

Armidale teachers walk out over failed school amalgamation

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Teachers at Armidale Secondary College have walked off the job over issues regarding the amalgamation of two former high schools in Armidale.

Teachers Federation Deputy President Henry Rajendra said the botched amalgamation at Armidale was a warning for other communities, like Murwillumbah, where the NSW Government was planning to force school amalgamations.

“Teachers have walked off the job at Armidale Secondary College because they are frustrated at the litany of failures this amalgamation model delivers,” Mr Rajendra said.

“This amalgamation is a complete failure according to the staff at Armidale and they are calling on the NSW Government to urgently set up a full school development review of the way the school operates.”

“It is time the Education Department recognised that forcing two schools to merge is a model that doesn’t work.”

“Teachers at Armidale Secondary College complain that they are short of the basic requirements to hold a lesson, with insufficient desks and chairs in some classrooms to accommodate 30 students.”

“Our members say the school fails to operate in accordance with the Education Department’s policies and procedures when it comes to supplying enough staff to ensure an appropriately qualified teacher is available for each class.”

“The Department has failed to deliver subject-specific professional development to staff and failed to deliver student well-being and behaviour management procedures.”

“It has failed to adequately staff the Intensive English Centre which is struggling with two unfilled vacancies.”

“On top of that, teachers are faced with increasing workloads that have reduced the time they have to prepare lessons and provide quality learning opportunities for their students.”

Mr Rajendra said teachers at Armidale had lost confidence in the Education Department’s ability to complete the amalgamation of the two former high schools.

“The evidence from Armidale is clear. Such school amalgamations are not improving learning opportunities for students and have damaged the well-being and morale of staff.”

