

New Vic agreement a big step forward for the community early learning sector

12 July, 2021

ELAA welcomes the approval of the Victorian Early Childhood Teachers and Educators Agreement (VECTEA) 2020. This agreement brings Victorian community early childhood teachers and educators significantly closer to the wages and conditions of their primary school counterparts.

The Fair Work Commission approved the agreement this afternoon. The agreement provides for significant wage increases for early childhood staff in Victorian kindergartens.

"We're pleased that under this agreement early childhood teachers can earn in excess of \$100,000 per annum," said Early Learning Association Australia Director Advocacy Solutions, Megan O'Connell. "We know early childhood teachers are highly trained and make a tremendous difference in children's lives. They deserve to be paid, and under the VECTEA will be paid, similarly to their school teacher colleagues."

Key changes in the agreement include an increase in employer-paid parental leave for primary caregivers, 20 days of paid family and domestic violence leave and an increase in paid personal/carers leave to 15 days for each year of service (pro rata).

The agreement also recognises the need for workforce wellbeing with those under the VECTEA gaining access to a Wellbeing Support Program for confidential counselling. "Support within and outside the workplace is vital for wellbeing. Access to counselling will help our workforce to debrief on the issues they face, and support them to handle the stressors of the workplace," said Ms O'Connell.

The new agreement also includes additional time for teachers and educators to plan and deliver quality services.

"The early childhood workforce is experiencing a skill shortage, with teachers and educators required across all levels. It is hoped the incentives within the VECTEA will attract people to consider roles in early childhood.

"The community sector delivers high quality early childhood education and care and the new VECTEA shows our willingness to nurture and support staff. ELAA encourages anyone considering a career in education to look to the community based early childhood sector."

For more information or to arrange an interview with ELAA Director Advocacy Solutions, Megan O'Connell, contact James Gardener 0413 483 182.

ENDS

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