

# Australian Principals Federation

## President's Message—Julie Podbury

### School Cleaning



It is a long time since I have heard members as angry about a matter as they are about the recently announced Cleaning Reforms. This is a very complex matter. While some think this is a timely response, the majority of our members report very positive relationships with good cleaning companies; companies with high standards and a devotion to the schools they are contracted to: These people are prepared to attend to all manner of difficult cleaning and security emergencies in support of the school. Many of our members are furious at what they are regarding as an anti-competitive move, designed to appease certain stakeholders. There is fury about the lack of consultation with

Principals of schools, along with the view that the DET's own values have been disregarded in this reform. Member's feedback on this and a number of other current topics makes interesting reading in this issue.



### Principal Health & Wellbeing Strategy—Discussion Paper

Please make sure your feedback is included in respect to this matter. This is a [link to the short version of the discussion paper](#). This is vital to the current and future members of the Principal Class. Please take the time to feedback directly to [principal.health@edumail.vic.gov.au](mailto:principal.health@edumail.vic.gov.au) or via the APF [astefani@apf.net.au](mailto:astefani@apf.net.au). On page 6 we have the Q&A on the recently announced Principal Health Checks.

**This newsletter:** Click on the link to the page where the information appears:

- ◇ [Annual Dinner and AGM](#) information & registration
- ◇ [Membership information](#), Angela Stefani
- ◇ [Coaching, Mentoring & Support for Principals](#)
- ◇ [Principal Health Checks](#)
- ◇ [Member's feedback](#), starts on P2
- ◇ [Police & School Relationships/Support](#), Julie Podbury

The nifty little item pictured below, will be a gift to all those who attend the Annual Dinner.



Valued at around \$30 each, this electronic key, wallet, iPad finder is generously provided by our new partner, TheirCare.

In another announcement; Free-agency are making 5 single CRT days available as part of the draw for members attending.

Register today!



Suite 1315A  
401 Docklands Drive  
Docklands Vic 3008  
Tel: +613 8566 7627  
email: [apf@apf.net.au](mailto:apf@apf.net.au)

### 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.



## The industrial organisation for the Principal Class

**Member Feedback—Cleaning Reforms:** I am pleased to see that I'm not alone in my condemnation of the recently announced changes to the school cleaning contract construct. In my view, this decision takes us back 30 years. Firstly, the manner in which the decision has been made and then delivered upon schools and school principals without even an attempt at constructive discussion, falls well short of my expectations of our employer at a time when we are attempting to unite the Department in terms of our core purpose and direction. Secondly, this decision takes us back to the days where 'super' sized cleaning companies with no direct links, commitment or connections to schools, take on responsibility for school cleaning at the local level.

In my mind, this is an absolute recipe for disaster. This college just recently went through the tender processes and have reappointed a contractor in whom we have absolute confidence to meet the needs of this college both now and into the foreseeable future. This contract is due for a re-appraisal in 2020. This contractor currently has a contract in 34 additional schools to ours, has impeccable references from each of those schools and since his appointment into our college has lived up to those references in every possible manner.



I've been informed that the Department has structured a letter with my name on the bottom of it, informing our cleaning contractor that the contract our college freely entered into will be annulled by the Department on commencement as at 1 July, 2018. With this scenario being repeated in each of the 35 schools that our contractor maintains a cleaning contract within, this decision sounds the absolute death knell to his company.

∞ ∞ ∞

**Member Feedback—Cleaning Reforms, Intranet:** I do not recall any Consultation process with Principals or School Councils prior to this Reform announcement. Where is the transparency? How can you have reform without reviewing the archaic cleaning funding model? 57-152 schools in a metropolitan area being serviced by a single cleaning contractor? Central administering the funds: So how do we ensure that we are getting value for \$'s when we do not have control of the finances?

'Schools of the Future' enabled schools to be self-managing and as a principal since 1994 I am well aware of how to maximise the SGB/SRP to ensure high quality cleaning, facilities maintenance and compliance, teaching and learning, staff professional development and health and well-being etc. in my school. My DET Cleaning Reform letter states that I have until 30 September to have negotiated and signed a new contract with our current Cleaners (current contract expires July 2018) or transition to the new model – not good enough.

