SINGLE BARGAINING UNIT
QUEENSLAND LUTHERAN SCHOOLS

JOINT COMMUNIQUE

Issue No 2, 7 October 2012

SINGLE BARGAINING UNIT (SBU) MEETING

Dear Colleagues

The second meeting of the Queensland Lutheran Schools Single Bargaining Unit was held on Tuesday, 30 October 2012. 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. Single Interest Employer Authorisation

The current Single Interest Employer Authorisation (“Authorisation”) issued by Fair Work Australia enabling all 27 Queensland Lutheran Schools to bargain as one (1) group is due to expire on 9 January 2013.

Accordingly, the meeting agreed it is appropriate for Queensland Lutheran School employers to lodge an application with Fair Work Australia requesting the operation of the existing Authorisation be extended for a period of 12 months.

2. Salaries/ Wages

Employer Representatives acknowledged the claim in respect of salaries/ wages tabled by the Employee Representatives.

However, the Employer Representatives noted:

   2.1 In addition to the outcome of the Gonski federal review of funding remaining uncertain, during the past few weeks, the Queensland State Government has announced significant cuts to the funding of independent schools in Queensland. Queensland Lutheran School employers are currently in process of understanding what these cuts are, and what they mean for Queensland Lutheran Schools.

   2.2 Because the needs component of State Government funding has been targeted for reduction rather than the base rate, the amount of the cuts per student varies considerably from school to school – with the biggest losses coming from those schools which have the highest needs.

   2.3 In addition, it is understood that schools will not be receiving the normal annual indexation component to recognise the inflation of education costs, which adds to the reductions of funding received in real terms referred to above.
By way of response, the Employee Representatives indicated:

2.7 Given Queensland Lutheran Schools know what their funding will be for the 2013 year, and the environment of uncertainty around funding, the employee group would be prepared to consider an agreement of shorter duration (eg, another 1 year term);

2.8 It is understood there is a special needs component attached to Gonski, which could reduce reliance on State Government funding, however, it is acknowledged that the outcome of the federal review of funding as yet remains uncertain.

The Employer Representatives advised they were not in a position to respond further in respect of this issue pending completion of the processes outlined above. Once the impact of the State Government cuts on school budgets has been assessed and decisions made as to how that impact will be managed, schools will then need to turn their minds to possible scenarios in respect of increases to salaries/wages, whilst striving to keep Lutheran Schools accessible to families within a broad socio-economic range.

Employer Representatives confirmed they would provide an update on the position at the next meeting of the SBU.

3. **Matters remaining under discussion**

The following matters were also considered by the meeting, and remain under discussion:

3.1 Lunch Break;
3.2 Preparation and Correction Time;
3.3 Annual Review of Position Descriptions (School Officers);
3.4 Professional Development:
   3.4.1 Effective Use of Student Free Days
   3.4.2 Meeting Queensland College of Teachers (QCT) Re-Registration Requirement;
3.5 Behaviour Management Processes and Procedures;
3.6 Recognition of Higher Degrees;
3.7 State and National Representation.

4. **Report on Claim by Queensland Nurses Union**

The meeting noted Queensland Lutheran Schools and the Queensland Nurses Union are further consulting with affected Queensland Lutheran Schools with a view to progressing discussions with respect to matters raised in the Queensland Nurses Union claim.

5. **Next Meeting Dates**

The meeting noted the next meeting of the SBU is due to be held on Tuesday, 13 November 2012 at the offices of LEQ.

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Executive Director  
Lutheran Education Queensland

Chris Seymour  
IEUA-QNT Officer supporting the Employee Team at the SBU Negotiations