



Tuesday, 6 June 2017

Submission Re: Education (Accreditation of Non-State Schools) Bill 2017

IEUA-QNT welcomes the opportunity to provide feedback regarding the Queensland Government's Education (Accreditation of Non-State Schools) Bill 2017.

IEUA-QNT represents ~17,000 teachers, support staff and ancillary staff in non-government education institutions in Queensland and the Northern Territory and consistently engages in industrial and education debate at both state and national levels through its Education and Industrial Committees and through its national counterpart, the Independent Education Union, which receives input from teachers in all States and Territories.

Our primary concern in relation to the proposed legislation relates to composition of the Non-State Schools Accreditation Board and, in particular, the omission of representation from union representing the interests of teachers and education workers as stakeholders.

Following discussion with the Minister in 2015, our union provided the Minister's office with a summary of the composition of similar organisations in other Australian States and Territories. Although the nature of the body responsible for accreditation and regulation of non-state schools varies, those that are comparable to Queensland (e.g. the Registration Committee of the Board of Studies, Teaching and Educational Standards in New South Wales) incorporate a wide range of stakeholder groups, including teacher unions.

Given the key role of IEUA-QNT as the collective voice of ~17,000 non-state school employees, and the absence of any teacher voice on the current board, we believe revision of the governance structure is warranted and that Government should take the opportunity to correct the oversight.

In relation to other proposed changes, we support the measures to simplify the accreditation process. We are satisfied that removal of provisional accreditation, accompanied by a strengthening of the powers of the Board to conduct investigations into contraventions and/or non-compliance provides an adequate degree of protection for teachers, support staff, students and parents; as do the changes to classification and roles of authorised persons.

Similarly, we have no objection to cessation of the issuance of certificates of accreditation, given that the Board will maintain a publically accessible register of accredited schools.

We also agree that streamlining processes for eligibility for government funding is appropriate given the current duplication of procedures and the fact that there will be no change to the process by which the Queensland Government provides money to schools.

We thank the Education, Tourism, Innovation and Small Business Committee for the invitation to engage in consultation through this submission and would welcome the opportunity for further discussion.

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