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## Secondary teachers' pay dispute to go to arbitration recommendation

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subject=Secondary%20teachers%27%20pay%20dispute%20to%20go%20to%20arbitration%20as%20PPTA%20agrees%20to%20ERA%20recommendation



Current PPTA members' industrial action includes rostering home different year groups, with Years 11 and 12 affected on Tuesday and further year groups affected this week and next (file image). Photo: RNZ / Marika Khabazi

**The secondary teachers' pay dispute is going to arbitration.**

The Post Primary Teachers' Association on Tuesday announced it had agreed to the Employment Relations Authority's recommendation.

The process will not be binding, but the union said it would recommend the results to its members and Education Minister Jan Tinetti has committed to taking the outcome to Cabinet.

The union and the Education Ministry have begun drawing up terms of reference for the arbitration.

The PPTA said its members would continue to refuse to teach particular year groups on different days until the terms of reference were complete.

Principals told RNZ the union should have suspended the industrial action today.

A PPTA message sent to its members on Tuesday morning said the government must first agree to accept the outcome of the process before it would agree to arbitration.

In the message, the Post Primary Teachers Association also told members their industrial action (<https://www.mnz.co.nz/news/national/492056/teachers-strike-action-should-target-education-ministry-not-students-petition-organiser-says>) would continue until it approved the terms of reference for the arbitration.

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Executive has decided it will recommend members accept any offer that results from the arbitration and, in order for the process, we will ask the government to also commit to the outcome," the message said.

"It seems pointless to go down the arbitration path unless there is a commitment to the outcome. When PPTA Te Wehengarua was involved in a similar situation to this, about 20 years ago, at the outset the government publicly committed to accepting the arbitration panel's decision. We need to see a similar gesture now."

The Ministry of Education had previously said it would prefer non-binding arbitration because it would be quicker to organise.

The Employment Relations Authority last week recommended arbitration (<https://www.rnz.co.nz/news/national/492186/teachers-and-ministry-of-education-consider-arbitration-to-end-industrial-action>) and strongly recommended the union suspend industrial action.

The action included rostering home different year groups, with Years 11 and 12 affected on Tuesday and further year groups affected this week and next.

The email indicated there would be no immediate halt to that action.

"We know that members want some certainty about this process so industrial action will continue while the terms of reference (ToR) for the arbitration process are developed. The ToR include selection of the panel, setting a timeframe, agreeing what will be covered in the arbitration and a commitment to the outcome.

"Once the ToR are approved by the executive all industrial action in support of the secondary and area school teachers' negotiations will be called off."

The union said it would discuss with the Ministry of Education the possibility of pausing negotiation of area school teachers collective agreement because it was closely linked to the secondary teachers' agreement.

The ministry previously said it expected arbitration would be conducted by an independent panel. It said the process might take several weeks to arrange, and the process itself could take more than a month.

"We understand it will be perhaps four to six weeks, once arbitration starts, but in spite of this, we believe arbitration is most likely to be the quickest way to reach a resolution. However, we believe industrial action should cease as it can have no influence on the arbitration process."

The ministry also said it preferred non-binding arbitration.

"The independence of the process ensures both parties will be heard, and if agreed the arbitration determination will be publicly released. A new mandate would be required for binding arbitration which would take time to work through.

"We think it is best that discussions on an agreement for non-binding arbitration get underway so that the dispute can be settled as quickly as possible."