

MEDIA RELEASE

16 February 2016

Industrial action on 25 February at most FNQ Catholic schools

Most Catholic schools in the Diocese of Cairns will be affected by planned protected industrial action on Thursday 25 February, but all schools are expected to remain open.

This will involve work stoppages on the day by members of the Independent Education Union.

Cairns Catholic Education Services Executive Director Bill Dixon said that while it was expected that all schools would remain open there would be some likely limitations on the day's teaching and other programs.

"Our schools will individually review their available staffing and the services they are able to provide on the day," he said. "At some schools there may be little or no impact, at others there may be a considerable adjustment to teaching and other programs – this will be decided on a school by school basis.

"Only union members are permitted to stop work on the day, and some union members may elect not to stop work. Non-union members will work as normal," he said.

Mr Dixon said schools will advise their parent communities regarding school operations for 25 February.

In summary:

- At 22 Catholic schools, union members may stop work on Thursday 25 February. Union members at these schools may also choose to delay responding to non-urgent emails from 22 February.
- At four schools (St Joseph's, Parramatta Park; Mount St Bernard College, Herberton; Mother of Good Counsel, North Cairns; and St Clare's, Tully) union members may stop work for three hours from 9am to 12 noon.
- Three schools are not affected by any stoppages – MacKillop Catholic College, Mount Peter; St Joseph's, Weipa and Our Lady of the Sacred Heart, Thursday and Hammond Islands.

Mr Dixon said that while Catholic Education supported the rights of union members to take protected industrial action it was regretted that these stoppages would inconvenience families, place extra pressure on school leadership and other staff, and affect student learning.

"We would like to resolve these remaining industrial issues as soon as possible and will continue to negotiate in good faith. Our pay offer of 2.5% is fair in the Queensland market and we have made significant concessions on workload issues," he said.

ENDS