



Catholic teachers strike for pay parity

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THE Far North's Catholic teachers may take further industrial action, including regular strikes, unless experienced educators are paid more.

About 200 Catholic teachers gathered at Rydges Esplanade Resort yesterday to discuss the year-long pay dispute.

Delegates unanimously passed a resolution to consider further industrial action, Queensland Independent Education Union regional organiser Patrick Meikle said.

"At this stage, we can't rule out further industrial action unless there is some meaningful efforts by the employer to meet our demands," he said.

"Teachers are very angry

and disappointed that the employer has refused to meet our demands for professional rates of pay.

"The key message is we're not far away from agreement."

Queensland Catholic teachers want to close the wage gap with New South Wales classroom teachers, who earn nearly \$7000 a year more at the top end of the pay scale.

The teachers have been offered a 12.5 per cent pay rise over three years, including a 4.5 per cent increase paid from last May.

A planned march to the Catholic Education Services building on Lake St was cancelled so delegates could meet Cairns diocese executive director Dr Bill Sultmann.

But Dr Sultmann said teachers would have to trade off other conditions, such as additional superannuation or more teacher aide support to receive higher pay.

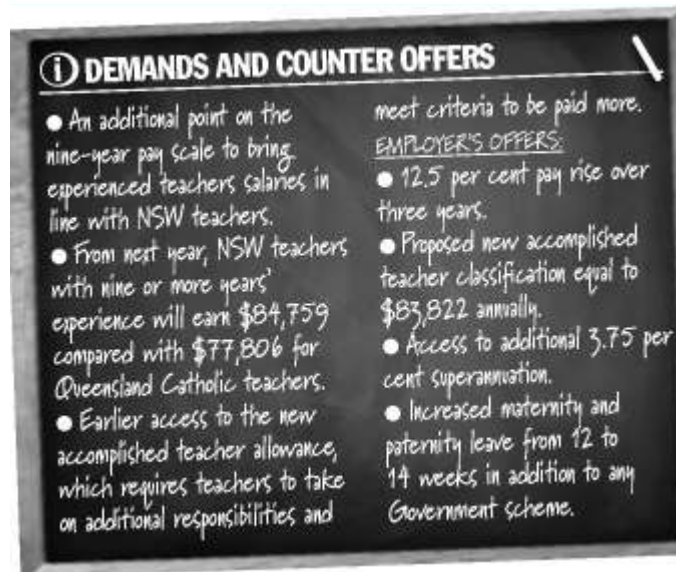
Five Far Northern Catholic schools were closed yesterday for the strike, while another five opened with supervision.

Sixteen other schools operated normally.

More than 40 of Queensland's 288 Catholic schools were affected by the statewide industrial action.

Outside the Cairns meeting, Far Northern teachers said they were seeking pay parity with NSW Catholic teachers.

Formal negotiations resume next week.





Courier Mail

Thursday 25/3/2010

Page: 9

Section: Edition Changes - Late City

Region: Brisbane Circulation: 211,230

Type: Capital City Daily

Size: 40.39 sq.cms.

Frequency: MTWTFSS-

Brief: QIEU (B)

Wage war escalates

Anthony Templeton

PARENTS of Catholic school students have been warned to expect more strike action, according to a key union.

Already sporting and co-curricular activities have been dropped at many of the 43 strike-affected schools.

Queensland Independent Education Union members have vowed to pursue further industrial action if their wage claims (\$1000 increase for senior teachers) are not met.

Union secretary Terry Burke said the bargaining process had become increasingly heated.

Queensland Catholic Education Commission executive director Mike Byrne said the "great majority of teachers in Queensland's 288 Catholics schools" believed the proposed enterprise bargaining agreement to be a "good offer".



Teachers on strike: equal wages for equal work

INEQUALITY

- Qld Catholic teachers earn \$1055 less than those in state system
- They also earn up to \$7000 less than interstate colleagues

Source: QIEU

By TONI SOMES

MICK Grew has been teaching for 20 years, including a decade in the Queensland Catholic Education system, but yesterday he walked out of the classroom frustrated by the fact he is one of the lowest paid in his profession in Australia.

