University	Members							Total Schools	Total Members
Principals		542							-	542
Students	94	319							94	319
Unemployed		186							-	186
Retired		667							-	667
Other/Life		9							-	9
Total general schools (university)	94									
Total members in general schools (university)	1,723									
Grand Total (Schools)	5,497									
Grand Total (Members)	30,990									

All school visits by category	
Systemic schools	688
Students	3
Non-systemic schools	651
ELICOS/Business colleges	25
Early childhood centres	176
Total schools	1,543

Recruitment and organising

A recent survey of 12 affiliated unions conducted by the ACTU found that people were most likely to join their union and maintain their membership if their union had a visible presence in their workplace.

In such workplaces, members were likely to recommend the advantages of union membership and invite new staff to join. Respondents nominated the following top four ways to increase union visibility in the workplace:

1. meetings were held regularly in my workplace for union members
2. union members met and raised issues where necessary
3. union meetings were held when a representative of the union office came to my workplace, and
4. someone shared union information in my workplace from time to time.

The study confirmed the importance of having a union representative in the workplace recommending their union to other potential members.

None of this comes as a surprise to the IEU and confirms our long-held belief that reps are critical, and chapters need to be active and visible.

High visibility

The IEU is highly visible in many of our workplaces. Current union updates and membership forms are easy to locate on prominent union noticeboards. Copies of *Newsmonth* can be found in numerous staff rooms. Union meetings are held regularly. Active IEU reps and activists speak to members and non-members about industrial and professional issues impacting their work.

There are other workplaces where the union is not visible, where meetings are not regularly held and where we do not have a rep. Collectively, we need to see this as a challenge and an opportunity rather than a problem.

Understandably, busy members are often reluctant to take on another role and put their hand up to be reps. Thankfully, realising that change cannot happen without active engagement, there is usually a member who stands up to support their colleagues and their profession. In well-organised workplaces, they are supported by their colleagues and chapter committees are formed. Where a support staff member joins the chapter committee and/or becomes a rep, this only helps improve visibility and representation for a broader section of our membership.

Finding time for a chapter meeting can be difficult but such meetings are clearly important. Organisers

are encouraged to schedule meetings at times that suit potential members as well as existing members in support and administration roles.

We need to stand up for what we believe in, and we need to be seen to be doing it. Visibility increases our collective strength to achieve positive change.

Membership growth and reps' training

Net growth for the past 12 months has been patchy. We have had gains in both teacher and support staff membership in Catholic systemic schools and strong growth in independent schools as members engage with negotiations for a new agreement.

Unfortunately, we have fallen back in other areas, such as in the Principals' Sub Branch and Catholic independent schools. We have fewer student members than last year. For more details, see the tertiary initiatives section over the page.

Membership has fallen ever so slightly in the metropolitan sub branches. This has been offset through growth in the regional sub branches.

Collectively, we continue to recruit well, but retention is difficult with an ageing workforce and an increasing number of members resigning citing financial reasons.

As part of our member retention efforts, the membership team make multiple attempts to contact lapsed members and encourage them to renew or provide a reason for not keeping their membership. Organisers and reps often assist the membership team in this work.

Of those who have resigned in 2024, all but 3.3% have provided a reason for leaving the union (4.2% last year). The top four reasons for leaving the IEU in 2024 are:

1. retirement (22.4% - up 3.3% on last year's figures)
2. no longer working in the education sector/left teaching (17% of all resignations - down 2.1%)
3. financial reasons (14.8% - up 1.3%)
4. gone to the public sector/not in non-government sector/left current workplace (13.5% - down 2.5%).

Keeping our union strong is a collective responsibility. New delegates' rights, introduced as part of the Closing Loopholes legislation, provide opportunities for unions to grow and improve our capacity for a better and fairer deal for workers.

The attendance levels of reps at IEU training days in 2024 has exceeded the pre-pandemic number seen in 2019.

At each of the reps' training days I have attended, it is encouraging to hear attendees discussing their commitment to the union and strategies for increasing membership density at their workplace.

A team effort

The IEU acknowledges every IEU rep and member who has taken the time to speak with a potential member and explain to them the importance of union membership. We also thank every rep and activist who has reached out to their organiser and arranged a chapter meeting.

Thank you to the union's organisers, whose work is critically important in supporting members and making the union's presence visible in workplaces. Turning an inactive chapter into a well-organised workplace is our mission and can only be done with the assistance of reps and members.

The IEU takes investing in the capacity of our organisers seriously. The organising section below details some of our initiatives in this regard.

Thanks also to our industrial officers whose work is vital to progressing our campaigns and whose support of individual members at critical times in their working lives is invaluable.

Similarly, the work done by our media and communications team is fundamental in lifting the profile of the union and the impact of our campaigning. Our media profile improves year on year with requests for radio and television interviews along with requests for comment from newspapers (metropolitan, suburban and regional) and other emerging news sources increasing all the time.

Likewise, our social media reach continues to grow as does traffic to our website. The production of high-quality publications and other resources is invaluable in assisting organisers, reps and activists to reach existing and potential members. Thank you to the team. (See the Media and communications annexure for more details.)

I would like to acknowledge Jody Clifford and Syeda Sultana, who jointly coordinate our membership department. Jody, Syeda, Karren and Margaret ensure our recruitment and retention processes are continually improved. Their work in improving payment options and the innovation of the call centre is already improving our capacity. Along with our administration staff, the team works diligently to contact members who have become unfinancial, retaining many and improving our data. Thank you.

In 2024, we celebrate the 70th anniversary of the formation of our union. It is an appropriate time to take stock of our growth and achievements over the past seven decades and to consider how best to ready ourselves for the challenges of the future.

I would like to acknowledge the Executive, who decided to engage the services of an external facilitator to develop a strategic plan that will help the union determine how we can best modernise to take advantage of the opportunities the future holds to advance our members' interests. I believe we are well placed to do this, guided by the experience and enthusiasm of our newly minted President, Glenn Lowe, and our Secretary, Carol Matthews.

David Towson Deputy Secretary



IEU organisers at Western Sydney University's Education Day in May.

Tertiary initiatives

Student membership has grown this year as universities continue their recovery and student engagement improves. The increase in enrolments in education degrees has supported our recruitment efforts in this space, although challenges remain. Many of the universities we deal with continue to suffer from high staff turnover. This hinders our efforts at establishing productive working relationships with many of them and each year (in some cases each semester) we need to establish new contacts to facilitate visits.

This staff turnover prevented us from visiting some universities, especially in the regions, where we would usually visit. There is concern in some universities as to whether the announced cuts to international student intakes will lead to further job-cuts in this sector.

The preservice recruitment committee consists of Jennifer Tait, Peter Criticos, Josef Dabbs and Luke Breen. The committee receives strong support from the membership team in converting student members to financial members as they begin paid employment. Interest in the IEU has risen, partly due to scholarship programs from non-government employers encouraging people into the profession. We may need to consider whether our membership categories are adequate for the increasing number of students who are commencing paid employment in schools prior to completing their degrees.

Our reps and active members play a critical role in recruiting students as they complete their practicums, and many are already working in schools before finishing their studies and final practicums. All members have a responsibility to invite student teachers to join the union. With free membership on offer it should not be a particularly hard sell. Student teachers should also be invited to chapter meetings where possible so their education in 'union' gets off to a good start.

Visits to universities this year included: Western Sydney University, Australian Catholic University, Notre Dame University, University of New South Wales, and the University of Canberra.

In terms of recruitment, the most successful visit was to Western Sydney University, where the university organises an excellent EdFest at Parramatta, drawing in students from all its campuses. The University of Newcastle event will be held later this year.

The early childhood education and care (ECEC) team have actively recruited pre-service preschool teachers by attending and presenting lectures at Western Sydney University and Wollongong University. In December 2023, IEU organiser Tina Smith was invited by the Professional Experience Coordinator for Early Childhood at the University of Sydney to speak to about 50 early childhood interns.

The presentation was well received, with a student survey citing it was identified as a presentation among the most valued sessions across the two-day careers event. Tina was invited back to talk with third-year early childhood students in October 2024 and again in December to discuss the benefits of union membership and how to navigate employment contracts and workplaces.

In 2025, we will redouble our efforts to ensure the IEU has a presence in all the universities in NSW and the ACT.

Peter Criticos Organiser

Organising

Organising for Power (O4P), an international core fundamentals program, took place over six consecutive Wednesdays in May and June this year. Seven NSW/ACT organisers connected with participants from IEU branches across Australia to focus on our educational context.

The collaboration across the branches started before the first module, continued in breakout sessions attached to the main plenary and was taken

even further with regular debrief and campaign-sharing sessions after the online training component had been completed.

This extensive training focused on five core organising fundamentals:

- leader identification and assessing who is best placed to move people in a workplace
- semantics and using language to activate each worker's participation
- structured organising conversations to recruit and engage identified leaders
- charting and mapping out the social relationships in a workplace to maximise union reach, and
- structured tests or mini campaigns to build solidarity and site structure.

In October, two organisers from the IEU's VicTas branch presented to our officers at a workshop in the practical applications of the O4P program.

The VicTas branch will host the IEUA organising forum and workshop in November. A delegation of NSW/ACT organisers will attend and continue the work that has been undertaken by the federal committee on member onboarding and retention, organising around the right to disconnect laws, and mapping member journeys.

Officers also participate in training modules offered by the Australian Trade Union Institute, the training arm of the ACTU. They have also been meeting briefly online on the last Tuesday of each month to provide an opportunity for experienced and newer organisers to problem solve and support each other.

Sue McKay Organising Coordinator

Professional engagement

Progress made

This year has been busy and productive for the professional engagement team. Several NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA) decisions, for which we have lobbied hard, became a reality.

Where the focus of 2023 was to reclaim the professional voice of teachers, in 2024, at least in part, that voice is being heard.

Engagement with peak bodies

As a result of her ongoing role with the federal office, Assistant Federal Secretary Veronica Yewdall has relinquished her position on the NESA Board and this vacancy has been filled by NSW/ACT Branch Deputy Secretary David Towson.

Professional Engagement Coordinator Pat Devery continues his role at the NESA committee level, with the new-look body being named the NESA Teacher Education Forum. It is hoped this forum will focus its attention more closely on teaching and learning issues the profession faces rather than the broader governance issues which were in the remit of the previous Policy Advisory Committee.

Professional development

One of the most important developments in 2024 was the welcome changes to accredited and elective professional development (PD).

Under the new improvements, teachers will no longer have to:

- complete 50 hours of accredited PD in previously mandated priority areas
- write evaluations for the PD they complete, or
- align their PD to the 37 Standard Descriptors. They now only have to align to the seven Standards of the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers.

Teachers will also be able to:

- count their compliance training mandated by employers towards their hours, as long as it aligns to the standards, and
- obtain support from NESA to identify effective PD, including access to a list of recognised PD providers.

Recognition gained

The IEU is pleased to note that we have been designated by NESA as a Recognised PD Provider, a clear acknowledgement of the fact that the PD offerings we provide are highly regarded by the profession.

The IEU has been calling for these changes for several years, and the union appreciates NSW Education Minister Prue Car's vote of confidence in the teaching profession. This new process puts

teachers back at the centre of the profession and will reduce some of the heavy workload pressures on IEU members.

This move should also have positive outcomes, especially for early childhood teachers. Where courses were previously available from private providers, they were often prohibitively expensive.

This year, we have been able to support early childhood education and care (ECEC) teachers in accessing professional development. The PD events have been highly successful, with strong attendance. We are committed to continuing this support and look forward to further developing our PD offerings for ECEC in 2025.

We have also assisted beginning teachers with our My Profession, My Career sessions, focusing on teachers who are negotiating the proficient teacher status process.

The IEU will continue to provide the 12 hours of NESA accredited PD which retains its accredited status until the end of 2024. This same PD offering is also Teacher Quality Institute (TQI) accredited, as well as an additional two hours for casual teachers which are not accredited through NESA.

We are hopeful that the improvements to the PD processes which have been gained in NSW will flow through to the ACT.

In the last months of 2024, we will conduct a review of our PD program with a view to establishing our future direction in this area (see table at the end of this annexure).

Accreditation improvements

While 2023 saw a big win for teachers with the five-year maintenance of accreditation period becoming more streamlined, the focus for 2024 was on the Highly Accomplished Lead Teacher (HALT) accreditation level.

NESA consulted the IEU with respect to improving the HALT accreditation processes. The main improvements include:

- reducing the need to provide evidence of a demonstration of Standard Descriptors from all 37 to 14 which will be mandated by NESA, and
- requiring teachers to provide evidence for a further six Standard Descriptors which can be selected by applicant.

These proposals are broadly supported by the IEU.

NSW Curriculum Syllabus Writers and Technical Advisory Groups

NESA has continued to ask the IEU to nominate members as syllabus writers and participants in Technical Advisory Groups.



NESA CEO Paul Martin addresses the IEU's 2023 AGM.

The IEU has a robust application and selection process for nominations to these advisory groups, and this is valued by NESA. If selected by NESA, members are asked to be mindful of workload considerations and negative impacts on teachers and support staff that may otherwise be overlooked.

Experienced teacher accreditation

IEU support for members undertaking Experienced Teacher accreditation with the Independent Schools Teacher Accreditation Authority (ISTAA) has continued in 2024.

Sixty-three members who were given assistance in 2023 were successful in achieving Experienced Teacher accreditation and gained a salary increase of \$14,800.

The evidence collection period for the 2024 cohort was from May 2023 to June 2024.

Most schools have taken a reasonable approach to the principal attestation and have not required members to produce unnecessary paperwork. A small number of schools have required additional classroom observations and further documentation.

In addition, five descriptors may be met by classroom observation and all members who have been assisted this year have chosen this option, as it does not require documentation or annotations.

Teachers were able to submit their portfolios between March and June and those who submitted early received their results within a short time. Some schools paid the increase in salary from when the results were received. Other schools expected applicants to wait until February 2025 to receive their Band 3 salary. There needs to be an earlier date for the salary increase.

Even though the documentation has been simplified, it is still a complex process and requires consistent work and a large time commitment to complete the evidence.

There is a need to provide intensive assistance as

the level of support remains inconsistent, with some schools providing limited assistance.

The AIS developed an updated manual for 2025 participants to further streamline the process.

