

Australian Principals Federation

President's Message—Julie Podbury



Authentic Leadership – central to successful schools and school systems

John Handley penned the following piece after attending the memorial service of Colin John Simpson; founding Principal of Richmond High School and formerly Principal of the Victorian College of the Arts Secondary School, and member of the APF Council.

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Central to the service were several instrumental and choral performances by students of the two schools. These performances were outstanding and made you feel proud to be part of our State Education system; and most certainly performances that were a true reflection of the school and system leadership of Colin John Simpson.

It was Philip Riley (Associate Professor at the ACU Institute for Positive Psychology & Education) who stated in his address to the APF Conference last year that Leadership is the most important determinant of student outcomes; and that **LEADERSHIP** is the most influential element to what **CULTURE** exists in a school.

Upon reflection there are some telling elements of Leadership that sit well for me, particularly in the context of educational settings like those of us engaged in leadership of state education in Victoria; leadership that needs to be common across central, regional and school level.

First and foremost is having a clear understanding and sense of your moral purpose, and being able to extend this to the development of a shared vision of leadership. Leadership that is steeped in your core values. Leadership that is ethical, authentic, relatable, and actioned through consistent behaviour. Leadership that is inclusive, empowering of others and one that inspires the pursuit of excellence – being your best. Leadership that is understanding of the context and challenges of others, that is empathic, and based on a high degree of reciprocity of support and expectation. Leadership that connects with our students and our communities. And in the context of system and school culture it is where behaviour and practices are lived out to exemplify the desired intent of identifying such Vision and Values.

Such Leadership cannot be incidental, and nor can it be transient. It must be embedded in every element of school and system life, and it's highly visible at every level of the organisation. And most importantly it reflects a model of personal behaviour such as - ***“Underpinning any desire to be a high performing school, or school system, is the quality of human interaction – the quality of personal and professional relationships”.***

If we see ourselves or aspire to be outstanding in our Principalship or system leadership, we have a responsibility to ensure the collective effort of our School Leaders and teachers is to maximise learning outcomes for all students and for us to be Modellers, Influencers, Coaches and Leaders in this process.

Colin John Simpson R.I.P.



In this issue:

This is a jam packed issue: I had intended to get the 2019 conference report to you in this issue. I will attempt to report in the next issue.

Page 2 has information on 2020 [Navigating Conflict Courses](#), which are highly rated.

An overload can lead to missing important information. **VSBA** information on [Essential Safety Measures](#) and the required Annual Report is included for your convenience.

[A notice to you all from Prof. Phil Riley is on P3. Please read!](#)

John Handley's stakeholder report from the [Initial Teacher Education Group](#) highlights some important facts on P4

In a blast from the past, **Graeme Seamer**, reports on [Casey Tech](#): What he discovered that we might like to know.

Finally, on P6 **Mark McKelson**, delivers another insightful Blog 14 on [Interviews](#)

Navigating Conflict Course

The APF is a Stakeholder with the DET, Complaints Management Reference Group. Under the auspices of the CMRG The School Operations and Statewide Services Division have partnered with the Dispute Settlement Centre of Victoria (DSCV) to deliver conflict resolution training specifically relating to conflict in school settings. DSCV delivered 3 pilot courses in October 2019 and the feedback has been overwhelmingly positive.

The Navigating Conflict course is a one day workshop to equip staff with the practical tools and strategies to better understand and respond to conflict, including dealing with difficult behaviours, with the target audience of school staff. Eight courses have been scheduled for terms one and two in 2020 and will be delivered at the DSCV city office. Training is charged at \$176.34 per person and cancellations within 48 hours will be charged.

Training will be advertised in the School Update and a course flyer is attached to this newsletter. School staff can register via the Eventbrite link: <https://www.eventbrite.com.au/e/navigate-for-school-staff-one-day-tickets-75625179949>. Please note this link will only take you to the registration page when opened in **Google Chrome**. If opened in Internet Explorer school staff will not be able to register.

