

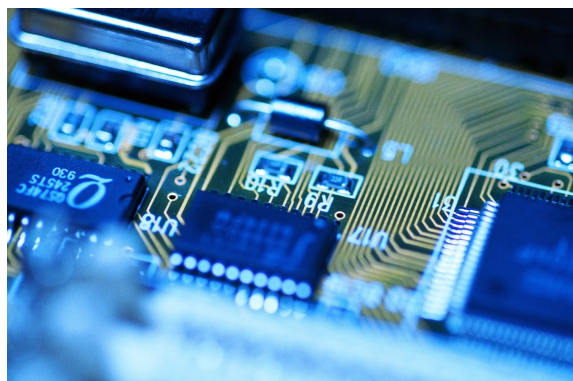
Australian Principals Federation



President's Message – Tina King

It is that time of year where stress levels are running high and endurance is low as teachers and schools are well entrenched in the **mid-year reporting** process. Principals, tasked with pacifying anxious staff, are ensuring support provisions and measures are enacted during this time to aid anxious teachers. All whilst principals and Assistant Principals themselves are in the midst of performing **report proofreading** tasks – a requirement that is often undertaken well outside the 38 hour week and in addition to ongoing requirements and responsibilities.

Recent key announcements have sparked interest and discourse relating to several topical items, the main one being **Time In Lieu provisions** and subsequent acquittal, particularly in relation to camps and overseas learning experiences. After months of dispute and deliberation between the AEU and the Department, The Fair Work Commission published the decision last Friday morning relating to staff on camp accruing TiL overnight. Frankly, this is a matter that should have been resolved during EBA deliberations and the fact that it has taken nearly a year to resolve since endorsement of the VGSA 2022 back in July last year, has only placed principals in a difficult situation and resulted in increased workloads and in some instances, fractured relationships. It is without question that school staff should be compensated for attending camp, even when asleep, and we applaud the Minister for announcing the \$130 million commitment (over four years) to pay for the recent determination. The Department has provided information to all schools on what the determination means and we unpack this in detail for you later in the newsletter.



The other topical item that is generating increased dialogue amongst members, is **the new requirement for all schools to migrate to department provided technologies by the end of 2028**. I recently met with a group of school leaders who have expressed concern at the restrictions the new IT policy provides and subsequent adverse impact upon their school (see report P3). Concerningly and most disappointingly, as this is a key change to impact schools and subsequently principals, the APF has not been afforded opportunity for engagement and consultation on

the changes. As more and more principals are becoming aware of the level of impact upon the suite of technologies and ICT services used in their school, concern is escalating. We provide for you a summary of the concerns as expressed by a range of impacted schools and will follow this up with relevant department staff.

As new issues present, we just seem to carry on as a matter of fact with recurring and ongoing challenges. This by no means makes these recurring issues redundant and it is important that we continue to bring these to the forefront as we work towards favourable solutions and outcomes. **The ongoing workforce shortages** continue to present for many schools and we share with you a recent letter from one of our secondary principals located in metro Melbourne.

It was lovely to catch up with many of you at the **recent principals' conference**. As always, the event provides opportunity for engagement and interaction with colleagues, something that unfortunately and concerningly is becoming less and less frequent as the demands of the job take many away from attending such occasions in person.

With the term break not far away, please try to find some time for enjoyment, rest and respite.

T. King



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In this issue:

Time In Lieu arrangements for Camps and Overseas Learning Experiences, P2

DE IT Services in School Policy, P3

Multifactor Authentication for eduPay, P5

A secondary metro principal raises serious concerns about the shortage of available teachers, P6

Smiling Mind, Funded Places available, P7

Listening & Communication tips for leaders, DAFIN Consulting, Columns 2&3

Play, Dale Sidebottom, C6

APF Website
<https://apf.net.au>

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Time In Lieu arrangements for Camps and Overseas Learning Experiences

Last Friday, the Fair Work Commission delivered its determination in support of staff accruing Time In Lieu whilst on camp particularly for the overnight period. In swift response, Minister Hutchins announced via [Media Release](#) a funding boost of \$130 million over four years to assist schools in meeting time-in-lieu requirements as per the FWC's determination.

So what does this funding actually cover and what are the key points:

1. To determine time-in-lieu accruals for camps, staff attendance should be planned according to whether the employee's time falls within the following 3 categories (refer to [DE Time-In-Lieu Guidelines](#)):

Regular hours of attendance - time-in-lieu **does not accrue** during this time

Regular hours of attendance are determined by the school day and whether it is a 7 or 8 hour attendance day.

