Wins from historic day offer great hope



It is amazing to think that it was just over one year ago that SSTUWA members came together to stage the largest union rally that experienced observers described as the biggest in Western Australia for over a decade.

What a sight it was to look back from the Gloucester Park side of Matagarup Bridge to see the bridge full, from one end to the other.

As over 10,000 people made that crossing from Perth Stadium to Gloucester Park, thousands more rallied right across Western Australia, from Esperance to Christmas Island. It was a remarkable day.

More importantly it achieved a series of improvements to the General Agreement offer that was subsequently tabled by the state government.

Thus far, members have received a five per cent pay rise backdated to 6 December 2023 and a four per cent rise delivered on 6 December 2024. A further three per cent increase takes effect from 6 December 2025.

A switch in many areas to district, rather than local, allowances has also boosted salaries, and the graduate allowance was increased to $2,000 per annum.

We have also seen progress on the delivery of changes to the class size clause – though there is still much work to be done, and the SSTUWA is not finished with that issue by a long way.

Some more of the implemented wins include:

- Student documented plans.
- Performance management.
- Professional learning.
- Casual rates for school psychologists.
- Improvements in classification levels for Level 3 principals and principals of district high schools.
- Long service leave.

- Senior Teacher Level 2.
- Staff placements.
- Level 3 Classroom Teacher attraction and retention.
- Vacation travel.
- Air conditioning subsidies.
- Union rep time.
- Right of return for school leaders.

In addition, there were considerable improvements shared with the wider public sector with a better deal on (amongst others) personal leave, leave without pay, superannuation, unpaid leave and bereavement leave.

There is still much to do around behavioural issues. As our 2025 State of our Schools survey responses arrive (if you haven't completed it yet, please do so, it is absolutely vital that we get a true picture of what's really happening in schools) it is clear that behaviour is still a major issue.

Violence is a leading factor in the fact that over 80 per cent of teachers and 75 per cent of school leaders, who have thus far responded to the survey, have considered quitting in the past four years.

Of the 80 per cent, 31 per cent note school violence as a reason, while 66 per cent identify a lack of respect for the teaching profession. For principal respondents those figures are 23 per cent and 69 per cent respectively.

Initial responses suggest stress from long hours and workload are still key issues.

You can find up-to-date trackers of the implementation of the agreement here.

On the broader front I have no doubt that the effective action taken on 23 April also drove the considerable focus on education ahead of the state election, resulting in some important pledges around infrastructure funding, including new air conditioning in every school, starting with 45 workplaces, and significant improvements to GROH.

The state government election commitment of an infrastructure fund could have been lifted straight from our pre-election booklet and is unique to our state.

As I have said, there is still much to do. With a new minister who genuinely understands the issues facing teachers we have high hopes. We will not achieve every goal we set, but the strength and unity we demonstrated on 23 April 2024 offers great hope.



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