He was one of hundreds of Catholic school teachers from across the Southern Downs taking part in a Queensland-wide strike action pushing for equal pay.

"It is just unreasonable to think Catholic employers can expect the same teaching levels and involvement in extra curricular activities as other schools, but then offer less pay," Mr Grew said.

The Stanthorpe-based teacher said ironically teachers' calls for equal professional pay rates were well supported by parents and local principals.

"They too can see the disparity in Catholic Ed's failure to offer

equal pay rates," Mr Grew said.

"The simple fact is we are doing the same job and soon we'll be teaching exactly the same things under the national curriculum, so we need pay rates equal to those teachers in the state system."

Queensland Independent Education Union organiser Nick Holliday was in Warwick for the rally yesterday.

He said school teachers in the Queensland Catholic system were among the lowest paid nationally.

"They are \$1000 behind teachers in the Queensland state system and up to \$7000 behind their interstate colleagues," Mr Holliday said.

"Taking this industrial action is a last resort for teachers, but unfortunately it has proved the only effective way to bring Catholic employers to the negotiating table."

Mr Holliday said yesterday's strike action had forced employers to agree to round table discussions about pay conditions on March 31.

In Warwick Catholic teachers also called for a lobby group of their peers to take their case to the head of the Toowoomba Diocese Bishop William Morris.

Local teacher Jim Armstrong said it was a move borne out of genuine frustration.

"This is last resort action, we are not just looking at ourselves, but how the issue of lower professional pay rates will impact on the Catholic Education system into the future," he said.

"If we continue to be the lowest paid teachers nationally it will impact on who we have teaching in Catholic schools."



Taking action: QIEU organiser Nick Holliday and Stanthorpe teacher Mick Grew led the local rally.



Catholic teachers make point with strike

PARENTS of Year 10 and 11 students at an Ipswich school were asked not to take their students to school yesterday due to a teacher's strike.

The Queensland Independent Education Union (QIEU) strike affected St Edmund's College in Ipswich and 42 other Catholic schools across the State.

Teachers stopped work all day yesterday and have withdrawn from co-curricular activities indefinitely in protest.

Year 10 and Year 11 students at St Edmund's College were asked to stay at home, but supervision was offered for parents who could

not make alternative arrangements.

Classes continued as normal for Years 8 and 9, while students in Year 12 had QCS practice of work placements as usual.

The union said it wants experienced teachers to be eligible for an \$84,800 salary, but their employers are only offering \$83,800 after 14 years of teaching.

QIEU president Andrew Elphinstone said the pay rate was one of the lowest in the nation's non-government sector.

"The industrial action will send a clear, strong message to our employers that inferior rates of

pay cannot be institutionalised in Queensland schools," Mr Elphinstone said. "It is time for Catholic employers to stop hiding behind their special funding relationship with the State Government and do what is fair for students and teachers."

Queensland Catholic Education Commission executive director Mike Byrne said every effort had been made to table an offer that was fair and responsible.

The union will meet the Catholic Education Commission next Wednesday over the pay deal.

Events Diary Wednesday, March 24, 2010

EVENTS LISTED IN CHRONOLOGICAL ORDER AND LOCAL TIME UNLESS OTHERWISE STATED:

ADELAIDE

No items listed.

BRISBANE

0830 - Infrastructure and Planning Symposium. Guests include Bob Carr, Don Henry. Hilton Hotel, Brisbane. Contact: Greg Hoffman 0418 756 005.

0900 - Rural & Remote Health Congress. Brisbane Marriott Hotel. Contact: Lauren Kirby 02 9080 4009.

0930 - State Parliament sits. Alice Street, Brisbane.

1000 - Sunshine Coast Council launch of the Mary River Aquatic Weed Strategy. Lake Kawana Community Centre. Contact: Peter Bell 5420 7418/Louise Pemble 5420 8991.

1000 - Brisbane Catholic Teachers - Day of Action. Stop work industrial action. March from King George Square to QCEC, Edward Street. Contact: Terry Burke 0419 640 078.

1730 - Clive Hamilton discusses his new book Requiem for a Species hosted by the Global Change Institute at UQ. Abel Smith Lecture Theatre (Building 23) St Lucia Campus. Contact: Rob Mackay-Wood 3346 9041.

