

# Australian Principals Federation

## President's Message—Julie Podbury

### Regional Forums



It was lovely to meet so many members at the NE Regional forum. I know your names and have spoken to you on the phone, but for many members, we are yet to meet. However with over 700 people at this particular event on 19th & 20th June, I did not meet as many members as I would have liked.

I received mixed feedback, but in my view it was a quality program, with considerable, valuable learning available. Without doubt the Education State is obliged to lead events like this to demonstrate exactly what it is they are seeking from

school leaders in fine detail. I believe this event answered that call in a clear and practical manner. The drawback was many were distracted by the huge workload they have to complete by the end of term and semester, challenging school issues or Statutory Declaration audits that were consuming them. After the 'Welcome to Country', there could have been a small ceremony called 'Focus on This' to disconnect from school and any ill-feeling for two days, to maximise the benefit of what was on offer.

Educational leadership is our bread and butter and is where we would all prefer to be spending the bulk of our time. I think it is critical for the DET to hold an event like this annually. In the future it could be one day not two, be planned to be closer to the start rather than the end of a term, Assistant Principals attending and no charge being made except for the dinner. Best practice should be highlighted and celebrated from across the state. While attendance in person would be strongly encouraged, there should be an opportunity for those with huge distances to travel, to attend remotely in smaller groups.

**In this newsletter:** In the last newsletter for the term, we bring you another excellent article from John Handley, that addresses the issue of a relationship breakdown in the Principal Class. The Conflict of Interest Declaration season is with us, there is a reminder with some examples to help you get this right. We include another reminder to arrange your registration for the Annual Dinner.

Click on the link to the page where the information appears:

- ◇ [Annual Dinner and AGM](#) information & registration
- ◇ [The Potential for Principal Team Relationship Breakdowns](#), John Handley
- ◇ [Membership information](#), Angela Stefani
- ◇ [Member feedback](#) re Martyrdom
- ◇ [Restraint & Seclusion: The latest Information](#)
- ◇ [Working With Children's Check, a point of clarification](#)
- ◇ [CyberSafety Scam Alert, David Sparksman](#)
- ◇ [Deconstructing Emotional Intelligence](#), David Goleman
- ◇ [Coaching, Mentoring & Support for Principals](#)



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## Annual APF Dinner & AGM

Thursday 19th

October

Melbourne Pullman

Albert Park

## Register now!

Arrange a table with  
your friends & col-  
leagues

See page 4 for more infor-  
mation and link to regis-  
tration.



Prof Bill Lucas, Sen  
Simon Birmingham,  
Julie Podbury, James  
Merlino and Ron  
Bamford at 2016  
dinner

# The industrial organisation for the Principal Class

## ***The Potential for Principal Team Relationship Breakdowns, John Handley***



Our first two articles in the Principal and Leadership series focussed on developing high performing Principal and Leadership Teams.

Central to the advice was to recognise the importance of committing to a Model of Personal Behaviour - ***Underpinning any desire to be a high performing school is the quality of human interaction – the quality of personal and professional relationships***, and, consequently, to ensure team members could agree upon the key values and related expectations of behaviour for each of you.

Unfortunately, for a range of reasons, there can be breakdowns of relationships between a Principal and his/her Assistant Principal(s) that impact on the quality and effectiveness of School Leadership. This is more common upon the external appointment of a Principal to a school, and may be more prevalent in cases where internal Assistant Principals have been contenders for the Principalship.

In this article, I will attempt to explore the problem from the perspective of both parties.

An underlying assumption is that any Principal will be striving to affect a level of change in the school necessary to maximise student outcomes and to develop and sustain a healthy, aspirational culture amongst students, parents and staff. Clearly the individual context of each school will inform the thoughts and actions required.

At a time quite early in their tenure at a school, it is important each Principal articulates their vision of the school that captures the essence of the school they wish it to be; remembering the Principal was appointed because the selection panel, including the President of School Council, saw them as the “person” to lead the school forward. This vision should be aspirational, it needn’t be critical or judgemental of the current situation in your school (it’s especially wise not to explicitly!) and it should reflect what the Principal stands for.

Assuming the intention of each Principal is to build a highly effective Principal and Leadership Team (I can’t imagine why this wouldn’t be the case for all schools), it would be my advice to any newly appointed Principal to share this vision and their vision for leadership, including its basis or rationale, with the Assistant Principal(s) in the first instance.