Eighty-five members received assistance in 2024. Members generally prefer more regular online and phone assistance as it is more convenient. Also, they find it easier to send in documentation for one standard or a limited number of descriptors with a follow-up discussion.

In 2024, the IEU helped members from the following schools: Al Faisal College, Campbelltown; All Saints, Bathurst; Al Sadiq, Greenacre; Arkana College, Kingsgrove; Broughton Anglican College, Menangle Park; The French School, Maroubra; The International Grammar School, Ultimo; Galstaun College, Ingleside; Sydney Japanese International School, Terrey Hills; John Colet School, Belrose; Leppington Anglican College; Malek Fahd Islamic School, Greenacre; McDonald College, North Strathfield; Meriden School, Strathfield; Moriah College, Queens Park; Mt Annan Christian School; Newington College, Stanmore; Oran Park Anglican College; Pittwater House, Collaroy; Ravenswood School for Girls, Gordon; Sapphire Coast Anglican College, Bega; Scone Grammar School; The Scots College, Bellevue Hill; Scots College, Albury; Shellharbour Grammar; St Andrews Cathedral School, Sydney; St Luke's Grammar School, Dee Why; St Phillip's Christian School, Newcastle; The Illawarra Grammar School; Thomas Hassall Anglican School, Middleton Grange; Trinity Anglican College, Thurgoona; Trinity Grammar School, Summer Hill; Unity Grammar College, Austral and William Clark College, Kellyville.

Members who have completed Experienced Teacher, as in past years, are appreciative of the support provided by the IEU. Members comment that without assistance from the IEU they would not have been able to complete their accreditation.

Staff dashboard

One of the aims of the professional engagement team is to develop resources and processes to assist organisers in their work with members and schools. To that end, Professional Engagement Officer Christina Ellul has been working closely with IT officer Trong Duong in the development of a staff dashboard that provides easy access to a range of programs used by staff, as well as quick links to the newly developed IEU file plan. This has been well received by staff and we will continue to improve the capacity of the dashboard in response to feedback.

Staff changes in professional engagement

Since 2024, we have seen administrative assistant Madi Weston move on from the IEU and we wish Madi all the best in the future.

Max Furby has joined the IEU admin staff and is working closely with the professional engagement officers in a range of areas, especially in the delivery of the PD program as admin and IT support. He has also assisted in the uploading of data to the NESAs eTAMS and the TQI sites. We welcome Max and value the enthusiasm he brings to the role.

Pat Devery, Christina Ellul, Elizabeth Finlay
Professional Engagement Officers

Courses offered by the IEU in 2024	NESA	TQI	Total *
Semester 1	(NSW)	(ACT)	
Accreditation, My Career: Part 1	NA	NA	3
Managing & Responding to Extreme Behaviours in K-6 Schools	122	8	151
My Accreditation, My Career: Part 1	NA	NA	14
Thriving and Surviving for Casual Teachers	NA	5	43
Behaviour Management: Getting it Right	52	3	60
Behaviour Management: Keeping it Right	51	1	57
My Accreditation, My Career: Part 2	NA	NA	10
Behaviour Management: Making it Right	62	3	75
My Accreditation, My Career: Part 2	NA	NA	3
Behaviour Management: Upholding The Right	51	2	60
Managing Difficult Conversations in K-6 Schools	44	3	48
Semester 2			
Managing & Responding to Extreme Behaviours in K-6 Schools	26	1	30
Managing Difficult Conversations in K-6 Schools	-	-	-
Behaviour Management: Getting it Right	-	-	-

* Total number online. Some attendees did not indicate if they were NESA or TQI registered.

- Not all semester 2 data was available at the time of publication.

Union training



Reps training day in Sydney in November 2023.



Reps training day in Sydney in May.



Reps training day in Wagga Wagga in August.

After a revamp in 2023, the IEU reps training program has been warmly received by reps across NSW and the ACT.

The reps training program takes participants through the process of:

- establishing where their working rights and obligations come from
- how to discern what is and is not union business, and what might constitute an organising or recruitment opportunity
- how to support members effectively, especially when they are called to a meeting with the principal or employer, and
- how reps can activate and organise their chapters effectively.

Training is also an invaluable networking opportunity for reps as they get to workshop issues and see how they're dealt with in other schools.

The other major development in 2024 has been the implementation of the new federal delegates' rights legislation.

Under this legislation, IEU reps, as union delegates in the workplace, have a right to paid union training during normal working hours.

This has led to a renewed interest in training, as well as a financial saving to the union as we are no longer required to reimburse schools for a casual day's release for reps to attend.

Reps now have increased rights and protections in the workplace when communicating with members and potential members.

In 2024, we've run reps training courses at a variety of venues (see table, next page).

We look forward to seeing many more reps join us for this training in the coming years.

Pat Devery Professional Engagement Coordinator



Reps training day at Orange in August.



Reps training day at Sydney in April.



AIS reps training day at Sydney in May.

Date	Targeted sub branch/s	Venue	Attendance
3 April	Central Coast, Central Met, Cumberland, Ku-ring-gai, Lansdowne, Met East, Northern Beaches, Northern Suburbs, Penrith/Blue, South Coast, Southern Suburbs	IEU Wattle St, Sydney	26
8 May	Central Coast, Central Met, Cumberland, Ku-ring-gai, Lansdowne, Met East, Northern Beaches, Northern Suburbs, Penrith/Blue Mountains, South Coast, Southern Suburbs	IEU Wattle St, Sydney	27
17 May	Central Coast, Central Met, Cumberland, Ku-ring-gai, Lansdowne, Met East, Northern Beaches, Northern Suburbs, Penrith/Blue Mountains, South Coast, Southern Suburbs	IEU Wattle St, Sydney (AIS specific)	17
31 May	Hunter Valley	Noah's on the Beach, Newcastle (AIS specific)	6
4 June	Monaro, South East	IEU Canberra Office	22
20 June	North West	Armidale Ex-services Club	11
25 June	North Coast	Lismore IEU Office	14
27 June	Mid North Coast	Port Macquarie Westport Club	13
25 July	Hunter Valley	Noah's on the Beach, Newcastle	30
8 Aug	South Coast	Camden Valley Inn	18
9 Aug	Cumberland, Penrith/Blue Mountains	Penrith Nepean Rowing Club	11
20 Aug	Central West	Orange Ex-Services Club	12
23 Aug	Riverina	Wagga Wagga Mercure Hotel	15
			Total 222

Media and communications



Secretary Carol Matthews addresses the media as the new right to disconnect comes into force, with federal Employment Minister Murray Watt, left, and rep Jacob Betts at St Francis Xavier College, Florey, on 26 August.



Preschool teacher and member Janene Rox explains the Unite for Change campaign to the media on 5 July.



Preschool teacher and member Jodie Cox talks to the media about the Unite for Change campaign on 5 July.

The IEU's communications inform and advocate for teachers and support staff through print publications (*Newsmonth*, *IE*, *Bedrock*) and digital channels (website, social media, eNewsletters) and the mainstream media. We engage with and influence both broad and targeted audiences that include our members; employers; politicians and government; policy and decision makers; parents; the wider community; IEU state branches and our federal union; and other unions and activists.

This year we've elevated the union's public profile through positive media coverage of our campaigns and commentary on issues impacting the profession. We've adopted a new email platform for distributing eNewsletters and bargaining updates, enabling greater reach and flexibility. We've expanded our online reach and engagement through social media

and our new website, and developed a range of campaign materials and resources for organisers, reps and members. We've also produced and delivered our regular suite of publications (eight editions of *Newsmonth*, three editions of *IE*, and three of *Bedrock*) to our usual high standard.

Media

The IEU has featured regularly in the media throughout 2024, with positive coverage generated by our media releases, media alerts, a media event and a press conference.

Both metropolitan and regional media regularly approach the IEU for comment on industrial and professional issues. *The Canberra Times* has pursued the non-payment of superannuation entitlements at Brindabella Christian College in

the ACT, giving the IEU numerous opportunities to advocate for members.

Media event: Unite for change pay rise claim for preschool teachers

The IEU generated extensive and positive coverage when lodging a supported bargaining application for teachers in more than 100 community preschools at a media event outside the Fair Work Commission on William Street, Sydney, on 5 July.



TV: All three major commercial TV broadcasters (7News, 9News, 10News First) covered the event in evening bulletins, including grabs from Secretary Carol Matthews and Vice President Early Childhood Michelle Thompson spliced with NSW Premier Chris Minns and Education Minister Prue Car at their press conference earlier that same day.

Radio: Secretary Carol Matthews provided early morning news grabs for 2GB, 2SM and Australian Radio Network (includes KIIS FM), and was interviewed for ABC Radio Illawarra and ABC Radio Newcastle, which also interviewed member Jodie Cox. Member Janene Rox was interviewed for 'Stick together', a nationally syndicated community radio program dedicated to union issues.



Print and online: Various news outlets covered this event and campaign, with follow-up information provided to AAP reporters proving particularly worthwhile, and the resulting story appearing in numerous regional online papers.

- 5 July 2024: Preschool cash splash but teachers demand more, *Canberra Times*
- 5 July 2024: 'Crisis' in preschools as staff seek greener pastures, *Canberra Times*

- 5 July 2024: Kindy teachers ask for pay bump, parents get fee relief, AAP syndicated to metro and regional newspapers including *SMH*, *St George & Sutherland Shire Leader*; *The Courier* (Ballarat)
- 5 July 2024: Preschool teachers push for pay, parents get fee relief, see AAP above, 5/7, *The Daily Advertiser* (Riverina); *The Irrigator* (Leeton Shire)
- 5 July 2024: IEU seeking 25% rise for preschool teachers in supported bargaining, *Workplace Express*
- 5 July 2024: Some of NSW preschool cash splash needs to go to teachers: union, *Education HQ*
- 9 July 2024: NSW community-based preschool educators get boost from FWC wage negotiation application, *The Sector*

Press conference: With federal Workplace Relations Minister welcoming right to disconnect

The IEU joined with federal Employment and Workplace Relations Minister Murray Watt on 26 August for a press conference at St Francis Xavier College, Florey, ACT to mark the new right to disconnect coming into force. Secretary Carol Matthews, rep Jacob Betts and principal and member Sandra Darley addressed the media.

Coverage

- 10News First evening bulletin
- 2GB, 2SM, Triple M and KIIS FM - morning news grabs provided by Secretary Carol Matthews

Media releases

We've released 21 statements to the media since the 2023 AGM on a broad range of professional and industrial issues, including launching the 'Now's the Time' campaign for members in independent schools and the 'Unite for Change' campaign for teachers in community preschools. Our statements addressed the following issues:

- 6 Nov 2023: Leadership change introduces IEU's first female Secretary
- 15 Dec 2023: Teachers are not to blame for school fee increases
- 8 Mar 2024: Union fights for meaningful action and real change on International Women's Day
- 12 Mar 2024: Why making Mathematics optional in Years 11 and 12 adds up
- 8 Apr 2024: Unite for change: IEU launches pay rise campaign for preschools
- 4 Jun 2024: Union rejects Catholic Archbishop of Sydney's threat to close schools
- 6 Jun 2024: Staff in Maitland-Newcastle Catholic Schools Office to stop work
- 13 Jun 2024: Reinforcing the right to disconnect for school staff
- 14 Jun 2024: Union calls for changes to anti-discrimination laws
- 18 Jun 2024: Now's the time: Uniting for a whole new deal in independent schools
- 21 Jun 2024: Reinforcing the right to disconnect for school staff
- 5 July 2024: Union files revolutionary pay rise claim for staff in over 100 preschools
- 8 Aug 2024: Union win: Big pay rises for staff in long day care
- 16 Aug 2024: Union welcomes new flexible policy for teacher professional development

- 26 Aug 2024: Media alert: School staff meet with Minister to welcome new right to disconnect
- 11 Sep 2024: Report on AI: GenAI growth outpacing safeguards for staff and students
- 18 Sep 2024: Union welcomes Productivity Commission report on early childhood education
- 19 Sep 2024: Education union welcomes super on paid parental leave
- 23 Sep 2024: Fair Work Commission authorises bargaining for staff in over 100 preschools
- 1 Oct 2024: Calling for action on violence and harassment in schools
- 14 Oct 2024: NSW Equality Bill: Union calls on Alex Greenwich MP to protect staff and students

Media coverage

The following is a selection of the IEU's many media appearances throughout late 2023 and 2024, with more anticipated this year as our campaigns for staff in independent schools, Catholic systemic schools and teachers in community preschools progress.