On duty time - time-in-lieu **accrues 100%** during this time.

This is time that falls outside the school day and before 11:00 pm and after 7:00 am. This is when staff are required to perform duties such as supervising camp activities, corridor/dormitory checks, camp discos/concerts

On call time - time-in-lieu **accrues 50%** during this time.

This is the overnight component and covers time that staff required to be on camp in order to meet ratios and available to perform duties if required. The on call period over the overnight period between 11:00 pm to 7:00 am and the times outside the regular hours of attendance where a staff member is available but not required to perform duties.

2. For the overnight on call time between 11:00 pm to 7:00 am, staff in attendance will be paid an average of \$200 per night or 4 hours pay. This is only for two nights and for Years 2 to Year 12 only. If a school runs a Year P and/or Year 1 camp, the school will not receive compensation for the overnight payment however staff attending will be required to receive the overnight on-call payment. Alternatively, if a school runs a 5 day/4 night camp program, the school will only receive compensation for the 2 nights only.
3. The on call overnight payment will be paid retrospectively dating back to the beginning of the year.
4. Funding for the overnight component will be made to schools via the SRP. We have been advised that this funding will form part of the core student allocation however will be identified for the intent and purpose it is being allocated – we will await to receive more information on this.
5. Whilst funding for the overnight on call payment will be based on an average of \$200 per staff member for two nights, the actual payment to staff will be made based on classification and remuneration range **NOT** the averaged amount of \$200 given to schools via the SRP.
6. Overseas camps and learning experiences will have time in lieu arrangements applied as set out in the VGSA 2022. In relation to the overnight payment, it will not apply in circumstances where accommodation is a homestay arrangement. If there are alternative supervision arrangements, for example staff have to supervise, then the overnight payment will need to be applied.



Listening in a team

The success of a team often depends on how often and how easily team members reach a common understanding of issues. Listening to understand what your team members are trying to say is at the very heart of teamwork.

Listening is also an important sign of respect. It encourages your teammates to participate in the team and shows that you value their opinions and ideas.

What you can do

- Give others your full attention. Ignore your mobile.
- Resist distractions. Keep focused on the speaker even when other things are going on in the room.
- Be open to others' ideas
- Concentrate on understanding the speaker.
- Accept that the speaker's views, opinions, and values may be different than yours-and might be better!
- Demonstrate that you are listening. Take notes.
- Ask questions.
- Check your understanding. "If I hear you right, Dave, you're saying you object to the changes because you think our time estimates are unrealistic. Is that right?"
- Consider combining the ideas you heard with other ideas raised by the team
- Listening is more than just hearing the words someone says. Think about what the person is saying and see if it relates to your own ideas or those of your other team members.

Julie Podbury, DAFIN Consulting

7. There are alternative arrangements for camps that occur during the school holidays with principals and the staff member/s required to reach agreement on the approach to recognise the staff members time falling within the school holiday period. In the absence of reaching agreement, the staff member is not required to attend the camp.

For all those educators that attend camps, whether locally, interstate or internationally it is known that it is no holiday. To the contrary, staff work harder and longer than if back at school and the associated responsibilities and accountabilities are immense. It is only correct and fitting that staff are compensated for the time they are away from their private life and personal time in order to make these experiences possible. The fact that this had to be played out before the Fair Work Commission is a sad indication of the lack of acknowledgement of the good will of principals, teachers and education support staff.

As stated earlier, the payment for the overnight stay whilst on camp is most welcomed however has come far too late and is simply not enough. Schools will still be required to acquit time accrued during on-call and on-duty outside of the regular attendance hours and outside the overnight hours of 11:00 pm to 7:00 am. Let's not play semantics and leave it open to various interpretations of what constitutes required work and on-call work. All work on camp is required work as it is all hands on deck at all times. Now that we are thankfully paying staff for the overnight component and outside the school budget, let's extend this to payment for other hours accrued outside the regular hours of attendance.

The Department states that *a school camp is an important curriculum, engagement and wellbeing activity for students* and that **there is an expectation** that school camps will continue. No one is more well versed of the benefits of camp than principals and school staff however camps **are not a compulsory curriculum offering** but rather an extra curricula activity, thus to expect schools to deliver camps whilst meeting time-in-lieu obligations and in the absence of appropriate funding and resources, makes such events unsustainable.

