

Australian Principals Federation

President's Message—Julie Podbury



By the time you get this newsletter, I will be in Milan, on a much needed break. Mark Arkinstall will be on deck, **0418 551375**, industrialofficer@apf.net.au and Janine Blachford, **0401 992 272**, janine.blachford@gmail.com has offered to offer support to members as well.

The new APF number is now in use, **0412 584 002**. Please record this number in your phone under APF.

In this issue we include **John Handley's third article in the series on Workforce Planning and Recruitment for 2019**. See below.

Ian Sloane, tendered his resignation from the APF Council at the last Council meeting, ahead of his retirement from Mitcham PS at the end of T3. Ian has been a highly valued member of the APF Council and will be sorely missed from the leadership group. We will have an opportunity to formally farewell him at our PD event on 15th November.

I look forward to seeing you there at this very important event, where colleagues from SA and WA will be present to discuss this all important topic of Principal Health & Wellbeing. See details in the panel to right of this article, where there are links to the website.

Members Feedback starts on Page 3, and a **report on issues handled by the APF** appears on Page 5.



Workforce Planning and Recruitment for 2019, John Handley

Expectations of improving student learning performance and student health and well-being (including resilience building and a positive futures outlook) continue to be the focus of schools.

With challenges in finding high quality, suitable staff across our system abounding, never before has it been so important to match teacher quality with school culture.

Within the letter and spirit of the VGSA 2017, there is an expectation of ongoing employment as the primary mode of employment. As such previous practices of using fixed term contracts to "trial" a staff member is difficult to justify, especially if challenged at the MPB.

This is not to say there are not legitimate circumstances whereby fixed term employment is the most suitable and practicable. It's very clear in the Agreement that such circumstances exist for replacement of ongoing staff with leave up to twelve months, except family leave. And it may be okay in schools with projected falling enrolments whereby recruitment of ongoing staff would in all likelihood result in excess. In all such cases, it is important that there are adequate records of staff leave and enrolment projections in school workforce planning documents that are accessible to the School Consultative Committee. This would include documented communication with staff on leave.

As school leaders we want our schools to have a rich and supportive learning culture. Essential to the process of building and sustaining our culture for high quality school performance is the development of the staff we have supplemented by the quality of our recruiting practices for the additional staff we desire.

Most successful school leaders identify the interpersonal skill set and expert knowledge



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Assoc Prof. Phil Riley

**Your Life is on
the Line**

APF Annual PD & AGM



Stephen Macdonald
Kaya Consulting

**15th November
9.30am-5.45pm**

Level 1, 4 Points by Sheraton
443 Docklands Dve. Docklands

Places limited and filling fast;
Book now
Members \$85, Non members
\$110



Addie Wooten & Andrew Jones,
Smiling Mind

Register and pay on line at
[http://apf.net.au/
apf-agm-2018/](http://apf.net.au/apf-agm-2018/)
by Paypal or credit
card:- Visa or Master
Card only accepted

The industrial organisation for the Principal Class

required; using recruitment as a vital stage of building a high capacity workforce - who will be best suited to be a quality contributor to the school improvement plan and be the type of person you would be proud of. And in following the concept of reciprocal accountability, consider for each candidate what might be needed to support them in adjusting to your school's life, and nurturing them in their career progression as lifelong learners.

Clearly with the knowledge that most recruitment will be for on-going staff, this suitability match is crucial. This requires a selection panel to ascertain such characteristics as personal and professional ethics, empathy, respect for the profession, maintaining high levels of optimism, being curious, taking risks, always aiming to learn and improve practice, ability to relate well to students, colleagues and parents, and a capacity to flourish in a team environment, as much as expertise and qualifications. And, as such, it sets the challenge for the panel in ensuring the interview and reference checking is of high quality in itself.

It reminds us of schools preparing for the selection of a new Principal, and how much conversation at both school and Selection Panel level occurs about the importance of the right fit for the school: What are some of the key characteristics required to successfully lead this particular school? I wonder whether this degree of consideration, important forward thinking, is missed with other selection opportunities.

