

QASSP Position Statement: School Leader Retention and Principal Autonomy to Lead



QASSP Position: *To retain school leaders, the Department of Education should empower principals to deliver high performance cultures.*

Rationale

- Increasing prevalence of erosion of school leaders' ability to make decisions and/or manage schools due to centralisation and risk aversion.
- Significant evidence of principal dissatisfaction as evidenced by the Australian Principal Occupational Health, Safety and Wellbeing Survey.
- Average school leader age needs to be considered in the context of the removal of defined benefits superannuation and the move to accumulation and the impact this has on principal mobility and willingness to seek promotion across the state.
- Increase in community and student violence both physical and verbal.
- Conversion to permanency against principal recommendation on fit, financial or performance grounds significantly erodes principal ability to manage, and decision make within their school.
- Increased importance placed on parent/community complaints with multiple levels of complaint opportunities (for example, IERU, HRC, information privacy, corruption commission, legal, etcetera) is destroying the courage and joy of school leaders.
- Disconnect between needs of a school and service orientation of the system to enable schools to deliver for students.
- Parent right to appeal suspensions when in excess of 10 days for the year irrespective of the incident, for example physical injury to students and staff, undermines principal authority and staff and student wellbeing in the school.

Details

QASSP is calling for Department of Education provision of genuine consultation to achieve:

- service orientation focus as a support for principals in their school setting
- trust in principal decision making
- supported autonomy to ensure principal longevity in the organisation
- psychologically safe workplaces for principals and school leaders.

Opportunities for QASSP to achieve the desired position

- Liaise with relevant bodies including the Queensland Teachers' Union, QASSP advocacy subcommittees, Department of Education partners, and P&Cs Queensland.
- Raise the issue though *The Queensland Principal*, QASSP's quarterly journal.

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