

SUBMISSION RE WORKPLACE BULLYING

Workplace bullying in schools

The following two examples of workplace bullying occurred in a state school in Brisbane in 2012.

- 1) On day two of the beginning of the new school year, a mature-aged primary school teacher was asked by her new school principal about her intentions when she reached her next birthday. The teacher replied that she intended to continue teaching. Within two weeks and without any visit to the classroom to observe the teacher in action, the principal placed her on diminished work performance. Guidelines for doing so were not followed. Pressure continued to be placed on her throughout the first six months of the year until such time as the teacher resigned.

- 2) As the situation re the first teacher escalated, the principal turned her attention to a second teacher and started putting pressure on her. This included increasing playground duty which exceeded that given to other teachers, demanding that the teacher be case manager for students who were not her responsibility, changing her role, writing reports for areas covered by other specialists and calling impromptu meetings at short notice. After attending a couple of such meetings, the teacher declined to attend any more until such time as a union representative was present. The second teacher is a highly skilled professional who has worked in numerous roles at school, district and regional levels. She has excellent academic credentials, is a conscientious worker and regularly attends workshop voluntarily at her own cost in order to increase her knowledge and skills. She is currently on stress leave, unable to return to the classroom at her designated school.

– retired teacher (26/9/2012)