Too much information can lead to an overload

There is so much information that flows to you as a member of the Principal Class, and so many multi-faceted expectations, there is a chance that you might miss things. This is not incompetence or an inability to do the job; this is overload. Some cope by pushing themselves to extremes and can burn out, others cope by simply not taking it all in. To support our members we will from time to time publish DET information as a reminder of some of these endless tasks. One such task follows. If you are all over it, then skip to the next item; if not read and try to absorb. This information was kindly provided by the VSBA for our newsletter.

The inspection of **Essential Safety Measures (ESM)** and the completion of an **Annual ESM Report** is a legislative requirement for schools under the Building Act 1993. As such, this is something that schools have been required to complete for some time.

The VSBA understands that school principals have a lot of demands on their time, and as such has recently enhanced the support mechanisms it has in place to assist principals in becoming aware and familiar with their obligations under the Building Act 1993, as it relates to ESM.

In 2018, the VSBA undertook a once-off State-wide ESM assessment to ensure all Victorian government schools were equipped with an up-to-date ESM maintenance schedule. This maintenance schedule itemises all ESM on the school site and lists the frequency each item must be scheduled for inspection and testing.

Earlier this year, the VSBA released the ESM Framework to provide guidance to schools about their ESM-related obligations under the Building Act 1993, including inspection, testing, maintenance and record keeping at school sites. This was included in a School Update mail out to all schools. The ESM Framework includes information on the development of the Annual ESM Report and the submission of this report to the VSBA. **Under legislation, the Annual Report has to be prepared by a building surveyor.**

To support schools to undertake their ESM maintenance and prepare their annual ESM report, the VSBA has established a panel of four building surveying companies to provide ESM services and technical advice to Victorian government schools. The VSBA has pre-approved these providers to ensure that they meet the standards required for this work. Schools may access a provider from this panel, or choose their own provider.

In addition, the VSBA has appointed a full-time ESM Coordinator who provides advice and support to schools so they can understand and fulfil their ESM obligations. You will also note that, as part of the \$515 million Maintenance Blitz funding announcement, every school received additional funding allocations through the ESM budget line of their Student Resource Package to support them to acquit their ESM obligations.

The VSBA is committed to continuing to support schools in this space, and welcomes any other feedback that can help us further enhance these support mechanisms.

Any queries regarding ESM, please contact the ESM Coordinator on 8688 7836 or via email at (Cont on P3)



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Tooronga Village,
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NOTE: Monday, Thursday & Friday are my APF working days. If you need assistance on Tuesday and Wednesday, text Julie or Mark directly please.



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Join the APF

www.apf.net.au

Forms can be
completed on line.



join

essential.safety.measures@edumail.vic.gov.au

Important links below,

ESM Framework: [ESM Framework](#)

EduGate site: [EduGate: Facilities - safety and compliance](#) (ESM is about half way down the page.)



Victorian Auditor General's Office would like to get your feedback about the Student Resource Package (SRP) (The APF thinks this is a good idea, and would warmly welcome a comparative survey about Government money spent in private schools)

Enter the following password to access the survey: principal

The Victorian Auditor-General's Office (VAGO) is asking all school principals and acting principals to complete this survey to support our performance audit, Management of the Student Resource Package (SRP).

We want to determine whether the Department of Education and Training (DET) allocates funding to Victorian government schools in a fair, consistent and transparent manner.

We greatly appreciate your input to our survey. It should take approximately 10-15 minutes to complete. You may save and return to your responses at any time.

Please note that this survey will close at midnight on 6 December

[Click here to take the survey](#)

What we will do with your feedback

We will keep your response confidential and secure.

VAGO is committed to protecting your privacy and we take our information security responsibilities very seriously. If you have any questions or concerns about the survey, please contact the audit team at VAGO_MSRRP20@audit.vic.gov.au



Notice from Phil Riley

Following our previous communication from **Prof Phil Riley** about a new project he is about to commence with **A/Prof Phil Atkins** re work they are both doing in H&WB....with the understanding of how busy Principals are in T4, **they have determined not to proceed with the event we had promoted**

in the last newsletter (160, 6th November). However, the proposed 2020 program will be really useful for all principal class members and feedback is still needed. **So, while the event for this year is cancelled, should you wish to express your interest in the concept or give feedback: Register at the link below, or call 0412 922 482, someone will be available to speak or get in touch to discuss the program. All interest welcome. The relevant brochure was sent with the last newsletter.**

