Time to reap EBA rewards



After lengthy negotiations, three offers, continuous member involvement and stop work events across the state, the Schools General Agreement was registered on 4 November 2024. But registration of a new Agreement is only part of the job.

SSTUWA senior officers have been working with all parties to ensure the improvements secured during negotiations are applied. Implementation arrangements are agreed to at meetings of the Employee Relations Executive Committee (EREC).

Often, discussions for items require multiple meetings and can involve smaller working groups refining the details prior to finalisation at EREC.

Here is a breakdown of how we are progressing.

Salary

The 2023 salary increase of five per cent was effective from the date the General Agreement was lodged with the WA Industrial Relations Commission. That meant that eligible staff received this pay in October 2024.

The 2024 salary increase of four per cent became effective from 6 December 2024 and the final three per cent salary increase for this Agreement will be effective from 6 December 2025.

The work of teaching and leading

The following list refers to items under the work of teaching and leading that have been completed:

- Changes to the class sizes clause (improvements to clause 12).
- Teacher observation as part of teacher performance management.
- Professional learning (improvements to clause 59).
- Online professional learning (new item in clause 29).
- Internal relief rates.
- Casual rates for school psychologists.

Student documented plans, a new clause included in the General Agreement, provides greater clarity around where plans are required and, more importantly, when they are not required.

Conversations between the parties have commenced around the development of an agreed template for documented plans.

Meetings of the Workload Ministerial Taskforce have commenced. This important General Agreement outcome is now well underway with the first progress report to the Minister for Education being finalised. Members will be updated with Taskforce outcomes when available.

Other initiatives that have or are due to commence implementation discussions include:

- Complex behaviour management (192 schools).
- Small group tuition (13,000 students).
- New starters professional learning.
- School leader performance management.
- Workload reduction review of Principal Professional Review.

System support

District high school (DHS) funding and principal reclassification changes, (including agricultural principals at Level 6, DHS principals at Level 5, Level 3.5 and Level 3.6 introduced for Level 3 principals) have been implemented.

The graduate allowance has been increased to $2,000 per annum, up from $1,600. Eligible 2024 employees received a top up payment in late January.

Implementation discussions have commenced for the Level 3.3 Classroom Teacher trial, with meetings being held to identify which schools will be invited to participate.

It is anticipated this trial will be commencing from Semester 2 this year. Existing Level 3 Classroom Teachers are encouraged to monitor communications from the Department of Education (DoE) and the SSTUWA where information about how to apply will be publicised.

Attraction and retention

The following list refers to items under attraction and retention that have been completed and delivered:

- Long service leave (LSL) – access to pro rata LSL during the first accrual period after completion of seven years of continuous service; five days of LSL credit to be carried over until next entitlement of LSL accrual.
- Staff placement trial for teachers and school leaders for regional positions.
- Vacation travel concessions for eligible employees in the Kimberley, Pilbara and Goldfields.
- Extended air conditioning subsidy for eligible employees.

Commencing from the date of registration, locality allowance and country incentive allowance was replaced and aligned to district allowance.

Following discussions with the DoE, district allowance has been brought from the end of Term 1 and is now expected to be delivered to eligible staff from Week 6.

The creation of Senior Teacher Level 2 (ST2) is a recognised workload reduction initiative, agreed to by the DoE to keep experienced teachers in our system and in our classrooms.

With approximately 7,200 senior teachers eligible to be reclassified to ST2, a bulk

process was necessary, and this occurred from 21 February.

Once this process has been completed, eligible STs will receive a pay increase, back pay to 4 November 2024 and be reclassified as ST2. It is anticipated this process will be finalised in the coming weeks.

Safety culture in schools and general Issues

The work health and safety item will remain an ongoing one as we continue to work with the DoE to implement the *Work Health and Safety Act 2020*, including the implementation of the three Codes of Practice associated with psychosocial health and safety.

Union rep time has been formally added to the Award and the School Psychologist Branch has been recognised as a "school", ensuring union representative time entitlement.

This schedule has been in place for some time as industrial relations advice for schools but has now been incorporated into the Award to remove any potential confusion on the entitlement.

Right of return for school leaders, including collegiate principals who are appointed to a system level position, has also been implemented.

Implementation discussions are underway for part-time principal arrangements and the review of the School of Isolated and Distance Education will continue in consultation with the SSTUWA.

Public sector standards

All new leave entitlements or changes to existing leave conditions are either fully implemented or will be by the end of Term 1. These include:

- Personal leave.
- Leave without pay.
- Compassionate leave for early pregnancy loss.
- Foster carer's leave.
- Superannuation on unpaid parental leave.
- Parental leave.
- Emergency services leave.
- Defence Force Reserve leave.
- Bereavement leave.

As can be seen, a large portion of items you, our members, helped to secure are now in place or are well on their way.

Keep up-to-date through the SSTUWA implementation guide which is updated as items progress. Find it in the schools hub here.

A reminder also the famous Red eBook is now available! Find all your rights, entitlements and conditions in this searchable compilation of the General Agreement 2023 (Schools), Teachers Award 1993 and exchange of letters. You can access it here.

However, if you would prefer a hard copy version, you can order your copy here.



By Natalie Blewitt
Senior Vice President

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