

Australian Principals Federation

Acting President's Report—Tina King



The challenges of the term are coming to short reprieve as we embark upon the term break. Our regional colleagues were provided opportunity for a return to onsite learning late last week, necessitating a quick transfer and deployment of resources and operations within a short time frame. Regional schools on the fringes of Melbourne faced added complexities and challenges. Decisions at the local school level had to once again be made without prompt and expedient guidelines and operational frameworks. Parent Payment Policy revisions continue to cause frustration and concern and the anger is not abating. School leaders have reported increased demands for onsite attendance and ongoing challenges in ensuring optimism and positiveness remains high within their school community.

There is no doubt resolve is running low and whilst we can easily focus on the matters that have consumed our time and attention, it is important to take a moment and celebrate all that has been achieved and continues to be gained. Without the strong leadership and adaptability of our school leaders, our system would not have changed quickly and successfully from onsite to remote learning. Furthermore, the continuity of learning for students would simply not be there, and communities would not have received the level of support required to meet the challenges. There is much to applaud and your efforts in keeping your school communities safe whilst continuing the learning journey for students and staff is to be commended.

The APF EBA negotiating team ran a Webinar on Monday last week (6th September), to report fully on the state of negotiations. As you would be aware we are restrained from providing detailed reports to you in print, due to the Good Faith Bargaining Principles under which we operate. We were thrilled with the very high number of members who attended, and the positive and supportive response fed back to the team. We are hopeful for a resolution soon, however, are not holding our collective breath given that there are other parties also negotiating with DET.

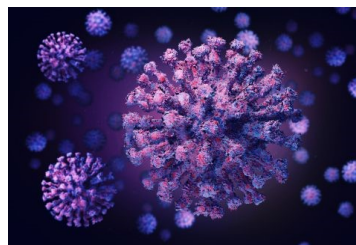
We wish you all a safe and relaxing break and hope you have opportunity to shut down from the demands and relentless requirements of the job. You truly have been champions in leading throughout this crisis.

T. King

Victoria's COVID-19 Vaccination Program

It appears that some schools are receiving communication from various anti-vaccination groups with threats of legal action if principals and schools promote and encourage the vaccination. The Department has made available [vaccination information packs](#) with schools asked to disseminate this information to their communities. Principals are not decision makers here, but simply required by the employer to pass on the information as presented. In doing so, you are not offering an unsubstantiated personal opinion but simply forwarding the communication messages as developed by the state government and Chief Health Officer.

Additionally, some parents are requesting information pertaining to staff vaccination status at the school. This is personal information and not for public disclosure. If you are being challenged in this manner, please seek support by advising your SEIL or contacting Legal Division if needed.



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In this Issue:

Anti Vaxers causing grief in schools. See P1 for more details and advice.

APF Presentations to Networks & Collegiate Groups.

Recent presentation by Mark and Tina has generated interest by other groups seeking presentations to PCEs. See P2

Julie Podbury and David Finnerty formally announce they are joining the APF team of advisers. See P2

Calming Anxiety see P2

DAFIN Consulting, with contact details included.

See P3

APF Website

<https://apf.net.au>

APF Presentations to Networks & Collegiate Groups

Earlier this week, Mark Arkinstall and I had opportunity to present at one of the principal networks in the east on matters pertaining to **Complaints & Misconduct** against principal class employees. This is an escalating and concerning area, which causes much distress and upset and can have significant negative impact not just on PCEs but their family and loved ones. If you would like us to present at your network or collegiate group, please don't hesitate to contact us and we would be more than happy to accommodate your needs.



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APF Member Support

We are delighted to announce that two of our esteemed colleagues, Julie Podbury (ex APF President) and David Finnerty (ex APF Treasurer) have generously offered their services to the APF as pro bono advisers. For many years, Julie and David have provided unwavering commitment and leadership to the APF and we are most fortunate to have access to their high level of expertise and knowledge. Please call the office for APF support. For more extensive, school and leadership developmental support they have formed DAFIN Consulting. Please refer to their advertisement at the end of this newsletter.

Explosion in new members!

Thank-you for your advocacy for the APF. I am enjoying entering new members to the database.

CALMING ANXIETY

Principal's Digest,
September 2021

Anxiety can cripple your day. Calm anxiety by trying intentional acts of calm.

Reframe. When you feel overwhelmed, ask yourself, *What is a different way of looking at my situation?* Doing this is a key step toward regarding yourself as a capable problem-solver.

Get outside. Take a walk. If you're walking with a dog, that will help you get out of your own head.

Hydrate. Water facilitates the delivery of nutrients to the brain, removes toxins and inflammatory markers, and improves cognitive functioning.

Do push-ups. A short burst of physical exertion releases nervous energy.

Visualise an admired person. What would they do?

Use the Pomodoro technique. Work in 25-minute chunks followed by 5-minute breaks, and after four cycles, take a 15-20-minute break.

Insert a mindful buffer. Between work and home, spend a few minutes in silence to make peace with what's happened during the day. Then take a few cleansing breaths before switching gears with presence and intention.

Clear clutter. This is especially helpful just before going to bed.

Read hard-copy news. On-screen news feeds are distracting and provoke anxiety.

Dump smiley-face. Sometimes you need to take off the rose-tinted glasses to see your smudged, cloudy challenges as they are.

Make a fun plan. Thinking about a get-together with people who are good for your mental health creates positive anticipation.

Accept anxiety. Sometimes letting go of the need to control outcomes leads to greater acceptance of your circumstances.

Acknowledgement: "12 Ways to Curb Anxiety" by Linda Esposito in *Psychology Today*, May/June 2021



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Join the APF

<https://apf.net.au>

Forms can be
completed on-line.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT FOR PRINCIPAL CLASS EMPLOYEES



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.

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.

With more than 60 Years of School Leadership experience as members of the Principal Class, Julie Podbury and David Finnerty bring a wealth of knowledge and skills they have developed in complex school, Regional and Statewide settings. They are looking to share that knowledge and those skills by delivering dedicated Professional Development to members of the Principal Class through a new company, DAFIN Consulting.

Julie and David are particularly interested in working with whole of School Leadership Teams, seeking to build the capacity of the team, instilling an understanding of what each member of the team brings to the leadership table, together with the knowledge and understanding of any potential opportunities for improvement existing, both individually and collectively across the team.

As a general rule, the consultants will take a coaching approach to leadership development. The aim of coaching being to facilitate and enable the individual to take control of their own development in ways that will positively impact school culture, organisational effectiveness and collective efficacy. Through these processes, Julie and David will work with the team to build accepted 'Trademark Behaviours' that are lived through genuine relationships and supported by a strong behavioural framework where trust and respect are both expected and freely given.

It is anticipated that such an approach will see the school Leadership Team commit to working with the consultants twice a month for a period of at least one term. During this period, the consultants will on occasion, schedule appointments to work individually with Leading Teachers, Learning Specialists, Assistant Principals, the Business Manager and of course, the Principal. As well, there will be sessions scheduled for the consultants to work with the extended leadership team. The number of sessions the school commits to will therefore vary, depending on the size of the school and more particularly, the size of the leadership team.

While it is not possible to give an accurate assessment of costs to school, the following is offered as a guide: \$200 plus GST, per hour, per consultant. Where it is anticipated a project will extend well beyond one term, it may be possible to negotiate a suitable deal.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT FOR PRINCIPAL CLASS EMPLOYEES & Leadership Teams



Contact dafinconsulting@optusnet.com.au or David Finnerty 0412 927 007

or Julie Podbury 0419 103 664.