

1 April 2020

100% support for industrial action from ACT Islamic School teachers

Members of the Independent Education Union NSW/ACT Branch in the Islamic School of Canberra have today won the right to take industrial action, as long running enterprise agreement negotiations continue to stall.

The IEU has been calling for school management to pay salaries and conditions in line with those received by teachers in other schools in the ACT and other Islamic schools in NSW.

The union has been in negotiations with the School Board for a new enterprise agreement since 2016, after the previous agreement expired in 2013. The school was sold in 2018 by the Australian Federation of Islamic Councils to Islamic Practice and Dawah Circle Inc.

Initial discussions with the new school management were cordial, but negotiations stalled at the end of 2019 when the employer applied to terminate the enterprise agreement. The IEU notified a dispute to the Fair Work Commission about the school's failure to bargain in good faith and applied for a Protected Action Ballot Order on behalf of its members.

"Staff employed at the school are an extremely dedicated group of employees who have stuck it out for their students during a very difficult period," said IEU organiser Lyn Caton.

The teachers have today confirmed their concern and dissatisfaction by returning unanimous support for taking industrial action.

IEUA NSW/ACT Branch Secretary Mark Northam says he has "nothing but praise for the members at the Islamic School of Canberra, who have collectively indicated their desire to achieve parity with like schools."

"Members at this school have the full support of the union in their ongoing struggle to achieve fair wages and conditions."

Valuing teachers and support staff is a responsibility of all school employers.

All members of the IEU applaud the brave steps taken by teachers at the Islamic School of Canberra.

The IEUA NSW/ACT Branch represents over 30,000 teachers, principals and support staff in Catholic and independent schools, early childhood centres and post secondary colleges.

Authorised by Mark Northam, IEUA NSW/ACT Branch Secretary