

13 April 2020

Government directives mean no school staff should be stood down

The Independent Education Union of Australia – Queensland and Northern Territory (IEUA-QNT) Branch notes today's (13 April 2020) announcement by the Queensland government that schools should begin home-based learning for the majority students from next Monday, 20 April 2020 schools only open to the children of essential workers and that this will be the case until at least 22 May 2020.

To facilitate this, schools are to remain open with teachers and school support staff to work from school to facilitate the continuity of learning for all students – those at home and those present in the classroom.

IEUA-QNT Branch Secretary Terry Burke said given this announcement and the recent direction of Federal Education Minister Dan Tehan, that all independent schools are to remain open or else lose their federal funding, the union expects that no non-government school should be closed for Term 2 and no school should be standing down any staff.

"There continues to be no shortage of work to be done in our schools as they explore ways to ensure school sites remain safe for the staff and small numbers of students who attend and as they develop and enhance the online learning provided to students at home," Mr Burke said.

"Support staff continue to play a valuable role in assisting teachers to provide online learning and maintaining contact with students and their families.

"Schools cannot be expected to deliver this new hybrid model of education without teachers and support staff working together.

"With schools remaining opening to staff and a small number of students, the ongoing protection of the health and safety of all staff and students will be paramount.

"Provisions for vulnerable staff to work from home should be in place and there will be a need for casual relief teachers to continue to be employed," Mr Burke said.

Mr Burke urged IEUA-QNT members with concerns regarding the measures being put in place at their schools to protect their health and safety to contact the union directly.

"Our union will continue to strongly advocate for the protection of all members' health and safety as well as their livelihoods as the COVID-19 crisis continues," Mr Burke said.

ENDS

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