

Friday 1 March 2019

Education Updates

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Australian Government Names Institutions who haven't Joined Redress Scheme

The Australian Government has published a list of institutions, including schools, which have joined the National Redress Scheme for survivors of institutional sexual abuse, and a list of those which have not. [Click here to read more...](#)

Growing Up in the Country shouldn't be a Disadvantage, says Tehan

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2019 Schools Plus Smart Giving Applications Open

Schools Plus is inviting schools with a value of less than 1000 on the Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage to express interest in funding for projects that will 'transform their students' learning outcomes'. [Click here to read more...](#)

Parliamentary Insider

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The Queen's Commonwealth Essay Competition 2019

The Royal Commonwealth Society is inviting citizens of Commonwealth nations who are aged 18 and under to take part in the Queen's Commonwealth Essay Competition 2019. [Click here to read more...](#)

Please visit the Independent Schools Victoria website for seminars for [March 2019](#).

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Survey again Highlights Stresses on Principals

The latest annual report on the safety and wellbeing of Australian school leaders shows that violence and threats of violence against principals continues to be a problem, and that principals are still working too many hours per week for a healthy lifestyle.

[The 2018 Principal Health and Wellbeing Report](#), from the Institute for Positive Psychology and Education at the Australian Catholic University (ACU), is the eighth annual report on principal wellbeing. It provides longitudinal data based on cross-sectoral surveys of almost 6000 school leaders, and finds that:

- The proportion of principals who had been threatened rose from 38 per cent in 2011 to 45 per cent in 2018. More than a third of principals (37 per cent) suffered from actual physical violence in the previous year.
- The rate of threats of violence (up to 18 per cent) is much lower in Independent schools than in other sectors.
- The two greatest sources of stress for principals remain the 'sheer quantity of work' and 'lack of time to focus on teaching and learning'.
- Stress related to the mental wellbeing of staff and students has increased since 2011.
- Women have consistently worked in lower paid roles over the last eight years, earning on average \$5000.00 less per year than their male counterparts.
- Just over half (53 per cent) of the principals surveyed worked more than 56 hours per week during term. More than a quarter (24 per cent) worked more than 60 hours.

The author of the report, ACU Associate Professor Philip Riley, told *The Age* that while other 'frontline services' (such as paramedics and police) also faced more threats of violence, school staff weren't trained on how to respond to it.

'You are leaving people exposed to serious danger who are unprepared. If you are a police officer, you get some training in handling difficult situations, but teachers get nothing,' he said.

Australian Primary Principals Association President, [Mr Malcolm Elliott, said](#):

While welcome efforts have been made by systems and school communities to affect positively the circumstances of the principalship, the stressors for our school leaders have remained the same, and in many instances grown.

CEO of the Association of Heads of Independent Schools of Australia, [Ms Beth Blackwood, said](#) that principals were 'intrinsically motivated and values driven, and the community has a responsibility not to take advantage of this'.

She said that the survey's results sent a 'strong warning' that employers or parents who trade on principals' aspirations for their schools and students are 'putting principals' health and wellbeing at severe risk'.

- Principals facing rise in violence, threats. Jordan Baker, *The Age*, 27 February 2019
- Students, parents attacking teachers. Rebecca Urban. *The Australian*, 27 February 2019

Australian Government Names Institutions who haven't Joined Redress Scheme

The Australian Government has published a list of institutions, including schools, which have joined the National Redress Scheme for survivors of institutional sexual abuse, and a list of those which have not.

The Minister for Families and Social Services, [Paul Fletcher, said](#) that the Department of Social Services would maintain the list, [which is now live on its website](#).

The lists state if an institution has indicated that it intends to join, and if it has provided a likely timeframe, of when.

Mr Fletcher said that it was important for survivors of sexual abuse, and the broader community, to 'have access to a credible and authoritative source of information as to which institutions have, and have not yet, joined the National Redress Scheme'.

He said publication of the lists provided ‘transparency for people who have experienced abuse and may be considering applying for redress’.

Mr Fletcher said that the government expected ‘all institutions in which sexual abuse of children has occurred to be accountable for that abuse’ and join the scheme. Twenty-seven non-government schools have joined the scheme so far.