- 3 Nov 2023: Supported bargaining more challenging if parties at odds: Participant, *Workplace Express*, Secretary Carol Matthews quoted
- 11 Dec 2023: Organiser Lisa James interviewed about a ban on early childhood teachers using personal phones/iPads in classrooms, ABC TV News24
- 9 Jan 2024: ABC Radio Sydney interviews Acting Secretary Lyn Caton on anti-discrimination laws.
- 1 Feb 2024: Private school's staff not paid super for nine months, re Brindabella Christian College, *Canberra Times*
- 9 Feb 2024: Parents on notice as childcare workers' union plans March walkout, *Daily Telegraph*, (this action was ultimately cancelled)
- 16 Feb 2024: Private school staff still waiting for nine months of unpaid super, re Brindabella Christian College, *Canberra Times*
- 27 Feb 2024: Early childhood workers on track for 'substantial' pay rise: IEU, *Workplace Express*
- 7 Mar 2024: Statement re exploitation in early childhood education and care sector provided to Immigration Lawyer Karl Konrad (YouTube following 86,000)
- 15 Mar 2024: Interview with Assistant Secretary Lyn Caton on mathematics becoming optional in Years 11 and 12, 2BS Bathurst Live and Local radio
- 7 April 2024: They can't afford the rent: Meet the teachers demanding a 25% pay rise, exclusive provided to the *Sydney Morning Herald*, positive coverage of Unite for Change campaign launch (pay rise for community preschool teachers); includes two member interviews and quote from Secretary Carol Matthews
- 10 April 2024: ABC Radio Sydney Tim Webster interviews Secretary Carol Matthews on Unite for Change pay rise campaign for teachers in community preschools
- 27 April 2024: *Newcastle Morning Herald* May Day liftout, feature and quarter-page ad
- 9 May 2024: Union files Fair Work dispute against Brindabella Christian College, *Canberra Times*, quoting Deputy Secretary David Towson
- 9 May 2024: ABC Radio Canberra interview with Deputy Secretary David Towson re Brindabella Christian College superannuation issue
- 12 June 2024: Private schools oppose right to disconnect for teachers, *Sydney Morning Herald*, Deputy Secretary David Towson quoted
- 20 June 2024: NSW 10% pay rise for teachers, budget overview, *Education Review*, Secretary Carol Matthews quoted
- 24 June 2024: Union pushes for private school staff's right to disconnect, *The Educator*, Secretary Carol Matthews quoted
- 24 June 2024: Private school teachers push for pay rises above public sector colleagues, *SMH*, launch of Unite for Change campaign for independent schools, Secretary Carol Matthews quoted
- 24 June 2024: Unite for Change campaign launch, Secretary Carol Matthews gives morning news grabs to 2GB, KIIS FM, Triple M, 2SM
- 24 June 2024: Union demands higher pay for private school teachers after pay rise for public sector, *Women's Agenda*
- 26 June 2024: Why are private school teachers paid more than their public colleagues?, *Explainer, The Conversation*
- 27 June 2024: It's time: IEU demands 'whole new deal' for NSW and ACT independent school staff, *EducationHQ*, Secretary Carol Matthews quoted.
- 8 Aug 2024: Long day care announcement: 10% pay rise Dec 2024, 5% Dec 2025; Secretary Carol Matthews provided news grabs for Triple M, 2NUR (Newcastle), 2SM
- Government fulfils pay rise promise for childcare workers, SBS, Secretary Carol Matthews quoted
- 28 Aug 2024: 7News New England, Secretary Carol Matthews interviewed re teacher shortages
- 16 Sep 2024: Education Minister takes action against Brindabella Christian College, *Canberra Times*, Secretary Carol Matthews quoted
- 18 Sep 2024: ABC Radio South East, Secretary Carol Matthews interviewed re Productivity Commission report into early childhood education
- 23 Sep 2024: 2SM, 2GB, Triple M - news grabs from Secretary Carol Matthews re Fair Work Commission authorising supported bargaining to commence for community preschool teachers
- 25 Sep 2024: 2GB news grab from Secretary Carol Matthews re changing enrolment statistics in government / non-government schools
- 1 Oct 2024: Call for action on violence and harassment in schools: Deputy Secretary David Towson Morning provided early morning news grabs for: 2SM, 2GB, Triple M, KIIS FM, 2NUR (Newcastle); and interviews on ABC Radio Canberra and 2CC Canberra
- 1 Oct 2024: Violence and harassment increase: Union calls on employers to take action, *EducationHQ*
- 2 Oct 2024: Violence and harassment against teachers must stop, says union, HR Leader
- 14 Oct 2024: Secretary Carol Matthews interviewed re NSW independent MP Alex Greenwich dropping anti-discrimination protections for teachers and students from his Equality Bill, ABC TV News, 7pm.
- 16 Oct 2024: Play fair: The educators who guide our children in their vital early years are fed up and fighting for what they're worth, cover feature, *Wentworth Courier*



Website (www.ieu.asn.au)

The IEU's new website, with a modern and engaging look and feel, went live on 11 December 2023. Since then, we've migrated content from the old site while updating the new site with information and other important industrial content relevant to current campaigns. Here's a snapshot of the website's performance (25 Sep 2023-25 Sep 2024):

- 460,000 page views by 99,000 users
- 1.3 million events (page view, user engagement, first visit, session start, form visit, etc)
- 93,000 visits from searches (52,659 from new users to the site)
- 56,000 visits from direct traffic (emails, texts, QR codes etc)
- 7200 visits from social media (5470 from new users)
- Just over half of all users view the website from a desktop computer (51.7%) while just under half visit from mobile devices (47.2%) and tablets (1.1%).

To drive organic search traffic to the website, we've adopted search engine optimisation (SEO) strategies to ensure every post has accurate and customised metadata and includes keywords to help the site rank in searches.

We incorporate both custom and generic feature images on every page and post. Every image has key words in the file name to help improve our visibility in a Google or internet search. To ensure our content is easily found on the site itself, we use a series of tags and categories that enable visitors to the site to search key topics. We continue to analyse our data and fine tune these tactics.

We update the site regularly to ensure the content is current and engaging.

Digital communications: Campaign Monitor

This year we transitioned our NewsExtra bargaining updates as well as surveys, event promotion and our regular eNewsletters to specific membership segments to a new platform, Campaign Monitor.

This has not only resulted in both time and cost savings, it is a leaner, cleaner and more flexible format that also provides detailed analytics in real time.

Adopting this platform has enabled much greater agility with bargaining updates for members, and a means of distributing surveys. It also provides us with a better understanding of member engagement and data we can use to segment and target our communications more strategically. Using Campaign Monitor and providing a link to our NewsExtra updates on the website helps drive much greater traffic to the new website.

Of the emails we've distributed through this platform we are experiencing consistently higher open rates as well as click-through rates.

Key observations (May - September 2024):

- NewsExtra email updates all had high open rates of above 60%
- NewsExtra email click-through rates ranged from 12% to 44%
- eNewsletters to different segments of our members (early childhood teachers, support staff and ELICOS) had open rates of between 56% and 75%.

Social media

Our Facebook audience and engagement continues, with our posts gaining a reach of 94,700 from September 2023 to September 2024. We had steady growth, gaining 529 new followers.

Of the content we post, single image-based content (custom tile or powerful image) performs best, followed by links, then short text-only posts. Reels (short vertical videos) are becoming a more popular format for video content.

This year we posted 14 reels which have been viewed a total of 32 hours with 13,800 initial plays. Image sets of the union in action perform particularly well: images of the Unite for Change (preschool teachers) launch in April and delegates collaborating in workshops at Council in August tracked well. Images with an overview of topics at the IEU's National Conference and photos of delegates, in late August, also generating substantial engagement.

Images and short videos track well on Instagram. Our overall reach was 17,600 from 424 posts and 131 stories. The NAIDOC Week video series (reels) did well, as did rallies and images of the union in action.

Top 10 Facebook/Instagram posts

- 16 Aug 2024: NESA announcement accredited Professional Development (14,300 reach)
- 8 Apr 2024: Media release: Unite for Change campaign launch (8400 reach)
- 28 Mar 2024: Single image tile: NESA fees reminder (7600 reach)
- 31 Oct 2023: Single image: Halloween teacher meme (7600 reach)
- 21 Jun 2024: Single image: Right to disconnect SMH article (7100 reach)
- 08 Apr 2024: Image set: Unite for Change campaign launch (6200 reach)
- 8 Aug 2024: Union win: Early childhood teachers receive 15% pay rise (4900 reach)
- 27 Dec 2023: First Nations 2024 key dates calendar (4800 reach)
- 16 Aug 2024: Media release: NESA accredited PD announcement (4600 reach)
- 28 Jan 2024: Text question: What's the funniest thing a student has said? (4600 reach)

Top 10 videos/reels: Facebook and Instagram

- 30 Nov 2023: Footage from the 'end unpaid placements' rally (3400 plays)
- 26 Aug 2024: Livestream of right to disconnect press conference (2700 plays)
- 11 Mar 2024: Did you know Barbie is a union member? (2200 plays)

- 4 Oct 2023: This is what 60,000 years looks like - Yes campaign (2100 plays)
- 12 Jul 2024: NAIDOC Week video - Amy Kermode (1800 plays)
- 21 Dec 2023: Happy Gravy Day video (1800 plays)
- 6 Aug 2024: Unite for Change campaign update - Carol Matthews (1400 plays)
- 23 Sep 2024: Now's the Time AIS Rep video - Maggie Findlay (1300 plays)
- 5 Jul 2024: Livestream Unite for Change media event FWC (1000 plays)
- 12 Jul 2024: NAIDOC Week video, Alex Thompson, (1000 plays)

LinkedIn

Our LinkedIn page continues its consistently strong growth. Followers engage well with union-related updates, professional development and industrial content. In the past year, we posted 382 times resulting in 75,000 impressions and 5930 clicks.

Our top post was a tribute to former IEU Secretary John Quesy on his passing in December 2023. Other top posts include updates on multi-employer bargaining in long day care, the right to disconnect, workloads and updates relating to accredited professional development.

Twitter (X)

We continue to post to Twitter (X). However, recent changes to this platform have restricted access to analytics without moving to a premium account. We are reviewing alternative analytics options.

Video

Video content performs well across our social media channels, with vertical video format becoming more popular. This year we created videos to highlight the union's activities, update members, showcase mainstream media appearances and to amplify IEU campaigns or broader social justice issues. A series of videos produced for NAIDOC Week and the AIS Now's the Time campaign performed particularly well.

We produced a dedicated video tribute highlighting the names of all the women killed by domestic violence in Australia in 2023 as part of 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence. The 'No more cupcakes' video for International Women's Day tracked well, as did the World Support Staff Day video.

A highlight was the Hear Our Voice campaign video, produced for the 2024 ACTU Congress. It was played to thousands of unionists in Adelaide and at the IEU's National Conference in Sydney in August.

Campaign material

The media and communications team designs, develops and produces materials including posters, flyers and t-shirts to support specific campaigns:

- Early childhood t-shirt (ECEC team)
- Unite for Change poster and social media assets (preschool teachers)
- Now's the Time poster and social media assets (independent schools)
- Hear our Voice Too t-shirt and poster (Maitland-Newcastle CSO staff)

- Hear our Voice Too poster (Maitland-Newcastle CSO staff)

Resources for reps and organisers

This year we've developed a range of materials for reps and organisers that we update as needed:

- IEU 2024 Wall planner/calendar
- Reps' handbook
- Recruitment posters (teachers and support staff)
- Fact sheets/tip sheets
- First Nations calendar
- Environment Conference promotion (print and online)
- Environment Grants promotion (print and online)
- Workloads liftouts
- How the union works liftout
- 16 Facts for 16 Days poster (16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence)

Publications

Our eight editions of *Newsmonth* include two campaign launches and our commemorative 70-year anniversary edition, featuring images from our archives, voices of IEU officials past and present, and an overview of our history by our resident historian, Deputy Secretary David Towson.

In *IE* magazine, produced in collaboration with the VicTas and QNT branches, we've featured Teach Us Consent Campaigner Chanel Contos and human rights advocate and former Socceroo Craig Foster, as well as a member who teaches students in war-torn Ukraine via Zoom. Our early childhood magazine, *Bedrock*, is strong this year, with coverage of historic industrial gains in the sector, and a pull-out poster with advice on reducing documentation.

Digital editions of all IEU publications are available on the IEU's publications website. With its rich archive spanning many years, this website draws a large volume of traffic from search engines as well as direct traffic from dedicated email boosts and social media posts. In the past year, the site had 66,573 visits and just over half, or 34,050, came from internet searches while the rest came from direct referral sources (emails or social media).

About 70% of visitors were women. The total number of pageviews was 130,000. Also, 52,000 users viewed or interacted with the site for the first time (new users).

Newsmonth

Newsmonth incorporates industrial and campaign updates, member stories and snaps, sub branch reports, vox pops, professional development updates and columns from elected officials. We produce eight editions a year (six in 20-page print and digital issues and two digital-only issues).

Newsmonth#7 2023

Cover: Wages breakthrough
In post 6/11; broadcast 8/11; open rate 65%

Top 5 stories

- Wages breakthrough (Catholic systemic pay rises)
- NESA compliance: Pullout poster
- Catholic systemic school support staff: Check your pay rate



- Child protection: Know your rights and responsibilities
- Widespread wage theft: How to protect your pay

Newsmonth#2 2024

Cover: Restoring balance - Right to disconnect and stronger rights for union reps
In post 25/3; broadcast 27/3; open rate 51%

Top 5 stories

- Restoring balance: 'Right to disconnect' and stronger rights for union reps
- Independent schools: Bargaining gets under way
- Christian schools: 0% pay offer for 2025
- Union power trebles at St Lucy's
- Member spotlight: Elizabeth O'Callaghan OAM

Newsmonth#3 2024

Cover: Unite for change - IEU launches pay rise campaign for preschools
In post 29/4; broadcast 2/5; open rate 58%

Top 5 stories

- Independent schools: Dates set for bargaining to begin
- Christian Schools Australia offer: 92% say no
- Stronger together: How the IEU works
- St Lucy's members say yes to new EAs
- Unite for change: IEU launches preschool pay rise campaign

Newsmonth#4 2024

Cover: Now's the Time - Uniting for a whole new deal in independent schools
In post 18/6; broadcast 24/6; open rate 54%

Top 5 stories

- Special workloads liftout: Better practice, less process
- Catholic systemic schools: Get set before agreements expire
- Independent schools: Talks under way but no offer yet from AIS
- Now's the time: Uniting for a whole new deal in independent schools
- In the spotlight: Meet four IEU reps

Newsmonth#5 2024

Cover: Unite for change - IEU files revolutionary pay rise claim for preschool teachers
In post 15/7; broadcast 18/7; open rate 53%

Top 5 stories

- Independent schools: AIS seeks to cut conditions and holds off on pay offer
- Campaign launch at IEU Council: Now's the Time
- IEU files revolutionary pay rise claim for preschool teachers
- Workloads: Members speak, the union listens
- Spotlight on reps

Newsmonth#6 2024

Cover: 70th anniversary commemorative edition
In post 19/8; broadcast 22/8; open rate 46%

Top 5 stories

- Independent schools pay offer: Devil in the detail
- Union win: Big pay rises for long day care staff

- Meanwhile, in independent schools (influence of Catholic systemic pay rise)
- Teacher pay moving across all sectors: Deputy Secretary column

Newsmonth#8 2023 (digital only)

Cover: Vale John Qussy, IEUA NSW/ACT Branch Secretary 2012-19
Broadcast 13/12; open rate 50%

Top 5 stories

- Secretary's report: Pay rises all round
- Vale John Qussy
- Wage theft: Why it pays to check
- NESA tackles teacher workload
- Secure jobs: Fixing the rules of fixed-term contracts

Newsmonth#1 2024 (digital only)

Cover: Done deal - Staff in Catholic independent schools gain new agreements
Broadcast 6/2; open rate 62%

Top 5 stories

- Workloads: Documentation should be decreasing
- Done deal! Staff in Catholic independent schools secure new agreements
- Share your wisdom: Top tips for new teachers

- Union of minds: Celebrating 70 years of strength and solidarity
- Members shine: NSW Premier's Teacher Scholarships
- Spotlight on reps: Building a strong IEU chapter
- Spotlight on members: From different schools, sectors and countries

IE#1 2024

Cover: How learning endures in Ukraine
In post 25/3; broadcast 2/4; open rate 48%

Top stories

- Support staff: Recognising their rising importance
- No more shame: Period positivity makes a difference
- Historic change: Big wins in new IR laws
- How learning endures in Ukraine
- Boom time: The rise of unions in the US and lessons for Australia

IE#2 2024

Cover: Chanel Contos: Meet the woman behind Teach Us Consent
In post 11/6; broadcast 17/6, open rate 54%

Top stories

- Sexism in schools: The influencer infiltrating classrooms
- In Focus: Chanel Contos - Meet the woman behind Teach Us Consent
- Schooling in a climate crisis: Inside a Kiribati classroom
- Closing the Gap: Ideas for education
- Lighting the spark: Getting girls into trades



IE magazine

IE is the union's nationwide professional journal. We produce three 36-page editions a year in collaboration with the VicTas and QNT Branches. Content includes in-depth profiles of prominent people in relevant fields; and features on pedagogical research, member interviews, and analysis of education policy.

