

Media Release - 5 May - Response to public comments by Catholic Education Tasmania

The IEU is disappointed to see recent comments made by Catholic Education Tasmania which are inconsistent with stated CET policy and have created significant confusion and anxiety amongst parents, staff, leadership and students of Catholic schools. Today we wrote to Executive Director Gerard Gaskin to outline our concerns and to call on him to support rather than undermine school leaders as they seek to implement stated CET policy in this challenging time.

Encouraging parents to unnecessarily send their children to school undermines the Tasmanian strategy for containing the spread of COVID-19, compromises the ability of schools and teachers to deliver quality remote learning, and potentially puts the health and safety of students, staff and the broader community at risk.

IEU General Secretary Deb James said "Schools, teachers and support staff have done an extraordinary job pivoting to remote learning and are safely delivering high-quality education to students across Tasmania. This can only be effective while it is the key focus of schools – moving to a split mode of delivery will make the work of teachers impossible and undermine education for all our students."

We acknowledge the need to provide safe supervision on school campuses for children of essential service workers and for vulnerable students. However, we strongly encourage all parents to follow state government advice, to consider the safety of the community, and to keep their children home if they can do so.

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