<https://www.eventbrite.com.au/e/using-coaching-circles-to-enhance-school-leader-wellbeing-and-performance-tickets-79476415097>

“Interrupting negative mindsets and practices is challenging work for leaders, requiring an orientation to vision – a leadership stance in which we define, coach toward, and message a vivid picture of success. Principals should over-communicate their vision – in meetings, agendas, posters, and feedback to teachers on classroom observations. Much of our work toward educational equity focuses on the problems we need to solve: institutional racism, sexism, exclusion, bias. While we must develop a robust analysis of our equity challenges, the warm demander framework offers us a path forward rooted in hope and possibility.”

Quoted
from Hippocampus,
an email publication of
Principal's Digest

PAYING ATTENTION TO PRAISE

Research shows that meaningful praise can measurably boost motivation and performance and can improve your brain's ability to remember and repeat new skills.

But there's a strong tendency for people to dwell on mistakes and failures and downplay compliments.

Compounding the hard-wired tendency to look for problems, is social pressure not to seem like a braggart – which leads people to not fully own their skills and talents. Compliments can be a rich source of feedback and affirmation.

Acknowledge praise by saying, “Thank you, I'm glad you said that”. Whether or not we receive praise from others, it's also helpful to compliment yourself by jotting down a list of accomplishments every day. This helps with self-efficacy, and also prepares us for professional situations where we're asked to list our strengths and might otherwise come up blank.

“The Importance of Accepting Praise” by Micaela Marini Higgs in *The New York Times*, December 10, 2018

Quoted
from Hippocampus,
an email publication of
Principal's Digest

"Becoming a Warm Demander" by Shane Safir in *Educational Leadership*, March 2019

Initial Teacher Education (ITE) Stakeholder Reference Group November

Report—John Handley, APF Advisor



The landscape is becoming increasingly challenging in this domain. Over the past year or two there has been significant interest as to what are our most important needs going forward.

As most would be aware, the University providers report to the Federal Minister as that government is the major source of funds. At state and federal levels there has been discussion on how best to improve student outcomes in schools, and this is translated into decisions and/or recommendations about entry levels and expectations on students in ITE programs, as well as providers, VIT, AITSL, DET and schools.

Changes in expectation have included increased ATAR scores, literacy and numeracy testing and, in Victoria, the use of the Victorian Selection Framework (VSF) that endeavours to assess both academic and personal attributes of candidates. Whilst it's early days, there has actually been a decrease in candidates of around 15%.

For schools the challenges are on at least two fronts. Firstly, how best should schools manage the teacher supervision of students in training, and then the support and mentoring of graduates. Secondly, how can schools continue to recruit suitable teachers into their workforce at a time of increasing school and early childhood enrolments across the state, and the reality of significant retirement numbers of teachers over these next few years.

The teacher supervision/mentoring challenges are more complex than at first glance. With expectations on our University providers to provide evidence of quality and comparable program structure and practices, and the introduction of a somewhat common, but still variable, Teacher Performance Assessment tool, there is increasing pressure on schools to be able to cope with an intended greater rigour in their support and assessment of teachers in training. And all of this with a back drop of schools and their teachers showing higher and higher levels of stress in meeting the conflicting demands of schooling today.

The problems are exacerbated in rural and regional areas where university providers are facing the challenges of sustainability of their programs, school size and resultant teacher numbers present challenges in the range and suitability of mentors and teacher in training supervisors, and the capacity to establish successful partnerships are diminished.

Over recent years, School – University partnerships have been established under the funded auspice of DET. There are currently 10 Teaching Academies of Professional Practice (TAPPs) funded through to 2021 involving six universities and 146 schools. They include ACU and schools in North West Melbourne, Deakin Uni and schools across Melbourne, Geelong and Warrnambool, Latrobe Uni and schools around Bendigo, Monash Uni and schools on the Bass Coast and South East Melbourne, RMIT Uni and schools in Northern Melbourne, and finally Uni of Melbourne with schools across Melbourne and the North East.

Benefits of the program not only include better outcomes for the pre-service teachers through immersive placement experiences, but opportunities for improved relationships, greater access to research and professional learning for teachers and school leaders. Whilst a one size fits all model rarely works, at a time whereby there is an increasing sense of concern about standards and sustainability, it's gratifying to hear of such a successful program that's funded by DET.