IE#3 2023

Cover: DeadlyLabs bringing STEM to remote Australian communities

In post 4/11; broadcast 12/11; open rate 47%

Top stories

- In Focus: Penrith Panthers CEO Matt Cameron
- DeadlyLabs bringing STEM to remote communities
- A day in the life: Teacher's aide Narelle Ryall
- Learning difficulties: Knowing what to look for
- History waiting to happen: Unions and schools



Bedrock

We produce three editions a year of this 20-page specialist publication for early childhood teachers in collaboration with the QNT Branch. *Bedrock* covers issues such as childhood psychology, teaching STEM, member stories, embedding Indigenous knowledge, and sector-wide industrial updates.

Bedrock#3 2023

Cover: Encounters with place - Valla Beach
In post 4/11; broadcast 11/11; open rate 52%

NOW'S THE TIME
UNITING FOR A WHOLE NEW DEAL
IN INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS

- Fix our pay
- Address our workloads
- Boost parental leave
- Improve leave for support staff
- Guarantee fair processes
- Respect our right to disconnect

SCAN THE QR CODE TO JOIN THE UNION

IEU Independent Education Union of Australia NSW/ACT Branch

Authorised by Carol Matthews, Secretary, Independent Education Union of Australia

Reps Handbook

"We're always stronger when we stand together."
IEU member, October 2023

Join the Independent Education Union

Who we are
We are the union representing the industrial and professional interests of more than 32,000 teachers, support staff and principals in Catholic schools, independent schools, early childhood centres and post-secondary colleges. We offer free membership to pre-service teachers who are still studying. **Union members stand together.**

What we do
better salaries and conditions.
Industrial advice and support on employment issues including your working conditions, entitlements, leave entitlements, flexible work arrangements, child protection and your capabilities in the workplace.
Your interests through campaigning, policy submissions to government and specialist publications and representing you in the media.
Professional development through regular training sessions, workshops and conferences.
Helping with career development through guidance on accreditation processes.
Member benefits include opportunities for retail, recreation and travel discounts and access to

Join the union today
Join or scan the QR code
6% deductible.

Authorised by Carol Matthews, Secretary, IEU NSW/ACT Branch

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02 8202 8900 | TF 1800 467 943 | ieu@ieu.asn.au | www.ieu.asn.au

STRIDE TO GROW 2030 STRATEGIC PLAN

Independent Education Union of Australia (NSW/ACT Branch)

Top stories

- Aboriginal connections: Bush tucker education
- How assertiveness at work can protect your mental health
- Encounters with place: Valla Beach
- What to do if you're being bullied
- Connecting with nature at bush kindy

Bedrock#1 2024

Cover: A brighter future for refugees in Lebanon
In post 25/3; broadcast 28/3; open rate 47%

Top stories

- Trauma-informed practice: A guide for early childhood services
- Cultural practices at the core of education
- Body blocks: Helping kids embrace body positivity
- A brighter future for refugees in Lebanon
- Your industrial questions answered

Bedrock#2 2024

Cover: Going bush is good for teachers too
In post 11/6; broadcast 14/6; open rate 58%

Top stories

- Unite for change: Pay rise campaign for preschools
- Barriers to entry: Getting more male teachers in ECEC

- Meet IEU member and early childhood teacher Paul Collins
- Going bush is good for teachers too
- Right to disconnect: Will it change your practice?

Acknowledgement

The media and communications team has again risen to the challenge of supporting our members through engaging communications and resources for concurrent campaigns along with our regular publications. We thank our members and we acknowledge the team: online journalist and social media campaigner Katie Camarena; journalists Lucy Meyer and Sue Osborne; graphic designer Chris Ruddle; and proofreader Helen O'Regan.

Monica Crouch, Media and Communications Coordinator

Katie Camarena, Online Journalist and Social Media Campaigner

Women and Equity Committee



International Women's Day march at Newcastle in March.

This year has been an impactful one for the Women and Equity Committee, marked by advocacy, vital discussions and meaningful actions. The NSW/ACT Branch welcomed its first female Secretary, Carol Matthews, on 25 October 2023.

Our work was influenced by the theme of International Women's Day (IWD) on 8 March: 'Invest in Women and Accelerate Progress'. This theme reflects our commitment to advancing gender equality in education and beyond. As we consider our achievements and ongoing efforts, it is essential to acknowledge the progress made as well as the challenges that remain to ensure women in education are valued, respected, and fairly compensated.

Invest in women and accelerate progress

International Women's Day (IWD) provided a powerful platform for the IEU to highlight the gender pay gap, particularly within the education sector. Legislation forcing organisations employing over 100 people to publish their pay gap has been a big step forward in transparency and accountability.

The IEU's engagement with this issue has been robust, as we continue to push for meaningful changes that address the systemic undervaluation of women's work.

Information about IWD events across NSW and the ACT was prominently featured on the IEU website. These events included a petition titled 'No More Cupcakes', which called on corporate Australia to take gender equality seriously. There were

marches in Sydney and Newcastle, IWD dinners in Newcastle and Bathurst, and social media vox pops. These activities not only raised awareness but also galvanised our members to act in their communities.

The IEU notes with concern that over 50 per cent of workplaces have reported a gender pay gap greater than 9 per cent. While there have been improvements in some areas, especially in education, the overall situation remains troubling. On average, women earn \$26,393 less per year across all industries - a stark reminder of the persistent inequalities that continue to plague our society.

The new Workforce Gender Equality Agency (WGEA) reporting requirements have revealed positive trends in education, yet they have also exposed embarrassing failings by many school employers. Less than 50 per cent of education and training employers have an equal remuneration policy, have conducted a gender pay gap analysis, or have acted due to such analyses.

Advocacy and campaigns

Throughout 2024, the IEU has been at the forefront of advocating for improved pay and conditions for women in education. This advocacy is rooted in the belief that fair remuneration is not just a matter of equality, but also of economic policy and societal wellbeing. The gender pay gap is symptomatic of the broader issue of work predominantly performed by women being undervalued. Women with less security and bargaining power are more vulnerable to exploitative work practices, making our advocacy crucial.



The Empty Shoes Vigil (representing women killed in acts of domestic violence) at Martin Place, Sydney, November 2023.



Secretary Carol Matthews and Deputy Secretary David Towson at the International Women's Day March in Sydney on 9 March.



IEU Organiser Tina Smith, right, with NSW Teachers Federation member Angie on International Women's Day, Wollongong.

One of the key areas of focus has been the Unite for Change campaign to secure pay increases for teachers in community-based preschools in NSW. These positions are held mostly by women and the roles are often underpaid despite the critical importance of their work. This campaign continues and we look forward to a positive outcome from the IEU's historic supported bargaining claim.

In August, the federal Labor government announced long overdue pay increases for staff in long day care centres throughout Australia. This is a huge win for early childhood teachers who will receive a 15% pay rise above the current rate in the modern award - with 10% in December 2024 and another 5% a year later.

The IEU has also contributed to research on the experiences of pregnant women and parents in the workplace, highlighting the need for more flexible work arrangements and stronger protections against discrimination.

In addition to our work in education, the IEU has welcomed the federal government's introduction of the Commonwealth Practicum Payment, which provides financial support for students in nursing, teaching, midwifery, and social work who are undertaking mandatory workplace placements. This payment will ease cost-of-living pressures faced by many students, a high percentage of whom are female, and help address the long-term workforce shortages in these vital fields.

The IEU also welcomed the federal government's announcement in March that from 2025, superannuation will be paid on the government's paid parental leave scheme. This is yet another

historic win by union members who have been fighting for this for decades. It's a crucial step towards addressing retirement poverty suffered by many women in Australia.

Pay equity

The Australian Council of Trade Unions (ACTU) has also been a strong advocate for pay rises in highly feminised industries. The ACTU called for pay increases of at least 9% in the 2024 annual wage review to address the historical undervaluation of work performed predominantly by women. The IEU supports this call and will continue to work alongside the ACTU to achieve systemic change that promotes gender equity in pay and conditions.

Reproductive health leave

A big victory for gender equity in 2024 was the introduction of paid reproductive health leave in Queensland, following a six-month union campaign. This leave, which will be available to public sector employees for fertility or IVF treatment, hysterectomies, vasectomies, and chronic reproductive health conditions, represents a step forward in recognising the impact of reproductive health on workers' lives. The IEU supports the push for similar entitlements at the federal level and will continue to advocate for the extension of such benefits to all workers, particularly those in female-dominated industries.

Committee activities

The Women and Equity Committee has been actively engaged in advancing the interests of

women within the IEU and the broader education sector. Our federal Women's Committee met on 13 July in Melbourne to discuss crucial changes in workplace policies and the development of resources aimed at enhancing understanding of the positive duty to prevent sex discrimination in a work context among IEU members and the communities they serve.

Key items on the agenda included updates to the Australian Teacher Performance and Development Framework (ATPDF) and the Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority (ACECQA) information sheets, reports on the ACTU Women's Conference, and discussions on gender equity in the Annual Wage Review. We also focused on strategies to better utilise and develop delegates during bargaining, as well as initiatives to support member recruitment and delegate training.

One of our major projects this year has been the development of a suite of resources to assist officers and engage with members on changes to the *Sex Discrimination Act* and the introduction of positive duty obligations. These resources, which include fact sheets on positive duty, flexible work, pay secrecy, and family and domestic violence leave, will be distributed to branch leadership for use as needed. We believe these resources will be invaluable in helping our members navigate the complexities of these issues and advocate effectively for their rights.

Engagement and support

As part of our ongoing commitment to supporting women in education, the Women and Equity Committee will be conducting a survey in Term 4. This survey will seek input from IEU representatives working in schools and centres to identify the priorities of women in their workplaces, particularly in regional areas. The survey will focus on issues related to enterprise agreements, legislative changes, and the specific needs of women working in education. The feedback we receive will be crucial in shaping the committee's initiatives and ensuring our efforts are aligned with the needs of our members.

Acknowledgements

We would like to express our gratitude to co-convenor Valerie Jones for her work in supporting and advocating for our female members. As she steps down from her role, we extend our thanks and wish her all the best in her future endeavours.

The committee also wishes to acknowledge and thank co-convenor Lyn Caton for her work at state and federal levels. Lyn is a passionate advocate for advancing the industrial agenda for women and will continue to be engaged and share her extensive knowledge.

We are also pleased to welcome Angela McDonald and Katie Camarena as co-convenors of the Women and Equity Committee. Their leadership and passion for gender equity will be invaluable as we continue our work in the coming year.

Conclusion

Overall, 2024 has been a year of progress, challenges, and renewed commitment to gender equity within the IEU and the education sector. As we look ahead, we remain steadfast in our mission to invest in women and accelerate progress towards a more just and equitable society.

The work of the Women and Equity Committee is far from over, and we will continue to advocate for, educate, and support our members in the fight for fair pay, better working conditions and true gender equality.

Thank you to all our members, supporters, and allies for your continued dedication to these important issues. Together, we can make a difference in the lives of women in education and beyond.

Valerie Jones and Lyn Caton

Women and Equity Committee Co-Convenors

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Advisory Committee



IEU member Kylie Booth-Martinez, ACTU President Michele O'Neil, ACTU Secretary Sally McManus and IEU member Craig Duncan at the ACTU's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Forum in June.

Committee structure and focus

The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Advisory Committee meets four times annually, typically before Council convenes. Current members include Mary Atkinson, Karen Andriske, Michelle Thompson, Kylie Booth-Martinez, Kath Baxter, Bettrina Stewart and Craig Duncan. The committee is focused on growth and inclusivity, working to establish an email network to keep members informed and engaged. Councillors and members are encouraged to promote the benefits of joining the committee and the IEU.

ACTU Congress 2024: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Forum

The IEU participated in the ACTU Congress 2024, specifically the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Forum on 3 June at the Adelaide Convention Centre. This event enabled the union movement to craft a collective vision for the future. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples have a long tradition of collective action and political organising, making their participation crucial. The IEU Executive sought expressions of interest from the committee, proposing three members attend the congress. Kylie Martinez-Booth, Michelle Thompson and Craig Duncan represented the IEU. At the event, they raised concerns about the colonisation of the digital space created by AI and its cultural impact, as well as the issue of cultural load.

Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP)

The IEU is committed to developing a Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) aligned with its broader goals of inclusion and cultural competency. The RAP is being developed with active involvement from the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Advisory Committee, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander members and officers. We expect to present a draft RAP to the Executive in early 2025.

Professional development

The committee has facilitated various professional development opportunities for staff. Forty-one staff members have completed a cultural competency course. This 10-hour course underscores the union's commitment to fostering a culturally aware and inclusive workplace.

Expansion and representation

The committee is focused on ensuring that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander voices are well represented in key decision-making bodies. Following the resignation of long-standing committee member Vinnie Cooper in June 2024, there were vacancies on the NESAs First Nations Advisory Group and Unions NSW relevant committees. The committee recommended that these positions be filled by First Nations members to ensure dedicated advocacy and representation.

Key motions and recommendations

At the June Council meeting, the committee tabled a motion encouraging Council members and organisers to actively engage with their Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander colleagues, invite them to join the IEU and self-identify within the union's membership system. This motion aligns with the committee's broader goal of increasing representation and participation among Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander members.

