Dear Colleagues

The fifth meeting of the Queensland Lutheran Schools Single Bargaining Unit was held on Wednesday, 6 March 2013. A factual account of the issues discussed at that meeting, indicating where agreement has been reached and outlining ongoing matters still under discussion, follows:

1. **Overpayments**

   Employer Representatives tabled some draft wording to reflect the agreement in principle reached in respect of the above matter for review by the Employee Representatives. Employee Representatives advised they would consider the draft wording and table any suggested amendments to that wording for consideration at the further SBU meeting to be held on Thursday, 21 March 2013.

2. **Maternity Leave (qualifying service)**

   Employer Representatives confirmed that, as requested by the Employee Representatives, Queensland Lutheran School employers are agreeable to amending clause 7.6.3(a) of the Enterprise Agreement to clarify that qualifying service in any Queensland Lutheran School is recognised for the purposes of determining eligibility for paid maternity leave.

3. **Payment of Public Holiday (School Officers)**

   Employee Representatives tabled a draft clause for consideration. Employer Representatives advised they would consult with Queensland Lutheran School employers in respect of the draft clause with a view to providing a response at the 21 March 2013 SBU meeting.

4. **Averaging of Hours**

   The Employee Representatives requested clarification as to whether the employer claim for averaging of hours for teachers still formed part of the Employer Negotiation Points. Employer Representatives confirmed the above item was formally withdrawn.

5. **Access to Long Service Leave**

   Following discussion, Employer Representatives confirmed the employee claim for access to long...
service leave accruals after 5 years of service with the employer was not accepted by Queensland Lutheran School employers as it is considered that the existing long service leave entitlements which apply under the terms of the Enterprise Agreement are appropriate and already more favourable than those which currently exist under State legislation. Further, Employer Representatives advised the employee claim for payment of long service accruals in circumstances of redundancy where the employee has completed less than 7 years service with the employer was also not accepted as it is considered current severance benefit entitlements under the Enterprise Agreement were appropriate in the unfortunate event that a redundancy is declared.

Employee representatives believed the claim relating to redundancy was a valid one and made such employees a cheaper target for the employer in cases of redundancy.

6. **Camps (School Officers and Teachers)**

Employer Representatives confirmed they intended to further consult with Queensland Lutheran School employers in respect of that part of the employee claim relating to directed attendance by teachers and school officers at school camps with a view to providing a further response to the 21 March 2013 SBU meeting.

7. **Salaries/Wages**

Employee Representatives expressed disappointment at the rejection by Queensland Lutheran School employers of the proposed employee wage restructure.

Employee Representatives confirmed that employees rejected the employer offer of a 3 year agreement in circumstances where a 2.2% wage increase was on offer in respect of the 2013 and 2014 years. Employee Representatives requested Queensland Lutheran School employers re-think the employer wages offer if they wish to maintain their request for a 3 year agreement.

Employer Representatives thanked the Employee Representatives for their response, and advised that Queensland Lutheran School Employers considered the offer made at the 19 February 2013 SBU meeting of 2.2% for the 2013 and 2014 years was appropriate and fair to Queensland Lutheran School employees when taken in the context of the 4% wage increase already paid to employees from 1 June 2012. Employer Representatives stated that, taking the 4% wage increase into account, this effectively amounted to a 2.8% per year increase to all Queensland Lutheran School employees over the 2012, 2013 and 2014 years.

However, Employer Representatives also acknowledged the comments made by the Employee Representatives in respect of the initial employer wages offer.

In the circumstances, Employer Representatives further advised that Queensland Lutheran School employers were in an intensive process of considering alternative ways in which key elements of the Employee Claim in respect of wages could be met whilst at the same time ensuring that Queensland Lutheran Schools remained affordable and accessible to the communities they serve. Employer Representatives stated the proposed wages restructure as originally tabled by the Employee Representatives would not meet these objectives and was not an affordable option for Queensland Lutheran School employers.

Employer Representatives confirmed that a revised employer wages offer was not able to yet be fully articulated, being dependant upon the outcome of further consultation with all Queensland Lutheran School employers at a meeting of Principals to be held on Friday, 15 March 2013 given the complexities raised during consultation with Queensland Lutheran School employers leading up to the 6 March SBU meeting. However, Employer Representatives confirmed that Queensland Lutheran School Employers were, in addition to the percentage based increases to wages tabled at the 19 February 2013 SBU meeting considering an alternative scenario including the following elements:
7.1 In addition to the offer of a 2.7% increase for the 2015 year, an agreement to match, on a dollar for dollar basis, the amount of the percentage based increase reached in the Queensland Government sector for the 2015 year if that percentage based increase results, in dollar terms, in teachers in the Queensland Government sector receiving more money than teachers in Queensland Lutheran Schools during the 2015 year.

7.2 The addition of a further $500 to the amount of the Leading Teacher 2 allowance in the 2014 year (in addition to the 2.2% increase), to bring that rate of pay up to a level to that which is comparable in the Queensland Catholic sector (i.e. $91,197 in the 2014 year);

7.3 Queensland Lutheran School employers are currently considering the structure of conditions surrounding the existing Leading Teacher 2 allowance, in particular:
   7.2.1 Eligibility for the allowance;
   7.2.2 Criteria to access the allowance;
   7.2.3 Cost considerations, including ongoing sustainability;
   7.2.4 Interaction with PAR arrangements;

7.4 Re-instatement of criteria to access the Leading Teacher One allowance from the 2015 year. Employer Representatives emphasised it was not proposed to implement criteria that would make the Leading Teacher One allowance difficult to access, but rather criteria would be directed towards promoting quality teaching and would include (amongst other elements) the development and implementation of an undertaking articulating a commitment to teacher excellence and leadership amongst classroom teachers, together with an action plan identifying indicative tasks associated with the undertaking.

By way of preliminary response, Employee Representatives expressed disappointment at what they considered to be a lack of progress on the part of the employer in respect of the issue of wages and reiterated that employees would not agree to a 3 year term for the next enterprise agreement unless there was a shift in the current employer position.

Employee representatives requested that the following be relayed to principals in LEQ Schools at their 15 March 2013 meeting:

- That employees reject the employer attempt to diminish the 4% wage increase in 2012 through the employer proposed increases of 2.2% in 2013 and 2014;
- That employees will not consider a three year Agreement under the current employer wage and conditions offer;
- That employees reject any further attempt by the Employer to diminish their conditions including the employer draft position seeking to reimpose application criteria to LT1 allowance which is currently an automatic step in the wage scale;
- That employee representatives can see no real benefit in the draft revised employer offer other than a catch up which is needed to LT2 (difficult to get) to bring the allowance into line with the Catholic Experienced Teacher 6 (easy to get); and
- That employees fail to see how principals in LEQ Schools cannot offer an increase which recognises the commitment and contribution of employees in LEQ Schools relative to their South Australian colleagues given comparable levels of Federal Government funding.

Employee Representatives requested that this expression of disappointment be relayed to the Principals in the strongest possible terms, together with the continuing request by the Employee Representatives for a shift in the employer position on wages at the meeting of Principals to be held on Friday, 15 March 2013.
8. **Next Meeting Date**

The next meeting of the Queensland Lutheran Schools Single Bargaining Unit will be held on Thursday, 21 March 2013 from 9.00 a.m. to 12.30 p.m.

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