DE IT Services in School Policy

On 9th May [The Technologies and ICT Services in Schools policy](#) appeared in the School Update, stating that *"by the end of 2028 schools will be required to have migrated their school-managed technologies to department-provided technologies where available. Schools must not adopt different technologies where the department technology provides the same service."* The rationale for this broad policy is that "increased cyber security risk and emerging regulatory standards means it is no longer appropriate for schools to operate separate technology environments". The policy outlines a list of [Foundational Technology Services for Schools \(FTS4S\)](#) which "will likely expand as the program progresses." This list already includes staff laptops, collaboration spaces (Google Workspace for Education and Microsoft 365), Internet service, amongst a wide-ranging list of technology & service categories.



While we wholeheartedly support the aims of the policy to improve cyber-security in schools, principals are questioning how they can possibly comply with the policy. In its present form the policy requires discarding years of investment which would reduce teacher confidence, classroom capabilities, access to assistive technologies, and much more. Principals are distressed that this policy will send their school backwards.



Communication: A very important leadership tool.

Speaking

- O Use right volume, tone and rate of speech
- O Use effective modulation and pause
- O Keep focused on key points. Don't ramble.
- O Explain special or unusual terms you use; avoid jargon when you can.

Presenting

- O Have thoughts well organised
- O Make clear opening and closing comments including acknowledging traditional owners
- O Maintain eye contact as you speak
- O Convey confidence and enthusiasm
- O Use AV aids appropriately
- O Mix up the activities: Present and group conversations with feedback

Written Comms

- O Provide clear, simple messages
- O Be sensitive to the readers
- O Ensure others proof-read for clarity and accuracy

Julie Podbury, DAFIN Consulting

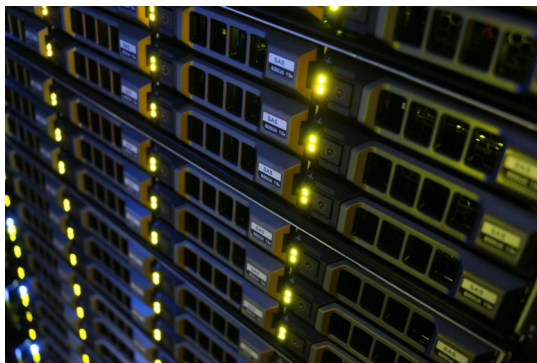
The proposed policy sounds great in theory, but it does not offer any real benefits to the people who will be using it the most: students and teachers. The policy does not provide any additional support, flexibility, guidance, upskilling, or professional development. In fact, it actually takes away much of the flexibility that schools need to respond to their students' needs, safety concerns, wellbeing issues, etc.

The technologies and services that the policy requires schools to use may be significantly restricted and lacking in features when compared to the tools that schools already have today. For example, the policy requires that all schools use either the Google or Microsoft productivity suites (with many essential features missing). The department's implementation does not allow your timetables packages and student information systems to talk. This creates a lot of unnecessary work for teachers and administrators, and will make it more difficult for students to collaborate on projects.

Furthermore, the policy extends its reach to school infrastructure, including the wifi configuration. However, as an example it fails to consider that the department's wifi is incapable of supporting the seamless integration of a wide array of diverse tools. These tools may encompass essential elements such as speech-to-text functionality, visual aids, wireless devices for assisted communication, and even wifi-connected life support and health monitoring systems.

According to the SCL team (responsible for implementing this policy) only "60% of schools use department managed technologies in some capacity". One only needs to consider the complexity of your Edumail password as compared to any other email service in your life today to understand why. Embarrassingly the department has not consulted with schools to ask why 40% do not use the provided services. We know many of these schools cannot meet their needs with the currently provided DE systems.

Many schools already have tools well beyond the capability of those provided by DE. These include daily wellbeing reports to identify at-risk students, monitor inappropriate online behaviour, detect worrisome mental health patterns, and control access to unsafe websites, among others. However, Principals will be left grappling with why they must now rely on a year-long DE trials of less functional tools and all requests be directed to a centralised service desk to address local student issues. Informing the school community that these essential tools and capabilities are no longer accessible puts Principals in an impossible situation.



Technical solutions are often a solution to emerging issues such as the current mental health crisis, vaping, trespassing & violence. Technological solutions can be delivered quickly in order to address looming safety concerns. There are many examples where implementation cannot possibly be subject to a 12 month centralised trial project in which schools are left with little control over the outcome and in the meantime no tools to correct the student safety issues. The one size fits all approach of this policy is likely to perpetuate a widening resource gap between the private and public sector with private schools continuing to freely innovate. In this future, private schools will be even more equipped to out-compete public schools for staff, student outcomes & parent expectations.

