

Teachers chalk up eighth pay rally

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CATHOLIC teachers are fed up with ongoing industrial action as their union readies itself for an eighth strike in 10 months.

Principals and teachers will have a full stop-work day and rally across the state next Thursday as negotiations over a pay increase stall.

The Independent Education Union is unhappy with an across-the-board 2.5 per cent increase already on the table and is demanding staggered increases comparable to NSW of between 2.5 and 3.2 per cent.

The union insists it has the support of its members but the handling of negotiations is being questioned. There are concerns teachers are being prevented from doing their job due to the drawn-out process.

It is understood only 5594 of the 18,900 Queensland Catholic staff voted in the ballot with 85 per cent of those voting yes. It means only one-quarter of staff across the state directly supported the action.

Queensland Catholic Education Commission executive director Lee-Anne Perry said the numbers meant most staff did not support the industrial action ballot or did not vote in the ballot. "That matches the anecdotal evidence we have

that the majority of staff are keen to resolve the bargaining process in a reasonable and considered way," she said.

She said the offer of a 2.5 per cent wage increase was fair against the current 1.7 per cent wage increase.

But the union has pushed forward with rallies, in which more than 8500 Catholic school union members across more than 240 school sites are authorised to stop work on February 25. Most are expected to take a full-day strike, with rallies across most major

STAFF ARE KEEN TO RESOLVE THE PROCESS

Lee-Anne Perry

Queensland cities. Independent Education Union of Australia-Queensland and Northern Territory branch secretary Terry Burke said he had the full support of teachers and staff across Queensland.

"Any suggestion the union is dragging this out is wrong," he said.

"The members are determined in these matters."

He said change was needed to address the changing workload and demands on teachers.