Perhaps DET could centrally manage the 'Out of Hours School Care' providers which is a bigger problem for many primary school Principals!

Personally I have found the DET Intranet more challenging than before and use the Principals page wherever possible. It would appear that DET newsletters and correspondence are no longer hyperlinked, instead communication defaults to the 8 Intranet headings but it's a challenge to find which tab to click for relevant information (perhaps I need to be more tech savvy!)

∞ ∞ ∞

**3 Member's Feedback –Expulsions:** No voice from the families whose kids are impacted by those who constantly disrupt the learning environment and make school unsafe either - i.e.: those families who have kids who just go to school and do all the right things. Good ole state education.

∞ ∞ ∞

Anytime Deborah Glass or anyone else wants to come and visit us and see what it is like working with highly traumatised children on a daily basis, they are welcome. Maybe they wouldn't be so quick to condemn suspensions and expulsions when they actually saw the violence and abuse children and staff are subjected to every day Julie.

∞ ∞ ∞



I just heard your radio interview on expulsions. You did a terrific job. I have been reading the ombudsman's report tonight. One has to know schools to understand what sits behind the case studies...schools make such efforts with kids. I don't think DET gets this.



## Member Feedback

### Principal H&WB

Thanks for your recent informative newsletter.

I couldn't help but grimace/smile at the department's August 8 school update. There is a long list of Priority information and Must reads all requiring some action or work. Last on the list is to register for a workshop on principal Mental health.

I am lucky to be experienced and working with a large principal and leadership team that allows us to delegate and prioritise work as it arrives. I wonder how a beginning principal in a smaller school would be able to cope with this sort of weekly update!

With the welcome additional support staff in regions comes increased expectations of attendance at network meetings and regional forums and now middle leaders are encouraged to attend these sessions! At our hard to staff college we have a very limited number of CRTS available and it is increasingly hard to take leading teachers and principals away from campuses that can be volatile at times to release people to attend these valuable learning opportunities. I suppose I'm having a whinge but I believe that our department needs to be a bit more considerate of the context in which we work!

Thanks for your time

# The industrial organisation for the Principal Class

**Member Feedback—Cleaning Reforms:** At XXX Secondary College, we have a cleaning company who has now worked for the College for just over a decade. In that time, they have done a terrific job for the School. They clean another school. I have confirmed with the Second College that they are also very happy with the product they are receiving.

They employ 8-10 staff to clean our school and the recent audit by the union was very complementary in the way the company operates.

We have spoken earlier regarding this and on your advice, I have spoken to the section of the Department who is overseeing this aspect of the work. They noted that because the company is not a “Sole Proprietor” and cleans more than one school, they/we are not eligible for an exemption to the new rules. This is manifestly unfair. It appears that I was talking to the messenger, not the architect of the new rules, so it was hard to be too critical over the phone.

For some of the cleaners at our school, this is much more than a job. Their loyalty and work, as well as our own local knowledge is being totally ignored. They will be devastated by the new arrangements and the fact that they may lose their job..

I worry about the personal toll and financial stress that is about to be unleashed on people who simply do not deserve it. This is particularly unfair when it would appear that this company (by all accounts) does the right thing. Why are they / we being penalised on the basis of, what appears to be, a knee jerk (one size fits all) response to a group of cleaners who were not doing the right thing, yet were approved by DET. As my Business Manager said on Friday, I cannot look “-----” in the face knowing what is about to happen.

My own view is that this is simply bad policy and totally at odds with the Department’s Integrity stance.

While I know that the new providers are being urged to employ existing cleaners, this will not be the same.



**Member Feedback—Cleaning Reforms:** Since the unexpected and surprising announcement about the changes to cleaning arrangements I have held two meetings with our cleaners, endeavoured to read all available material ; on the subject, and have also called the 1300 number three times.

I was completely astonished to find that I could not get satisfactory answers to the few questions I asked about the implementation of this new arrangement. One response indicated that the Area tender process would not be completed until March 2018 and it would be at that time that current cleaning providers would be able to get more explicit information regarding transitioning and that in the interim DET would provide them with opportunities ( approaches and guidelines not yet developed) to move into other cleaning areas – offices etc.

It would be reasonable for me to report that our cleaners are confused, unsettled, unsure of their future and very emotional about the new format. This has been a distressing process for them as it has been for me and will also be for our community.

