



QUEENSLAND INDEPENDENT EDUCATION UNION

Queensland Independent Education Union

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Media Release

QIEU Members in Catholic Schools Take Protected Action

Queensland Independent Education Union (QIEU) members in Catholic Diocesan schools across the State will take protected action on Tuesday 5th August, 2003 in order to consider unresolved enterprise bargaining issues.

QIEU General Secretary Terry Burke said the action would take the form of an uninterrupted lunch break (no longer than one hour) to consider the issue of equitable sick leave provisions for all staff.

“Some school chapters have considered the issues so serious they have decided to take further protected action in the form of stop work meetings from 2– 3pm to give proper consideration to the matters,” Mr Burke said.

Members had consistently advised that their heavy workload in schools meant they have been unable to give proper consideration to enterprise bargaining issues, so this action will allow this consideration to be uninterrupted and in their own time.

Mr Burke said staff in Diocesan schools were particularly concerned with their employers’ intention to continue providing inferior sick leave provisions to school officers and services staff as opposed to the provisions offered to teachers.

School officers and services staff members make up a significant part of workers in non-government schools, including auxiliary, support, grounds and maintenance staff.

Mr Burke said teachers in Diocesan schools have had access to portability of sick leave accruals since the early eighties but through a “handshake deal” between employers and employees.

“Diocesan employers have agreed to ratify this position in the new agreement but only for teachers,” he said.

“School officers and services staff will only be given access to portability from the start of the new agreement. This means any sick leave they have accrued prior to the start date will not be portable”.

“Sick leave accruals are an essential safety-net for employees and these staff in Diocesan schools will continue to be disadvantaged if their employers hold their current position,” Mr Burke said.

“Many of these staff have worked in Diocesan schools for long periods of time and it seems grossly unfair that they should lose the security of accrued sick leave simply because they might move to another Catholic school employer,” Mr Burke said.

“The advice from the chapters as a result of the meetings will then be considered prior to any decision being taken on further negotiations,” Mr Burke said.

**For more information contact
Mr Terry Burke QIEU General Secretary on (07) 3839 7020 Mobile: 0419 640 078**

Or Laura Wise, Communications Officer (07) 3839 7020 Email lw@qieu.asn.au