What a powerful and potentially empowering way to start your leadership journey! It allows you to articulate your thinking, share your reasoning, and provide an opportunity for your Principal Team peers to question, to clarify, to affirm or even push back. At the very least you begin by being open and inclusive; and it’s highly respectful.

In the circumstance whereby your peers have provided thoughts contrary to your thinking, it’s important for you to reflect on their feedback, and subsequently, respectfully respond – this may not be during the initial discussion. Again, it helps demonstrate the personal behaviour you hope to permeate through your school.

From here it’s important to establish regular meetings and informal catch ups with them so as to maintain open dialogue - ensuring two-way communication and establish clarity of purpose for the work of school leadership. And it provides the Principal Team every opportunity to contribute to the work and share concerns about the how, what and why of this work.

If professional and personal integrity mean anything, it’s during this initial period that both Principal and Assistant Principal(s) should “park” any “resentment or animosity” regarding the appointment and subsequent direction being taken. It should be about embracing the potential opportunities for school improvement and building and sustaining a positive, inclusive culture.

In circumstances, whereby this resentment is a reality - when it hasn’t been “parked”, there is little choice than to confront it. Respectfully and openly talk about it. Develop an understanding of each other, work through how best you might progress your relationships and clarify roles and expectations. This requires mutual respect and tolerance. And it provides a platform for future interactions.

Starting any Principalship in the position of yearning for “your own team” and planning from the outset to manipulate circumstances to get it, is not acting with integrity, and is downright unprofessional. We are in a state system. Our colleagues are ongoing employees and have earned tenure of employment in their current roles.



***Underpinning any desire to be a high performing school is the quality of human Interaction – the quality of personal and professional relationships, it is incumbent on us all in our quest for the best outcomes for our students to***

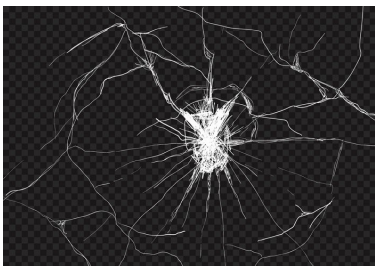
***“put the interests of our students first and foremost”.***

John Handley

## **The industrial organisation for the Principal Class**

It is critical that your Assistant(s) are given every opportunity to adjust to your approach and your expectations. Don't pre-empt future actions. Plan to support and develop your colleagues. Be encouraging, inclusive, and identify opportunities for them to achieve successes. And most importantly ensure the entire Leadership Team is engaged and empowered in shaping the school's improvement journey. Don't let it become a time for isolation for you or your peers. And stay true to the values of respect, trust and integrity, regardless of the circumstance.

Equally, any disaffected Assistant Principal has no right to undermine the leadership of a newly appointed Principal. Personal and professional ethics must inform our behaviour. For the Assistant Principal(s), it is firstly important to understand any new Principal may have different ideas and approaches to you. And being resentful rather than disappointed with their appointment doesn't help anybody. Disappointment is natural, resentment is selfish, and can only end 'in tears'. Hence, if you can't manage your emotions or can't accept the direction and manner of this new leadership, at least be honest enough to respectfully state your case. But be clear that ultimately, your Principal has the authority to lead the school.



The facts are that anytime the relationships within a School Principal Team are fractured or dysfunctional, the school is greatly impacted and the likelihood of sustained high performance and positive school culture is negligible.

So what are our options? Clearly the preferred option is to collaborate to build a powerful and empowered school leadership team; with all embracing a set of agreed values and behaviour expected of such a team. Alternatively, it might be that support is given to Assistant Principals in

their voluntary quest for promotion or transfer to another school.

Or at its most unsatisfactory, a disappointing reality may be that some of your team, regardless of support, coaching, and encouragement, may not have sufficient capacity to deliver on the agreed expectations of either behaviour and/or roles. And through a balanced and respectful use of our well documented Departmental processes for both Performance and Development, and complementary Managing Unsatisfactory Performance, it may be necessary for personnel changes.

Suffice to say, should we return to the initial model of behaviour - ***Underpinning any desire to be a high performing school is the quality of human interaction – the quality of personal and professional relationships***, it is incumbent on us all in our quest for the best outcomes for our students to ***“put the interests of our students first and foremost”***.