Spirit on Country Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Conference

The IEU was represented at the 2024 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander State Education Conference, titled Spirit on Country: Learning Together Then, Now and Always, on 22-24 October at the Tamworth Regional Entertainment and Conference Centre. The Executive endorsed this proposal, recognising the importance of the IEU's presence at this powerful event.

Pilliga campaign

The committee supports the Pilliga campaign, part of a broader effort by the trade union movement to

assist First Nations people in their fight to protect the Pilliga region. A First Nations briefing meeting was held on 5 September 2024, with the committee encouraging all First Nations members and representatives to attend. (See details in the Social justice annexure.)

Conclusion

The committee has made measurable progress in advancing the IEU's commitment to cultural competency, representation, and inclusion.

Through professional development, participation in key events such as the ACTU Congress, and the development of the RAP, the committee is ensuring Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander voices are heard and respected within the IEU. The committee looks forward to continuing its work and expanding its impact in the coming year.

Lyn Caton Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Advisory Committee Convenor

Environment Committee

In 2024 the Environment Committee's program has been progressed by co-convenors Richard Ryan and Lee Cunningham with the assistance of committee members Lyn Caton, Katie Camarena, Anthony Telford, David Whitcombe, Jackie Groom, Josef Dabbs, Emma Ford, Liam Crisanti, Max Furby and IEU members Carmelo Fedele, Sharon Jennings and Will Pollock. The committee meets every three months to discuss projects and activities. We thank the Executive for their support.

IEU Teachers Mutual Bank Environment Grant winners (2023)

Every year the IEU invites members at schools, colleges and early childhood centres to apply for grants to develop sustainability initiatives.

The 2023 Environment Grants, sponsored by Teachers Mutual Bank and the union include a variety of innovative and exciting projects.

Early childhood education and care

The Point Preschool, Oyster Bay: Energy from the Sun - Collaborating with Solar Schools, the project allows the preschool to see its energy data using a display monitor, showing what's affecting energy use and supporting the preschool community's knowledge of energy consumption.

Lismore Preschool, Lismore: Keeping the Dream Going - This project revitalises the outdoor learning environment of the preschool, decimated by floods in 2022. It includes replanting/replacing gutted spaces/beds, the bush tucker garden, native trees, timber seating and insect/bee housing.

Beresfield Community Children's Education Centre, Beresfield: A Native Connection - This project aims to create a sensory walk-through garden for the younger children using native flora, cultivating plants from cuttings to ensure the preschool can top up the garden as needed.

Primary schools

St Christopher's Catholic Primary School, Panania: Trees for Bees - The students will learn about how bees are part of the biodiversity that humans and animals depend on for survival through a lunchtime club, planting flowering natives and installing a beehive.

Mt Carmel School, Yass: Extruder Club: Through the purchase of a benchtop plastic extruder, the school will turn container lids into filament that can be used in moulds that can produce a variety of objects, which will be sold to buy more moulds and maintain the club.

Secondary schools

Northside Montessori School, Pymble: Planet Fashion - Students will recycle pre-owned fabric, accessories and clothing from charity shops to create a range of bespoke outfits. Students will sell a range of recycled and upcycled products at a fashion show and display environmental education material including infographs, brochures, and posters.

O'Connor Catholic College, Armidale: Tukka Garden and Yarning Circle - This garden will provide a learning space for multiple faculties to engage in meaningful learning about the local Anaiwan nation, learning about bush medicine and tucker and then having a yarning space to discuss this learning.

Lumen Christi Catholic College, Pambula Beach: Native Plants in Nature - A yarning circle for outdoor group discussions will be established. It is quite bare and would benefit with some native plants. Students will create a natural space that incorporates learning in the outdoors, stopping erosion.

2024 Environment Grant winners

Applications for the 2024 grants opened in Term 3. The Committee met in early October to review the 2024 applications. Successful applicants will be announced at the IEU AGM on 26 October and listed on the IEU website and social media platforms.

School Strike 4 Climate: March for urgent action

In November 2023, the IEU took to the streets alongside students in the School Strike 4 Climate. As fires loomed once again, the march called for an end to new coal, gas, and oil projects. IEU members supported the students, continuing their commitment to advocating for urgent climate action. Teachers and students discussed the link between environmental education and climate action, underscoring the importance of integrating these lessons into school curriculums.

Stand with Gomeroi campaign wins Environment Award

In March, the Unions NSW Stand with Gomeroi campaign was awarded the Jack Munday Award at the 2024 NSW Environment Awards. The award recognises collaboration between unions, the Gomeroi people, environmental groups, and the Country Women's Association. The IEU has been an integral part of this campaign from the start, standing in solidarity with the Gomeroi people to safeguard their cultural heritage and the forest's ecosystem.

Read more about IEU's support of the Gomeroi people in the Social justice annexure.



Secondary school teachers at the IEU's Environment Conference on 9 August.



Primary school teachers workshop.



Members connect at the Environment Conference.



International Grammar School's Climate Fresk students, left, with IEU staff on 9 April.



School Strike for Climate on 17 November 2023.

Role reversal: Students educating teachers

In April, students from International Grammar School (IGS) facilitated a Climate Fresk workshop for IEU staff. The workshop, led by student leaders Maddy Hayen and Hugh Gibbons, was part of the Sustainable Futures Club at IGS. It focused on building a deeper understanding of the causes and effects of climate change through a collaborative approach. This initiative not only highlighted the leadership of young people in the climate movement but also underscored the value of student-led education on critical global issues.

Striking for climate justice

On 3 May, the IEU once again joined students striking for climate justice, this time outside federal Environment Minister Tanya Plibersek's office. As students raised their concerns about the future of the planet, the IEU stood in solidarity, emphasising the union's commitment to community-led solutions to the climate crisis. The rally underscored the importance of climate justice as union business, with students leading the call for systemic change.

Environment Conference: Out of the classroom and into nature

In August, the IEU hosted its annual Environment Conference at the Field of Mars Environmental Education Centre on Wallumedegal Country. The conference focused on taking learning outdoors, emphasising environmental sustainability through hands-on workshops for early childhood, primary, and secondary educators. Highlights included:

- Early childhood teachers connected with Country by building birds' nests, using journey sticks, and participating in bush-based activities.
- Primary school teachers explored curriculum integration with environmental education, connecting nature with subjects such as English, mathematics, and science.
- Secondary teachers delved into fieldwork methodologies such as tree measurement and soil analysis to extend their teaching of geography and science.

This event was a resounding success, allowing educators from all backgrounds to reconnect

with nature and explore creative approaches to environmental education.

Other news

The committee acknowledges the dedication and commitment of Liam Griffiths who stepped down as Convenor of the Environment Committee in March 2024 upon his retirement. We also express our gratitude to long-time committee member Berna Simpson who retired from the IEU and the committee late last year.

The committee welcomed Richard Ryan and Lee Cunningham as co-convenors in 2024.

Lyn Caton and Richard Ryan are members of the ACTU Climate Action Group with other members of the committee also participating in this forum.

The committee continues to oversee a dedicated IEU Environment Facebook Group where committee members and interested IEU members can share information, news, resources and events relating to environment and sustainability: facebook.com/groups/IEUEnvironment

Lee Cunningham, Richard Ryan
Environment Committee Co-Convenors

Child protection

For the period September 2023 to September 2024, the IEU finalised 54 child protection cases.

To reduce the risk of having an allegation relating to their conduct being made, and to assist in maintaining their NSW Working with Children Check (WWCC) clearance and ACT Working with Vulnerable People (WWVP) registration, members need to be familiar with compliance and with the obligations and expectations detailed in their employment contract, employer policies, and current child protection legislation.

While confidentiality must always be maintained, members can still contact their organiser to seek confidential advice, support and representation when notified of an investigation into their conduct.

NSW Reportable Conduct Scheme

Following on from the initial roundtable discussion on 24 July 2023, Steve Kinmond, of the Office of the Children's Guardian (OCG), hosted key employer agencies, religious faith representatives and union bodies, including the IEU, in further roundtable discussions on some of the key challenges faced when handling and responding to claims of historical child sexual abuse.

In a meeting with Mr Kinmond on 5 August 2024, the IEU, as well as representatives from other key union bodies, discussed union views on the proposed OCG fact sheets 'Handling historical reportable allegations' and 'Reportable conduct investigations and the NSW Police Force'. There was further discussion to explore how responses to claims of historical child sexual abuse can be improved, while ensuring the timeliness of investigations and the rights of the person who is

the subject of the allegation to a procedurally fair investigation.

Union representatives also raised concerns on 'claim farming' practices in NSW. Claim farming is the practice where a third party calls, sends messages or approaches survivors of institutional child sexual abuse to induce or otherwise convince them to commence a personal injury claim with the promise of substantial compensation. The personal information of the survivor is then sold to personal injury law firms or other claims management service providers, who commence the claim process.

In Queensland, there was significant claim farming activity occurring in regional and remote areas, particularly Aboriginal communities. In 2022, Queensland introduced legislation outlawing the practice in relation to survivors of institutional child sexual abuse.

Union representatives requested the OCG follow up with the NSW Government with a view to having claim farming outlawed in NSW.

The union raised these concerns with NSW Deputy Premier Prue Car at a meeting in her office on 16 October 2024.

NSW Working with Children Check

The NSW government announced in its 2024-25 Budget an increase from \$80 to \$105 in the application fee for a paid NSW WWCC. This started on 1 August 2024 and is the first increase since the \$80 fee was introduced in 2013. The WWCC remains free for volunteers.

Russell Schokman Policy Advisor

Social justice



IEU members and friends at the Palm Sunday rally on 24 March.

Social justice involvement is an important part of the union's work, a commitment valued by many members. Much of the work undertaken supports, and is informed by, work being done by the Environment Committee, Women and Equity Committee and the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Advisory Committee.

As the IEU marks its 70-year anniversary, we are proud to reflect on our long history supporting social justice campaigns. Throughout the 1980s, the Independent Teachers Association (ITA), as the IEU was then known, supported the African National Congress in its struggle against South Africa's apartheid regime through its affiliation with the NSW Labor Council (now Unions NSW).

In 1983, the ITA Executive endorsed the 'Australians for Nuclear Disarmament' rally. As the then-General Secretary said, "This is a fundamental issue which no doubt concerns teachers, not just as citizens but as teachers, teachers whose daily lives centre on the education and preparation of those youth who will soon inherit the world that we shape for them."

ITA members marched behind a Teachers for Peace banner alongside their counterparts from the Teachers Federation. This marked the beginning of the union's long-standing association with the Palm Sunday peace marches. For many years, the IEU has been represented on the Palm Sunday Rally Planning Committee along with other unions, church representatives and other allies.

Union Pride

In February, the IEU was part of the Union Pride float in the Sydney Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras. This year's Union Pride float was dedicated to the union movement's ongoing solidarity with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community. The IEU was represented by Branch Secretary Carol Matthews and organiser Peter Criticos.

Palm Sunday rally for refugees

The IEU proudly attends the annual Palm Sunday Rally and March for Peace. This year's rally called for peace not war and permanent visas for all refugees. Human rights advocate and former Socceroo Craig Foster addressed the crowd, saying there are still 10,000 refugees needing permanent visas, who remain in detention within our society. The IEU again helped with marshalling and collecting donations to cover the rally's costs.

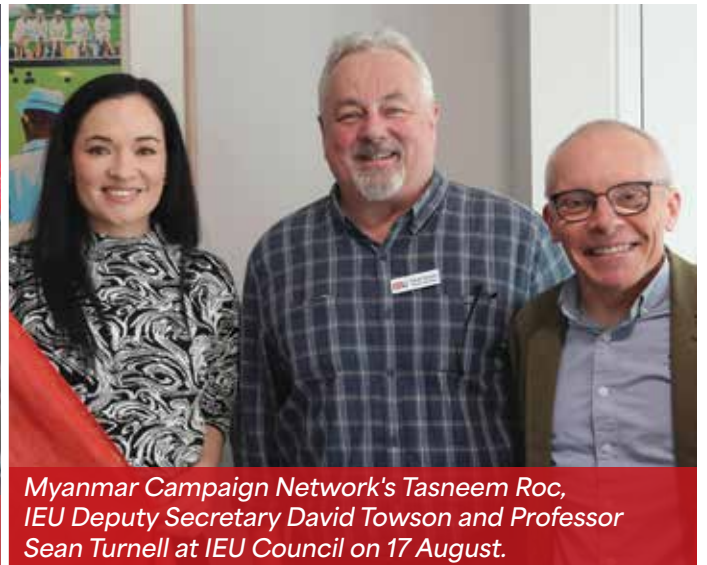
Stand with Gomeroi campaign

The IEU continues to stand with the Gomeroi people against Santos's coal seam gas well project in the Pilliga. Over the past two years, we have joined the Unions NSW Pilliga campaign to help save the Pilliga and help the Gomeroi people be respected and heard.

In March, the IEU proudly stood with the Gomeroi people, Unions NSW and other unions to receive recognition for the campaign. Hosted annually by the Nature Conservation Council of NSW, the NSW



IEU Secretary Carol Matthews at the 2024 Sydney Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras.



Myanmar Campaign Network's Tasneem Roc, IEU Deputy Secretary David Towson and Professor Sean Turnell at IEU Council on 17 August.

Environment Awards celebrate the achievements of grassroots environmentalists and community groups across the state. The Unions NSW Pilliga Campaign Committee was awarded the Jack Munday Award in recognition of union work in the campaign. It was an honour to receive an award named after union legend and environmentalist Jack Munday.

In October, several IEU officers and staff joined Unions NSW's Picket the Pipeline convoy from Narrabri to Newcastle. In conjunction with the Pilliga campaign, this event involved stopovers in towns such as Gunnedah and Scone to raise awareness of the pipeline's implications. The IEU will be closely monitoring the outcome of the Native Title Tribunal decision on the Gomeroi case, due in March 2025.

Edmund Rice Centre

The union continues to support the work of the Edmund Rice Centre, which promotes human rights, social justice and eco-justice through research, community education, advocacy and networking.

Union Aid Abroad-APHEDA

As APHEDA marks 40 years, we congratulate it on its inspiring tale of Australian workers uniting against injustice across the globe.

The IEU has been a partner with Union Aid Abroad-APHEDA, the global justice organisation of the Australian union movement, since its inception.