For any schools requiring particular advice in their workforce planning from an industrial viewpoint, the APF, particularly with the expert support of Mark Arkinstall, should be a key reference point.

All the best with your workforce planning and recruitment for 2019.

Member Feedback: Workload

I was so concerned about the workload and the emotional state of Principal Class in schools towards the end of 2017, I spoke personally to the Minister about the matter, and not long after he made a commitment that there would be no new initiatives in 2018. 2018 would be a year of consolidation. That is good in theory, however some believe that more and more is being sought from schools; a number of members have spoken to me about that matter in recent times and the general claim is that these are often distractors that take attention and energy away from teaching and learning. This flies in the face of the good work being done by The School Delivery Unit, who is charged with trying to address this very issue.

This email arrived recently from a very frustrated member. Julie

Can I alert the APF to the ever increasing 'expectations' that are drifting in from DET that increase workload for staff. Every man and his dog is asking for things to be done. In isolation each seems a reasonable request – but put together it's unrealistic – especially when it impacts on already busy schedules at school (i.e. work experience, subject selections, exams, moving between buildings during a building program and so on).

For example – this term

- 1. About You Survey:** *DET has engaged an external contractor to do the 'About You Survey' a health and wellbeing survey with students in year 7/8/10/11. This was sent to Principals a few weeks ago with the expectation that it be completed this term. The survey includes sensitive topics about health, drug use, experience of violent, sexuality and the like. Parent information sheets were provided for an 'opt out'. No translations into foreign languages were provided. I followed up with Legal Branch who then the relevant section in DET who were responsible – who I then also rang*



"I absolutely guarantee your workloads will not increase."



Facing Allegations?

Read this!

The APF has established an outstanding panel of retired Principals, SEILs, Assistant Regional Directors, and Regional Directors who are available to offer individual Principal support and or mentoring.

This Panel has expertise in all manner of school related issues. If however, you are undergoing an investigation or facing allegations, you may well want the support of one of these people who can support you through such a difficult time.

Contact the APF for a referral, or contact Janine Blachford, program coordinator.

janine.blachford@gmail.com

Or phone 0401 992 272

OR

Contact

Sarah Carthew,
Senior Project Officer
at Bastow
03 8199 2986

after feedback from Legal. They are now working on providing translated information sheets. It's not acceptable that an AP in a school has to go to such lengths to get the department to do its job properly. I'm still not sure about 'opt out' either...I'm also tired of the government using schools as an easy way to collect information about the populace... can't they find some other way to survey youngsters without compromising their education.

- 2. Childsafe Audit:** Despite collecting copious amounts of information for our School Review/VRQA which included Child Safe compliance check a little over a year ago. The school was 'mysteriously' selected to do a Childsafe Audit – again with an external contractor who had done very minimalistic training (she showed me the training booklet which in my opinion was inadequate). Anyway we passed almost all aspects with only a few minor things to do... talk about a waste of time preparing for and doing this again...
- 3. Online NAPLAN:** Don't even get me started on the work/interruption involved to set up laptops, train staff, run a practice session with current Y7/9 with not a skerrick of data to be returned to the school. All we get is the benefit of a trial run – even though another will need to be done next year too.
- 4. Ministerial order 1125 – suspensions.** According to this order – schools are required to enter all suspensions on Cases21 – however to what degree is not specified. An instruction sheet was emailed to all schools from the edugate email address on how to do this. No name was attached to the email or information sheet verifying under who's direction this was, or who to contact for questions. Nice to have an info sheet if you don't know how to use Cases21 for suspensions – however we and many school use COMPASS (or XUNO or other) software to manage and record suspensions – and the **Date of this suspension is then imported into Cases21**. No one can tell me whether this meets the requirement in the Act? Someone from region is following up on the behalf of myself and a few others. But let's say that we are then required to – this will create work for presumably an office staff member to now double entry all suspensions... or realistically DET will need to provide Cases21 machines to all YLC/LT's to now double input suspension information. Look it doesn't make any sense unless the bureaucracy wants to 'big brother' and look into minutiae of everyday school business.