There is no better example why schools need flexibility over their technology than our experience during remote learning where DE applauded schools for their sophisticated, prompt,



Support for members

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

However, from time to time you may be concerned about a colleague. Please do not hesitate in making contact with us so we can offer them appropriate support.

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timely and innovative responses, something other states could not achieve with their centralised approach to IT. As Principals, we experienced first hand just how ineffective and inefficient the DE service desk continued to be when schools did require additional functionality, software & systems during COVID. Ultimately it was the ability of local schools to respond flexibly with technology that made the greatest impact for students.



While a significant number of technical staff have raised concerns about how the policy can possibly be implemented or complied with, it is particularly worrying that **policymakers seem to believe that the policy enjoys widespread support, pointing out that very few principals or SEIL's have voiced any concerns thus far.**

Although framed as an IT policy, technology underpins almost all school functions. A policy with such broad

scope requires principal input to ensure that DE is in-fact supporting the schools in which they serve. We should all be concerned about further erosion of the Principal autonomy to make informed decisions about how best to improve our schools. **We ask that all Principals provide feedback to your SEIL, Regional director, school council & the SCL team seeking more consultation and flexibility.**

Multifactor Authentication for eduPay

As part of the department's enhanced security strategy, all school-based employees with HR Admin privileged access are required to set up Multifactor Authentication (MFA) to access eduPay from 1 July.

Guidance has been developed in order to undertake the process in registering for MFA, with support materials and training courses available as listed below.

The guidance does require the use of an individual's mobile phone and some members have expressed concern about using a personal device for work intended purposes. Whilst the use of a mobile phone is preferable, if a school-based employee does not want to use their personal mobile phone, doesn't have a work mobile, has poor cellular reception, an old phone or MS Authenticator is not supported, the alternative method of MFA is via a phone call to the office landline. This will need to be set up to a direct phone number that is directly reachable, so not an extension or switchboard/reception.

The MFA for eduPay initiative does require 2 methods to be set up, so if these employees are happy to receive an SMS to their mobile number (personal) it is the Department's preferred option for their second method. Remembering this is a **back up option only** and will only be used in the instance that the first method is unavailable (office line is unavailable/disconnected etc).

This way there is no requirement to set up anything on your personal mobile, you are just receiving a text message with a number code if the office phone is down.

Support is available via [Services Portal](#), Schools: 1800 641 943 or email servicedesk@education.vic.gov.au

MFA Support Material

[MFA 1 Page Quick Guide](#)

[QRG – Registering MFA for eduPay](#)

[Installing MS Authenticator to your Mobile Phone](#)

[DE Services Portal](#)



David Finnerty, Julie Podbury and Loretta Piazza deliver leadership programs in schools. Our **Emerging Leaders Program** has been very successful in five schools.

DAFIN are also **Coaching** the Leadership Team in other schools.

Limited Vacancies for 2024.



Please contact David on 0412 927 007 or Julie on 0419 103 664 for further information

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Staffing concerns in the school, Metro Secondary Principal

It is of increasing concern to me the manner in which staff shortages are impacting on the operations of my school. Throughout the year, we have at various times been understaffed in terms of our ability to have a full number of teachers as required by the timetable.

Even when I have had enough of a workforce to do this, it does not mean we have staff to operate other programs such as TLI or even the full curriculum – I have had to apply for an exemption to teach Languages as there is no one I am able to hire.

External professional development is virtually impossible. I rarely attend network meetings as my Assistant Principals are often called away to cover classes and I am needed to be in the Administration building. Last week I had a day with 7 teachers away and I was unable to get any CRT's to cover these absences. We are often resorting to classes of 50 with one teacher and one Education Support staff member trying to manage the class and deliver learning.

The stress of this is having a huge impact on all programs at the school. I have cancelled excursions (especially the less popular sporting activities, and extra-curricular activities and told staff not to run lunch time activities as they need to be available to cover yard duty).

I have mentioned to my SEIL that I am very worried about my capacity to fulfil the AIP, let alone ensure that student data shows a continuous improvement. The understanding from Region that schools in my situation should not have an assessment in the Differentiated School Performance Groups when we are struggling to safely supervise students is nil.

Instead, I was advised to make sure I did not let the school community know why activities were not running. It was stated to me that 'other Principals' have told families and got into trouble for doing so'. So one might ask is the preferred position that we are to have families think we are just not delivering a comprehensive program? Or have them come and ask us why school X, Y or Z is running camps that we are not?

