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Last chance to avert disastrous shakeup of NT teacher regulation

Teachers are urging the Northern Territory (NT) government to avert a disastrous shakeup of NT teacher regulation.

With the *Education Standards and Registration Board Bill 2026* poised for a vote in the Legislative Assembly on Tuesday, concerned teachers have urged the government to amend the bill and avoid gutting the Teacher Registration Board (TRB) and the NT Board of Studies (NTBOS).

Both boards currently include mandatory seats for teacher, parent and principal representatives, as well as experts in Aboriginal education.

Under the bill, this system would make way for a seven-person board of ministerial appointees (with one merged board replacing the current TRB and NTBOS).

Without guaranteed representation, the new board could see members with no classroom experience deciding critical curriculum, teacher registration and disciplinary matters.

More than 1,000 concerned teachers and community members have signed [a joint IEU-QNT/AEU NT petition](#) opposing the bill in its current form.

Quotes attributable to Brian Gray – President, AEU NT:

“These changes are a disaster waiting to happen as they would remove independent oversight of decisions about teaching in the NT,” Mr Gray said.

“The Minister claims this bill is about ‘removing red tape’, but decisions that could end a teacher’s career shouldn’t be left to people without classroom experience; otherwise, you risk costly and time-consuming appeals.

“Having a broad range of stakeholders on the board and mandated teacher representation for inquiries into registration matters is standard practice in other jurisdictions.

“This is not just about convention, but about ensuring the complex education landscape of the NT – with government, Catholic and independent P-12 schools across urban and remote areas – is understood by the body regulating the profession.

“For over 20 years, the representational structure of the boards have guaranteed its independence.

“That independence is at serious risk unless the government amends this bill,” Mr Gray said.

Quotes attributable to Terry Burke – Branch Secretary, IEU-QNT:

“The message from NT teachers is very clear: ‘hands off our TRB,’” Mr Burke said.

“It’s deeply disrespectful to silence teachers on a board that is funded with their registration fees.

“There is a reason why every other jurisdiction in the country has mandatory representation for teachers on their registration authorities – it provides important oversight from people with real classroom experience.

“This bill puts the quality of education in the NT at risk.

“Despite proposing a radical set of changes, the government has not adequately explained what is wrong with the existing system.

“This is a bill with no purpose other than making the NT a disastrous outlier on teacher regulation,” Mr Burke said.

ENDS

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