In late September, the IEU was one of many unions to come together to celebrate 40 years of global justice at APHEDA's global solidarity dinner in Sydney. Helen McCue, co-founder of APHEDA, opened the evening, giving an overview of the early days of APHEDA and how its international program was developed from a rights-based approach with a focus on solidarity, not charity. Then guest speakers from the Fiji Trade Union Congress and Samoa Workers Congress spoke about the importance of Australian unions' international solidarity.

Motion for the Myanmar people

At our August Council meeting, we heard updates on the situation in Myanmar from Professor Sean Turnell and Tasneem Roc from the Myanmar Campaign Network. The IEUA NSW/ACT Branch endorsed the following motion in support of Myanmar:

"The Council of the IEUA NSW/ACT Branch acknowledges and congratulates Professor Sean Turnell, Tasneem Roc and the Myanmar Campaign Network for their unrelenting efforts in supporting the people of Myanmar in their struggle for workers' rights and democracy.

"Council calls on the Australian Government to support the Myanmar Campaign Network in its efforts to bring further pressure on Myanmar's military junta to end systemic human rights abuses and to bring about the restoration of democracy."

Around the globe

Around the Globe is a regular column in *Newsmonth* reporting on global justice issues and workers' rights. In 2024, we reported on the situation in Myanmar, Croatia, Mongolia, Fiji, Gaza and more.

A whole union effort

We acknowledge the support of Secretary Carol Matthews and Deputy Secretary David Towson, together with elected Executive and Council delegates who have provided unwavering support to the IEU's social justice initiatives. The work of our publications team in promoting these initiatives is greatly appreciated. We extend our gratitude to our IEU colleagues and members who do so much of the work in this space in their own time on top of their already full workloads. Thank you for turning up time after time to support marginalised and vulnerable communities.

David Whitcombe Organiser
Katie Camarena Digital Journalist and Social Media Campaigner

Information technology and data management

Records management project

In late 2023, the IEU commenced a comprehensive review of our records management practices to develop an effective information management program and culture.

Annette Senior from Records Keeping Innovation (RKI), in consultation with staff, developed the action plan and a Business Classification Scheme (BCS) to begin the process.

Stage 2 of our records management project involved verifying our internal information structures to further develop the Business Classification Scheme (BCS). The BCS was designed to streamline record retention and disposal processes, ensuring consistency and compliance across teams. This process involved extensive consultation with various departments to customise the BCS to meet the varied needs of the IEU.

In March 2024, we engaged Anthony Bobbermein, an information management specialist, to work on the action plan developed by Annette Senior. Bobbermein's role was to further refine the BCS based on additional staff consultations and to ensure that it met the file management needs of the IEU.

Consequently, we launched a new SharePoint site on 9 July. This new site was designed to consolidate information previously scattered across multiple SharePoint sites, desktops and databases. Training was conducted in-house and via Zoom for staff on the new file management system.

Work on refining the file system continues, with a focus on catering to the union's information requirements with the aim of retaining a well-organised and accessible information repository that is governed by the file structures defined in the BCS.

Staff dashboard

The professional development team, Pat Devery and Christina Ellul, worked closely with Trong Duong (IT) to develop an in-house dashboard/intranet site. The dashboard is designed to be a 'one-stop shop' for staff to access information and resources required to assist in their daily work activities.

Monthly information technology committee meetings

In March, we established an IT Committee in line with the recommendations from the Records Management Action Plan. The committee convenes monthly and includes representatives from various IEU teams. The purpose of the committee is to address IT requirements, working closely with IEU teams, and to include information governance as an important component of our IT strategies.

Cybersecurity

Cybersecurity is a priority on the committee's agenda. We have finalised our cybersecurity policies and developed emergency procedures for responding to device or data breaches. In February, Gridware delivered cybersecurity training for all staff during our planning days, followed by a series of phishing email simulations. The union is committed to conducting annual staff training and regularly sending mock phishing emails to staff to educate them against scams.

IT ticketing system

A ticketing system has been implemented to track IT service requests, events, incidents, and alerts that may require additional action from IT.

Membership system - EFT project

The project concluded in August 2024 and saw both the development and implementation of a new fortnightly payment option into our membership system.

Mobile phones

After TPG Group, Telstra and Optus announced in mid-December 2023 the phased shutdown of their 3G network on 28 October 2024, all mobile devices have been upgraded to 5G.

Website

Discussions are currently underway regarding the next phase of the development to the IEU's new website, which was launched December 2023.

The project is set to include the development of the professional engagement, training and events sections.

Joanna Kotsakis Administration Manager
Lance Whiteley IT Manager

NGS Super

NGS Super continues to thrive. As of June 2024, there were over \$15 billion of net assets and nearly 80,000 active members in the accumulation phase.

In late 2023, NGS Super decided to restructure its board, following advice from Australian Prudential Regulation Authority (APRA) that changes needed to be made to the NGS constitution. These changes include the appointment of two independent directors and a reduction in the board size from 12 to 10 directors. All shareholders, including the IEU, agreed to the changes.

Consequently, with effect from the end of April this year, the total number of employer and union nominated directors was reduced from 12 to eight and the IEUA NSW/ACT nominees were reduced from three to one. The IEU Executive nominated the secretary as its sole nominee in April 2024.

I would like to thank the previous two directors, Christine Wilkinson and Mark Northam. Christine Wilkinson was an NGS director for nearly 12 years and has done an outstanding job representing the members of the fund. Mark Northam had been a director since February 2023 and represented members' interests well during this period.

A board and strategy meeting was held in the Hunter Valley in late April and attended by director Christine Wilkinson. In early May, board members met as a group with representatives of APRA to discuss the overall progress of the fund, including addressing cybersecurity issues and the general operation of the fund. Board members were quizzed directly by APRA about their knowledge of the fund's operations and strategy.

On 6 June, NGS launched its Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan.

In August, the board appointed the two new independent directors, one of whom will be appointed as an independent chair and will replace the current Chair, Dr Geoff Newcombe AM, who was nominated by the NSW Association of Independent Schools (AIS). John Battams will start as the Independent Chair in 2025. John is currently the Director of the Queensland Investment Corporation and Chair of Queensland Teachers Union Health Fund.

Brett Lazarides has been appointed independent director with effect from 1 September 2024. He has been an Independent Director of industry funds Combined Super and Prime Super, and held executive roles with UniSuper, Frontier, Perpetual and National Australia Bank (NAB).

NGS has implemented a review of its insurance products. From October 2024, premiums have been reduced by 13.9% on average, with 97% of members receiving a reduction in premiums. The revised fees

compare favourably with insurance costs in other funds.

NGS has been shortlisted for three SuperRatings awards - for MyChoice Super of the Year (based on investments, fees, insurance, governance, etc), the Service Quality Award (for the speed and quality of service to members) and the Momentum Award (for implementing strategic change).

NGS has maintained its commitment to becoming carbon neutral by 2030. To achieve a carbon neutral portfolio, NGS has focused on carbon reduction (divesting shares from companies with a major focus on coal, gas or oil production) and investing in carbon positive assets or companies, such as clean energy infrastructure (wind and solar projects), storage infrastructure and grid technology.

NGS has been conducting an extensive industry engagement program - attending 27 events over six weeks in Term 3, including events at IEU offices and employer conferences (Christian Schools Australia, Anglican and Catholic events). Over 40 new schools (many of them Christian schools) have chosen to nominate NGS as their default fund in the 2024 financial year.

The Big Tomorrow Retirement campaign has involved advertising on billboards, radio and social media and has been highly effective in raising awareness of super among NGS members.

Nearly 1400 members have participated in NGS webinars about planning for retirement.

Director fees for the secretary will be paid directly to the union. In the 2025 financial year (July 2024 - June 2025), the fees will amount to over \$60,000.

Carol Matthews NGS Director

ACT



Members at the Monaro Sub Branch meeting in May.



ACU Expo, Canberra.



Members at the Monaro Sub Branch meeting, IEU Canberra office in August.

The ACT office services members in the Monaro, Riverina and South East Sub Branches. Organisers Jackie Groom, Anthony Telford and new organiser Angela McDonald have met regularly with members, particularly in independent schools, during the ongoing negotiations for a new multi-enterprise agreement with the Association of Independent Schools (AIS).

Following the resignation of Office Manager Susanne Radnidge, we welcomed Harriett Kerr-Dodd to the role in July this year.

The ACT office provides a high level of service to members resolving reportable conduct matters, disputes, flexible work requests, performance issues and workers compensation claims.

The members have great faith in the work of the union and demonstrate an appreciation of the support we offer.

Our members continue to struggle with workforce shortages, particularly teachers. These shortages

have an ongoing impact on workloads. The IEU works with relevant stakeholders on these issues.

We thank the current and previous school representatives (delegates), Executive Council, consultative and sub branch committees for their continued activism and support of IEU members in their schools as well as the broader union agenda.

Organisers have also engaged in the broader industrial and social agenda through Unions ACT and represent members on:

- ACT Teacher Quality Institute Board
- TQI Professional Registration Committee
- TQI Standards and Professional Practices Committee
- TQI Learning and Development Committee, and
- TQI Initial Teacher Education Committee.

Monaro/ACT Sub Branch

The ACT welcomed Andrew Dane to the IEU Executive as Vice President representing members in the

ACT. We held a successful reps training day in June that was well attended by ACT and South East reps.

In the ACT, we have been negotiating with Christian schools, congregational schools, the Catholic Education Office and AIS schools. We have been preparing for upcoming negotiations with Catholic systemic schools. An agreement has been finalised for the Galilee School.

Riverina Sub Branch

The Riverina members are led by a dedicated and enthusiastic group of schools reps. We received an abundance of nominations for Council positions, necessitating an election. Sub branch meetings were well-attended and the recent reps training day in Wagga was very successful.

The industrial focus has been on the independent sector and we are working towards a well-deserved and overdue increase in pay and improvements in conditions for members in these schools. Re-negotiation of the Catholic Education Diocese of Wagga Wagga (CEDWW) Work Practices

Agreement is beginning as we reach out to members for their suggestions and ideas.

South East Sub Branch

Given we're celebrating the 70th anniversary of the IEU, it is appropriate to acknowledge that the first chapter meeting of the ITA held in the Canberra Goulburn Diocese was at Sacred Heart Central School Cootamundra in 1971. Then General Secretary John Nicholson flew into Cootamundra to chair the meeting. Teachers from St Columba's High School, Harden, also attended. The main items on the agenda were wages and workloads. Some things never change.

With your ongoing support and commitment, we will continue to work towards addressing and improving those work issues that contribute to the current teacher shortage.

Jackie Groom, Anthony Telford, Angela McDonald
Organisers

<p>Monaro/ACT Sub Branch Sub Branch Executive President Deputy President Secretary</p>	<p>Dianne Lefebvre Alex Thompson Anne Barbic</p>	<p>Radford College Canberra Grammar School St Thomas the Apostle Primary</p>	<p>Bruce Red Hill Kambah</p>
<p>Council Delegates Dianne Lefebvre Kathryn MacDonald Anne Leet Jacob Betts Alex Thompson David Caton</p>		<p>Radford College St John the Apostle Primary Mother Theresa Primary St Francis Xavier College Canberra Grammar School Daramalan College</p>	<p>Bruce Floreys Harrison Floreys Red Hill Dickson</p>
<p>Riverina Sub Branch Sub Branch Executive President Deputy President Secretary</p>	<p>Mercedes Goss Vanessa Geddes Terri-Anne Scott</p>	<p>St Patrick's Primary School Xavier High School Xavier High School</p>	<p>Albury North Albury North Albury</p>
<p>Council Delegates Kell Woodhouse Terri-Anne Scott Vanessa Geddes Sharon Jennings Narelle Ryall</p>		<p>Kildare Catholic College Xavier High School Xavier High School Aspect Riverina School Aspect Riverina School</p>	<p>Wagga Wagga North Albury North Albury Albury Albury</p>
<p>South East Sub Branch Sub Branch Executive President Deputy President Secretary</p>	<p>Linda Swadling Margaret Findlay Leonne Challen</p>	<p>Mount Carmel Central School St Peter's Anglican College St Mary's Primary School</p>	<p>Yass Broulee Young</p>
<p>Council Delegates Simon Fraser Linda Swadling Leonne Challen Margaret Findlay Terrienne Ryan</p>		<p>Lumen Christi Catholic College Mount Carmel Central School St Mary's Primary School St Peter's Anglican College Pambula Beach Flexible Learning</p>	<p>Pambula Yass Young Broulee Pambula</p>

Newcastle



Catholic Schools Office staff at the Hear Our Voice Too stop work, rally and march on 6 June 2024.

The Newcastle office supports members and chapters in the Central Coast, Hunter Valley and parts of the Ku-ring-gai Sub Branches. The office serves over 3600 members in schools from Taree to Sydney's north and west to Merriwa.

In February, the Central Coast and Hunter Valley Sub Branches held AGMs to elect their 2024 executive teams and in April, they elected their delegates to Council.

Contributions of many

The Hunter Valley Sub Branch Committee is made up of: Matt Bower, Dot Seamer, Jarrod McGrath and Steven Newman.

The work of the executive and union activists is essential to the Newcastle office, providing a high level of service to its members. The union congratulates these executive, Council and committee members, and thanks them for the time and effort they give in serving members.

Throughout 2024, the Newcastle office continued to advise, assist and provide support to individual members in the areas of disputes, permanency, flexible work requests, reportable conduct matters, pay and performance issues, to name but a few. Organisers have assisted chapters in the Hunter region to resolve many school-based issues and facilitated campaigns for members in Catholic, Christian and independent schools.

Catholic systemic schools

New leadership continues to restructure Diocesan Shared Services into a corporate model. Many

members have raised concerns that this new structure no longer serves schools or employees working in them.

Workers are being moved out of schools and replaced by contractors. In the last 12 months, the Head of Finance and Payroll, Head of People and Culture and the Head of Teaching and Learning have all been replaced. These changes of leadership complicate and obstruct the work of the Newcastle office organisers.

Secondary school ICT officers

In June 2023, the Maitland-Newcastle Diocese notified the union it would move 15 information and communications technology (ICT) officers from working solely for secondary schools to working for diocesan ICT Services. It proposed an increase in hours from 30 to 38 per week over 48 weeks per year but no increase in the current Level 4.3 pay rate and with the loss of all enterprise agreement (EA) conditions, including reductions in personal and long service leave.

