

School Xmas show 'grinches'

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EDUCATION REPORTER

UNION "grinches" are "stealing Christmas" from working parents by taking action resulting in end of year school concerts being held during the day, Treasurer Rob Lucas says.

Trinity Gardens School principal Marg Erwin has written to parents about events affected by teachers' actions to highlight workload issues as part of their industrial dispute with the State Government.



The concert will be at 10am on Tuesday, December 3.

Parents say it has previously been an early evening event. The letter says the school's Australian Education Union sub-branch decision to "restrict after-hours activities" also means discos have been "rescheduled to during the

day" on November 29. Camps will have "modified" staffing.

Mr Lucas, pictured, said it was "outrageous, mean-spirited behaviour from union bosses", but the union said it had made no direct suggestion to sub-branches to target school concerts.

"The union boss grinches within the AEU are trying to steal Christmas from working mums and dads," Mr Lucas said. "Children and their families ... have become collateral damage in the union's infatu-

ation with industrial action." Parent group SA Association of State School Organisations director David Knuckey said: "Parents who can't attend because of work will miss out and it is particularly sad for children who will look out into the audience and not see mum or dad."

A letter from the AEU Trinity Gardens sub-branch, handed to parents outside the school yesterday, said it was one of many schools where members were acting on union

advice to minimise tasks not related to teaching and learning. It described them as "extremely difficult decisions" and acknowledged the "inconvenience and disappointment ... for our whole community".

"We certainly are not working against you or your child through this action. We are, in fact, fighting for your children and their education," it said.

AEU state president Howard Spreadbury did not know how many concerts were affected as such decisions were left

to sub-branches. He said in some schools teachers had negotiated time off in lieu of evening concerts, such as by staff meetings being cancelled.

In other schools, parents had taken over running of concerts "years ago", he said. The range of actions teachers were planning was about "taking control of their workload" and demonstrating how much the Government relied on their "goodwill" for unpaid duties.

Trinity Gardens School was contacted for comment.

SIX-YEAR-OLD JAYDEN IS BOWLING THEM OVER

GORDON ARMSTRONG

HE'S just six but Jayden Green has already hit a (jack) high on the bowling green.

Last weekend, he made history as the youngest pennant player to represent Adelaide Bowling Club - and possibly the youngest in South Australia. The youngster lined up in the club's division five east team season opener.

"I had fun and it was exciting but I was a bit tired at the end," said Jayden, whose team was comfortably beaten by Walkerville. "I like to drive (attack the kitty) and I love getting touches (when the bowl touches the kitty)."

Jayden's parents are club and state bowlers Adrian and Katrina Green. Bowls SA has no restriction on age but his mum said Jayden would only fill in when the club needed him.

"Jayden just started following Adrian around on the greens and then he would just have a roll. That's when we saw some capabilities," she said.

Cooper Hocking, now 13, was just seven when he lined up for the Blues' Metro 5 Central team. After a break playing basketball, he is back.

"I think some people feel good ... because they think it will be easy," Cooper said. "But sometimes they get surprised."

Jayden already has a challenger to his record waiting in the wings - three-year-old brother Noah is also showing talent on the green.



ON A ROLL: Six-year-old bowler Jayden with his parents, Katrina and Adrian Green.

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