School Councils are the contracting body for cleaning arrangements in schools and I do not believe there has been any correspondence to inform them of the changes or consultation with them as the governing entity. If there has I would appreciate being directed to the outcome of the consultation.

Furthermore I am unaware of any consultation having taken place at a principal level and I have had this confirmed by both the VPA and VASSP. Once again please direct me to any documentation/reports on principal consultation should this not be the case.

I find it completely ironic that the release of this new arrangement arrived at virtually the same time as that of the release of the DET response to the Mental Health and Well Being of Principals paper.

In recent times I have carried out my duty as the DET delegate in my role as the Principal of XXX College by ensuring that we are aware of all Education State strategies including the release of the DET’s values: Responsiveness, Integrity, Impartiality, Accountability, Respect, Leadership and Human Rights. I struggle to find a connection to the upholding of these rights by DET in the process followed with the enactment and rollout of the changed cleaning arrangements. One may be able to argue that the values can be upheld at ‘a level’; in the system, however I fail to see the connection at the school and principal levels.

As a leader in the school community I am expected to uphold the DET and College values and if I do not I am held to account by DET and their delegates and my performance comes into question. Rightly so! (P4)..



### **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. 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 and individual expertise is incredibly valuable for your school.

Contact the APF for a referral.

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

collaboration leads to collective efficacy and both are key drivers in building strong cultures resulting in system improvement and the building of trust.



I could go on outlining the raft of expectations placed upon principals, schools and their staff and cite the extensive international research that backs the need for a collaborative approach.

I often wonder if those beyond schools understand the sense of community that schools build and are expected to create.

Decisions such as these tear at the very fabric of many school communities as in many cases the cleaning company and staff have become integral to the smooth operating of the school.

Smaller operators (such as those I have been dealing with over the last 27 years of principal ship) are very responsive to immediate needs and are on call to address the vomit in the corridor, the excrement found on the entrance doorstep, the emergency mop up after a water spill/leak that does not meet DTZ criteria and more, they open up daily, unlock gates and then close up at night as part of their community engagement and service (not a contractual requirement usually more a strength of community engagement) and never have I had to pay more than the SRP allocated amount.

I am deeply concerned about the impact an AREA arrangement will have on increasing pressure and workload for principals (especially at a time when DET has received such strong evidence on the effects of the workload on Principals) as a result of implementing an Area service model that will be at some distance from the community coal face.

One final point: The recently released Victorian Government Schools Agreement 2017 Implementation Guide (pg 7) states: PRINCIPAL CONSULTATION – “The Agreement introduces consultation obligations on the Department to consult principals and their union(s) where it is proposed to introduce a significant change in the work required of principal.” It would be my view that the implementation of the new arrangements have the real potential to ‘significantly change the work required by principals’ and the introduction of the changed cleaning arrangements may very well be in conflict of the new agreement should there not have been proper consultation.

## POLICE & SCHOOL RELATIONSHIPS/SUPPORT, Julie Podbury



From time to time we have difficulties in schools and members express their frustration about the lack/timeliness of support and response from the local Police. We have had a few very difficult and dangerous situations in schools over an extended period of time, with drug affected or angry parents exhibiting threatening and violent behaviour. Recently a drug affected parent punched a hole in a wall in a primary school. The principal was terrified. The region responded well, and the police did attend. But all too often with threats to Principals etc., the standard: “there is nothing we can do about it”, which from one Government employee to another, is an unreasonable response. I sought some answers from DET which are expressed in the content below. Please let the APF know if you have a problem and we can put

you in touch with the appropriate personnel.

General advice to school principals would be for them to establish and/or foster a relationship with their local ‘officer in charge’ (Generally this is Senior Sergeant level, but in some smaller towns it might be a Sergeant and in a few cases, a Senior Constable). Perhaps stating the obvious, but a regular catch-up, even just for a coffee and a chat, can be all that is required to establish a good professional working relationship. And when police are required, the principal is then in the position to call directly on a first name basis.

Further to the above, if police are required urgently then ‘000’ should be utilised. In circumstances of less urgent attention, if the principal (either attending or by phone) is not getting the degree of enthusiasm they expect, they should request to speak to the officer in charge (and if the OIC is not available, then speak to the Duty Sergeant) as the constable who answers the phone or attends the counter may not fully appreciate the nuances of a school community or the seriousness of the situation, nor may they appreciate the seniority or standing of the principal in their communities.

