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Teachers Strike While NT Government Twiddles Its Thumbs

The Shadow Minister for Employment, Education and Training, Dr Richard Lim claims that the NT Labor Government’s rhetoric that it supports teachers and good education is founded on lies when it refuses to keep its pre-election commitment that it will make teachers the best paid in the country.

“As a fellow professional, I understand what Territory teachers are saying, that they are professionals who are dedicated to their work and students, and want the NT Government to recognise their commitment by keeping its pre-election promise to make them the best paid in the country,” Dr Lim said.

“The Chief Minister made the pre-election promise to teachers, and it is reasonable that teachers expect the Chief Minister to keep her word.

“Instead, we have the Chief Minister and her government breaking promise after promise and now breaking the promise to teachers.

“This week, we see the introduction of industrial action by teachers, standing down between 8.00 and 10.00am in rolling action across the Territory. This will impact on Alice Springs next Tuesday 15 March and on Tennant Creek on Wednesday 16 March.

“In the same way, over the last two weeks, nurses at the Alice Springs Hospital have taken industrial action to protest to the Government that they have been severely under-resourced. Royal Darwin Hospital nurses are exhausted, with ‘pandemonium’ reigning.

“We now see teachers taking industrial action to show that they have been severely under-resourced.

“The last thing we need is a full-blown teachers’ strike and it seems that will all occur over the next coming weeks,” Dr Lim said.

“As professionals, in health workers or teachers, we all, aspire to do the best we can for our patients or students. To do that we need to be adequately resourced.

“Salary erosion and staff attrition through difficulties in recruitment and retention will compound poor working conditions in the future. That is not a situation that any professional wants.
“As the salary gap increases between teachers in the Northern Territory and the rest of the country, the legacy left by the Labor Government will produce a situation where future government will find it very difficult to catch up.

“It will be a dastardly and cynical act if the government continues to refuse to seriously negotiate a mutually satisfactory outcome until the very eve of the Chief Minister announcing the election so as to get the problem off the election agenda.

“The Country Liberal Party’s policies for education are strong in its commitment to support teachers and to ensure that teachers are fostered to do what they do best, that is, teaching.” Dr Lim said.

Ends

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