## Declaration of Private Interest

It is that time of the year when the Department is collecting the Declarations of Private Interests from all **relevant officers** in compliance with the Public Administration Act 2004 and the Code of Conduct for public sector employees which require all public sector employees and other public officials to avoid any **actual, potential or perceived conflicts of interest**.

**All school Principals, substantive or acting are considered as relevant officers for the purpose of the annual collection.** This practice is also consistent with Clause 3(3)(b) of the principal class contract of employment which states that a principal class employee ‘...complete a declaration of pecuniary interest in the form required by the Employer...’.

A circular was to be forwarded to all principals Tuesday, 20 June 2017 requesting that a declaration of private interests be completed.

**To best protect yourself it is VITAL that you declare any matter in which it may be said that you or a family member can unfairly gain or benefit.**

**Examples of Col for Principals:** A family member has applied for a job at the school or seeks CRT work there; A family member already works at the school; Your child attends the school; You are in a relationship with another staff member; You are in a relationship with a parent; The school wishes to purchase something or use the service of a company owned by a family member or close associate; You wish to write a textbook; You have been offered part-time work for an education consultancy; You wish to engage a contractor who regularly does work for the school to do some work for you in a private capacity; You own shares in a company that has a significant contract with the Department. (Examples from the DET Conflict of Interest Toolkit)



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Mark Arkinstall  
APF Industrial Officer  
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If you become aware of a colleague who is not coping or who needs help, please contact the APF without delay.

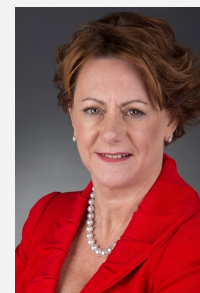
We are here to support and offer advice to all members at any time.

**Julie - 0419 103 664**

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Julie Podbury  
APF President  
Vic Branch

# The industrial organisation for the Principal Class

**Member Feedback - Martyrdom, Issue no.105**

Re: Martyrdom article – have just spent an hour trying to unblock toilets in BER building!  
Still blocked!



Hi All, I'm not sure how this fits into the DET survey or if it is ever recognised in my Schedule B List of delegated duties....

But.... the fact is ... this is how I spent my Saturday afternoon....hmmmmmm....



Digging out an over-weight rubbish hopper!



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One of our members has now recruited 5 new members, because she is so thrilled with the support she received from the APF.

**Thank you!!!**



Angela Stefani  
APF Executive  
Officer

[astefani@apf.net.au](mailto:astefani@apf.net.au)

## Annual APF Dinner and AGM

Thursday 19th October 2017

Pullman Melbourne Albert Park

65 Queens Road Melbourne

6.30 - 9.30pm

**Guest speaker, Lachlan Bunn, CEO of Antipodeans.**

He is offering an incredible prize to a member.

**Members \$125, Non-members \$150**



### Discount Accommodation

Accor will offer special room rates inclusive of breakfast and complementary Wifi. Reference 'Australian Principals Federation' when making the reservation.

Link to Registration: <http://apf.net.au/apf-agm-2017/>

Join the APF

[www.apf.net.au](http://www.apf.net.au)

Forms can be completed on line.



join

# The industrial organisation for the Principal Class



## The Use of Restraint & Seclusion



The Department of Education and Training, in collaboration with stakeholders, has released the reviewed *Guidance, Procedures and Resources* to support schools to reduce and eliminate the use of restraint and seclusion. This includes the new ' *Principles for the reduction and elimination of restraint and seclusion in Victorian government schools* ' .

Preventing and responding to behaviours of concern in our schools is a critical and sensitive subject matter, which is understandably distressing for school staff, students and their families. These documents clearly demonstrate the Department's commitment to reduce and eliminate the use of restraint and seclusion in all Victorian government schools.

The revised version of the document previously *Guidance for Responding to Violent and Dangerous Student Behaviours of Concern* , is now titled *Policy Guidance, Procedures and Resources for the Reduction and Elimination of Restraint and Seclusion in Victorian Government Schools (Guidance, Procedures and Resources)*.

Key changes include:

- Greater emphasis on and reference to the Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities
- Links to new documents such as the Child Safe Standards resources
- The inclusion of 15 *Principles*, initially developed by the U.S Department of Education and adapted for use in Victoria
- Clearer definitions for restraint and the use of the Australian Psychological Society definition of seclusion, raising the threshold for its use
- Removal of language such as 'violent and dangerous'.

