

Further Education Joint  
Trade Unions Wales



Cyd-Undebau Llafur  
Addysg Bellach Cymru

defending further education

## NEWSLETTER

AMiE ATL GMB NASUWT UCAC UCU UNISON

October 2014

### Pay Claim for 2014/5

#### Employer's response

The Joint Trade Union submitted a claim in May 2014, the employers have now responded to that claim and agreed to negotiate to agreement on all the collective agreements; Management of Change, Starting Salary for Lecturers, Toil for Managers and Domestic Abuse Policy.

However, Colegau Cymru (CC) Board "was unable to recommend an additional general increase in pay for staff in 2014/15 due to financial pressures.." Their position is that "many staff will benefit from a pay increase of more than 1%" from their incremental progression.

#### Correspondence with the Minister

We also wrote to the Education Minister, Huw Lewis, in July as CC had written to him to ask for his views on pay parity with school teachers. Pay Parity with School Teachers has driven the pay increases in Wales since the introduction of National Pay Bargaining in Wales. We asked that he adopt the same intellectual rigor as he applied in his submission to the Pay Body for teachers when he argued that

***"Welsh Government continues to challenge the notion that pay is a key driver for performance and I strongly believe that a national system of pay and conditions for teachers is a far better, fairer and more cost effective way to administer than local /school determined pay. "***

The response from the Minister confirmed that the Conditions of Funding for 2014/15, which was introduced by a previous Minister, is maintained and there is an expectation that pay parity will be maintained in the coming year. It is our understanding that teachers will access incremental progression in Wales and be awarded a 1% pay increase.

#### Decision of your Negotiators

In response to this unexpected Pay Freeze (many Colleges had already budgeted for at least a 1% increase) and the unilateral refusal by the employers to even enter

negotiations, the Joint Trade Union negotiators have unanimously agreed to hold indicative ballots on industrial action in pursuit of a fair pay increase.

This ballot will involve all FE unions. We are clearly stronger if all the unions stick together and co-ordinate action. You will be asked to indicate your support, or rejection, for industrial action short of a strike and industrial action up to and including strike action.

All FE staff (with the exception of many Principals) have now faced a real terms pay cut of around 18% over the last 6 years. It is now time to send a clear message to our employers. We are no longer prepared to simply stand by and watch as our living standards go into free-fall.

Our call to employers is straight forward: avoid this dispute and return immediately to the negotiating table. All we are asking for is a fair deal and fair pay.

Data obtained by UCU through a Freedom of Information request of 12 colleges in Wales, operating across 18 sites shows that in total, 1,324 main grade lecturers (43.3% of all college lecturers) are at the top of their grade and will receive no incremental increase under these plans, as put forward by Colegau Cymru. Additionally, more than half of all Instructors, Demonstrators and Associate Lecturers (271 total, 51.0%) would receive no benefit from incremental progression.

The indicative ballot will help us to decide whether to run a ballot which complies with the requirements of employment law in order for us to take lawful industrial action.

### **The Indicative Ballot**

Each Union has agreed the following time table to allow us to consider co-ordinating industrial action, dependant on the outcome of the individual union ballots.

The mechanisms for the ballot will vary depending on which union you belong to but all members in colleges in Wales will be encouraged to participate in the indicative ballot

**The indicative ballot will open on Thursday 23<sup>rd</sup> October  
and close at NOON on Friday 7<sup>th</sup> November**

**Please use your vote and vote yes to strike  
action and action short of strike action**