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Queensland Teachers Strike Over Pay and Safety Concerns

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– Categories: Human Rights



Thousands of Queensland teachers walked off the job on August 6, 2025, in their first strike in 16 years, demanding better pay and safer classrooms as negotiations with the state government faltered.

On August 6, 2025, over 50,000 members of the Queensland Teachers' Union (QTU) staged a 24-hour strike, disrupting 1,266 state schools and affecting nearly 600,000 students. The action, the first since 2009, followed the collapse of enterprise bargaining talks with the Queensland government. Teachers rejected a proposed 8% pay rise over three years (3%,

2.5%, and 2.5%), arguing it fails to address chronic teacher shortages and escalating workplace safety issues. QTU President Cresta Richardson emphasized that the strike was about more than pay, stating it was a community issue to ensure qualified educators remain in schools. “The teacher shortage crisis is real and at breaking point,” she told 9News.

The strike saw rallies across 34 locations, including a march to state parliament in Brisbane, where teachers demanded action on occupational violence and overcrowded classrooms. Veteran teacher Danny Tattam, with over 20 years of experience, highlighted the toll of managing classes of 26–28 students with diverse needs and no adequate support, describing it as unsustainable, per ABC News. QTU General Secretary Kate Ruttiman noted that burnout and workplace aggression exacerbate staff losses, further straining the education system.

Education Minister John-Paul Langbroek defended the government’s position, noting 18 negotiation meetings over five months and expressing confidence in reaching a deal through conciliation at the Queensland Industrial Relations Commission (QIRC). He stressed student safety as the top priority and urged parents to trust schools to manage disruptions. However, critics argue the government’s offer falls short of addressing systemic issues, with retired teacher Terry Evans calling it “ridiculous” in an AAP interview.

The Queensland Council of Unions urged parents to support the strike, framing it as a fight for education’s future. With conciliation scheduled, the standoff highlights tensions over balancing teacher welfare with fiscal restraint, leaving parents and students caught in the crossfire as schools navigate reduced services.