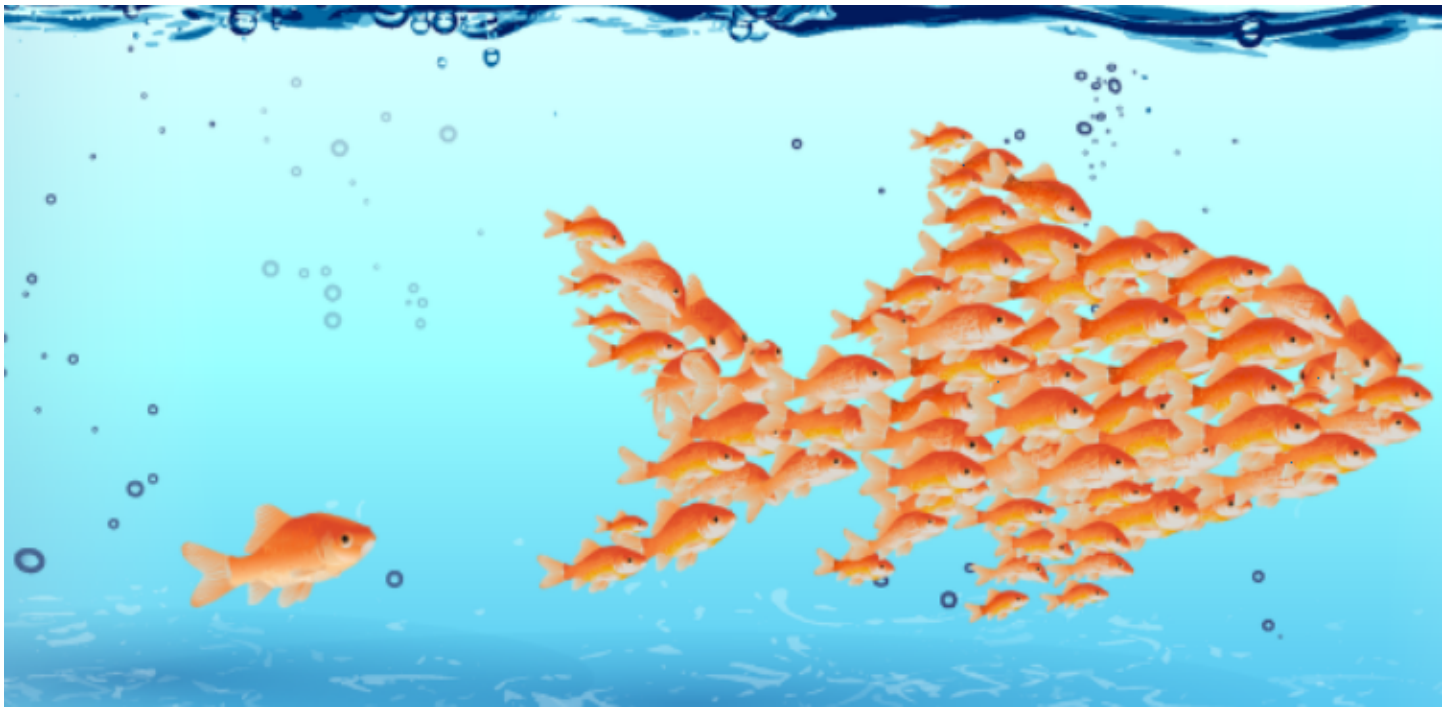
Reaching an Agreement

Western Teacher volume 5.27 September 2023



As public school teachers, our working conditions, from class sizes to wages to DOTT time, are determined by the Schools General Agreement and Award. This Agreement is negotiated between your union and your employer – the SSTUWA and the Department of Education (DoE). This is a lengthy process, and it starts with members like yourself!

Compiling the Log of Claims

Around 18 months before our current Agreement expires, it's time to start compiling a Log of Claims. The Log of Claims is a list of "asks", submitted from workplace branches, District Councils, State Council, committees and Executive, all aiming to improve existing conditions for the public school system.

Approximately six months before the Agreement expires, State Council examines a draft Log of Claims. State Council may propose amendments and is ultimately responsible for rejecting or endorsing the draft.

Once the draft Log of Claims has been endorsed by State Council, it is known as the Proposed Log of Claims and is provided to the entire membership for ballot.

Members vote on whether they are happy with the Log. If the majority vote no the compilation process starts again. In the case of a yes vote, the Log of Claims is served on the DoE.

Bargaining with the employer

During bargaining, the SSTUWA and department negotiators meet on a regular basis.

Not every item in the Log of Claims will be won during negotiations – this process is about bargaining in good faith to reach an agreed outcome.

If the existing Agreement expires while negotiations are ongoing, it remains in force until the new Agreement is in place.

When the SSTUWA negotiators believe they've achieved the best possible outcome they are likely to achieve, an Agreement in Principle is reached and may be endorsed by Executive.

If endorsed by Executive, the Agreement In Principle is provided to the entire membership for ballot. Members vote in branches or individually online; if the majority vote no, negotiations resume.

Registration and implementation of the new Agreement

In the case of a yes vote, the new Agreement must be registered in the WA Industrial Relations Commission. This part of the process may take up to a month.

But that's just the start ... the changes in the new Agreement must still be implemented.
Depending on the complexity of these changes, it can take some time before department processes have caught up.

The SSTUWA has a role in overseeing this implementation process. Before the implementation phase is over, it is often time to begin compiling the next Log of Claims, and the process begins again.



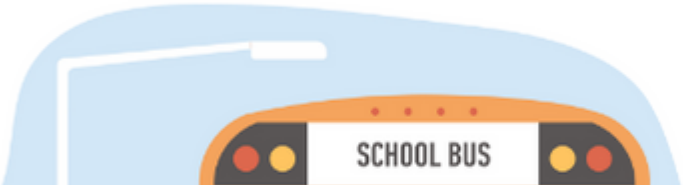
By Chloe Hosking
Growth Team officer

Teaching tip

Negotiate TOIL in advance

If you agree to work outside of official student instruction time, such as on school camp, music or drama performance, or completing your graduate modules online or during the school holidays, you may be able to access **time off in lieu** (TOIL) or **paid time off in lieu** (PTOIL).

It's important to negotiate TOIL with your principal before undertaking the additional work.





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Fill in an Accident Incident Investigation Report (AIIR) or

Authorised by Sally Dennis, General Secretary, The State School Teachers' Union of W.A.
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