



Catholic teachers in pay fight

TOWNSVILLE Catholic school teachers are taking industrial action this week in support of a pay claim.

Queensland Independent Education Union spokesman Terry Burke said Catholic teachers across the State were withdrawing from sport and cultural activities in schools for a week.

He said it was unfair that their pay was as much as \$6000 less than their interstate colleagues.

“We’re waiting on the employers to revise their wage offer,” he said.

“The campaign that we’ve got is a long one and (we’re) very determined.

“If the employer offer is not significantly revised then I think the members would determine there will be further action.”

Fair Work Australia last week rejected an attempt by Catholic education authorities to prevent teachers from taking action

in support of their claim for a new enterprise agreement.

A full bench of FWA ruled that employers do not have the right to force employees to negotiate on a particular form of agreement.

Mr Burke said employees had a legal right to pursue the form and content of the agreement they wanted, and employers could not unilaterally dictate how employees were to negotiate,

“Employees in Catholic

schools across Queensland have been attempting to negotiate an agreement with each of the separate employers since the beginning of 2009,” he said.

“Employees have sought 23 separate agreements, one with each Catholic education authority.

“The Catholic education employing authorities failed to make a wage offer which proved parity with interstate Catholic schools.”

— ALEXIS GILLHAM