

NewsExtra

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NSW Christian Schools – Getting to Agreement

We have achieved notable gains in both pay and conditions for members working in NSW Christian schools represented by Christian Schools Australia (CSA).

General staff – finalising the MEA

We are in the final stages of drafting the multi-enterprise agreement (MEA) for general staff, which will soon be put to a vote.

Pay rises

The recently negotiated MEA secures pay rises of 4% in each of February 2024, February 2025 and February 2026. The proposed MEA will also introduce a new classification structure and substantially higher rates of pay for school-based psychologists, closely modelled on those that apply in NSW government schools.

Conditions

Under the proposed MEA, we have achieved the following improvements:

- personal/carer's leave will increase from 10 days to 15 days per annum
- the New Parent Bonus (paid parental leave) will increase in line with the federal government's Paid Parental Leave Scheme, from 22 weeks from 1 July 2024 to 26 weeks by 1 July 2026
- the two weeks paid parental leave for the non-primary carer (normally the father) will no longer be deducted from the available personal leave balance.

In addition, we expect that the proposed MEA will include robust new rights under the changes in industrial relations laws, such as:

- stronger rights for employees to request flexible work arrangements to achieve a better work-life balance
- limitations on the use of fixed-term contracts which will provide better job security
- the right to disconnect from work; and
- delegates' rights so that your workplace union rep can represent you more effectively.

Teachers – interim pay rises secured!

Pay rises

In response to our claims, teachers in CSA schools received pay rises of 7% in February 2024 with a commitment to a further 4% pay increase scheduled for October this year. However, we have not reached agreement about pay rises in 2025 and 2026 because IEU members have not accepted the CSA's offer of 1.5% pay increases for 2025 and 2026.

In March 2024, we conducted a poll where a decisive 92% of IEU members rejected the CSA's pay offer ([see IEU poll results](#)). This overwhelming response from our members meant we were unable to agree to CSA schools asking teachers to vote on the proposed MEA based on the CSA offer.

Recently, the NSW Government announced the initial pay offer for NSW public sector workers, and we expect that the final agreement for NSW government teachers (expected from October 2024) will be at least on par with this offer. Given the historical alignment, we anticipate that similar increases would be extended to teachers in Catholic systemic schools. The table below compares the anticipated outcome for teachers in NSW government schools against increases in Christian schools represented by the Association of Independent Schools (AIS) and the most recent final CSA offer for teachers:

Year	CSA offer for teachers	AIS Christian Schools teacher pay rises	Anticipated outcome for teachers in NSW government schools
2024	7% in Feb 4% in Oct	Adjustments to align teacher salaries with NSW government schools	3%–4% in October 2024 (on top of increases of 8%–12% in Oct 2023)
2025	1.5% in Oct	3% in Feb	3%–4%
2026	1.5% in Feb	3% in Feb	3%–4%

What now?

CSA schools have suggested we suspend the bargaining process temporarily. Given that IEU members are receiving 11% pay increases this year, we have advised CSA that we are open to resuming bargaining at a later time, provided that they commit to extending the improvements in paid parental leave benefits gained for general staff to teachers as well. We anticipate that other improvements stemming from recent industrial law changes, such as the right to disconnect, will also extend to teachers.

With no agreement yet for 2025 and 2026, this delay will allow us to see potential pay increases in those years across other sectors. It also gives us an opportunity to push for a more competitive pay offer from CSA schools.

Stand strong with the IEU

Thank you for your support and engagement in our campaign for fair pay and better conditions. While we have made significant gains, our fight for fair pay, especially for our teacher members, is not yet over. Show your ongoing support:

1. Stay informed: stay updated with NewsExtras and follow our campaign ([click here](#)).
2. Spread the word: discuss this campaign with your colleagues. Encourage non-members to join the IEU. [Click here to join](#).
3. Empower your chapter: union reps now have protections and rights under the new delegates' rights. If you do not have an IEU rep in your school, reach out to your IEU Organiser to find out how reps can be elected for your school and advocate for your chapter.

Together, we can achieve the fair pay that we deserve.



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