

23 March 2020

IEUA-QNT CALLS FOR IMMEDIATE NATION-WIDE END OF TERM FOR ALL SCHOOL STUDENTS

Schools cannot meet either their legislative Work, Health and Safety obligations or their duty of care to both their employees and students as the COVID-19 health emergency continues, according to the union representing non-government sector teachers and school support staff.

The Independent Education Union - Queensland and Northern Territory Branch (IEUA-QNT) is calling for an immediate nation-wide end of term for all school students.

IEUA-QNT Branch Secretary Terry Burke said employees with underlying health conditions, those who are pregnant and those who provide care for elderly relatives within their own household should, with immediate effect, be permitted to work from home or granted ex-gratia leave.

"There must also be an orderly transition to emergency schooling arrangements, including support and protocols for online/remote learning," Mr Burke said.

"There needs to be urgent discussions between government, employers and our union about the provision of emergency schooling arrangements for children of essential services personnel, including the terms of engagement for volunteer staff and a safe workplace environment."

Mr Burke said staff working in remote schools must be provided with immediate travel arrangements to their home or home state, especially in light of emerging border arrangements.

"It's time to call time on term one now," Mr Burke said.

In addition to this coordinated call to governments and employers, IEUA-QNT will be issuing a *Charter of Action* for employers to sign up to calling on them to ensure the health and safety of school staff and the protection of their livelihoods.

The IEUA-QNT *Charter of Action* seeks an immediate response and action by all school employers.

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The Independent Education Union of Australia – Queensland and Northern Territory Branch represents more than 17,000 education professionals across Queensland and the Northern Territory. www.qieu.asn.au