The diocese refused to negotiate and, in October, eight members asked the union to lodge a dispute at the Fair Work Commission. After mediation, the new contracts paid Level 5 equivalent, back paid to 1 July 2021, about an extra \$270,000 in workers' pockets, as well as maintaining all their EA conditions.

The members and the Newcastle office would like to thank our industrial officers for their work and support throughout this dispute.

Office staff

The CSO staff have always received the same pay increases as school staff but in October 2023, the diocese failed to pass on the teachers' 8% pay increase and offered only 3%. These members have a separate agreement and over the years could have sought differential outcomes, but as a show of unity, have always accepted the same increases as teachers.

Shocked by this offer, the chapter formed a campaign committee, recruiting every employee who had not yet joined the union. With little progress in Term 1, the chapter sought a Protected Action Order and stopped work on Thursday 6 June.

Almost 200 members and supporters attended a rally in Wickham Park and marched over the bridge to the CSO office. The members continued this show of solidarity by proudly displaying bright yellow posters inside and outside the CSO office.

In August, the diocese made a new divisive offer that would see most members receive the 8% increase but only 3.5% for the others. At the time of writing, the employer was putting this agreement to the vote. The chapter recommended a 'no' vote and was pressing the employer to return to the bargaining table.

The Newcastle office commends this chapter, its committee and rep for all the work and effort they have put into this campaign. Further, it applauds the support and camaraderie they have shown each other throughout this campaign.

Classroom assistants' permanency

In Term 4 2023, the diocese agreed to make all learning support assistants (LSAs) permanent. They were to use the average hours worked between 2022 and 2023 to calculate the permanency for each LSA. Unfortunately, the rollout of the contract offers over June and July was inconsistent, confusing and upsetting for many members. With almost 500 LSAs working in Catholic schools, there were many errors. The Newcastle organisers took calls and emails from almost 100 members over

this period and are still working to address these concerns and errors.

The LSA permanency campaign went on for almost 20 years, and many members who fought for full permanency have retired. The Newcastle office would like to thank and recognise all these unionists for their support in winning this outcome.

Newcastle secondary schools transition

The diocese continues to move all its Newcastle secondary schools to a Years 7-12 structure. This has raised workload, PD and work health and safety issues. St Francis Xavier, Hamilton, a senior college for 40 years, has received its first Year 7 intake and will enrol 150 Year 8 students in 2025. St Pius X High School, Adamstown, will change its name to Trinity Catholic College and next year enrol its first senior students in more than 40 years. The task of programming and preparing for over 20 new subjects has raised concerns for members. San Clemente, Mayfield, is currently working towards enrolling its first senior cohort in 2026.

Independent, Seventh Day Adventists and Christian schools

Although the majority of these are individual schools, most members work in three systems. The Newcastle Anglican Schools Corporation operates K-12 Schools in Warnervale, Newcastle, Taree and Scone. The Seventh Day Adventist Northern Conference covers 10 schools from the Central Coast to the Queensland border. St Philip Christian Colleges operates K-12 schools and DALE colleges operate in Cessnock, Gosford, Newcastle and Salamander Bay.

These organisations are also becoming more corporatised and employ separate People and Culture departments. This structure aids organisers in assisting individual members but adds complexity to dealing with individual schools. All systemic schools have some autonomy but will defer to People and Culture when it suits them.

Like in all schools, workload is an issue for teachers



Hunter Valley sub branch meeting in July.

but an extra frustration in these systems is the fact that every school has different hours of work and timetable expectations. To progress to consistent, defined workloads, the Newcastle office has implemented a system-wide approach to organising.

Reps training

The union ran training for the Hunter Valley Sub Branch independent school reps on Wednesday 31 May. On Thursday 25 August, 27 reps from Catholic systemic schools attended training.

The reps workshopped strategies for running a successful chapter, growing their membership and supporting members at their school. The training covered the current industrial landscape, where entitlements are derived from, as well as understanding their rights and responsibilities as a rep. Feedback from reps was positive; they valued the information and welcomed the opportunity to network with other reps.

Thanks to all reps who attended, and to Secretary Carol Matthews and Professional Engagement Coordinator Pat Devery for delivering what was a quality training agenda.

Hunter Workers

The 2023 Hunter Workers delegates were Carlo Rendina (Executive), Therese Fitzgibbon, Jim Hall, Sarah Gardiner, Amanda Wood, Steven Newman and Mark Wilson. IEU delegates participated in this year's May Day dinner and march, which saw over 2000 union members parade down Wharf Road. Members also supported the Hunter Workers Women's Committee events, such as the Newcastle International Women's Day march through Hamilton.

The Newcastle office thanks Hunter Workers for their support during the CSO office staff stop work rally and march. We are stronger together. Thank you to all the delegates.

Therese Fitzgibbon Organiser

Jim Hall Organiser

Veronica Lang Office Administrator

Carlo Rendino Organiser

	<p>Hunter Valley Sub Branch Amanda Wood Sarah Gardner Kim Keating</p>	<p>Central Coast Sub Branch Georgina Martin David Terry Colleen Heffernan</p>
<p>President Deputy Secretary</p>		
<p>Councillors</p>	<p>Craig Duncan Mark Wilson Riley Warren Steven Newman Katrina Easton Amy Jones</p>	<p>Ann Hall David Terry Kim-Maree Warden John Heffernan</p>

Lismore

In 2024, the Lismore office has continued its work for members in schools in both the North Coast Sub Branch (Tweed Heads to Yamba) and the Mid North Coast Sub Branch (Grafton to Laurieton).

The office is staffed by organisers Steve Bergan and Richard Ryan, Industrial Officer Carolyn Moore and Office Administrator Cassie Barnes. From the start of Term 2, the team has been back in the refurbished Molesworth Street office. After over two years of working remotely, it is great to be back together under the same roof, and with access to the resources necessary to fulfil our roles.

Steve Bergan has taken leave for Terms 3 and 4. Peter Criticos is covering Mid North Coast schools from Dorrigo to Laurieton and Richard Ryan is covering Mid North Coast schools from Grafton to Bellingen. Both are doing so in addition to their usual loads. We look forward to Steve's return in January 2025.

Elections and meetings

In February, both the North Coast Sub Branch and the Mid North Coast Sub Branch held their annual general meetings (AGMs) at Lismore and Nambucca Heads respectively.

North Coast Sub Branch Committee President Kath Egan (St Francis Xavier Primary, Ballina), Vice President Michael Namrell (St Mary's Catholic College, Casino) and Secretary Jennifer Allen (St Carthages Catholic School Lismore) were re-elected.

The Mid North Coast AGM held at Nambucca Heads RSL saw President Markus Muschal (St John Paul College, Coffs Harbour) re-elected unopposed. Also re-elected was Will Pollock (St Joseph's Primary School, Kempsey) as Vice President. Ngahine Munokoa (St John Paul College, Coffs Harbour) was welcomed as Secretary on the Sub Branch committee.

Secretary Carol Matthews attended the North Coast Sub Branch AGM, while Deputy Secretary David Towson attended the Mid North Coast Sub Branch AGM, with both providing broader insight for members into industrial, professional and educational issues affecting non-government schools. Assistant Secretaries Lyn Caton and Amanda Hioe have also attended various sub branch meetings in 2024. The branch welcomes and appreciates these visits by our Sydney-based executive.

Both sub branches continued moving the meetings around in order to give members greater access to attend.

North Coast Sub Branch meetings for 2024

Term 1 AGM Lismore
Term 2 Ballina
Term 3 Tweed Heads
Term 4 Lismore.

Mid North Coast Sub Branch meetings for 2024

Term 1 AGM Nambucca Heads
Term 2 Port Macquarie
Term 3 Coffs Harbour
Term 4 Nambucca Heads

As well as the ongoing work supporting individual members and chapters, the Lismore organisers have been busy attending chapter meetings in the AIS schools, rallying our chapters to keep pressure on their respective employers in delivering an acceptable CEA outcome for the schools currently on the multi enterprise agreements.

The North Coast Sub Branch Reps' Training Day was held in the Lismore IEU office on 25 June followed by the Mid North Coast on 27 June. Across both days, 31 reps attended from across Catholic systemic, independent, Christian and Steiner schools.

We thank Professional Engagement Coordinator Pat Devery for running this valuable training.

Finally, we thank the North Coast and Mid North Coast Sub Branch executives and committees for their continued activism and support of all IEU members within their respective sub branches.

To all past and present IEU school chapter reps, we acknowledge and thank you for your support and contributions on behalf of members in your schools, along with your activism towards broader union issues this year.

With your ongoing commitment and support, we are positive that the union will continue to meet and resolve those matters that arise in your schools on the north and mid-north coast regions.

**Steve Bergan, Richard Ryan, Carolyn Moore
Cassie Barnes, Peter Criticos**
Lismore Office Staff

IEU partners

The IEU acknowledges its service providers and partners for their support throughout 2024.

Teachers Health

Teachers Health joins the IEUA NSW/ACT Branch in celebrating a significant anniversary this year, 70 years of caring for members.

Created as the health fund for teachers – by teachers – in 1954, Teachers Health has grown to become Australia’s largest industry-based health fund and the sixth largest health insurer.

Today, it is proud to be the health fund for NSW and ACT’s teachers, early childhood educators, support staff, and their families.

Congratulations IEUA NSW/ACT Branch

Teachers Health congratulates IEUA NSW/ACT Branch on celebrating 70 years strong in 2024.

Throughout this time, the union has continued to grow and achieve major milestones in representing the rights of teachers and support staff in non-government education.

Teachers Health is proud of the strong partnership forged with the IEU over many years and the enormous strength, opportunities, and benefits provided for members.

As organisations with a shared commitment to achieving the best outcomes for members, Teachers Health looks forward to continuing this important work together.

Growth and sustainability

Despite the challenges of operating within the highly competitive health insurance industry, as well as broader social and economic pressures, Teachers Health continued to deliver strong results for members throughout the year.

With a clear purpose and strategy in place, focused on sustainability, resilience, and consistent growth, more than 5000 new members joined the fund. This growth rate of 2.8% takes the total number of people covered by Teachers Health to over 420,000. Member satisfaction levels also remain high, with an industry-leading retention rate of 96%.

Putting members first

As a not-for-profit, Teachers Health is committed to achieving the best outcomes for members.

With cost of living and member wellbeing top of mind, Teachers Health delivered a premium increase of just 2.65% in 2024, well below the industry average premium increase of 3.03%, annual CPI inflation of 4.1% and health-related inflation of 5.1%.

Looking to the future

As the IEU and Teachers Health mark their 70-year anniversaries in 2024, it is a time to both reflect and look to the future.

While a lot has changed over the decades, the commitment to working together for the benefit of both organisations’ shared membership remains as strong as ever.

Teachers Health looks forward to working with the IEU to build on these opportunities.

Teachers Mutual Bank

For 10 consecutive years, Teachers Mutual Bank (TMB) has been named one of the World’s Most Ethical Companies. In 2023, it was one of only four banks globally to be recognised. TMB is proud to count itself among the leaders in the industry in setting standards and in supporting economic, social and environmental sustainability.

TMB believes that sustainability influences every aspect of its planning, programming and implementation. Across the education sector, TMB aims to build long-term, mutually beneficial relationships. TMB partners with organisations that are aligned with its values and that deliver commercial outcomes.

TMB is a mutual bank created by teachers for teachers, providing financial products and services for teachers, their families and employees in the education sector. The IEU and TMB’s Partnership Agreement, signed in 2022 by both parties, expires in June 2025. In this partnership agreement, the parties agree to the principles and objectives set forth. It is subject to quarterly progress updates and an annual review.

TMB was a major partner for the 2024 Australia’s Best Teachers for the second year running. It is dedicated to supporting education sector employees. TMB is pleased to be part of an initiative that recognises and honours teachers and the contribution they make to students and the community.

As TMB and the IEU have a proud history of funding education projects that kickstart sustainability projects, TMB was pleased again to co-sponsor six environment grants of \$3000 for members in schools, colleges or early childhood centres.

TMB and the IEU, throughout the year, meet every few months to update each organisation, share insights and to plan resources. The IEU appreciates the ongoing support and sponsorship from TMB.

NGS Super

NGS is the leading industry super fund for all workers in non-government education and community sectors. All NGS's profits go back to members and NGS is proud to help its members create a brighter future. Its team of dedicated customer relationship managers provide workplace visits, employer tools and resources, and an accessible education program to help its members make the most of their super.

As an industry super fund, its fees are just one of the benefits that are offered to members; to keep their costs low so that members can get the most from their super.

The IEU and NGS have once again entered into a marketing agreement which enables the fund to inform and educate the union membership on the services, products and benefits of the fund. Advertising in union publications is also included in this agreement.

As part of the agreement, the IEU uses its reasonable endeavours to assist NGS to gain a greater presence in Catholic systemic and independent schools; such assistance includes providing NGS an opportunity for its staff to attend appropriate IEU workplace events or opportunities to speak at a full staff meeting, be part of professional development days, or be available in a room for members who meet with NGS. The IEU has enabled NGS to attend university open days, sub branch meetings, and IEU reps' training days.

NGS financial planners provide members with advice on their super and beyond. NGS planners create strategies that aim to maximise members' financial position, including planning for their retirement.

As part of the agreement with NGS, financial planning seminars for IEU members have been held this year in Ultimo, Parramatta, Canberra, Newcastle, Port Macquarie, Gosford, Wagga Wagga and Albury. IEU members have appreciated the support of NGS in the hosting of these retirement planning seminars, including the provision of co-branded IEU/NGS tote bags and other material. As always, education is integral to the planning process, and it is important that members feel confident and informed at all times.

NGS Super has once again been recognised for the value it offers members, winning the Best Value Balanced Index Super Product at Money magazine's Best of the Best Awards. It was also recognised at the Super Review Super Fund of the Year Awards, with the Super Ratings Award for Accountability and Transparency. For three years running, Chant West has awarded NGS the Insurance Best Fund Award after assessing its policy conditions, benefit design, premiums and commitment to helping members return to work. (See also NGS Super annexure.)

Union Shopper

For over 35 years, Union Shopper has utilised the collective bargaining power of unions across Australia to provide great savings and services to members and their families. The IEU has continued to partner with Union Shopper as a service provider to offer its members access to a wide range of

benefits, including lifestyle, leisure, and financial offers. Union Shopper is fully endorsed by the ACTU, 100% union-owned, is run solely to benefit members and is Australia's number one rewards program.

