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Union lodges dispute with Fair Work Commission over “shared” principal plan

The union representing teachers and support staff in non-government schools in NSW and the ACT has lodged a dispute with the Fair Work Commission following Catholic Schools Broken Bay’s announcement that a number of schools in Sydney will share principals.

The IEU believes the employer has breached relevant enterprise agreements by failing to consult with school staff over a major workplace change.

Under Catholic Schools Broken Bay’s proposal, 14 schools in the Northern Beaches and North Shore will have principals that divide their time between two schools.

“IEU members are deeply concerned about the employer’s plan for schools to have part-time principals,” said Independent Education Union of Australia NSW/ACT Branch Secretary Carol Matthews.

“This change will impact staff, students and families in the affected schools. The union cannot see how this restructuring will benefit anyone.”

Matthews said the employer had not consulted the union about the impacts of the “shared” principal proposal when it made this decision.

“For example, we do not know whether staffing at affected schools will be increased to compensate for the loss of a full-time principal and how principals will perform their role across two schools,” she said.

The union has called on the employer to immediately provide more detail about its plan for “shared” principals and to consult with the IEU.

“The proposed changes will have significant implications for workload, school operations and work health and safety,” Matthews said.

“The union will support members to ensure the employer meets all its legal obligations to staff.”

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

Authorised by Carol Matthews, IEUA NSW/ACT Branch Secretary