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IEU statement: Hate speech has no place in NSW schools

The union representing teachers and support staff in non-government schools in NSW welcomes today's statement from the NSW government about amending Codes of Conduct to ensure all schools are free from hate speech.

All NSW school staff, including principals and school leaders, will have strengthened Codes of Conduct that explicitly ban hate speech under reforms announced by the Minns government.

"The vast majority of schools already have guidelines preventing hate speech, but these new requirements will make it crystal clear that hate speech based on race or religion is not acceptable," said Independent Education Union of Australia NSW/ACT Branch Secretary Carol Matthews.

"We don't anticipate teachers will be impeded in classroom discussions by the new requirements, which are based on the prohibition of hate speech in the *Crimes Act*.

"Our members are committed to maintaining a high standard of professionalism and dedication to their work."

The changes take effect immediately and apply across more than 3000 government and non-government schools in NSW, tightening the rules governing the conduct of all school staff.

"We'll be sharing these changes with our members in upcoming meetings and communications," Matthews said.

"Together with the broader union movement, the IEU opposes all forms of violence, hatred, bigotry and racism. It is not who we are. We reject hate speech that makes people feel threatened and unsafe. We are always stronger together."

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The IEUA NSW/ACT Branch represents 32,000 teachers, principals and support staff in Catholic and independent schools, early childhood centres and post-secondary colleges.

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