

MEDIA ALERT

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Industrial action threat over hundreds of job cuts

Thursday, 7 December 2017

Hundreds of Community Public Sector Union and Civil Service Association members employed at the Department of Education have resolved to take industrial action on the first day of school in 2018 if the responsible authorities do not meet demands.

Pressure is now on Education Minister Sue Ellery and Education management to ensure a thorough assessment has been conducted to ensure WA's public education system can provide quality services from 2018 and beyond.

"Public servants are feeling betrayed," said Toni Walkington, Branch Secretary of the CPSU/CSA.

"This time last year, the then Opposition Leader Mark McGowan promised real improvements to the public sector. He promised the attraction and retention of skilled staff," she said, highlighting the relevant sections of the ALP's Public Sector Policy released in December 2016.

"What a difference a year makes," she said.

"Working West Australians have changed the government before – we can and will do it again until we finally have a government which values the service provided by our public sector. After eight years of cuts, there is nothing left to slash."

At the Mass Member's Meeting, union members heard from Debbie O'Hara, a regional Aboriginal Education Coordinator who has recently found her position would be abolished.

"After these cuts, how can Western Australia continue our work to close the gap on Aboriginal disadvantage in education?" she asked.

"How can we turn our back on those targets? Turn our back on those families?"

The public is being urged to register their opposition by taking part in the #SelfiesforSue online action and sending a message to Education Minister Sue Ellery.

Members of the public can take a selfie with a message of protest and tag it with the hashtag #SelfiesforSue and upload a photo to www.cpsucsa.org/selfiesforsue

A personalised message in solidarity with Department of Education public servants can be completed online at www.cpsucsa.org/edcuts17

APPENDIX – Resolutions passed at Mass Member’s Meeting on 7 December

- 1) *Condemns the decision to abolish at least 188 positions within the Department of Education that keep vulnerable children in school, close the gap on Aboriginal disadvantage, and support our public schools to deliver quality education to the children of Western Australia;*
- 2) *Demands that the Department halt the process for the abolition of positions and conducts proper consultation with all affected areas to determine the full impact of this proposed change, both direct and indirect, in Education central and regional offices and in schools;*
- 3) *Demands that the consultation include, but not be limited to:*
 - A) *A complete workload impact assessment for all proposed abolished positions;*
 - B) *Transparency around what work would no longer be undertaken as a result of the proposed abolition of positions;*
 - C) *The details of any plans to outsource some or all of the work currently undertaken by staff in proposed abolished positions to the private and/ or NGO sectors;*
 - D) *The details of how many proposed abolished positions are currently filled with staff on fixed term contracts and the dates of expiry of these contracts;*

This requires a consultation period of more than the two weeks for feedback currently provided by the Department;
- 4) *Demands that the McGowan Government comply with WA Labor’s own Public Sector Policy and immediately cease the progress of any planned and not outsource any work currently undertaken by Department of Education staff;*
- 5) *Demands that any person whose position is abolished following a thorough and fair consultation process must be able to have access to the full VTSS package on completion of the review, regardless of the date on which this occurs;*
- 6) *Should these consultation requirements not be met, this meeting of members resolves to take industrial action on the 1 February 2018.*

<END>

Available for comment

Toni Walkington, CPSU/CSA Branch Secretary
Please call Andrei Buters to arrange

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