

Teachers and school families both deserve a fair deal

While Catholic school employers and the Independent Education Union (IEU) have reached agreement on a 2.5 per cent annual pay rise for teachers over three years, the employers believe the IEU's further claims for changes to employment conditions remain unaffordable.

"We greatly respect and value our teachers. They do an outstanding job. We've committed to reducing workload and increasing salaries and we're ready to pay. We're hopeful that we will soon reach a resolution with the IEU," says Helen O'Brien, Director, Catholic Education South Australia.

"We are negotiating in good faith with the IEU. Ideally we would reach agreement without industrial action, but we acknowledge the right of our staff to participate.

"We need to balance the needs of our staff with ensuring that we offer affordable school fees for South Australian families. Teachers and school families both deserve a fair deal."

Catholic school employers have offered:

- A reduction in Student Contact Time (SCT) of 11 hours per year at times of more intense workload such as school report writing
- Reduction of 6.5 hours per year in yard duty, teacher meetings and briefings.

"Changes to working conditions don't come out of thin air. Every concession or change has a cost. We believe we've offered some generous concessions but the union won't accept them," adds Michael Kenny, Assistant Director, People and Culture.

"The IEU claim as it stands is simply unaffordable and industrial action won't change that fact.

"We want our schools to be accessible to all. In this tough economic climate we need to ensure that changes to working conditions are affordable.

"The 2.5% salary increase each year for the next three years will cost \$28 million. Non-salary benefits also cost money to roll out and we will continue to work with the IEU on a solution that is affordable.

"Parents can be assured that our schools will remain open while this rally is taking place on Thursday. We will continue to work towards reaching a resolution that is in the interests of teachers, parents and our school communities."

Parents with any concerns about how the action will impact their school are encouraged to discuss them directly with their school principal.