

Media Release

The Hon James Merlino MP
Deputy Premier
Minister for Education
Minister for Mental Health



Friday, 4 February 2022

RECOGNISING AND REWARDING OUR HARDWORKING SCHOOL STAFF

The Andrews Labor Government has landed an agreement with Victoria's government school workforce, giving them more time and support to focus on quality teaching and learning in the classroom.

Minister for Education James Merlino today announced details of the proposed new Schools Enterprise Bargaining Agreement, which includes better pay and conditions for teachers, education support staff and better recognition of the crucial leadership roles principals play in their school communities.

Reached as part of good-faith negotiations with the unions representing the school staff, the four-year deal, once approved, will cut the maximum number of weekly face-to-face learning hours for every teacher, giving them more time to prepare lessons, plan, and mark assessments.

When teachers have more time to prepare and develop their practice, students, families and school communities all win – and teachers will see a reduction of one hour of face-to-face teaching in 2023, then a further half-hour reduction in 2024.

The agreement also includes salary increases in line with the Government's public sector wages policy – with staff receiving a one per cent pay rise every six months up to and including 1 July 2025, with the first raise backdated to 1 January 2022. In addition to this, a new allowance will be paid to all teachers and other eligible employees.

To better reward the work principals and assistant principals do as community leaders and to recognise the important step-up these roles entail, they will benefit from a new pay structure that distinguishes them from their existing classifications.

The Labor Government will also invest a further \$12 million each year to reduce principals' administrative burden, improving occupational health and safety and emergency management practices.

The proposed agreement will lift pay classifications for entry-level teaching graduates, keeping Victoria as the best place in Australia to start a long and rewarding career in teaching.

In addition, structural adjustments will lift starting salaries for education support staff – the professionals who support the work of teachers and principals, and keep Victorian students happy and healthy. The agreement also allows for education support staff to be provided with a laptop.

The better we support teachers who are also parents and carers, the more they will be able to contribute – and the proposed agreement will increase the parental leave period from 14 to 16 weeks, other parental leave like adoption leave from eight to 16 weeks, and partner leave from one paid week to four.

Crucially, the Labor Government's proposed deal will also deliver better outcomes for an entire generation of women, introducing superannuation contributions for the first 12 months of unpaid parental leave.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Education James Merlino

"Victorian school staff have given so much to school communities over the past two challenging years – and we're proud to be supporting them with better pay, improved conditions and more generous parental leave."

"When we support our school staff properly, Victorian kids see better education outcomes – this proposed deal will cement our state as the best place in the nation to work as a teacher, and the best place to send a child to school."

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