

15 November 2019

**Catholic Schools Office staff to take industrial action**

Professional officers, education officers and administrative staff working at the Maitland-Newcastle Diocese Catholic Schools Office (CSO) will stop work for two hours on Wednesday, 20 November from 8.30am to 10.30am.

The IEUA NSW/ACT made an application for protected action on behalf of members following the inability to reach agreement in bargaining for a new Enterprise Agreement (EA).

The key issue relates to the refusal of the employer to guarantee EA coverage for the full three years of the agreement.

 In 2018 the diocese undertook a restructure known as Many Parts, One Body, One Mission which resulted in a group of members being stripped of their EA coverage.

Members are of the strong view that the diocese will attempt to deny more members EA coverage and will not settle an agreement until they receive a guarantee that this will not occur

“The union has bargained, in good faith for an enterprise agreement which protects members’ hard won pay and conditions, and this move by the employer undermines all that has been achieved over many decades” IEUA NSW/ACT Secretary Mark Northam said.

Northam urged the Maitland-Newcastle Diocese Director of Schools to ensure all members are guaranteed coverage of the EA for the life of the agreement.

“Employers cannot change the rules without going through the proper negotiations,” Northam said. But it appears that the diocese is determined to strip members of their rights and entitlements.

“Enterprise agreement coverage must be guaranteed for employees in any future restructuring, otherwise the rights of current and future employees are at risk.”

**Media are welcome to attend the stop work meeting at Mayfield West Bowling Club, 4 Norris Avenue, Mayfield West at 9am-10am on Wednesday, 20 November.**

Further comment:

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*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**