The Security Services Unit (SSU) is able to assist with security audits of schools where there are particular concerns about security around the office area in particular. This service is available to all schools and the SSU often reach out and volunteer when issues are identified through IRIS alerts or when requested by the school or their SEIL or EAD. SSU is more than happy to talk directly to groups of principals.



Suite 1315A  
401 Docklands Drive  
Docklands Vic 3008  
Tel: +613 8566 7627  
email: [apf@apf.net.au](mailto:apf@apf.net.au)



Mark Arkinstall  
APF Industrial Officer  
0418 551 375

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

Mark - 0418 551 375  
[industrialofficer@apf.net.au](mailto:industrialofficer@apf.net.au)



Julie Podbury  
APF President  
Vic Branch

# The industrial organisation for the Principal Class



**SRP Consultative Committee Report, Tuesday 22nd August - Dr Ian Sloane**

Schools receive funding towards **Workers Compensation** through the SRP and the DET recoups about 3% of actual Worker's Compensation costs. The new system rewards schools with a good claims performance and imposes a cost on schools with poor claim performance.

Current price signalling provides little incentive for schools particularly larger schools, to improve OHS & Workers Compensation performance. The new model proposes an increase of 4% up to \$25,000., capped at 0.5% of remuneration. 1131 schools will probably not be affected. Claim period previous 2.5 years. Small schools will still remain protected by the remuneration cap. Small school defined as having a PCB of less than \$2,000,000.

Around 20% of schools will pay more; A few schools will pay less; Majority of schools will pay the same.

Increased training will be provided in: Workers Compensation, Mental health, Return to work

**Travel Policy:** Independent Landell Review found that the current policy is too complicated and lacks alignment to the WOVG Travel policy. New policy alignment recognises the value of travel to teachers, principals and students. Pre-approval time frames have been changed to three weeks for international travel. Turnaround time will be ten working days. Policy to be released on August 31. List of personnel in regions will be included. Schools can continue to undertake their student travel arrangements as they have in the past.

**Local payroll:** 26 schools have never used CASES 21 finance in the past; 1400 + schools are using the automated pay system; 74,000 school council employees on the automated pay roll.

**SRP IMPLEMENTATION—Toniann Stitz** Increases for 2017: Two increases, one in April and one in October. Learning Specialists – funding for 3000. There will be an adjustment to the per student credit rate. Weighted average will be provided in the SRP. Casual Replacement Teacher rate will be adjusted by a full year effect of 9.7%. Professional Practice days increase of 1.44%. Funds will not be taken back from schools. 2% non-wages increase to SRP for facilities, utilities, etc. Planner will be taken down on 4 September. Revised indicative planner to be released 14 or 20 September.

**School Cleaning Update—Chris Keating** On 11 August, government announced a major change. Eight separate areas in Melbourne. One contract per area. One contract will be let with one company per area. All schools will have high quality cleaning. There will be consistency in cleaning standards across Melbourne. All cleaning staff are to receive their wages and entitlements.

There is an obligation to reemploy existing cleaners. Schools will engage cleaners on contract. Areas range from 57 to 153 schools. PPP schools will be excluded. 25% of schools will transition more slowly, where there is an owner operator or where the school has only one operator not working in any other school. Money will still be in the SRP.

All cleaning contracts remain in place until 1.7.2018. There will be transition support for small businesses. The Tender process started two Fridays ago, seeking expressions of interest. One company per area. Firms are legally required to pay entitlements. Biggest area of concern is for the welfare of cleaners.

**Annual APF Dinner and AGM****Thursday 19th October 2017**

Pullman Melbourne Albert Park, 65 Queens Road Melbourne

6.30 - 9.30pm

**Members \$125, Non-members \$150**Link to Registration: <http://apf.net.au/apf-agm>**Guest Speaker, Lachlan Bunn,****CEO Antipodeans**

Hear him talk about how his work has changed the lives of 1000's of Australian children.