The new *Principles* document provides detailed explanations of the 15 *Principles* to support school staff manage behaviour that poses a risk to the safety of others. Dr Frank Lambrick, Senior Practitioner – Disability, DHHS has endorsed this document.

These resources take important steps to support schools across Victoria to ensure that the human rights of every young Victorian are respected.

These resources are complimented by the broader suite of professional development opportunities that are already in place to support schools to promote positive behaviour and respond to behaviours of concern.

Mandy Donley, Principal Practice Leader (Education), will continue to work with schools to ensure that physical restraint and seclusion are only used when it is immediately required to protect the safety of a student or any other person.

The revised *Guidance, Procedures and Resources* and the new *Principles* document will be available online, and sits within the broader Student Engagement and Inclusion Guidance.

For further information visit:

<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/participation/Pages/behaviourofconcern.aspx>

### DECONSTRUCTING EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE

Emotional intelligence, a different way of being smart, is a key to high performance at all levels, particularly for outstanding leadership. Emotional intelligence (EI) is the capacity to recognise our own feelings and those of others, and to manage emotions effectively in ourselves and our relationships.

#### Components of EI

##### Emotional self-awareness:

The ability to understand our own emotions and their effects on our performance

##### Self-management:

- Emotional self-control – The ability to keep disruptive emotions in check and maintain our effectiveness under stressful or hostile conditions.
- Achievement orientation – Striving to meet a standard of excellence; looking for ways to do things better, and set challenging goals.
- Positive outlook – The ability to see the good in people, situations, and events, and persistence in pursuing goals despite obstacles and setbacks.
- Adaptability – Flexibility in handling change, juggling multiple demands, and modifying ideas when needed.

Cont. in next column

*The Ordinary School Leader Tells;*

*The Good School Leader Explains;*

*The Great School Leader Role Models;*

*The Sensational School Leader Inspires....*

## The industrial organisation for the Principal Class



**Working With Children’s Check— Clarification for a member**

One of our members was confused by the complexity of the changes made to the WWCC, which are active as of 1st August 2017. The Legal Unit was kind enough to provide clarification.

Do the amendments impact on “Open Days” or community events?

The amendments also do not require people within the community who have been invited to ‘open days’ or ‘welcome days’ as visitors of the school to have WWCC Checks. This is because people within the community who have been invited to ‘open days’ or ‘welcome days’ are unlikely to be regarded as engaging in “child-related work”. WWCC Checks are only legally required for visitors who engage in child-related work, which requires that the work involves direct contact with a child and is a part of the visitor’s duties. Therefore, most visitors will generally not require a WWCC Check.

However, it is always incumbent on a school as part of their general duty of care to have considered any risks to children from events like ‘open days’ and to put in place risk prevention and risk reduction strategies. Schools should continue to ensure that reasonable steps are taken to minimise the risks of reasonably foreseeable harm to students, and what will be reasonable will depend on the circumstances of the case. If you would like further guidance on this please consult the Department’s Legal Division.

The amendments do require that volunteers are required to hold a WWCC Check unless they have a relevant exemption (e.g. teachers, parents, police officers). For more guidance on what exemptions apply click [here](#).

**Background:**

On 1 August 2017, a series of changes will be introduced to the Victorian Working with Children Check (WWCC) scheme through the *Working with Children Amendment Act 2016 (Vic) (the Amending Act)*. These changes are intended to further strengthen the scheme by implementing recommendations made by the Royal Commission into Institutional Child Sexual Abuse (**Commission**).

As you may already be aware, under the *Working with Children Act 2005*, only people who are doing “**child-related work**” need a WWCC unless an exemption applies.

Under the amendments, “child-related work” involves contact with a child that is direct and a part of the person’s duties; and is an activity undertaken in any of the services, bodies or places referred to in the Act as ‘occupational categories’ (which include schools).

The biggest change is that while volunteers were not previously required to have to get a WWCC if they were directly supervised, under the new legislation they now will need to have a WWCC regardless of whether they are being directly supervised. However, there are still a number of exemptions, which mean that the impact for school volunteers are limited as teachers, police officers, **immediate family members of the child** involved in activity are not required to obtain a WWCC.

