



Statement from Early Learning Association Australia regarding: VECTEA Bargaining Update

Friday 30 January 2026

ELAA calls on the Victorian Government to show some care for the people who care for our children.

Early Learning Association Australia (ELAA) is calling on the Victorian Government to engage directly with all parties on wages for early childhood teachers and educators.

The AEU today advised it will withdraw from negotiations for a new Victorian Early Childhood Teachers and Educators Agreement (VECTEA) until a wage offer is provided.

ELAA CEO Dr Karina Davis said the path forward requires government action.

"ELAA and its members strongly supports fair wages for early childhood educators and kindergarten teachers who do vital work educating Victorian children," Dr Davis said.

"We recognise that employees have not received a pay increase since April 2024. Their frustration is entirely understandable.

"However, under the Victorian Government's Free Kinder policy, kindergarten services are fully government-funded - including wages. We cannot make a wage offer because we are not the ones who control the funding.

"This matter can only be resolved with government at the table. We call on the Victorian Government to engage directly on wages without further delay."

ELAA has been negotiating with the AEU in good faith for over 18 months, reaching in-principle agreement on most non-wage matters.

For more information on ELAA and to arrange an interview with a spokesperson, contact:

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ELAA is the national peak body for not-for-profit providers of early childhood education and care. Our vision is Excellence and Equity in Early Childhood Education and Care. www.elaa.org.au