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## School leaders' health survey reinforces education sector crisis

The union representing over 17,000 principals, teachers and staff across Queensland and Northern Territory non-government schools has called for urgent action to address the health and wellbeing of school leaders, their staff and students.

Independent Education Union – Queensland and Northern Territory (IEU-QNT) Branch Secretary Terry Burke said the summary findings of the latest Australian Principal Occupational Health, Safety and Wellbeing Survey reinforced the extent of the sector's crisis and urgent interventions by government and school employers were needed.

"The Australian education sector is in a workload crisis," Mr Burke said.

"We see this in the burnout of our teachers and other school staff and the increasing rates of school refusal by students.

"The latest Australian Principal Occupational Health, Safety and Wellbeing Survey findings are yet another red flag.

"The number of Principals looking to retire has tripled in the last three years for the same reasons as our teachers – workload and a lack of time to focus on their core duties as a school leader.

"This is compounded by the national shortage of teachers unwilling to work under the current workload regime.

"We don't have a teacher shortage - we have a shortage of teachers willing to work under oppressive workloads.

"Like teachers, our school leaders are forced to do too much work unrelated to their core duties, severely impacting their health and wellbeing.

"Both government and school employers need to take urgent action on the issue of workload and work intensification in our schools by putting in place meaningful reforms to tackle the paperwork, red tape and obsession with data which are sucking the life out of our profession.

"In Queensland, school employers will also be legally responsible for complying with the new *Managing the Risk of Psychosocial Hazards at Work Code of Practice* from 1 April this year.

"These risks will need to be managed by implementing relevant control measures as to how employees are managed, the system or design of the workplace, and how these things impact workers' mental health.

"The new *Code* will also provide practical, enforceable minimum standards a school must follow to comply with its duties to ensure psychological health and safety of its employees," Mr Burke said.

**ENDS**

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