That said, the elephant in the room for school and early childhood education across the nation is how we can continue to match increasing demand for teachers with expectations of higher quality candidates for Initial Teacher Education programs.



Support for members

We are here to support and offer advice to all members at any time.

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Ring us direct



Mark Arkinstall
APF Industrial Officer

"The greatest sign of success for a teacher is to be able to say, 'The children are now working as if I didn't exist'."

Maria Montessori

Quote
from Hippocampus,
an email publication of
Principal's Digest

DON'T STOP THE LEARNING AT SCHOOL, TAKE THE MAGIC HOME TODAY AND TRY SUPERLOOP HOME BROADBAND NBN FOR FREE.

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APF-2019

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Visit to Casey Tech School : Graeme Seamer

(APF Comment: Graeme is a former APF member, Principal, Senior Education Officer and school reviewer among other things. A recent discussion with him revealed his delight with the work in our new Tech Schools. He prepared this report on his visit for the APF)



On 14 October, 2019, I was privileged to visit Casey Tech School, situated within the grounds of key partner, the Chisholm Institute. The visit was hosted by Ben Jenkinson, Casey Tech School Director (pictured)

Board membership includes representatives from DET Region, the Chisholm Institute, City of Casey, local industry, the LLEN, and 3 representative principals (2 government schools and 1 non government).

Staff – around 9 full-time and some casual, most with acknowledged school based and industry experience. The school is a centre for education provision but does not enrol students in the traditional sense. Casey Tech works within a zone. Education provision is for groups of students who visit with teachers from their own base school. There are 22 partner secondary schools, both government and non government. There are around 23,000 student enrolled across the partner schools.

There is a 20 year funding model in place – it connects Government, the Chisholm Institute, local industry partners and the secondary colleges.

Funding covers facilities, equipment, staffing and transport of students and staff between schools.

Courses / services to students and/or teachers occurs for groups. It is common for students to attend for 3 sequential days in order to complete a project.

Programs offered include a teacher training element for the local teachers. There is a co-design of curriculum element with these teachers to help them with their ‘tech’ oriented work in their schools. This supports the vision that the visit is far more than an excursion.

There has been an emphasis on Enterprise and Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Mathematics – STEAM. Actual activities would reflect the maturity / year level of the participants. For example, explicit STEM-skill based programs for younger folk.

The learning focus is closely aligned with modern industry, with particular reference to the local area. For example, employment in advanced skills engineering, manufacturing, bio-medical, and ‘Smart Cities’. Vision and problem solving is central to the learning activities.

The highest participation proportions of approximately 4000 student participants in terms 1, 2 and 3 2019 have come from Year 9 or Year 10, combining to be perhaps 50% of the total. Around 350 teachers had been involved over that period. A ‘full house’ on any one day would be around 120 students.

Other centres include Monash, Morwell, Lilydale, Bendigo, Ballarat, Geelong, Wyndham, Whittlesea, and Banyule, each with an industry charter. It is apparent the Director’s vision is critical to the success of the venture.

The name ‘Tech School’ seems to be a throwback to the previously positive emotions around the former Technical Schools, however, the variety of modern ‘hi-tech’ equipment accessible on site to the students and teachers whilst engaged at this Casey school is impressive. Students and teachers who gain access are indeed privileged.

Background to the visit

The visit to Casey Tech School was related to research associated with the interest of the Association of Retired Principals of Technical Institutions (ARPTI) in the current [Review Report: ‘One Teaching Profession: Teacher Registration in Australia’, 2018](#). The ARPTI contributed to the Review and the recommendations are currently with the National Education Council. ARPTI concerns relate mainly to the demonstrated current shortage of trained secondary school teachers in the practical studies areas.

With thanks to Ben Jenkinson

Graeme Seamer President, ARPTI

A brochure is attached with this newsletter.



Role of the APF:

Industrial Relations 101

At the APF consistent with industrial relations ‘101’ we are concerned with matters such as your salaries, classification, entitlements, protections, contracts of employment and amongst other matters, the manner in which you are assessed and the consequences thereof.

