COVID-19: Joint letter to PM from AEU

AEU Federal President Correna Haythorpe and heads of the Australian Education Union branches nation-wide have signed a joint letter to Prime Minister Scott Morrison regarding COVID-19.

Click the image below to read the three page letter in full.

Australian Education Union

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19 March 2020

The Hon Scott Morrison MP
Prime Minister
PO Box 6022
House of Representatives
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600

Dear Prime Minister Morrison

RE: COVID-19

The Australian Education Union is gravely concerned about the ongoing impact of COVID-19 and the implementation of the decisions taken by the National Cabinet with respect to preschools, schools and TAFE.

We note that the National Cabinet has accepted the advice of the Australian Health Protection Principal Committee (AHPPC) that schools should remain open at this time, that pre-emptive closures are not proportionate or effective as a public health intervention at this time and that further restrictions on social gatherings are in place.

We note that the AHPPC has stated that school closures for shorter defined periods of time may be considered as part of a suite of more stringent distancing measures. Further, that schools should implement a range of other strategies to reduce transmission, including the promotion of personal hygiene measures, frequent handwashing, reducing face to face contact, cough etiquette, physical distancing, reducing public gatherings, reducing the mixing of students, staggered lunchtimes and reduced after school activities and interschool activities.

We wish to raise the following matters for the urgent consideration of the National Cabinet meeting on Friday 20th March 2020.

That:

- at all levels of government, Work, Health and Safety obligations to employees must be met
- identified risks and hazards must have the appropriate level of control to mitigate them
- the National Cabinet and health officials at both a national and state/territory level have provided insufficient information and assurance to teachers, support staff, educators, principals and the AEU about the implementation of COVID-19 decisions and indeed, the safety of workplaces for employees and students
- social distancing requires staff and students to keep a distance of 1.5 metres, a requirement which is practically impossible in the vast majority of public education settings across the nation

Click the image above to read the three page letter in full.

Authorised by Sally Dennis, General Secretary, The State School Teachers' Union of W.A.
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