

## Norfolk Island members want a stop of the rot

October 22, 2021

Teachers at Norfolk Island Central School have initiated a series of rolling strikes over the coming weeks as “disgust” at a lack of commitment by state and federal governments could leave 300 students without education services.

Federation members at the school walked out again today, after stopping work on Tuesday, in “disgust of the Commonwealth’s ongoing inability to ensure the continuity of public education” on Norfolk beyond this year.

“It’s nearly the end of October. We have eight weeks of school left in which to plan for 2022,” the school’s Federation Representative Susie Hale said.

“How do we plan when we have only nine teachers confirmed to stay at the school and no employer to recruit new staff?”

The Norfolk Island community is demanding certainty over the provision of education services after the NSW Government withdrew from an agreement with the Commonwealth to provide public education on the island.



NSW Teachers Federation President Angelo Gavrielatos said Norfolk Island families deserved better than being left without any certainty about the operation of the school in 2022 and beyond.

“It is outrageous that the educational needs of a community like Norfolk Island are being ignored by the Morrison Government,” he said.

“The Australian Government has a clear responsibility for Norfolk Island and must advise the community about arrangements for schooling on the island next year.

“It is a basic right of all students to have access to high-quality public education and in that respect, Norfolk Island is no different to the Australian mainland.”

Ms Hale said teachers and community had reached a point of crisis.

“The uncertainty continues to cause extreme stress to staff and students,” she said. “The only definite information we have is

that the NSW Government is ceasing education provision on December 31, 2021.”

The school community remains cautiously optimistic that Queensland will take on education provision.

“Our meetings with Queensland Education have been incredibly positive,” Ms Hale said.

“The irony is lost on no one, however, that of the three governments currently involved in discussions around education provision, the only government showing any consideration and concern for our school is Queensland; the one without any signed agreement or responsibility.

“Members have had enough. Parents have had enough. The community have had enough of this blatant disregard by the commonwealth for the wellbeing of our children.”