Editor's note: It is the extent to which we are diverted from core business that is at issue here, particularly when principals are held so firmly to account with their results and data generally. Principals need their autonomy returned to them.

Member feedback—Consultation arrangements

The important bit, Julie, is that the Principal should consider the advice tendered by the Consultative Committee is just advice and the Principal makes the final decision. There is a very carefully crafted bit of wordage in Tony Bugden-speak which makes this extremely clear on "Consultation".

Member feed back—ES Staff

Hi Julie, Just thought I'd mention this to you – I know it's out of range somewhat, but is a Prin Health and Wellbeing issue – as I know personally I am now feeling terrible for not being aware and celebrating our ES staff.



I was unaware that it was ES Week last week, I have gone through my DET emails and have not found anything. A quick google turned up only one website – the AEU website.

Editor's reply: Can I suggest you set aside another date and time and have a morning tea that celebrates your school's ES Staff. They are the engine of the school that keeps it running, they deserve to be recognized once a year at least, BUT maybe that should be at a time and place to suit your school.

Put a date in your school calendar for next year now.

Members Feedback—Cleaning Reform

Cleaning still lingers as a big issue, and I continue to get frustrated calls and emails about matters related to it. There are three things about which our members are most aggrieved.

1. The promised that the cleaning would be as good or better than it was under the previous system. For many this is yet to be achieved.



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If you change schools, home address, mobile no., or cc details please let me know as soon as possible.



Angela Stefani
APF Executive
Officer

astefani@apf.net.au

Join the APF

www.apf.net.au

Forms can be completed on line.



The industrial organisation for the Principal Class

2. This would reduce principal workload. It has significantly increased it for some.
3. The costs would be borne by the system. Many schools are contributing additional school funds to get the service that was delivered under the previous contract.

The following member email raises some very good points.

Hi Julie,

Yesterday at our Area Principal's forum, we had Chris Keating from VSBA talking about the school cleaning reforms. He was open and honest about many aspects of the reform. I asked him a question about Principal work-load related to the reforms. It was in the context of being a principal of a PPP school where the same standards-based contract applies and works quite well. The significant difference in PPP schools though, is that we have the management company Cushman and Wakefield who contract the cleaning company and monitor performance and an OSSA (On-site Service Assistant) at each school monitoring the "standard" of the clean and addressing any issues with the cleaners.

When asked how he expected this new system to work without those supports for Principals and not have it significantly impact on Principal workload, his answer was short and direct. Basically, he said that he knew it was a significant extra workload for Principals, was not sure whether that would decrease over time and did not know whether it would be, in the end, less work for Principals than the last system. In other words, he (and DET, of course) were happy that a significant increase to Principal workload was a price they (DET) were prepared to pay for the reform to go forward. Of course, we know though that it is Principals paying that price, not DET. All the rhetoric about Principal well-being goes out the window when it all gets too hard for them and they need us to deliver something for them.

There was a general feeling of disgust in the meeting at the manner in which he responded to the workload issue.

I must respect the honesty of the response re workload, however I don't accept this as an outcome on behalf of our members.

What is identified in this member's letter above is the standard that will be expected ASAP. That is the standard in use for cleaning in the PPP schools. The difference is that Cushman and Wakefield are monitoring this as a third party. In the current cleaning arrangement for most other schools the cleaning companies are monitoring themselves, so their bottom line financially is always in their sights. However I am convinced that the penalty clauses in the contract should be incentive enough to sort the issues out and quickly.

Teachers should not be cleaning their own classrooms and furniture, and principal class should not be vacuuming. Don't compromise, keep at the managers until the matters are satisfactorily resolved. Keep DET Cleaning in the loop. Lastly, try to avoid dipping into school resources to fix this at a school level, if you can.

