

# QUEENSLAND INDEPENDENT EDUCATION UNION



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## Briefing Early Childhood Education

### Can Community Kindergartens close on the last day of term four?

A significant number of members have contacted QIEU seeking clarification in relation to the scheduling of a pupil free day on the last day of term four. In previous years the Management Committee of many Kindergartens (the employer) and the employees of the Kindergarten have reached agreement to close the Kindergarten on the last day of term four to allow for cleaning and tidy-up.

On behalf of members, QIEU has investigated this issue. The following points need to be noted:

- (a) The DECKAS guidelines do not mandate that Kindergartens must be open for 41 (or any other number of) weeks.

The guidelines are available through the Department of Education Training and the Arts Website (<http://education.qld.gov.au>). The closest the Department comes to the issue is a statement that Kindergartens "usually" operate for "approximately 41 weeks per year".

- (b) The Financial Assistance Kit for DECKAS Funding states that Kindergartens must be "approved by the Creche and Kindergarten Association of Queensland (C&K)". In the formal DECKAS Policy (FNM-PR-011) the Department indicates that a Kindergarten must be "affiliated" with C&K to receive DECKAS Level 1 funding.
- (c) The requirement relating to a specific number of weeks emanates from C&K and not the Department. We note that QIEU is not in possession of any C&K publication which identifies a requirement that Kindergartens must be open for a specific number of weeks.
- (d) QIEU has confirmed with the Department of Education, Training and the Arts that it imposes no restrictions on the C&K affiliation requirements, and in particular it does not impose a requirement that a Kindergarten must be open for a "full 41 weeks".

It is unreasonable (in the opinion of QIEU) that C&K should attempt to overturn the relationship between the Management Committee and their constituency in relation to the operations of an individual Kindergarten, especially in the absence of any Government requirement to the contrary.

**QIEU will fully support any member who may be threatened in any way because of the agreement by the Committee to close a Kindergarten on the last day of term four.**

Individual Committees are the employer of the Directors, Teachers and Assistants at Kindergartens and consequently the Committee has the role of agreeing (or not agreeing) to certain employment arrangements and not C&K.

QIEU encourages any member with a concern around this matter to contact us at your earliest convenience.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Terry Burke'.

**Terry Burke**  
General Secretary