

Lobby Network News - June 19 2009/03e

Support Staff 0% wage offer

As you may have heard, the Government has offered support staff a 0% wage increase. This is totally unacceptable even in the current economic climate. We are currently seeking feedback on this offer from members. It is likely that we will need your help shortly to ensure that all Government MPs get a clear message that by undervaluing school support staff, they put in question their commitment to children's learning, efficient school systems and fairness for the lowest paid people in the education sector.

Please make sure you get in touch with your local support staff activists so that you can support and assist with meetings with MPs. If you're unsure of who to contact locally, contact your nearest Support Staff National Caucus member at <http://www.nzei.org.nz/Contact+Us/SSNCKT.html>

You can keep up to date with the "Fair Deal" campaign at www.fairdeal.org.nz

Join the Pay Equity Challenge

NZEI members have won pay parity for primary and ECE teachers, but there is still a pay gap in education! NZEI is continuing to campaign for pay equity for school support staff and GSE support workers, in spite of the Government's abolition of the Pay and Employment Equity Unit. For those of you in Wellington, there will be a demonstration at Parliament on June 30 - for more details about the demonstration and the wider campaign, see www.union.org.nz/payequity

Implications of Budget 2009

Last month's Budget signalled increases in school property funding, but a minimal (1.9%) increase in the school operations grant. There were also cuts to professional development funding, and buried in the detail, plans to cut \$45 million from teacher staffing funds in 2011 and a further \$50 million from 2012. Education Minister Anne Tolley has said she wants to consult with NZEI and the sector about how such cuts can be achieved. NZEI would strongly oppose any increase in teacher:student ratios.

Once more information about any consultation process is known, I'll get back to you about any action you may be able to take.

National Standards Consultation

The introduction of national standards in 2010 is a major issue for primary schools, and NZEI encourages all members to take part in the Ministry's consultation process. You can attend a meeting or provide feedback via their website. For more information, see

<http://www.minedu.govt.nz/theMinistry/Consultation/NationalStandards/Consultation.aspx>

If you've attended a consultation meeting, we'd be interested to hear your feedback. Please email me at stephanie.mills@nzei.org.nz

Kia kaha, kia manawanui

Stephanie Mills, Communications Director