



aeuact@aeuact.org.au  
www.aeuact.org.au  
ABN: 98 106 001 142

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## **MEDIA RELEASE**

# **ACT TEACHER OFFER FALLS SHORT AFTER YEAR-LONG WAIT**

The Australian Education Union ACT Branch has received the ACT Government's first substantial offer for teaching staff, more than 12 months after the union presented its claims.

AEU ACT Branch President Angela Burroughs said the offer contained some welcome movement but, on initial assessment, did not go far enough.

The Government has proposed a 9 per cent salary increase over three years, with an additional increase for teachers at the top of the classroom teacher pay scale and for some school leaders.

"We welcome the recognition of our most experienced teachers, but whether the offer is acceptable for the entire membership will be a matter we discuss later today," Ms Burroughs said.

"For most teachers, this is the same core pay offer that workers covered by the Administrative and Related Classifications Agreement, including our school assistant members, have just rejected."

"The Government says this is a plan to make ACT teachers the best paid in the country. That's a bit of a tenuous claim."

"We need competitive salaries that attract great teachers to the ACT."

Ms Burroughs said pay was only one of the AEU's 25 claims.

"There has been welcome movement on some of our claims, and that progress has been hard won through the industrial action taken by our members, but the Government is still not doing enough to address the staffing and workload crisis in our schools."

"Split and collapsed classes have become chronic due to teacher shortages. The offer makes some commitments to reduce that, but our members will need to see more detail. We know this is a pressing concern not only for our members, but for parents and students."

The AEU's Branch Council will meet this afternoon to consider the offer and determine the next steps for teaching staff and school assistants, who are also back at the bargaining table following the rejection of the proposed Administrative and Related Classifications Enterprise Agreement.

"We have spent more than a year fighting for the improvements our public schools need. Branch Council will consider later today what remains unresolved and what we need to do next," Ms Burroughs said.

The AEU will provide a further update following today's Branch Council meeting.

## **For further comment:**

**AEU ACT Branch President**  
**Angela Burroughs**  
Ph: 0419 104 193  
E: [aeuact@aeuact.org.au](mailto:aeuact@aeuact.org.au)



Level 1/71 Leichhardt St, Kingston ACT 2604  
PO Box 3042 Manuka ACT 2603

P: 02 6272 7900