Members are encouraged to log into the IEU Union Shopper platform, confirm their union membership details and start shopping and enjoying the great savings and rewards that await them. Union Shopper offers many benefits, including discounts on electrical items, cars, gift cards, movie tickets, wine, travel, entertainment, finance and much more. By making one relatively large purchase or a few smaller purchases through Union Shopper, members could easily receive savings in excess of their annual union fees.

Union Shopper appreciates the union's dedication in enhancing the value of Union Shopper membership for IEU members and is eager to collaborate to achieve both organisations' shared goals.

Welfare Rights Centre

The union continues its affiliation with the Welfare Rights Centre (WRC). WRC opened its doors in 1983 as a community legal centre specialising in social security and family assistance law.

The centre prioritises IEU members and provides free expert legal information, advice and representation to thousands of NSW residents every year who are adversely affected by Centrelink decisions.

The centre also offers IEU members free community worker training sessions which aim to increase the capacity of community workers to navigate the social security system.

The union supported WRC in its campaign for the state and federal governments to reinstate annual grants to the centre so that it can meet the overwhelming demand for its services. Without ongoing support from both governments, the centre would be unable to maintain its vital services.

The CEO had the opportunity to address an officers' meeting this year to provide information about the centre and how it could help IEU members, as well as an update on its funding campaign.

WRC's annual report, highlighting the incredible work it has been able to do over the past year, was presented to the union. WRC appreciates the support and commitment to social justice from the IEU.

Workers Health Centre

Workers Health Centre (WHC) is a not-for-profit organisation providing specialised consulting services in the field of injury management, return to work and rehabilitation.

Since its opening in 1976, it has remained deeply committed to providing its services to injured workers through its proud affiliation and association with the trade union movement in NSW. The centre has a strong working relationship with 22 affiliated unions, including the IEU, and has provided union members quality rehabilitation and occupational health and safety services since 1976. The centre engages in best practice to help injured workers and

their families; its mission is to facilitate a safe and durable return to work for injured workers.

Under the NSW Workers Compensation Scheme, IEU members are entitled to occupational rehabilitation if they sustain an injury or illness because of their work.

The centre has joined IEU delegates and officers at meetings to provide free health and hearing checks. It has partnered with Amplifon to provide advance hearing assessments for members at no cost, and it offers discounts on hearing aids to IEU members.

Due to the closure of Relationships Australia

NSW's Employee Assistance Program (EAP) service, the union has entered into an EAP service agreement with WHC. The EAP is a work-based counselling service designed to improve the emotional and general psychological wellbeing of all employees, including immediate family members.

The union is proud of its relationship with WRC for providing these specialist services to assist our injured members to return to their fullest potential at work.

Helen O'Regan Executive Assistant

National/international



IEUA Federal Secretary Brad Hayes and IEU member and preschool teacher Janene Rox address the ACTU Congress in Adelaide in June.

Professional engagement 2024: Compliance and workloads

In 2023, the federal branch began engaging with federal authorities and agencies to advocate for greater transparency on the compliance requirements that have become such a driver of workload intensification.

This work took place alongside active engagement with federal government initiatives to tackle the teacher shortage, including a review of the *National School Reform Agreement* (now the Better and Fairer Schools Agreement), the National Teacher Workforce Action Plan and the development of the Australian Framework for Generative AI in Schools.

In 2024, progress towards completion continues for the Better and Fairer Schools Agreement and The National Teacher Workforce Action Plan, while the Australian Framework for Generative AI in Schools has been published with the inclusion of protections secured by the federal office.

The parallel work of clarifying compliance undertaken by the federal branch has focused on the Australian Teacher Performance and Development Framework developed by the Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL) and the Educational Program Documentation required under the National Quality Framework and the National Quality Standards for the Assessment and Ratings process overseen by

the Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority (ACECQA).

Both processes have become workload drivers in schools and early childhood services, exceeding the policy intentions of both AITSL and ACECQA. In both cases, the federal office worked with these agencies to develop information sheets that would not only clarify the documentation required for compliance, but also identify processes and practices likely to be duplicative or excessive.

These resources join the Nationally Consistent Collection of Data (NCCD) Evidence Fact Sheet, the NESA guidance on Curriculum - School Registration, and Curriculum Programming and Record Keeping. These were also developed through a collaboration between the IEU and the federal and state agencies involved.

This growing suite of resources empowers members to challenge unreasonable and unsustainable workloads, backed by the official advice found in these information sheets.

Industrial challenges, wins and next steps

Important industrial reforms and new workplace rights for IEU members were secured by member campaigns over the last 12 months.

Combined with changes in 2022, industrial rights and protections for IEU members have improved dramatically under the federal Labor government.



COPE Conference delegates in Fiji, March 2024; Assistant Federal Secretary Veronica Yewdall, back row, centre.

However, challenges remain to win the further reforms needed to bring complete balance to workplace laws.

Closing Loopholes Bill #2

IEU members were again front and centre in the fight to deliver a range of important reforms as the Closing Loopholes Bill #2 was passed by the federal parliament.

While the changes delivered a broad range of improvements for secure jobs and fairer workplaces, new delegates' rights and the right of employees to disconnect have relevance to IEU members. Our union will continue to advocate for changes to the excessive restrictions imposed on members seeking to take industrial action, and for the need to wind back employers' ability to lock out staff for imposing minor work bans.

Ending discrimination

While the federal government is to be commended for delivering major improvements to industrial laws, similar legislative support to end discrimination in faith-based schools remains unresolved.

The federal government's decision to seek bipartisan support from the Coalition for federal changes undermined its clear election commitment and once again delayed basic discrimination protections for thousands of employees and students.

Similar political failings by several state governments continue to frustrate and delay long overdue changes at the state level in NSW, Queensland and Western Australia.

The IEU will persist with its campaign for the commonsense changes needed to anti-discrimination exemptions in faith-based schools. We can support our communities of faith while at the same time ensuring these laws reflect modern community standards.

Federal branch research and policy support

A plethora of reviews and inquiries were a feature of the education and industrial landscape over the last

12 months. The IEU lodged 15 submissions, including on the Australian Law Reform Commission's review of anti-discrimination provisions, the *Fair Work Legislation Amendment (Closing Loopholes) Bill 2023*, the VET Workforce Blueprint, the National School Reform Agreement review and the Covid-19 Royal Commission. We made several submissions specifically on the perils and promises of AI in education, and on early childhood education and care.

Copies of all submissions can be found at: ieu.org.au/policy-submission:

Federal budget

The IEU was in attendance on Federal budget night on 14 June 2024, with Federal Secretary Brad Hayes and Researcher Christine Regan watching the Treasurer deliver the budget live at Parliament House and engaging with MPs and union representatives.

A budget summary paper was sent to branches on the night, supplemented by an *IEU Speaks* and a further budget brief that outlined in more detail key outcomes for our sector. These included government support for increased wages in the early childhood education and care sector multi-employer agreements, cost of living support, affordable housing measures, paid practicum placements, lower HECS/HELP indexation, domestic violence payments, and super on federal government paid parental leave.

Staffing and enrolment

ABS schools' data and the National Schools Statistics Collection have been the primary sources of data for mapping school staffing and enrolment trends nationally and across states and territories dating back to 2006. Along with the presentation at the national conference this year, reports have been prepared and delivered to each IEU Branch.

The data currently indicates that the Catholic sector performs more strongly in NSW than the national average, although the independent sector will soon employ more workers in NSW, and is already doing so in Qld, SA and WA.

Voter mapping

As part of voter mapping in crossbench electorates, the federal office conducted a data project identifying the predominance of non-government school enrolments in some electorates represented by Greens MPs. These reports highlighted the higher levels of non-government school enrolments in these seats and provided a further basis for IEU engagement with the crossbench, including a common interest in different forms of representation of workers and families in these electorates.

Enterprise agreement workload provisions

Building a comparative data source of workload provisions in Catholic systemic school enterprise agreements across all states is another project underway in the IEU federal office. The goal is to provide branches with user friendly, one-stop documents that enable quick, initial comparison of each category of provisions designed to address workload. Identifying whether, for example, some states may have innovative or new provisions may be beneficial for decision making in areas such as logs of claims in collective bargaining.

Members' inspiring tradition of activism

The last 12 months has once again seen IEU branches engaged in bargaining campaigns, political lobbying and disputes across the Catholic and independent sectors. It will continue to be IEU member campaigns that will make the positive change needed in our schools and in our classrooms.

International solidarity: Council of Pacific Education Regional Conference

The Council of Pacific Education (COPE) met in Fiji from 1-3 March to discuss issues of critical importance for achieving progress towards quality public education, social equity and climate justice. While there are clearly differences in capacity and resourcing around the Pacific, teacher shortages, workload and the impact of climate change were recurring themes.

At the conference, affiliates shared their challenges in delivering quality education to students. They also worked collaboratively to prepare a climate justice motion for presentation at the 10th Education International (EI) World Congress in July-August 2024.

The Conference resolution to EI focused on real action to protect the lives and livelihoods of those most impacted by climate change in the Pacific and ensure stable and quality education for all students.

COPE Executive meeting, Vanuatu

In June, members of the COPE Executive travelled from Fiji, the Solomon Islands, Samoa, New Zealand and Australia. Veronica Yewdall, IEU Assistant Federal Secretary, attended in her role as Assistant to the Women's Network Co-ordinator, Nanise Kamikamicka.

The COPE Executive meeting considered the financial report, country reports and discussion of issues related to the EI World Congress.

The Executive visited members of the Vanuatu Teachers Union (VTU) who were taking stop-

work action and awaiting a commitment from the government to address their long-standing claims. A message of solidarity from the IEU was communicated to the VTU.

The Executive also addressed participants at the VTU training workshop on the challenges in delivering quality education in the Pacific and strategies for women's empowerment and leadership.

APHEDA

The IEU proudly supports Union Aid Abroad- APHEDA and encourages branches and members to join in helping build workers' rights around the world. The IEU remains active in our region through support of the Timor-Leste Farm Workers Union.

Education International (EI) World Congress

In August, the world's teacher unions met in Argentina for the EI World Congress for the first time since 2019. This involved 380 unions representing over 30 million union members. About 1200 delegates developed the policy and action framework that will guide the work of EI until the next World Congress in 2029.

Key Congress discussions centred on the UN's High-Level Panel on the Teaching Profession. Debates focused on global issues relevant to IEU members - teacher workload, school funding, recognition of support staff, pay rates and workplace rights. Human rights violations and the persecution of teacher unionists in many countries were particularly distressing, as were the first-person stories of anti-union violence and oppression in the host country and other South American nations.

ACTU Congress

The triannual policy-setting forum of the ACTU was held in June 2024. Given the growth of our union since last congress, there was an increased IEU delegation and allocated votes.

ACTU policies spanning dozens of areas were developed and endorsed on education, industrial rights, equity and anti-discrimination protections in faith-based schools.

The IEU supported the successful re-election of ACTU office holders including Sally McManus (Secretary), Michele O'Neil (President), Liam O'Brien (Assistant Secretary), Joseph Mitchell (Assistant Secretary) and Gerard Dwyer (Senior Vice President).

The focus of federal office engagement throughout 2024 has been to make meaningful inroads into unsustainable workloads, restore professional autonomy and capitalise on the raft of industrial reforms passed by the federal government to achieve real improvements to the security, pay and working conditions of teachers and support staff in the non-government sector.

Veronica Yewdall Assistant Federal Secretary

President's report

I take this opportunity to thank everyone for welcoming me to this role. I appreciate your support and look forward to working towards new goals to move the IEU forward.



I want to acknowledge Tina Ruello for her outstanding work over the past two years. Additionally, I wish to pay special tribute to Christine Wilkinson, who served in this role for over two decades. Her unwavering dedication and meticulous management of meetings have left a lasting impact on our union.

We all know that the role of educators and schools has evolved due to societal shifts and the perception of declining educational outcomes. The changes in the core work of educators are spoken of but ignored by those who make decisions. Our profession faces a range of challenges.

Changing role of educators

Teachers and support staff have transitioned from traditional knowledge providers to facilitators of learning. This shift focuses on guiding students to develop critical thinking and problem-solving skills rather than merely delivering content. In parallel, the integration of digital tools and resources has transformed educational delivery, making classrooms more interactive and adaptable.

The emphasis on social-emotional learning (SEL) reflects a growing recognition of its importance in students' development. Teachers are increasingly incorporating SEL into their curricula to support students' emotional and social growth as well as their academic achievement.

Impact of societal changes

The diversity of students' needs has surged, requiring teachers to adapt their methods to cater to students from a multitude of backgrounds. This diversity brings both opportunities and challenges in ensuring that all students receive equitable support. Increased awareness of mental health issues has led teachers to integrate mental health resources into their teaching practices, focusing more on students' overall wellbeing.

Professional development and support

As educational practices evolve, continuous professional development is essential for teachers to stay abreast of new methods and technologies. Support systems, including mentorship and collaborative networks, are vital for helping teachers navigate these changes effectively. Professional development must align with current educational priorities to ensure teachers can effectively implement new strategies in their classrooms.

Challenges and barriers

The shift towards a holistic approach to education often leads to increased workloads for teachers, raising concerns about burnout and job satisfaction. Moreover, while personalised learning and other innovations hold promise, there is a risk of exacerbating existing inequities if resources and support are not distributed equitably. Addressing these challenges is vital to maintaining a balanced and effective educational environment.

Measuring success

Traditional measures of educational success, such as standardised test scores, may not fully capture the outcomes of modern teaching practices. This limitation has sparked debate about developing new forms of assessment that better reflect the diverse achievements of students. Surely producing good humans is a noteworthy benchmark.

Community and parental involvement

Engaging with parents and the community has become increasingly important for supporting student learning and addressing broader educational issues. Strong and respectful partnerships between schools, families and community organisations can enhance educational outcomes and support the evolving role of teachers. This can foster a collaborative approach to education.

The core work of educators has changed in response to a multitude of factors. These changes bring both opportunities and challenges. They should not come at the expense of educators' personal lives, their families, their health or their bank accounts.

Our decision makers know what needs to be done to fix our education system, because we have told them.

As a union, we need to maintain the fight to improve respect for our profession; the result will be a better system for all.

Glenn Lowe President



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