

**6. My employer says they will look after me so I don't need to join the union.**

While it is admirable that you have an employer who wants to look after you, at the end of the day, your employer only has a limited amount of money for support staff costs. They are legally required to pay the rates that are negotiated in collective bargaining and if their budget is tight, there is no guarantee that the same rates will be applied to you. For schools on very tight budgets, non members may lose out.

**7. I'm concerned about what my employer might think.**

Being a member of a union has nothing to do with whether you have a "good" or "bad" employer and joining a union does not mean that you are going against your employer. It simply means you are standing alongside all support staff in schools to ensure you are acknowledged appropriately. Remember, more often than not, your principal is a union member so they will respect your decision.

## How do I join?

- **Talk to your NZEI worksite representative**
- **Download a membership form at [www.nzei.org.nz](http://www.nzei.org.nz)**
- **Contact your local NZEI office**

National Office  
P O Box 466  
Wellington  
Ph 04 384 9689  
Fax 04 385 1772  
e: [nzei@nzei.org.nz](mailto:nzei@nzei.org.nz)  
[www.nzei.org.nz](http://www.nzei.org.nz)

Ngā Tātaha-ā-Māui  
Northern Region  
Regional office  
P O Box 52087  
Kingsland  
Auckland  
Ph 09 360 4005  
Fax 04 360 4008  
e: [nzeinorth@nzei.org.nz](mailto:nzeinorth@nzei.org.nz)

Te Ngālo Tuū  
Central Region  
Regional Office  
P O Box 466  
Wellington  
Ph 04 384 9609  
Fax 04 384 9983  
e: [nzeicentral@nzei.org.nz](mailto:nzeicentral@nzei.org.nz)

Te Waipounamu  
Southern Region  
Regional Office  
P O Box 13455  
Christchurch  
Ph 03 366 1385  
Fax 03 366 2030  
e: [nzeisouth@nzei.org.nz](mailto:nzeisouth@nzei.org.nz)

# Why You Should Join YOUR UNION

**STRONGER TOGETHER  
FOR FAIR PAY**

*one hundred and twenty five years*

**STRONGER  
TOGETHER**

Ngātahi Aumangea Ake

**NZEI · TE RIU ROA**  
NEW ZEALAND EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTE

**1. I can't be a union member as I am paid above the scale in the collective agreement.**

Regardless of where you sit on the pay scale, or what your level of responsibility in the school may be, you are entitled to be an NZEI member. Your rate of pay has no bearing on your ability to become a union member.

**2. I only work for 5 hours a week. It is not worth it for me to become a union member.**

As a member who only works a few hours a week, the membership costs for you would be minimal – less than the cost of a cup of coffee. It is essential to understand that the more union members we have, the more seriously the government will take us. One person can make a difference.

**3. Why should I become a union member? I get the same as they do anyway!**

As a non union member, you may eventually get the same rates as union members but often there is a delay in passing on these rates which are negotiated for NZEI members. Union members automatically receive the new rates and find that they are still better off once their union fees are deducted. NZEI Te Riu Roa is currently lobbying the government to address low pay issues for support staff in schools. In order for the government to take us seriously, we need to form a united front.

If you are not a union member you have no say at all in what is claimed and negotiated for all support staff.

**4. I can't be a union member as I am on a fixed-term agreement.**

There is absolutely no reason why you can't be a union member while in a fixed term position. It is probably more important than ever to be a member to ensure that you are treated fairly and there are legitimate reasons for your employment being fixed term. Legally there must be a justifiable reason for a fixed term agreement and if it has gone on for a long period of time (e.g. year after year), it is highly unlikely that the arrangement is legitimate. The union can and does step in and assist in rectifying the situation for members in such circumstances.

**5. Would becoming a union member mean supporting a political party?**

**No:** NZEI is not affiliated to, nor does it support any particular political party and it does not advise members which party to vote for. It encourages the public and members to become enrolled to vote so they can participate in the democratic process. NZEI does analyse party policies in relation to its own policies and provides that information to members.



*"Find it here"*

[www.nzei.org.nz](http://www.nzei.org.nz)