

STRONGER TOGETHER for a Fair Deal



NZEI Campaign News (Support Staff)2010/02

To: All NZEI Support Staff members covered by the Support Staff Collective Agreement

COLLECTIVE AGREEMENT RATIFIED

February 2010

KEY POINTS:

- The Support Staff in Schools Collective Agreement (SSCA) has been ratified by members with 97% of members voting in favour of the settlement.
- Workforce Strategy meetings involving NZEI Te Riu Roa, NZ Schools Trustees Association and the Ministry of Education are set to commence later this month. Members will be updated on how it is progressing throughout the process.
- While this settlement is a positive step for Support Staff, it is essential to continue the momentum gained during the campaign process to ensure that issues such as the funding mechanism and improved career pathways for support staff are addressed.

OTHER NEWS:

- NZEI started a National Standards Bus Tour on 2 February to call for a trial of the Government's National Standards before they are implemented nationally. Go to www.handsupforlearning.org.nz

ACTION:

Worksite representatives

- Please ensure that every union member covered by the SSCA gets a copy of this newsletter.
- Visit www.handsupforlearning.org.nz to access information and downloadable resources for the National Standards Bus Tour.
- Keep encouraging any non member support staff at your school to join NZEI.

ENQUIRIES:

For further enquiries contact 0800 NZEI HELP (0800 693 443)

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15 February 2010

**Kia Ora koutou
Nga mihi mahana kia toutou**

During January and February this year, NZEI conducted a ratification ballot for the settlement of the Support Staff in Schools Collective Agreement (SSCA).

The outcome of the ballot was a 97% vote in favour of the settlement. NZEI members are to be congratulated on the successful action taken as a 'whole union' to secure this settlement and the NZEI negotiating team appreciates the strong membership support and encouragement they received during this process.

The Settlement

The main points of the settlement are:

- A significant move on the minimum pay for support staff
From 27 January 2010, the bottom step in Grade A for both Administrative and Associate will be \$14.00 with the next step being \$14.62. The bottom step of Grade B will be \$14.62 - equivalent to the "pay jolt" we campaigned for and were promised in 2008
- A 1.4 % pay increase for support staff on printed rates above \$14.62 from January 27 2010
- An exchange of letters to progress the Workforce Strategy The terms of Reference for the Workforce Strategy are on the NZEI website www.nzei.org.nz
- Annualisation for fixed term employees employed for the full school year starting in 2011
- From 2011, Ministry notification to employers of when a member's increment is due
- The new agreement will run from 10 December 2009 to 31 March 2011.

The Workforce Strategy

With the large increase in the support staff workforce over the past twenty years of self-managing schools, it is timely that we now have the first opportunity to work in a cooperative way, with the Ministry and School Trustees Association in the form of a working group.

The group will identify and assess issues which may hinder the effective use of support staff in schools and consider change initiatives to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the workforce. The working group will meet during 2010, with an interim report distributed to members in April and a final report with recommendations, completed in December 2010. Most importantly, work completed in the past by NZEI Te Riu Roa members in 2000 and 2004, together with the Operational Grant review, will inform the workforce strategy. To view the Terms of Reference for the Workforce Strategy, go to the Support Staff page at www.nzei.org.nz

We are pleased to advise you that NZEI Te Riu Roa is represented by Vicki Signal from Hamilton and Helen Burnet from Wellington, together with Geraldine Ryan from National Office. Helen and Vicki both bring a wide range of skills and experience to this group and are excited to be part of such an important process.

Helen Burnet

My name is Helen Burnet. I started working in the education sector as a teacher aide, then moved into administration and am presently the office manager at a Wellington inner city primary school. As a member of the workforce strategy working party this experience will allow me to give a voice to those 'at the coalface' as I have a thorough understanding of the realities of working in a school.

I bring a wide range of skills and experience to this important role representing members on the Workforce Strategy Working Group, including: Secretary to the Parent Education Team, Wellington Playcentre Association, Teacher Aide, Hampton Hill Primary School, Chairperson of a Board of Trustees for 6 years. I have also previously been the Wellington representative on the NZEI Support Staff National Caucus (SSNCKT) and Facilitator of the Wellington City Schools Office Managers' Network.

I believe that the workforce strategy has the potential to forge a new direction for support staff in exploring the variety of ways that they can further support the education of students. I am excited by the opportunities this may present for us to become a more professional body of people who form an integral part of our schools.

Vicki Signal

My name is Vicki Signal. I originally came from the Hauraki Plains. Bryan and I moved to Hamilton 35 years ago when we were married. I have a background in office management. 22 years ago I started working at Rhode Street School where I now manage the Media Centre/Library and computer network. I also have experience as chairperson of several Boards' of Trustees.

I am honoured to be selected to this position and with some trepidation I am looking forward to the challenges ahead.

This Workforce Strategy is our opportunity to demonstrate that Support Staff do give our employers value for money and we do have a positive impact on student learning. Having said that - now is not the time to rest; we must keep pushing if we are to gain professional recognition of the skills and attributes that we demonstrate daily in our work. I believe all support staff need greater job security.

We need to investigate ways of delivering consistent professional development for all, to establish nationally recognised career paths for those who wish to take that direction as educational support staff.

When the time comes that you are asked to contribute, please take the opportunity to make your voice heard. The Workforce Strategy final output is dependent on your input. We are looking forward to hearing your thoughts on the Workforce Strategy issues.

This is an exciting opportunity for NZEI Te Riu Roa and its Support Staff members. Keep an eye on the NZEI Te Riu Roa website for updates as the work progresses.

Maintaining Momentum

The settlement was reached after a long, drawn out process and this should be celebrated. However, members must also keep in mind that this settlement was simply the first step in achieving better terms and conditions for school support staff. The passion and collective action that was evident in campaigning for a 'Fair Deal' needs now to be maintained and strengthened in order to ensure long term success. There are still issues such as appropriate funding of support staff, improved career pathways and enhanced terms and conditions to be addressed. Members are encouraged to continue to utilise the Fair Deal website – www.fairdeal.org.nz and to maintain visibility within your school and community.

The success of our collective agreement campaign in 2009 was achieved through the actions of thousands of support staff members and with support from colleagues. The workforce strategy is work that will potentially benefit all support staff and their schools. It is more important than ever that all support staff are NZEI members. Please take every opportunity to encourage any of your support staff colleagues who are not currently members to join NZEI.

Kaiarahi i Te Reo, Therapists', ATSSD and Special Education Assistants' Collective Agreement (KRCA)

Negotiations for this collective agreement are still ongoing and to date and no progress has been made yet in reaching a settlement. Please ensure that you continue to support your colleagues to ensure that a satisfactory settlement can be reached.

National Standards Bus Tour

The National Standards Bus Tour kicked off in Kaitaia and Bluff on 2 February to call for the National Standards to be trialled in our schools before being implemented nationally. The message from NZEI is "Trial National Standards, Not Our Kids". All members of NZEI are asked to show their support for this campaign. For information and resources, go to www.handsupforlearning.org.nz

Operation Switch

Given the current political climate, it is more important than ever that members of NZEI pay their union fee directly to the union rather than having their fees deducted by the Ministry. An information sheet and the form to switch over to direct debit of the fees are attached. Switching over is not a cost for members but it is important for the future of your union.

Kia Kaha, kia toa, kia manawanui

Sharyn Gibbons and Kevin Burrows
Your advocates