Meet Circle with Disney - Smart Parental Controls for your School Community

Circle is the smart way for families to manage content and time across all devices. Circle pairs wirelessly with the home Wi-Fi and allows parents to easily manage every device on their network. Using the Circle App, families can create unique profiles for each family member. From here, kids will have a connected experience that is designed just for them.

Preferential pricing for APF members

Our long term strategic partner, CyberHound, introduced Circle to Australia and now offer very special pricing for APF members and their school communities. Circle normally retails for \$169, but APF member communities can access preferential pricing of \$130. To receive your school community code to access this great pricing, contact team@cyberhound.com.

Additional special offer - six months of Circle Go for free!

[Circle Go](#) takes all of the settings your kids' devices have at home and extends them to 4G LTE and any other Wi-Fi network they join. In addition to the special APF pricing, until 31 December 2018 when you purchase Circle Home you can also receive six months of [Circle Go](#) for free.

Find out more about Circle with Disney at CyberSafeHouse.com.



Moving Update.

From **1st October** the APF will be located at the office tower at Chadstone Shopping Centre.

The new address will be
**Tower 1, Level 8,
1341 Dandenong Road,
Chadstone, 3148.**

The new APF phone number is
0412 584 002



Hattie says...

"In fact, we know from looking at the comparisons between classes of 25-30 to 15-20, in smaller classes, teachers talk more. There is less feedback. There is less group interaction... If I'm given trillions to reduce class sizes and that's the only choice, I'll take it. But if I'm given trillions, I'd rather spend the money on developing teacher expertise..."

John Hattie quoted in "Dr John Hattie: Assessment Should Measure Teachers' Impact" by Roger Riddell, July 21, 2016, *Education Drive*

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



The new way for families to manage online content and time across all devices



Get your school community discount code for parents from team@cyberhound.com



Issues Report—From August 2018 Council Meeting

We continue to handle an extraordinary number of issues for our members, including a high number of very complex matters. This is a summary of the report made at the State Council meeting in August.

From July this year we recorded the following numbers of schools per Region.

Regions	NW	SW	NE	SE	Total
	338	408	385	400	1531
New issues per Region August	12	15	23	19	69

Since May 2018 we have handled **69 new matters** as well as continuing **27 on-going matters**. There were **85 new matters reported February to May 2018**. The chart above quantifies the new Issues May-Aug 2018

4 of these matters were Complex (requiring over 20-100+ hours of work), 45 were moderate, (between 4-19 hours). The balance of these matters were simple (requiring up to 4 hours of work)

Details of new issues raised May-August 2018

Issue category	No.	Details
Agreement/Staffing	3	
Cleaning	14	Huge concerns around this still
Conflict of Interest	2	Issues still surfacing
Contract/Remuneration	9	Can be Prin or AP contract renewal
Closure of School	1	
Disability	2	Could also be classified as Parent*
Enrolment	1	Regional issue
Facilities	2	Where prin is under threat over facilities
Investigation	3	We have a number of on-going investigations as well
Legal matter	1	
MPB	3	An enormous amount of work for Mark
OHS	1	
Parent	3	Lower than usual number
Resign/Retire	3	Often aligns to leave matters
Review	1	
Staff	10	Staff causing issues for Prins/AP's
Wellbeing & Workload	3	
Workcover	2	Complex with assistance needed. A number OG as well



Support for colleagues

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 103664

jpodbury@apf.net.au

Mark - 0418 551375

industrialofficer@apf.net.au



Mark Arkinstall
APF Industrial Officer

“So often we use assessment in schools to inform students of their progress and attainment. Of course this is important, but it is more critical to use this information to inform teachers about their impact on students. Using assessments as feedback for teachers is powerful. And this power is truly maximised when the assessments are timely, informative, and related to what teachers are actually teaching.”

John Hattie in “We Aren’t Using Assessments Correctly” in *Education Week*, October 2015

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