



INDEPENDENT EDUCATION UNION OF AUSTRALIA – QUEENSLAND AND NORTHERN TERRITORY BRANCH



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Government Recognises Industry Concerns for Community Kindergartens

The changes announced by the Queensland government in the way the new Queensland Kindergarten Funding Scheme (KFS) will be applied for 2011, has been commended by the Independent Education Union of Australia – Queensland and Northern Territory Branch (IEUA-QNT) on behalf of community kindergartens across the state.

IEUA-QNT has advocated strongly for better transitional arrangements for early childhood centres.

The Minister for Education and Training, Mr Geoff Wilson, yesterday announced a transitional period to begin from 2011 which will ensure the delivery of an educational program for its current duration remains in place throughout the year.

IEUA-QNT Secretary Terry Burke said Minister Wilson ought to be commended for his efforts in recognising that existing community kindergartens needed a transitional period to be best prepared for the looming changes taking place throughout the sector.

“Our union welcomes the Minister’s announcement to ensure the quality education that occurs in community kindergartens is maintained and strengthened,” Mr Burke said.

“Teachers in Early Childhood Education always want what is best for their children, and the IEUA-QNT will continue to act and advocate on behalf of community kindergartens for provisions which enhance the quality of that education.

“While delaying the mandatory 15 hour program by 12 months will not address the significant changes that are planned to take place in the sector, the delay does now allow additional time for consultation and negotiation,” he said.

The decision from Minister Wilson also delays the introduction of a number of policy changes, with the kindergarten curriculum for 2011 and the continued attendance of younger children most notable.

For 2011, existing community kindergartens will be required to deliver a program on average for at least 13 hours and 45 minutes per week, for 40 weeks of the year instead of the 15 hours program originally planned.

However, new community kindergartens will be required to deliver the 15 hours program from 2011.

“The IEUA-QNT will continue to advocate for the important role of community kindergartens as providers of quality early childhood education,” Mr Burke said.

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“The Queensland Independent Education Union represents nearly 15,000 non-government education sector employees including teachers, principals, school support staff, grounds and maintenance staff, early childhood education staff and employees in business, international and English language colleges.”