Dear colleagues,

Employer and employee representatives met yesterday to progress the enterprise bargaining negotiations.

During negotiations around the employer’s fair and responsible wage offer, union representatives proposed an amended wage position. This proposal included three key elements:

- Investigation of the potential for implementation of a Lead Teacher position linked to the AITSL standards;
- Preparedness to advocate a wage increase of 2.7% per annum, subject to;
- An “effectiveness dividend payment” equivalent to an additional 1.5% aggregated over the life of the agreement.

In the context of the overall negotiated package, RI school employers will give consideration to the amended claim in light of the current economic climate and funding uncertainty.

It is disappointing that union representatives have not agreed to a major concession proposed by employers. This concession is to withdraw the employers’ professional development claim of 18 hours in return for the withdrawal of the employee claim for resourcing the expanding role of teachers. This proposal will be the subject of further discussion.

While this proposal relates to two of the more significant claim items addressed during these negotiations, it is by no means the only concession that has been made by RI school employers. In fact, over 25 employee claim matters have received in-principle agreement from RI school employers to date.

These concessions underline the commitment of RI school employers to finalise these negotiations.

RI school employers are progressing these negotiations and are confident that agreement can be achieved prior to 19 October 2012 in order to guarantee back pay and the payment of the wage increase before Christmas.

I will continue to provide you with further details as these negotiations progress.

The next Single Bargaining Unit meeting for RI schools will be held on 11 September 2012.