CANBERRA

1200 - David Daly, Ambassador of the European Union Delegation, address to the National Press Club. "Europe's Man in Canberra - One year on". Contact: 6121 2199.

1500 - BeyondBlue Forums - Guidelines for treating depression and anxiety. Event Room 1, Rydges Capital Hill. Contact: Jane Gardner 0428 333 917.

MELBOURNE

No items listed.

PERTH

No items listed.

SYDNEY

0900 - Senator Stephen Conroy will address the 2010 Australian Broadcasting Summit. ABC's Mark Scott to speak at 0930, SBS's Shaun Brown to speak at 1000 and Kim Dalton, Freeview chairman to speak at 1130. Parkside, Sydney Convention & Exhibition Centre, Darling Drive, Darling Harbour, Sydney. Contact: 9282 5000.

0900 - 2nd Annual National Telemedicine Summit 2010. An increase in chronic disease and an ageing population are putting major strains on the nation's healthcare system. Sydney Harbour Marriott Circular Quay. Contact: 9080 4300.

0930 - Former NRL player Ian Roberts will attend a case conference to determine his application to join Gary Burns in his action against The Nine Network Footy Show skit last year. The Administrative Decisions Tribunal, level 15, 111 Elizabeth Street. Contact: Gary Burns 0407 910 309 or Ian Roberts 0410 495 461.

1000 - World's Biggest Playgroup Day. The Australian National Maritime Museum, Sydney. Other NSW locations: Lismore, Wyong, Grenfell, and Murrumbidge. Thousands of children and parents celebrating in parks, halls, museums and other venues. Contact: Deb Ryan 0409 651 469 or Sandy Kervin, 0418 863 694. www.playgroupaustralia.com.au/nsw

1000 - Public hearings will recommence for the Commission of Inquiry into matters arising on board HMAS Success. Level 11, Defence Plaza, 270 Pitt Street, Sydney. Contact: Danielle Kuhn 0405 310 176.

1000 - ICAC inquiry into corruption allegations involving Burwood Council General Manager Pat Romano and others continues. ICAC Hearing Room, Level 21, 133 Castlereagh Street, Sydney. Contact: Nicole Thomas 8281 5799 or 0417 467 801.

1050 - The Poche Centre, the new home of the Melanoma Institute Australia will be opened by NSW Governor Marie Bashir with a blessing by Cardinal George Pell. Attending: Dick Smith, Joe Hockey, Frank Sartor, Jillian Skinner. Mater Hospital Campus, Rocklands Road, North Sydney. Contact: Lisa Sampson 0406 523 324.

1100 - 2008 Formula One world champion Lewis Hamilton will be setting sail on Sydney Harbour to launch his bid to win the 2010 Australian Grand Prix for the second time. Quay Restaurant, Overseas Passenger Terminal, The Rocks. Contact: Michelle O'Brien 0414 012 401.

1300 - David Millar will present a lecture for Seniors Week: Their England Their Marriage: Queen Victoria and Prince Albert. Ashfield Library, level 3, Civic Centre, 260 Liverpool Road, Ashfield. Contact: Annie Coulthard 0403 820 609

1300 - The 20:20 Investor Series resources investment forum. Amora Jamison Hotel, Jamison Street, Sydney.

SPORT

SOCCER - AFC Champions League -

Match 3 - Group H

2100 (AEDT) - Adelaide United (AUS) v Sanfrecce Hiroshima (JPN), Hindmarsh Std

GOLF - USLPGA Tour -

Kia Classic, La Costa Resort & Spa, Carlsbad, CA - to March 28

CYCLING - UCI Track World C'ships - to March 28

Copenhagen, Denmark

GALLOPS -

Warwick Farm

Sandown

Eagle Farm

Murray Bridge

Pinjarra

New Zealand

Hong Kong

Sth Africa

TROTS -

Bathurst

Ararat

Redcliffe

Charlton

GREYHOUNDS -

The Gardens

The Meadows

Ipswich

Angle Park

Albion Park

Bathurst

Cannington

Ballarat

Warrnambool

AAP RTV bm/evt/rt/wz