



2019 Annual General Meeting - Co-Presidents' Report

The ACT Principals Association has the 'ACTPA Core Purpose' document to guide ACTPA activity. The following Strategic Intentions or *Pillars* represent the core of our work and for the structure of this annual report:

- **Advocacy**
- **Professional Learning**
- **Principal Wellbeing**
- **Research**

ADVOCACY

This year ACTPA enjoyed a productive and purposeful relationship with our Director-Generals, Natalie Howson and Meg Brighton. They and the senior officers have regularly engaged with members of our executive team at meetings. The DG/ACTPA meetings have established a place for open dialogue and have subsequently informed strategic actions and communication with school leaders regarding issues that impact on their daily work.

As a system, we entered 2019 with the clarity of the 2019-2021 Education Directorate Strategic Plan and a deepening engagement with the Future of Education Foundations and Principles. Throughout the year, members and colleagues have shown a professional resolve when contributing to the prominent government reviews into students' behaviour and school community safety. We actively engage with policy development, review and now have four Principal members on the new Policy and Procedures Review Group.

As each year passes, ACTPA continues to attract new members as we farewell colleagues. This has been sustained through the active engagement of ACTPA Executive with colleagues across the system, listening to what matters and bringing this back to inform our deliberations and advocacy.

ACTPA offers school leaders a strong professional network for a very low subscription. The annual allocation of \$25,000 for professional learning by the Education Directorate fosters, “for the profession, by the profession”, learning and development opportunities for members.

In a dynamic year for our association topics and areas of development that received our consideration and input included:

1. Principal Health and Wellbeing Strategy
2. Revised Principal Career Structure (contained in the EA)
3. Principal Capability Framework (supported by EA)
4. The 2019 Biennial Directorate Conference “The Leading Edge”
5. Bully and Violence in Schools - two governments review were conducted.
6. Review of the Suspension Policy
7. AITSL Review of Teacher Registration
8. Review of the Gifted and Talented Policy
9. Teacher Scholarship program
10. Public Education Awards
11. Teacher Transfer and Recruitment program

Each term ACTPA Executive representatives have also met with Education Minister, Yvette Berry. The meetings cover matters relevant to schools and school leadership. They continue to be productive discussions and fostered a strategic relationship between the ACT Government and school principals.

The landing of the 2019 Enterprise Agreement was a significant milestone for school leaders. The active engagement of ACTPA in the lengthy process of framing claims and working with the Directorate developing key salary reform components included in the Revised Principal Career Structure, position the ACT Principalship well for the future.

There is still work to be done to implement the Principal Capability Framework which will provide a complete approach for career management, leadership coaching and professional development. ACTPA can report from a recent meeting that the Directorate is seeing the Principal Capability Framework as a priority project aligned with the Empowering Leaders government initiative (supported from the \$5.4m funding for the next four years).

ACTPA representatives have had the opportunity for input into a full range of advisory groups, committees, forums and inquiries

- The Principal Health and Wellbeing Governance group
- ED's National Occupational Violence Forum
- Future of Australian Education Symposium (ASP/APP)
- TQI sub-committees - Professional Learning and Development, Initial Teacher Education, Standards and Professional Practice
- ED's Consultative committee (EA Implementation)
- ED's Policy and Procedures Reference Group (new in 2019)
- Domestic and Family Violence Working Group
- Legislative Assembly Inquiry into Violence and Bullying
- Professional Learning Planning for ED and ACTPA
- Revised Principal Career Structure Reference Group
- Business Managers' Advisory group
- BSSS Committees and Board
- Public Education Awards
- Teacher Scholarship panel
- Secondary Pathways Research (Commonwealth lead by Peter Shergold)
- Representation on behalf of the ACT Education Directorate at national and international forums and networks

Australian Secondary Principals' Association (ASP)

ACTPA has one representative on the Board of ASP, Michael Battenally. ASP has continued to lobby and advocate for public secondary schools. The news that the next national declaration for education will be confirmed in December 2019 is an outcome ASP has been contributing to for some time.

ASP continues to play a strategic role supporting cross jurisdictional sharing of reforms through the affiliates influencing Commonwealth and State/Territory policy. It is doing this with a clear understanding of and respect for the ever-changing educational landscape.

This year ASP convened the Future of Australian Education Symposium at the National Museum. The theme of the day came from the published ASP monologue, *Beyond Uncertainty: Towards a process for thinking about futures for Australian education*. This document was the culmination of an 18 month collaboration with the ASP Board by Professor Alan Reid AM. It challenges the certainty of current policies by pointing out that educational decision making is always context specific. All prominent national principal associations attended this forum and our DG at the time,

Natalie Howson, was on the concluding discussion panel with Pasi Salsberg. It was a significant national association approach where a communique for the commonwealth and states was developed.

