

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE WAGES CAMPAIGN

### Background

The State Government has not shifted its 3.25% wages offer to government teachers. Victorian teachers are now the lowest paid in the country and this is a consequence of this intractable wages policy. Victoria spends less on education than any other state or territory. In 1997, VIEU members fought and won historic wages parity with our colleagues in government schools. Now it is time to fight again and take the fight to the State Government, because the wages outcome in the government sector will be reflected in Catholic schools.

On 14 February, government teachers will be again taking industrial action against the State Government. On 10 December 2007 the VIEU Committee of Management held an extraordinary meeting and voted unanimously in support of recommending sub-branch meetings in every Catholic school on 14 February. All VIEU members are asked to vote at these meetings in support of a day of political protest against the State Government on 7 March.

As in the government sector, the majority of staff in Catholic schools have not received a pay rise since October 2006. Negotiations with Catholic employing authorities commenced in October 2007, and wages and workloads are the threshold, and most significant, issues that must be addressed to ensure Catholic schools continue to provide a quality education.

The State Government's public position around wages is that any increase above 3.25% must be linked to "productivity gains". It is difficult to imagine how much more productivity can be squeezed out of staff in Government or Catholic schools. In the last few years, members have endured major curriculum reform through VELs, increased reporting and accountability requirements, new renewal and registration requirements, and yet have still managed to deliver a quality education to their students. It is an insult to the profession to ask it to do even more, and on inferior wages.

It is time to fight for the future of our profession.

### KEY FACTS

#### Wages

- In no state are teachers paid less than in Victoria (**See national comparison**).
- At the top of the scale Victorian teachers earn 15 per cent less than those in NSW.
- Victoria now also comes last in salaries for beginning teachers.
- Victoria has the longest incremental scale (12 steps) for teachers in the country.

## National wages comparison - Teachers

State or Territory	Beginning Teacher 4 year trained (1 Feb 08)	Top of Automatic scale (1 Feb 08 )
Victoria	\$46,127	\$65,414
NSW	\$50,522	\$75,352
Queensland	\$46,950	\$66,191
South Australia	\$50,709	\$68,422
Western Australia	\$46,549	\$68,217
Tasmania	\$46,882	\$67,792
Northern Territory	\$46,677	\$70,047
ACT	\$50,365	\$71,767

## Skills shortage

Across Victoria we are having trouble getting the teachers we need to fill vacancies, and the situation is going to get worse. Official figures show we are going to have to recruit an extra 500 teachers every year on top of the graduates from our universities.

We have a teacher shortage in Victoria, a rapidly ageing workforce and an increasing number of people leaving the profession every year.

- In 2008 fewer school-leavers chose teaching as their preferred career.
- Schools have reported difficulties in recruiting teachers in maths, science, languages other than English, technology studies. (*Ref: Teacher Supply and Demand Ref Group Report*).
- Half of all government secondary schools reported difficulties filling vacancies in 2006. This situation is reflected in Catholic schools. (*Ref: Teacher Supply and Demand Ref Group Report*).
- The supply of teacher graduates must be supplemented by the recruitment of an additional 500 secondary teachers a year between now and 2010 to meet demand in government and non-government schools. (*Ref: Teacher Supply and Demand Ref Group Report*).
- Over 50 per cent of beginning teachers say they don't plan to be teaching for more than ten years. (*AEU Beginning Teachers Survey*).

## Ageing Workforce

**We have an ageing teaching workforce and that is going to cause major problems if it is not addressed.**

**We need to make sure teaching is an attractive profession for young people to enter and remain in.**

- In 2006 the biggest group of teachers were those aged between 50-54. Those teachers now make up almost one quarter of the entire workforce (22.8 per cent) (*Ref: Teacher Supply and Demand Ref Group*).
- 55 per cent of our teachers are now over the age of 45 (was 38.5 per cent in 1996) (*Ref: Teacher Supply and Demand Ref Group*).
- Retirements as a proportion of the teaching workforce are predicted to rise in the next five years (*Ref: Teacher Supply and Demand Ref Group*).

**Authorised by Debra James, General Secretary, Victorian Independent Education Union**