



INDEPENDENT EDUCATION UNION OF AUSTRALIA – QUEENSLAND AND NORTHERN TERRITORY BRANCH



MEDIA RELEASE

Friday, 23 October 2009

prpcpas13bhc

Catholic Schools to Close as Teachers Stop Work in their Campaign for Professional Rates of Pay.

Catholic schools in Cairns are likely to close next Wednesday 28 October following similar announcements of school closures in Brisbane with teachers taking protected industrial action in support of a campaign for professional rates of pay.

Brisbane Catholic schools St Joseph's Nudgee, St Laurence's and St Joseph's Gregory Terrace have announced they are closing next Wednesday and some schools in the Cairns area will likely follow.

Members of the Independent Education Union-Queensland and Northern Territory (IEUA-QNT) working in Cairns Catholic schools overwhelmingly voted to take protected action due to the continual refusal of their employers to negotiate the endorsed wage claim ahead of state sector arbitrated outcomes.

IEUA-QNT Branch Secretary, Terry Burke said that this continued position by Catholic employers has left members no choice but to take protected action as a last resort.

"Catholic employers have continually told their employees that they will not pay professional rates of pay because they cannot afford them, but ironically will pay them if the state government does," Mr Burke said.

"What Catholic employers are saying is that the 'special relationship,' with the state government is far more important than the relationship with their own employees," Mr Burke said.

Cairns teacher Nicole Jones said, IEUA-QNT members are willing to stand up and be counted in support of quality education in Queensland.

"Taking protected action next Wednesday and rallying together will send a clear, strong message to our employers that inferior rates of pay cannot be institutionalised in Queensland Catholic schools," Ms Jones said.

"We are fighting for professional wages because we want what is best for our students and for the future of education in this state. Our employers may lack the courage to stand up for their schools, but we do not."

"Professional rates of pay are essential to attract and retain accomplished teachers in our schools and this must be realised by Catholic employers. We now want them to negotiate this issue in good faith," Ms Jones said.

Cairns teachers will be meeting on Wednesday 28 October at 10am at Rydges Esplanade resort (Ballroom), Crn Esplanade and Kerwin Street. A march to the Diocesan offices will follow.

Teachers taking action in Atherton will be meeting on Wednesday 28 October at 9am at Atherton International Club 60 Kennedy Highway.

Teachers taking action in Innisfail will be meeting on Wednesday 28 October at 12:30 at Brothers Leagues Club, Cnr Ernest and Campbell Street.

All media welcome.

...Ends

For further information contact: Belinda Hogan-Collis, IEUA-QNT Communications Officer/Journalist on 0419 653 131

For further comment contact: Terry Burke, IEUA-QNT Secretary on 0419 640 078, or Paul Giles, IEUA-QNT Assistant Secretary on 0409 895 949

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