Throughout 2019 ASPA affiliate jurisdictions continue to foster their work to support principal wellbeing. Our effort in the ACT acting on the nine recommendations of the ACT Principals' Health and Wellbeing Report, provides a strong contribution to the national effort. The ACT's 2019 National Forum on Occupational Violence demonstrated the ACT's lead in respect to Occupational Violence (OV) policy and practice. Nationally, jurisdictions are working to respond to this challenge, highlighting that violence is a community problem, not just a school problem.

ASPA has met with Minister Tehan this year to advance the priorities of public secondary education and particularly the priorities of principals. ASPA presented position papers to the Commonwealth Department of Education, where the work from our ACT jurisdiction continues to make a significant contribution.

Australian Government Primary Principals' Association (AGPPA) and Australian Primary Principals' Association (APPA).

Primary principal members of ACTPA are represented on two national groups, the Australian Primary Principals' Association and the Australian Government Primary Principals' Association. Wendy and Liz Bobos are both members of AGPPA and Liz also represents ACTPA on the National Advisory Council for APPA. We are privileged to represent and advocate for the ACT at these national bodies which continue to have a strong influential voice at the national level on primary education and school leadership.

Some of the major strategic work undertaken in the primary sector on the national scene this year includes: principal health and wellbeing, school leadership, valuing primary education, learning progressions and formative assessment, cultural competencies, violence in schools, considerations of the Disability Royal Commission, school staffing and facilities standards.

Both groups have provided submissions to the review of the Melbourne Declaration and NAPLAN, and have been consulted on the National Teacher Workforce Strategy, Teaching in rural and remote Australia, and Reducing Red Tape initiatives from the Federal Government.

We have had meetings with the Minister for Education Dan Tehan, Shadow Minister Tanya Plibersek, and Federal Education's Deputy Secretary Alex Gordon. We have ongoing relationships with ACARA, AITSL and ESO.

We've also had a number of interesting and influential guest speakers including the CEO of Early Childhood Australia, Australian Computer Academy, Phil Riley, Australian Securities and Investments Commission, Australian Council of State School Organisations and Michael Howton child psychologist.

Both AGPPA and APPA have refined their Strategic Plans and prior to the federal election in May, we lobbied with both sides of politics to outline the key issues for primary education.

This year's national APPA Conference was held in Adelaide, in 2020 Melbourne will host the Trans-Tasman Conference and we currently have a team of people working with colleagues from the NT to plan for our joint conference which will be held in Darwin in July (start planning now for a winter getaway).

PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

ACTPA launched a new model for professional development this year, beginning some routine opportunities on Thursday afternoons of weeks 3, 6 and 9.

- 'What can leaders learn about' series - service providers with Ross Hankins (automotive industry), lawyers with Gabrielle Sullivan (Bradley Allen Love) and journalists with Leigh Sales
- 'Connected People connecting with Research' series - with Steve Shann, Clair McGettrick (AFP), Penny Dakin, Diana Harris and Rebecca Goodhue (ARACY)
- 'Operational Study Group' series - with George Palavestra and Yehuwdiy Dillon, Leslie Anne Watson

We saw new faces at each of these events and the centrally placed venues we accessed (Terrace Cafe at Old Parliament House and The Canberra Yacht Club) worked well.

Media Training 4 July

A group of executive members worked with Media and Communications and recently retired ABC sports commentator Tim Gavel to skills us up when talking to the media.

Principal Health and Wellbeing Breakfast 12 September

To celebrate 12 months since the launch of the Principal Health and Wellbeing, we hosted a breakfast at the Yacht Club and provided an update of our progress on the recommendations

Business of Schools Series

The 2018 Business of Schools series spurred further collaboration with Business Manager's in 2019. The Principal's Advisory Group has included ACTPA representation, and invited a principal as MC of the Business Managers Forum. We are looking forward to further collaboration between ACTPA and BMAG/ BMA in 2020.

Bastow Institute Program

Identified as a strategy designed to build personal capability and to have a positive impact on principal wellbeing, the Directorate has now supported three groups of principals who have now been through the leadership development program facilitated by the Bastow Institute.

International Confederation of Principals Convention - Shanghai October 2019

ACTPA was represented by seven delegates attending three days of powerful keynotes and international workshops. Returning delegates have already provided presentations to Gungahlin, South/Weston and Tuggeranong networks.

(The next ICP Convention is 2021 in Toronto, which will be ten years since 2011 when Toronto hosted and the ACT sent a delegation of ten Principals)

PRINCIPAL WELLBEING

In September this year, we celebrated the first year of activity framed by the recommendations of the ACT Principal Health and Wellbeing Report. This work has been supported by the Principal Health and Wellbeing Governance Group, chaired by the Director General. Four ACTPA representatives and key directorate officers have carriage of this work.

On 12 September the Principal Health and Wellbeing Breakfast event provide a report across all 9 recommendations, celebrating this leading work and acknowledging the partnership and the progress made so far. The work of this initiative framed a workshop presentation at the ICP Convention in Shanghai in October. Michael Hall and Michael Battenally presented an overview of the 2018 wellbeing research conducted in the ACT and the progress made in the first year of implementing the recommendations.