He said that the government also expected ‘other institutions which were not named where abuse occurred’ to join the scheme.

The Shadow Minister for Families and Social Services, [Linda Burney, said](#) that the government needed to do more to ‘make sure the National Redress Scheme is working for survivors’.

She said that ‘only 51 survivors’ had actually received redress, out of an estimated 60,000 survivors that were expected to apply, and that a ‘third of the 2728 survivors who have applied for redress are in limbo because the government has not secured the participation of all relevant institutions’.

Australian Greens Senator Rachel Siewart said that the government needed to do more to get institutions signed up to the redress scheme as soon as possible.

‘Any institution that was named during the Royal Commission should have well and truly signed up by now’, she said.

- Government must do more to get institutions signed up to redress scheme as soon as possible. Media Release, Rachel Siewart, 28 February 2019

Growing Up in the Country shouldn’t be a Disadvantage, says Tehan

A ‘more targeted and nuanced’ approach is needed when it comes to the preparation and recruitment of teachers for rural, regional and remote schools, says Australian Minister for Education Dan Tehan.

Mr Tehan made the education of students in non-metropolitan schools the focus of [his address to the Sydney Morning Herald Schools Summit](#) this week, saying that ‘every Australian child, no matter where they live, should have access to a world-class education’.

He said that despite non-city schools making up 47 per cent of all the schools nationwide, National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) results and Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS) data clearly showed that the ‘further away from a metropolitan area you go to school the more challenges you will face getting a quality education’.

He said the Australian Government was working to improve this through its schools reforms, by addressing Indigenous attainment and by improving teacher quality.

He rejected policies that would restrict entry into teaching degrees, saying that it was better to focus on ‘producing quality teachers by the end of their degree not at the start’. He said:

Surely the best way to develop a rural lens in teachers is to train teachers who come from rural and regional communities. That is why I am opposed to any policy that would restrict Indigenous, rural and regional students from studying teaching.

Helping non-metropolitan students become teachers, he said, was ‘essential to address the needs of rural, regional and remote communities’.

- Tehan warns against new teacher entry standards, Fergus Hunter, *Sydney Morning Herald*, 25 February 2019
- Students deserve teachers who are well-qualified. Editorial, *Sydney Morning Herald*, 25 February 2019

2019 Schools Plus Smart Giving Applications Open

Schools Plus are inviting schools with a value of less than 1000 on the Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage (ICSEA) to express interest in funding for projects that will 'transform their students' learning outcomes'.

The *Schools Plus* Smart Giving program was established in 2013 to 'improve the education outcomes of Australian students in need by increasing schools' access to philanthropy'. It has funded more than 500 projects around Australia since 2015.

The organisation will provide from \$20,000 to \$30,000 for individual school projects, or up to \$60,000 for projects submitted by a cluster of schools (4 to 10 schools).

Expressions of Interest submissions open on Monday 4 March and close Monday 1 April 2019. For more information, or to apply, contact *Schools Plus* [via email](#), on (02) 8880 0296, or [visit their website](#).

Parliamentary Insider

The Parliamentary Education Office (PEO) is offering schools a free, immersive way to bring Parliament into the classroom via video conferencing.

The program gives students the chance to talk to experts and learn how Parliament works. It links to the Australian Civics and Citizenship Curriculum and caters for students from years 5 to 12. The program explores:

- how laws are made through Parliament
- the responsibilities of representatives
- the formation of government
- how government is kept accountable.

For more information, or to book, head to the [PEO website](#).

The Queen's Commonwealth Essay Competition 2019

The Royal Commonwealth Society (RCS) is inviting citizens of Commonwealth nations who are aged 18 and under to take part in the Queen's Commonwealth Essay Competition 2016.

The competition gives all young Commonwealth citizens and residents, regardless of region, education or background, the opportunity to share ideas, celebrate their story and have their voice heard.

The overarching theme for 2019 is 'A Connected Commonwealth'. Junior and senior participants are invited to consider aspects of the theme and to express views in a creative manner.

The competition is open to all citizens and residents of the Commonwealth aged 18 and under and runs until Saturday 1 June 2019.

More information, including essay topics, can be found on [The RCS website](#).