

# Frequently Asked Questions

About the Council of Trade Unions' proposal for the joint public sector pay initiative.

## What is the Public Sector Pay Adjustment proposal?

At this stage it is a proposal that we **try** to agree a pay increase with the Government that could apply across the state and publicly funded sector. Although the Government has responded positively to this initiative, no outcome is guaranteed at this stage.

## How would it work?

A public sector unions' negotiating team lead by the CTU would negotiate for an across the board pay increase with the Government through Te Kawae. The pay increase would be delivered through collective agreements. Members covered by each collective agreement would get to vote on whether or not to include it in their collective agreement. That means that members covered by some collective agreements may vote to include it and others may vote not to include it.

## What are the key points of the CTU proposal?

Please note, that as with any negotiations, these are a starting point:

- Members can continue to negotiate non-pay issues such as sick leave and our staffing, professional time and hauora demands through our collective agreement negotiations
- There would be a union member advantage included, such as delayed introduction of the pay increase for non-members
- Members that have already settled their agreements would automatically have the sector wide pay adjustment applied from the date it is introduced.
- Pay equity claims would still be progressed and settled independently of this process, along with initiatives to close the ethnic pay gap and establish the Living Wage as the minimum salary
- Government must provide funding to ensure kaiako in kindergarten and ECE (and other funded sectors) have pay costs met without incurring job losses.

## **What would this mean for our collective agreement negotiations?**

If members covered by your Collective Agreement vote to be included in the PSPA negotiations, we could still negotiate about non-pay related claims, but it is likely that we would put on hold any specific pay related claims until the outcomes of the PSPA negotiations is known.

## **What is the process for NZEI Te Riu Roa Members to decide what happens?**

There are a number of steps of the process and NZEI Te Riu Roa members will get to decide, collectively by collective, what happens each step of the way.

Primary teacher, principals and kindergarten teachers already have a set of claims endorsed by members and the negotiation teams are mandated to pursue these claims in bargaining. In the meantime, members will be asked to have their say on:

Whether or not your collective agreement should be included in the PSPA negotiations

Then if the PSPA negotiations are successful and a pay increase is agreed:

Whether or not to accept the pay increase.

If the pay PSPA pay increase is not accepted, pay will revert to negotiations within your normal collective agreement re-negotiation process.

Members will also then vote on whether to accept any offers made on non-pay issues by the employer to settle collective agreement negotiations.

## **How will members make an informed decision?**

As well as at Primary Teacher and Kindergarten Paid Union Meetings (see <https://action.nzei.org.nz/local?page=1> for more information) we plan to hold optional Zoom meetings in the week of June 20<sup>th</sup> for anyone who has questions about this proposal. More information will be available here as any further developments occur.

## **When do we get to vote?**

Straight after Matariki weekend on Monday June 27<sup>th</sup>, members of each collective agreement will be sent ballots to vote on whether to include their collective

agreement in the PSPA negotiations. The ballot will be open until COB Thursday 30th June.

## **What are the pros and cons of being in the PSPA process?**

This initiative is a unique and historic one, born out of the unusual and historic times we are in. The key question for you is whether you see joining together with other educators, nurses, public servants, and people working in the wider public services as giving us more power to win a better outcome for everyone.

However, this is not a black and white decision. Members will need to weigh up a number of pros and cons for each option and decide what is likely to deliver the best outcome in the current environment.

### **Pros:**

We would have the combined negotiating power of many tens of thousands of public sector workers

If the outcome is not satisfactory there is still the option of negotiating pay through the collective agreement process

The government has expressed support for the proposal

### **Cons:**

Specific pay issues such as addressing relativities issues are unlikely to be able to be addressed in this round of negotiations.

The impact of the PSPA negotiations on negotiations of other claims through the collective agreements negotiations is unclear

The outcome of PSPA negotiations could set the benchmark for pay adjustment across the state sector making it very difficult to negotiate a better outcome within just one collective.

## **Who would represent NZEI Te Riu Roa members in the PSPA negotiations?**

As one of the largest public sector unions, NZEI Te Riu Roa expects to be represented on the union negotiation team.

## **Why are we only hearing about this now?**

The NZEI Te Riu Roa National Executive endorsed in principle the idea of exploring the CTU initiative in late May, on the basis that members would have a vote on whether to go into the negotiations collective by collective before making any formal decision to progress to negotiations. The Government only responded to the CTU initiative on Friday (June 10<sup>th</sup>), so members have been informed as soon as possible. No further action will be taken by NZEI Te Riu Roa to progress the PSPA until members have voted on the issue.

## **Will units, allowances or other non-base scale remuneration be addressed in the PSPA?**

This is a matter for negotiation, so it is neither ruled in or out at this stage.

## **How will the PSPA address relativity issues, for example between U1-2 principals and AP/DP/Across School teachers in large schools?**

This is a matter for negotiation, but it is unlikely the PSPA will be able to address relativity issues with any degree of granularity if an across the board increase across the wider public sector is to be agreed reasonably rapidly.

## **The Government has said it sees including the funded sector in the PSPA as difficult because of the additional complexity involved. Does this mean ECE will miss out?**

The Government has also said this issue is not an insurmountable challenge. The Government is directly involved in bargaining of the Kindergarten Teachers Collective Agreement and is committed to pay parity for all ECE teachers. If KTCA and ECE members agree NZEI Te Riu Roa should enter the PSPA negotiations, our position would be that any pay increases for teachers in the compulsory sector must be applied to all teachers.

## **Support staff are currently voting on whether to ratify a collective agreement offer. What does it mean for us?**

Support staff are currently voting on terms of settlement for their collective agreement. You should continue to proceed with your vote on this offer before the deadline of SSSCA ballot of Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> June 5pm as planned.

Following the conclusion of the collective agreement ballot support staff will then have the opportunity to consider the CTU public sector pay proposal and vote on this along with other NZEI members.

- Regardless of whether the current proposed settlements for the support staff and kaiārahi i te reo agreements are ratified or not, support staff will still have the opportunity to choose whether they take part in the combined negotiation process.
- If this process results in a higher pay increase, NZEI's goal would be to ensure any increase applies to support staff. If no agreement is reached through the CTU process, or the outcome is a lower pay increase, your collective agreement pay rates will stand.

The CTU proposal and NZEI Te Riu Roa's intention is to secure agreement so that members that have already settled their agreements would automatically have the sector wide pay adjustment applied from the date it is introduced. However as with any negotiation, this is an issue for further discussion.

### **My collective has already been settled. What does it mean for me?**

The CTU proposal and NZEI Te Riu Roa's intention is to secure agreement so that members that have already settled their agreements would automatically have the sector wide pay adjustment applied from the date it is introduced. However as with any negotiation, this is an issue for further discussion.