



LIAISE EDUCATE ADVOCATE DELIVER

2019 General Agreement

Background

The existing General Agreement was for a two year period ending December 2019 and was based upon a cost neutral approach to bargaining and a strict government wages policy of a \$1,000 per annum increase for all employees for the life of the Agreement.

This wages policy has resulted in a serious distortion of the relativities between the salary scales of the various employee categories and sub-categories, leaving Principal Class Officers significantly disadvantaged when compared with other school-based employee groups.

For example, School Officers, gardeners and cleaners enjoyed a wage increase of, on average, between 2% and 2.5% per annum, while Principal Class Officers, the leaders in the system charged with the greatest levels of responsibility and accountability, received an increase of between 0.58% (Level 6) and 0.75% (Level 3).

The Principals' Federation of WA finds this situation unacceptable and untenable. In a climate where the government and DoE are eager to develop a leadership strategy that inspires aspirants to want to become school and system leaders, it is incongruous for the government and DoE to think that this can be achieved without a competitive salary and benefits framework that encourages people to aspire to leadership.

Members of the Principals' Federation of WA have clearly indicated their frustration with the government's policy and will only endorse a new Agreement where it can be seen that the government has entered this bargaining period in good faith and with a view to making school leadership a desirable career destination for Education Act employees.



PROPOSED PFWA LOG OF CLAIMS 2019

Historical Context

There has been a substantial increase in the responsibility, complexity, workload, accountability and regulatory requirements for the Principal Class. These factors have exponentially risen since 2008. This is demonstrably evident through the introduction of the following work requirements which have fundamentally broadened in scope since 2008, or which did not exist prior to 2008.

(See attached Schedule A)

Furthermore, the public promotion, by State Government and the Department of Education, for greater school autonomy through the implementation of the Independent Public School strategy with the associated increase in Principal Class responsibilities and accountabilities has compounded and further increased the complexity of the role of the Public School Principal.

The most recent agreement, which restricted pay increases to \$1000.00 per annum, resulted in the principal class, in real terms, having their remuneration devalued when considered against both the State and National Consumer Price Index for 2017 and 2018.

Principal class annual percentage increase, 2017 and 2018 - 0.65% (average)

State Adjusted Consumer Price Index, 2017 year end - 0.9%

Nationally Adjusted Consumer Price Index, 2017 year end - 1.9%

State Adjusted Consumer Price Index, 2018 year end - 1.1%

Nationally Adjusted Consumer Price Index, 2018 year end - 1.9%

Additionally, it is evident that from 2008 there has been an exponential decline in the number of people applying for advertised principal positions in the metropolitan and regional areas. It has reached a stage where in some instances, there are now no suitable applicants for advertised principal positions in the public school system.

Numerous research reports and professional association survey findings have indicated the principal class increasingly suffers from some of the highest physical and mental, work related rates of ill health.