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School communities deserve support, not unnecessary public controversy

The Tasmanian Association of State School Organisations (TASSO) has raised concerns about the unintended consequences of the recent public debate surrounding Christmas celebrations in Tasmanian schools.

TASSO President Damien Rhind said public statements and political interventions can have far-reaching impacts on school communities, particularly when the full circumstances have not been established.

"When decisions are made or public statements issued without considering the bigger picture, it's often the people on the ground who are left dealing with the consequences," Mr Rhind said.

"School Association volunteers give their time to organise events that bring families together and strengthen school communities. They do this because they care about their schools and the children who attend them.

"These volunteers, along with educators, parents and students, should not find themselves caught up in a national controversy over an end-of-year celebration."

Mr Rhind said the situation also raised questions about where attention and resources were being directed.

"Tasmania's government education system faces significant challenges, including student wellbeing, educational outcomes and the resources available to schools. These are the issues that deserve our attention and action.

"School communities need to feel supported and valued, not scrutinised over decisions made with the intention of bringing people together."

Mr Rhind said the situation was a reminder of the responsibility that comes with public leadership. "Before making public statements, we need to establish the facts and consider the potential consequences for those involved.

"Good leadership means looking at the bigger picture and recognising that words and actions can have unintended impacts on the very communities we should be supporting."

TASSO has written to the Premier seeking an explanation of the basis for his intervention, what consultation occurred and whether consideration was given to the impact on the school community.

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