Visit the [Antipodeans website](#)

A proud APF Partner



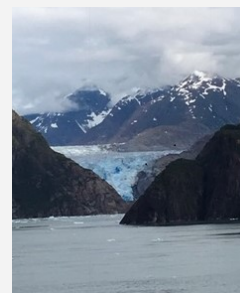
Suite 1315A  
401 Docklands Drive  
Docklands Vic 3008  
Tel: +613 8566 7627

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

A photo of Sawyer,  
Glacier, Tracy Arm  
Fjord, Alaska, from my  
recent overseas trip.

Keep those new mem-  
bers form rolling in.

**Thank you  
Everyone!**



Angela Stefani  
APF Executive  
Officer

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

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**

## Principal Health Checks –Answers to your questions

### What can I expect from the Principal Health Check

Why is the Department offering Principal Health Checks?	The DET has made a commitment to ensuring our school leaders have access to a broad range of advice and support for their own health and wellbeing. The health check services is just one way the DET continues to develop, implement and promote initiatives specific to Principal wellbeing and will supplement existing support currently available to individual principal-class members, including the Employee Assistance Program, the Conflict Resolutions Support Service, the Medical Advisory Service and OHS Advisory Service.
Are Principals required to undergo a health check?	No. The health checks are totally voluntary and it is not compulsory to participate.
When will the service commence?	The Deputy Premier announced the new Health Checks at regional forums in June and DET are now in the process of securing a provider. DET expect the service to commence in 2018.
What information will a principal receive after attending a health check?	Each principal will be provided with a confidential health report advising them of their results. It will also include specific information on areas of their health that have been identified as foreshadowing possible future health matters.  Results of individual health checks are totally confidential, as is any individual consultation with a medical practitioner.
What information will be provided the department?	De-identified, aggregated data will be provided to the department on the uptake of the service; the composition of users (for example: principal/assistant principal cohorts, male/female) and a summary analysis of assessment analysis. This will assist the department in identifying trends in factors affecting principal health and wellbeing and which interventions to consider in mitigating health matters.  Results of individual health checks are totally confidential, as is any individual consultation with a medical practitioner.
Who will be conducting the health checks?	Each health check will be delivered by trained medical professionals led by a General Practitioner (GP). The GP may also be supported by other medical professionals, as required. The GP will sign off on the health check.
What will be included in the health check services?	At a minimum, the health check will include a medical examination (for example, blood pressure, heart rate, weight and waist measurement); lifestyle health assessment and mental health check. Where it becomes evident that a referral may be required for additional medical assessment or treatment, this will occur according to doctor/patient privacy protocols and processes.
Is the health check free?	Yes, the health check service will be provided free of charge to individuals within the principal class. If an individual is referred for additional medical assessment or treatment, this assessment or treatment will normally be paid for by the respective individual.
How frequent will it be recommended that a principal undertake the health checks?	As a guide, it is suggested that a principal undertake a health check every two years; further guidance will be obtained from the successful supplier.
Where will the health checks be undertaken?	The successful supplier will be expected to have the capacity to deliver the service across Victoria, covering regional and metropolitan areas.
What will be the hours of service?	Health checks will be available to school principals between the hours of 8.30 am and 5.00 pm. Monday to Friday.
Is a similar service offered elsewhere?	This service is commonly offered to executives in a range of private and public sectors, including to executives within the Victorian Public Service.
What happens if a health check indicates that a principal is unwell, requiring immediate attention?	As with standard medical practices, the principal would be referred to the appropriate medical service for immediate attention.



### END OF THE LECTURE

**Medical students at the University of Vermont's Lerner College of Medicine will no longer be taught in a lecture setting,** according to William Jeffries, a dean at the school, who says evidence indicates students retain and understand information offered during instruction better in an 'active learning' setting. Students must not only take in information, but also make sense of it in a way that is easily retained if needed in the future. Chances of students remembering increases if students are required to apply that information to a task, as students in the school will have to do. Jeffries said there was initially some pushback from professors who were fond of the lecture approach, but they were receptive to change once informed that active learning procedures actually are more beneficial to fledgling students. The active learning model has been helped along considerably by tech advancements which can lead to blended learning opportunities, offering more customisation for students' learning. It is possible that the school which stresses hands-on, innovative classroom instruction in lieu of lecture presentations might see an influx of interest from students seeking something different.

Pat Donachie. Education Dive, 7 August, 2017

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