ACTPA thanks the ACT Education Directorate for their partnership and support to establish the Principal Wellbeing Strategy this year. This has been a significant milestone in advocacy and support for ACT school leaders.

The national Principal Health and Wellbeing survey was conducted again this year and we anticipate results for the ACT will be available early in 2020. This will be the ninth year of the longitudinal survey.

Global Challenge – Team Wellbeing Challenge

From 5 September, 21 ACTPA members across three teams have been involved in the Virgin Pulse 100 Day Global Challenge. With 16 days to go until the Virgin Pulse report is to be presented, all three teams are continuing to register their daily wellbeing activities. The final team reports will provide aggregated details that will inform consideration of similar activities in the future. What works for each individual and what is the benefit (or not) of such a team endeavour?

After 84 days the local leaderboard has the 7-person team distance totals at **ACTPA-Eagles** (4,323km), **ACTPA-Cockatoos** (4,297km) and **ACTPA-Emus** (4,082km). Participants gain steps for walking, running, and a range of exercise activities. At this stage it looks like the average daily steps for each team member will exceed 10,000 which is a fantastic sustained effort. For those who also participated in 2018, comparative wellbeing feedback across both years is provided to individuals.

RESEARCH AND INNOVATION

The Principals Australia Research Foundation (PARF)

PARF was established this year. Funded by the legacy of the retired Principals Australia Institute, this entity is a body that will fund research grants for projects that will have an impact with long-term beneficial outcomes for education.

This funding will be made to Principal Associations (ACTPA) to undertake research and development in school leadership and effective leadership practice. At a recent ACTPA Executive meeting the intention was to establish a PARF proposal to research, The Principal role was supported and will be progressed as an initial 2020 focus.

Principal Autonomy Research Project

The Australian Secondary Principals' Association is working with Monash University to study the effects of autonomy and accountability on principals' work. The ACTPA Executive has been nominated for this study which involves a 10-minute anonymous survey and 30-40 minute interview to understand issues associated with principal workload, leadership practices, and career experiences as Australian principals.

If any other principal is interested in participating in an interview, please contact amanda.heffernan@monash.edu to schedule an interview.

2019 ICP Convention Shanghai (Workshop) - “Our Principal Wellbeing - Making a Difference”

Michael Hall and Michael Battenally presented an overview of the 2018 wellbeing research conducted in the ACT and the progress made in the first year of implementing the recommendations. The workshop audience included international principals where support for their wellbeing varies significantly. Australia is among a few nations where many years of research is now having an impact. Of note was that Finnish principals were very interested in the ACT strategy as they are in their first year of the Principal Health and Wellbeing Survey - we are in our eighth!

SPONSORS

Special thanks to all our sponsors; please support them as they support us! See our website www.actpa.com.au and download the free ACTPA App for details. Our Platinum Sponsors are the Teachers Mutual Bank (which has supported us for many years) and new to our association are Footsteps and School Photographer. We welcome Naomi from TMB and Garrick from the School Photographer who are both with us tonight. We want to pay particular thanks to Executive members Chris Jones and Kim McCormack who have been such a brilliant duo in securing these wonderful sponsors.

THANK YOU

Thank you to all members who attended the professional learning activities during the year. Your collegiality and capacity as professional educators provide the motivation and purpose for the work of our association.

Thank you to our Directors-General, Natalie Howson and Meg Brighton, and the key senior executive for the open door they provide for listening to ACTPA and more importantly the leaders in all schools. In 2019 the active partnership with the Education Directorate executive team has enabled members to co-design contributions to professional learning, strategic planning and a host of critical operational matters.

Our Vice Presidents Wendy Cave and Andy Mison, and the Executive team members have worked tirelessly in 2019 and we thank them for their ongoing commitment to ACTPA. ACT principals have represented our colleagues in many forums; on committees, advisory bodies, and on working groups. Your contributions individually and collectively have kept us wise and well. Thanks to Mark Eyles for ensuring we had the right papers, minutes and regular information sharing.

The final word.....

We are so proud to be a part of this association but ACTPA isn't about us, it isn't about our wonderful executive team. It's about every principal and every deputy in our system. Those of us who sit on the executive group are passionate about what ACTPA stands for, the principal class it represents and whose interests we lobby for. Tonight we are going to pay tribute to 6 of our finest who have made the decision to move to the next chapter of their lives.

We know we are going to hear from them during our dinner but we wanted to pay particular tribute to the enormous contribution that these principals, Melissa Travers, Linda Heath, Felicity Bruce, Bruce McCourt, Susan Skinner and Daniel Zobel have made to public education both in the ACT, nationally and internationally. The students and teachers whose lives you've touched are better because of you, so thank you.

And thank you to everyone for another year of support and professional involvement.

Liz Bobos
ACTPA Co-President (Primary)

Michael Battenally
ACTPA Co-President (Secondary)

