



ABN 45 620 218 712

Queensland Independent Education Union

“Non-government education works because we do”

Media Release

Tuesday 29th April 2003 – FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

SARS Raises Need for Review in Non-Government Schools

The Queensland Independent Education Union (QIEU) is calling for a review of infection control procedures in non-government schools in light of the recent SARS (Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome) outbreak.

QIEU General Secretary Mr Terry Burke said that amidst the hysteria about SARS, it was appropriate for schools to examine their policy and procedures for dealing with infectious diseases.

“It is short-sighted of employers to rely only on a policy of exclusion of students who have recently been to risk areas, in order to deal with the potential of infection in their schools,” Mr Burke said.

“Exclusion from school of students who have recently travelled to areas affected by the disease, but who do not show symptoms on their return, is disruptive of student learning, especially when the expert medical advice from the World Health Organisation (WHO) is that SARS is hard to catch and close contact is needed with a person who is showing the symptoms of the disease.”

“Schools, however, need to ensure that procedures exist for identifying symptoms, assessing the risks and responding and containing those risks if there is a suspected case of SARS at a school,” he said.

“Schools must have a considered and updated set of procedures in place which are well communicated to both staff and students alike.”

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
or email: lwise@qieu.asn.au

.../Ends