

Talkback Radio

Generally when you call your talk back station, you will speak to the Producer who will ask you what you want to talk about. In order to be in a position to raise a specific topic, you may have more luck after 8pm at night.

Some suggested openers are:

- I would like to talk about the “Invisible Army” in schools
- I would like to talk about the Government funding in schools
- I would like to talk about the low pay issues facing school support staff
- Did you know that many support staff are the ones who deal with disruptive student behaviour on a daily basis and most are paid only just above the minimum wage?
- Did you know that while the Minister of Education has indicated that he wants to increase the rates of pay for cleaners and caretakers in schools, the rates for school support staff, many of whom are dealing with our children on a daily basis are not being considered. It is fantastic that the cleaner/caretaker rates may be increased, but it is essential that support staff rates are addressed too.
- Many teacher aides work from 9 – 3 in the classroom, and then after 3pm, take on the role of school cleaner. It makes no sense that the teacher aide can be paid as low as \$12.69 working with children, then potentially earn \$14.62 for cleaning classrooms and toilets. Where is the equity there?
- Did you know that some children with special needs can only attend school if there is a support staff person to care for them? These support staff are paid barely above the minimum wage, have very little job security and yet are crucial if these children are to get an education.

Other things you can raise once you get through

- Most school support staff are at best only employed for 40 weeks of the year. They do not get paid during the school holidays
- Support staff wages are paid out of the Operations Grant. Support staff salaries have to compete with other school expenses such as school maintenance and ICT.
- Many support staff do not have job security as their hours each year are determined on how much money goes into the Operations Grant, and what other expenses the school has to meet.