

NewsExtra

19 September 2024

Claim for a new Enterprise Agreement

The current enterprise agreement (EA) applying to teachers and support staff in Catholic systemic schools expires on 9 October 2024.

At its meeting on 17 August 2024, IEU Council endorsed a claim for a new three-year enterprise agreement that:

- ensures teachers and support staff are paid no less than their colleagues in government schools
- ensures pay rises do not fall behind the rate of inflation
- increases release from face-to-face teaching time for both primary and secondary teachers by two hours per week
- improves 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
- 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.

Pay rises

Our members continue to face significant cost-of-living pressures, with interest rates remaining high and an annual CPI increase to June 2024 of 3.8%.

Pay rises for both teachers and support staff in NSW government schools are not yet settled.

In relation to teachers, the NSW Teachers Federation is currently negotiating with the NSW Government. Support staff in government schools are represented by the NSW Public Service Association (PSA). The PSA is calling for pay rises for NSW public sector workers to be determined by the NSW Industrial Relations Commission (NSWIRC). This comes after the PSA rejected a government offer of a 3.5% pay increase from July.

Face-to-face teaching and release

Our members are seeking reduced face-to-face teaching time (secondary) and additional release time (primary) as key measures to address workloads. Some dioceses already provide additional release, but most do not. Improved release and reduced meeting times for those in leadership positions is also crucial.

Paid parental leave

All NSW public sector workers (including teachers and support staff in government schools) have been entitled to improved paid parental leave since October 2022. Under the new arrangements:

- both parents are eligible to take 14 weeks paid parental leave in the first two years after the birth or adoption of a child, not just in the first 12 months, provided the parent has responsibility for the care of the child
- there is a bonus two weeks' leave available if both parents have exhausted their employer-provided paid parental leave, and
- the qualifying period to access the leave is 40 weeks of service, not 52 weeks.

In the ACT, the Archdiocese of Canberra & Goulburn's policy is that parents are entitled to up to 24 weeks of paid parental leave from the date of birth or adoption. This is well in excess of the 14 weeks applying in other dioceses and reflects the ACT public sector entitlement. We're calling for this new standard to be included in the new EA for members in this diocese.

Workload and work pressure

Crippling workloads continue to exacerbate staff shortages across the profession because of difficulties in both recruiting new graduates and retaining experienced teachers.

Members advise the union that out-of-hours work requirements are a key stress, including programming and marking, compliance and data collection. There is also a big variation between schools in the number and timing of parent-teacher events and other school community events that staff are expected to attend. Catering to diverse student needs also remains an ongoing issue.

We know you're busy, but we ask for your help in identifying your most pressing workload concerns.

Please complete a brief survey [on your workload issues](#).

Engage with your union

The historic gains achieved by determined union members in Catholic systemic and government schools in 2022 and 2023 are flowing through to other school sectors.

Moving forward, we must continue to fight for improvements in pay and conditions for all our members in Catholic systemic schools. It's time to make a real difference to your working life by addressing critical workload concerns.

Encourage your colleagues to [join our union](#) as we continue the fight to improve your salaries and conditions.