Further, your access to industrial and/or legal advice, advocacy and support in relation to matters of discipline, conflict resolution, conflict of interest, complaints and/ or performance.

Role of the APF:

Industrial Relations 102

Industrial matters arising from the management and implementation of one’s professional role. Specifically as a function of the Principal Class Employee interpreting and performing their accountabilities and obligations as defined by their contract of employment; the operation of industrial agreements, Ministerial Orders and the changing compliance environment determined by legislation, regulations and policy.

The industrial organisation for the Principal Class

101 Things you need to know about being a principal, Mark McKelson



Blog 14—Interviews.

What are we looking for? What are you trying to say? If you're reading this you have most likely had lots of experience on both sides of the panel. Like most of you, I've sat through a number of panels this term. What's struck me is I seem to be looking for the same thing whether it's a graduate or principal class position. Of course the depth and detail you expect changes, but the key points remain the same.

When giving feedback the other day, I found myself drawing the model below to explain the gaps in the interview. When I reflected on the conversation, I realised that I was looking for this in all interviews. There is nothing ground-breaking about the data cycle here, it's the inability of interviewees to talk to it that's frustrating me.

Let's look at a couple of examples.

No 1. Principal Class Interview - You are given some school level data and asked how you would drive improvement in the school. You need a model to disseminate your thinking. Whether it's the PLC Inquiry Cycle, PDSA or the model above you need to start and end with the data. If you don't have the model to drive your presentation you risk over talking and the message gets lost. Start with your data analysis and how that links to the curriculum. Talk about how you lead teachers in the conversation and use the data and curriculum to challenge their thinking and get them on the same page. From there you can set common goals and develop your instructional model for improvement. You must and I repeat must talk about how you collected evidence to see the progress the teachers and students made and the cycle starts again. You might not always make the progress you hoped you would and that's ok.

No 2. Classroom Teacher Interview - You ask a question about running an effective reading or maths program. I have found this model really helpful in ticking off in my mind that the applicant has the full picture. Often teachers miss the link between data and curriculum. I want to see they understand the data and look to the curriculum for the next steps in learning. Often they will go straight to strategies like reading conferences, guided reading or the Daily 5 but miss this important step. Teachers seem to be getting better at talking about data to start the unit, but often miss important points about differentiation, growth and reflection.

As an interesting side note, a couple of years ago we added demonstration lessons into our graduate interviews. It was a process I'd seen used in Malaysia and wanted to try it here. We found that some graduates talked the talk but couldn't walk the walk. So, we had the shortlisted applicants come in and teach a 20 minute maths game to different classes. If we were satisfied with their teaching, we would follow up with some further interview questions. This certainly helps us identify who could relate well with children.

I've also heard of a school using a speed dating technique to sort through the hundred or so graduate applications they received. They invited applicants in for 5 minute 'chats' and then decided if the applicant was suitable for further interviews.

It can be quite a laborious task at times and I'm always looking for alternate means to decide the best applicant for the position. I hope you are all having a successful recruiting season and get the best teachers in front of our students for the 2020 school year.

APF Member, Mark McKelson, has been a member of the principal class at a number of schools across Victoria. He is currently based at Camberwell South PS. He is writing these "blogs" based on his experiences, in support of new or acting principal members of the APF, and has endless topics that he will write about which will appear in future issues of the Vic Branch, APF Newsletter.



DECLUTTER YOUR LIFE & YOUR WORKSPACE

According to Shannan Kennedy & Lyndall Mitchell in *Chaos to Calm*, clutter creates stress.

Clean and open spaces give your body and mind room to breathe. They say that you might not realise that your physical surroundings can significantly affect your attitude and happiness.

Your space says a lot about your confidence:

They suggest that the following symptoms mean you need to tackle this issue:

1. You lose things
2. You waste time searching for things
3. You feel overwhelmed by having too much to do
4. You cannot prioritise efficiently and get easily distracted.

If you take the time to address this issue, they promise the reward is worth the effort. Use the four E's to do the task in deciding how to sort your stuff.

Examine, Evaluate, Eliminate and then Enhance your workspace. Set up systems and use the one touch policy (If you touch it, decide what to do with it...don't just move it.)

The industrial organisation for the Principal Class