One consideration is for Principals to be given permission to have some year levels be on staggered timetables before we lose more of our workforce to other industries. Regions should be once more sending staff to work in schools rather than have them delivering programs we are unable to implement. There is a crisis in the system which needs ongoing coordinated, sensible, short-term responses in order to fully support schools rather than schools feeling they are left to try and manage as best they can.

Adjustments and allowances need to make allowances for schools in this situation. We need to be honest and frank with our communities about what is happening in schools. It is widely recognised that this will be the situation for a number of years and rather than have us limp along, schools need to be empowered to make decisions based on our daily challenges.



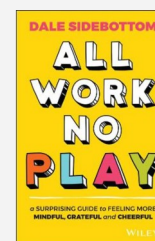
PLAY

We don't grow old and stop playing, but when we stop playing we grow old.

The older we get, the more daunting and scary it can be to add play to everyday life. People don't want to be judged or

show signs of vulnerability, which can be a side effect of play. It only takes one brave soul to initiate some form of play - opening the door for others do the same - and life becomes joyful, and full of laughter, movement and connection.

Think back to a situation you were in where a form of play would have changed the mood. This could be a job interview, a meeting or an awkward dinner with people you didn't really know.



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website

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2023 Funded Places available

Mapped to the Australian Curriculum, and included in the Be You Programs Directory and the Victorian Schools Mental Health Menu, the **Smiling Mind Primary School Program** helps schools implement and sustain meaningful and impactful change for students, teachers and the wider school community. Since February 2020, we have delivered the Smiling Mind Primary School program to schools across Australia.

Limited Free Places Available Now:

The Australian Government has generously provided funding for 1,100 primary schools to participate in our evidence-based whole-school social and emotional learning program in 2023. This is open to schools who are new to Smiling Mind, and those who've completed Smiling Mind program(s) in the past.

Valued at up to \$8,990, the funded places provides the following:

- 12-month subscription to the **Smiling Mind Classroom Curriculum**, which has **120 pre-prepared SEL lesson plans**, and can save teachers valuable time in planning & delivering the SEL curriculum
- **Mindfulness Foundations Course** - a self-paced online professional development course for educators (90mins)
- Access to **webinars** on specialist topics (including Educator Wellbeing, ADHD, and Trauma)
- Access to regular Live Practice sessions for Educators as part of Smiling Mind's online community
- Additional digital & printable **resources** for educators, students & parents
- (NEW schools only) A live-online facilitator school **staff workshop** 'Working with the Primary Classroom Curriculum' to support schools implementing the program.

How to find out more or apply:

Want to apply now? [Apply here](#) (3 mins with principal endorsement needed)

Interested but need more info? Email: education@smilingmind.com.au

Read more about the Smiling Mind Primary Schools Program [here](#)

Impact of the Program:

We're seeing very positive results from schools that have participated:

- Most students (73%) find Smiling Mind helpful, with key benefits including being more focused on schoolwork (34%); calming down during worry (29%); and feeling less worried about schoolwork (24%).
- Educator confidence to discuss and teach SEL and mindfulness concepts increased substantially over the duration of the program – from 51% at commencement to 96% at completion.
- 100% of participating educators observed benefits from the program.
- Educators themselves experienced statistically significant improvements in wellbeing after participating in the program.

You can read more about our recent program evaluation by the Australian Council of Education Research [here](#).

If you have any questions, please contact education@smilingmind.com.au.



Prepare yourself to empower others.

Empowerment is a management term that consistently fails to live up to its promise, in large part because leaders find it difficult to give up control. They see their role and status as tightly linked to their decision-making authority.

Prepare yourself to delegate decisions by:

- Reflecting on what has held you back from empowering people in the past. Was it a failure when you tried? What could you have done differently to make it a success? What were your feelings when you delegated, and what can you learn from them? What will it take to make the first step?
- Planning for a staggered transition of responsibilities, starting with giving low-risk decisions to capable people. This helps build up confidence in yourself and others before you distribute responsibility more widely.
- Considering it an opportunity to increase the quality of your decision-making and to explore other aspects of your role, such as innovation and growth, as you free yourself from some of your managerial responsibilities.

Reminding yourself why you're doing this — which should be to give people an opportunity to develop and harness their (often greater) insight into the product, service, or market in question.

Acknowledgement: David Lancefield in Harvard Business Review: "5 Strategies to Empower Employees to Make Decisions" March 2023. <https://hbr.org/2023/03/5-strategies-to-empower-employees-to-make-decisions>

from Hippocampus 5,
an email publication of
Principal's Digest

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