

# Annual Conference 2025



## Industrial Report

A REPORT FOR THE NZPPTA ANNUAL CONFERENCE 2025



This report provides an update on the ongoing negotiations for PPTA's five collective agreements. At the time of writing, bargaining for three of the collective agreements is well underway, with the remaining two agreements in the earlier stages of bargaining.

## CECA

The Community Education Collective Agreement (CECA), which covers our Adult and Community Education (ACE) and Out of Hours Music and Arts (OOHMA) members, was the first cab off the rank. Bargaining was initiated in January 2025, alongside a claim's development and endorsement process. Progress has been slow and steady, with negotiations happening over five days during the first half of 2025 to present claims and work towards an offer. Important areas of discussion have included remuneration, health and safety, mileage and reimbursements.

## STCA

Secondary Teachers' Collective Agreement (STCA) claims were developed in consultation with members in late 2024 and were endorsed in March 2025. The claims are connected to the vision areas and targets from the PPTA Te Wehengarua 'Vision for Secondary Teaching'. The vision was developed from member consultation and reaffirmed by members at annual conferences. It is our way of ensuring that we can maintain momentum towards our longer-term goals.

PPTA's vision for the secondary teaching profession is centered around seven areas:

- Secondary teaching is a well-paid profession.
- We are a highly trained profession.
- Teachers and school leaders are well supported in their role.
- We are a culturally responsive and sustaining profession.
- Schools are properly resourced for pastoral care, curriculum and assessment.
- There is a sufficient and sustainable secondary teacher supply.
- There is a healthy work-life balance.

In May the government made unilateral and retrospective changes to the Equal Pay Act, extinguishing our pay equity claim and making it impossible for secondary teachers to raise a new claim. In response to this, members voted to add an additional pay claim in recognition that pay increases expected through pay equity would no longer be delivered.

STCA bargaining was initiated on 7 May 2025, with parties meeting for pre-bargaining on 28 May. We were informed that the Public Service Commissioner (PSC) would be playing a more substantial role in negotiations for teachers' and principals' collective agreements, rather than delegating these responsibilities to the Secretary for Education. We met for four days of bargaining in June, and then two days in July.

In late June the government changed the Employment Relations Act to allow employers to make pay deductions during partial strikes. The rostering home strike action that secondary teachers took during previous negotiations was clearly a target of these changes.

On 16 July, the PSC presented a first offer for teachers. The offer featured 1% pay increases for three years, \$2,500 for Principal's Nominees, and a string of claw backs. The claw backs included doubling the callback days – the days schools can require teachers to attend when the school is closed for instruction – from 10 to 20 per year. The offer would also cause major changes to

eligibility for disregarded sick leave, study leave and sabbaticals. Additionally, the offer would exclude composite and special school teachers from coverage by the STCA.

The PPTA Te Wehengarua Executive met on 22 July and decided to reject the first offer as it did not even come close to addressing the needs of secondary teachers and their students as identified in members' claims. Following the rejection of the offer, the Minister for Public Services, Judith Collins, and the Minister of Education held what can only be described as a *memorable* press conference. In a moment of inspired imagination, Collins conjured a teacher pay rise that would see pay for an average teacher with 10 years' experience soar to \$147,000 per annum—an impressive figure, albeit one not grounded in any known reality. Meanwhile, the Minister of Education took a more complimentary route, applauding the association's "slick marketing" and our apparent knack for securing prime picketing real estate—overbridges and street corners—weeks in advance, as if booking venues for a summer tour. Minister Collins belatedly apologised and has been MIA on any subsequent media announcements about our negotiations.

During this furore, PPTA Te Wehengarua agreed to attend mediated bargaining. The first two days of mediation took place on 15 and 19 August. As the PSC failed to present an improved offer, this was followed by the full day strike of secondary teachers on 20 August. Members braved stormy conditions gaining wall to wall national media to demonstrate the importance of our claims for fair pay, meeting the growing unmet needs of students and improving retention and recruitment of teachers.

A third day of mediated bargaining happened in late August, when we heard the PSC was working on an improved offer. We received the second offer on 5 September. The offer had a reduced term of 26 months, including two pay increases. These increases were different for different steps of the salary scale, with the highest percentage increases seen at the top and bottom of the scale. The Principal's Nominee offer now included one hour per week, but the time and money for the role had been reduced to an 18-month period. The offer contained a \$400 improvement to MMAs, but no increase to units or senior management allowances. The PSC offered a new allowance, the Immersion Virtual Teaching Allowance, but his representatives were unable to provide evidence that it would have any real impact on our members.

While the PSC had reduced the callback days in the offer from 20 to 18, the right to claim reimbursement for expenses such as mileage and childcare on all the callback days was removed. The claw back for disregarded sick leave remained, but other claw backs, such as the coverage claim for composite school, were withdrawn and others were softened.

Executive voted to ballot members in September on the second offer, and STCA members overwhelmingly voted to reject the offer. Four days of planned rostering home strike action then begun. At the time of writing this report, PPTA was waiting to meet with the PSC's representatives to discuss next steps. Meanwhile, STCA members were being polled on their views for future industrial action with a ballot on industrial action planned for the first week of Term 4.

## ASTCA

Area school members were part of the wider consultation and endorsement process with members in late 2024 and March 2025. Area School Teachers' Collective Agreement (ASTCA) claims then went through a joint development process with NZEI Te Riu Roa.

The unified claim, including the major components of the STCA claim, was endorsed, and bargaining was initiated on 14 May. Parties met for pre-bargaining in late May 2025, and the teams from PPTA Te Wehengarua and NZEI Te Riu Roa held training and ongoing hui with the wider bargaining teams for whakawhanaungatanga and kotahitanga.

Bargaining started with two days in late July, after the secondary and primary teacher negotiations were underway. Another two days of bargaining took place in mid-August, with a short lineout of union and PSC advocates at the end of the month. In September, the ASTCA team were informed that they would be receiving an offer following the second STCA offer. This was earlier in the process than Area School members traditionally receive offers.

The first offer for Area School Teachers, received on 8 September, was essentially identical to the second offer for secondary teachers made on 5 September. Executive approved a ballot of members on the offer with a recommendation that it be rejected, which was still underway when this report was written. If the offer is rejected and there is no further progress in negotiations a ballot on industrial action will be held the first week of Term 4.

### **SPCA and ASPCA**

The Secondary Principals' Collective Agreement (SPCA) claim was developed in Term 1 2025 and endorsed by members in Term 2. Bargaining was initiated on 31 March. Negotiations began in Term 3. The principals' claims covered remuneration increases, and specific claims to address workload and complexity.

Bargaining was initiated for the Area School Principals' Collective Agreement (ASPCA) on 20 May 2025, with claims going out for endorsement in Term 3 and negotiations expected to start in October. Similarly to the ASTCA negotiations, ASPCA bargaining usually gets underway following the commencement of negotiations for secondary and primary principals.