



There is a nationwide teacher shortage. Last term, over half of schools reported that they didn't have enough teachers, with the problem set to worsen in coming years. There are a range of issues affecting education at the present time.

- Children with additional learning needs aren't getting the support they need
- Teachers salaries have risen only 1.2 percent on average, meaning teachers' and principals earnings have not kept up with inflation
- The strike is about sending a clear message to the Government that it is time to invest in education. Industrial action is about championing better conditions for teachers and students
- Attracting the right people into education is becoming a massive issue and we have so many learners who need additional support
- If New Zealanders genuinely want our children to have access to an education system that is both excellent and equitable, then we need to stop the neglect and invest accordingly
- There has been a 40 per cent decline in teacher applications in recent years
- Teachers want more time to teach. For that to happen they need more incentives for teachers to stay in the industry and to choose it as a career

This week, NZEI teacher members rejected the Ministry of Education's second pay and conditions offer and voted to go on strike again. But what is it they want? And what's been offered?

What we want:

- **SENCO – A Special Needs Coordinator (SENCO) for every school**, so that children with additional needs have a dedicated expert. This job is almost always tacked onto the roles of teachers already busy with many responsibilities, and so doesn't always get the dedicated attention it needs.
- **RELEASE TIME – Significant increases to release time** so that teachers can complete assessment properly and have time to discuss and interpret the data they gather. Two days per term is just not enough to do all of this.
- **PAY – 16% increase** over the course of a two year agreement.
- **PAY PARITY – A renewal of the pay parity clauses** so that primary teachers aren't worse off than high school teachers.
- **SALARY CAP – Remove the qualification-based salary cap** so that teachers are no longer unfairly penalised for having trained under the earlier Diploma system and can move up the entire pay scale with experience as other teachers do.

What Ministry has offered:

- **SENCO – Nothing!**
- **RELEASE TIME – Nothing!** (In the first offer, Ministry offered addition release equal to 12 minutes' release per week, but that was withdrawn in the 2nd offer).

- PAY – 3% per year over a **three** year agreement.
- PAY PARITY – **Agreed** to renew the pay parity clause.
- SALARY CAP – Allow **only one** additional step for those teachers affected by the cap.

As you can see, what was asked for and what has been offered aren't even close to each other. Only one condition was met as asked for, and that is the Pay Parity clause. Dedicated SENCOs to support students with special educational needs are not in Ministry's offer, miserly release time in the first offer was withdrawn in the second offer, and the pay offer is less than asked for and over a longer period, and Diploma-trained teachers continue to get paid far less than their colleagues despite having the most experience (and often being team leaders, senior staff, and the ones that train new teachers)!

When we are **hundreds** of teachers short for next year, and we know we will be **thousands** of teachers short within a couple of years, you'd think Ministry would listen to teachers and make the job more manageable and attractive so that we keep the teachers we already have and attract new ones. But no. Something's got to give:

Do you want the Government to fix these problems?

The Government's \$339m first year fee-free tertiary education policy. Is this where we can get a proportion of the money needed to support our teaching crisis?

Teachers and principals are asking for a total package that would cost \$900 million to address this. The Govt has a 5.5 billion dollar surplus. Would you like them to spend 16% of that surplus on education or to save it all for a 'rainy day'?