**Coaching, Mentoring and Support**

The APF has established an outstanding panel of retired Principals, SEILs, Assistant Regional Directors, and Regional Directors who are available to offer individual Principals support, coaching and or mentoring. These highly skilled individuals are able to assist you in a variety of ways. We will match you with the most suitable individual and it will be up to you to negotiate the terms and conditions, however, it is acknowledged that \$200-\$220 an hour is the going rate for this level of consultancy. The individual school will need to make all necessary arrangements and pay on invoice.

This Panel has expertise in school improvement and effectiveness, managing difficult people, building effective teams, policy development, school development, curriculum development, Autism Spectrum Disorder and students with Special needs; Their collective expertise is incredibly valuable.

Contact the APF for a referral.

**Deconstructing emotional Intelligence....continued**

**Social awareness:**

- Empathy – The ability to sense others’ feelings and perspectives, taking an active interest in their concerns, and picking up cues about what others feel and think
- Organisational awareness – The ability to read a group’s emotional currents and power relationships, identifying influencers, networks, and organisational dynamics.

**Relationship management:**

- Influence – The ability to have a positive impact on others, persuading or convincing them in order to gain their support.
- Coach and mentor – The ability to foster the long-term learning or development of others by giving feedback, guidance and support
- Conflict management – The ability to help others through emotional or tense situations, tactfully bringing disagreements into the open and finding solutions all can endorse.

Continued in next column

**The industrial organisation for the Principal Class**

## CyberSafety scam alert, David Sparksman, Cyberhound



We all know cybersafety and security is more critical than ever to student wellbeing and learning. Hence the need to get the right partner and solution has never been more important.

It has come to my attention that Department schools have been the target of what I could best describe as a 'cybersafety marketing scam'. Bypassing IT evaluators and targeting the less technical Principals and Business Managers, with the promise of downstream discounts based on schools promoting home (consumer) cybersecurity products.

Such an offer is fraught with danger for several reasons:

1. **Department risks:** As a government department school any recommendations of home products is a risk. The Department of Education has not approved any device and before doing so would no doubt want to perform technical tests and understand fully the support arrangements plus financial security of any provider before any such endorsement. The risk of parents having a false sense of security around products that are incomplete and without such rigorous investigations would present a risk to all parties (children, government, school and parents).
2. **School risks:** Without clarity around support of the product (i.e. out of business hours when home use is most likely) the school runs a reputational risk in the event a home network performance has an outage or slows down because of these products. This is particularly pertinent for the school if it becomes known that the school benefits from sales to parents.
3. **Commercial risks:** Offers of discounts seem to have little detail around returned goods or any proven examples of schools achieving required uptake thresholds. There is also a possible Conflict of Interest for Schools.
4. **Technical risks:** I have heard of issues experienced with the home solutions actually preventing access to the internet and the school solution being well below the expectations and needs of schools and a cause of much frustration.

Some firms are seeking to muddy the water of what is clearly not a school's duty of care or responsibility, by dangling discounts for home consumer uptake.

A proper school cybersecurity and safety evaluation process should always involve:

- (A) The documenting of school requirements
- (B) All the key operational stakeholders (Principals, IT Managers, Business Managers, Assistant Principals, Wellbeing Officers, eLearning Directors and the like)
- (C) Decisions made that are in line with Department guidelines

For those school Principals concerned about their school's cybersecurity and safety, a very reputable supplier to the education industry for 18 years, and strong supporter of APF, are the team at CyberHound. See [cyberhound.com](http://cyberhound.com) Please contact them at [info@cyberhound.com.au](mailto:info@cyberhound.com.au) as we have negotiated a free risk audit for all our member schools that has been well received.



### Deconstructing emotional Intelligence....continued

- **Inspirational leadership** – The ability to inspire and guide individuals and groups towards a meaningful vision of excellence, and to bring out the best in others.
- **Teamwork** – The ability to work with others towards a shared goal; participating actively, sharing responsibility and rewards, and contributing to the capability of the team.

**These competencies aren't just innate – they can be developed through introspection, feedback from others, and effective effort.**

Acknowledgement: "Emotional and Social Intelligence Leadership Competencies: An Overview" by Daniel Goleman in *More than Sound*, April 2017

Published in the June 2017 issue of Principals' Digest.



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