



Victorian Principals Association

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VPA - Connected, United and Powerful

Quote:

“Well done is better than well said.”

~ Benjamin Franklin

VPA eletter No 2 - February 2011

About the VPA.....

The Victorian Principals Association aims to provide a range of key services and support for leaders in Victorian government primary schools. It provides **professional services**, advice through **Field Officers, Project Officers** and support to members around the **day to day operation of schools** e.g. SSSO processes, BER, Edupay, English On Line, OHSC, Network organisation. There are regular **Board, Council and regional meetings** with plenty of feedback and discussion time. Members receive a weekly eletter about current issues.

A vital role of VPA is **to advocate** for members on school based issues. This takes the form of working with governments, both state and federal, DEECD personnel and the media. Many of the VPA perspectives on school based issues are formed through listening to members in Hot Topics sessions and then creating **Position Papers** which are tested by surveys to all members. The VPA provides **Professional Learning** for leaders across a range of issues. Where a need arises for information, the VPA arranges Forums or Think Tanks e.g. to respond to the issues of small schools.

The VPA works alongside secondary colleagues in VASSP to share many of the Professional Learning forums. The VPA is **Connected, United and Powerful** and works to grow excellent school leaders across Victoria.

VPA Advocates For and On Behalf of Members

Victorian Ministers for Education

The Age ran an article recently about our two new Ministers- Hon. Martin Dixon and Hon. Peter Hall. It was excellent to note that the VPA position was quoted a number of times. This is excellent news for school leaders as our perspective is being heard. Click [here](#) to read the full article.

VPA Meeting with the Victorian State Government Ministers and Advisors

Recently the VPA met with **Hon. Peter Hall MLC** – Minister for Skills and Workforce Participation, Minister for Tertiary Education and Training, and the Minister Responsible for the Teaching Profession and the **Hon. Martin Dixon MP** – Minister for Education – Schools.

It was an excellent meeting where we presented the following position papers and areas of concern from our members' perspectives - **Consultation, \$100 anomaly money, English On Line, Reducing Red Tape, OH&S, Edupay, SSSO restructure, Teacher Rewards, Ultranet, Networks, Welfare officers, Current commitment to facilities, Resources – SRP, National Partnerships, Australian Curriculum and National Professional Standards for teachers and principals (AITSL).**

VPA Minister's Meeting with the Hon. Wendy Lovell Minister for Early Childhood Development & Minister for Housing.

We had a good meeting highlighting the transition between kindergarten and school focusing on transition statements. Out of School Hours Care was discussed with changes to the National Requirements. We also tabled the VPA School Nursing Position paper. Concern was expressed about recent changes which meant that not every prep child was being assessed as had occurred in the past. We were assured that this meeting was the beginning of an ongoing consultation process between the Government and the VPA.

Edumail Mailbox Expansion – negotiations with DEECD – Erle Bourke

We have had great concern regarding the limiting size of Edumail mailboxes. It was anticipated that principals' mailboxes would increase in size since the introduction of EduPay, but this has yet to happen. ITD has assured me that the Exchange 2010 project will see the current Edumail system upgraded to the latest Microsoft email system. The transition to the new platform should occur by the start of Term 2, 2011. Migration is planned to commence in March. The VPA will monitor this space.

Further update on Cleaning for your planning from DEECD – Finance Area

1. Cleaning allocations will be increased by approximately 3.1% from 1 January 2011 to reflect recent cost pressures in the industry. This is in addition to the current indexation of 1.5% with the 2011 indicative SRP.
2. Schools with new BER facilities will have an appropriate cleaning allocation from the date of occupancy.
3. Where the ratio of high and low use cleaning area for the school has changed as a result of the BER project, the school council may consider renegotiating the cleaning contract.
4. Schools are able to calculate normal and low use areas from the table in the SRP guide for the purpose of school cleaning allocations. This may be useful as a guide.

It is suggested when calculating your new floor space and entering into a new contract with your cleaners make sure you do it **pending** adjustments to the cleaning schedule in the confirmed SRP in April 2011.

Unite Members and Provide Professional Services



2011 VPA & VASSP Annual Conference

The joint VPA and VASSP Conference is centred around **Building Educational Capacity – Enhancing Leadership Potential**. The combined 1 day conference and annual general dinner will be held on **Monday 1 August** the **Crown Conference Centre** in Melbourne. Speakers include **Saul Eslake, Wendy McCarthy, Professor Barry McGaw, Professor Richard Teese** and our special guest speaker is **Anh Do**. The MC is **Jenny Brockie** from SBS Insight. Please put this major event into your diary. Registration will be open soon.

ICP Conference 15 – 18 August Toronto 2011

The next ICP Convention will be held in Toronto, Canada on 15-18 August 2011 at the Metro Toronto Convention Centre. Registrations are still open. Click [here](#) to go to the Conference website for more information, including the three hotels made available for delegates attending the convention. The idea is to have a VPA cocktail party on Tuesday 16 August at a venue to be decided.

VPA China Instructional Leadership - China Study Tour - 18th September – 1st October, 2011 An amazing opportunity for you!



VPA Life Member, Aileen Hall is planning a second study tour to China in 2011, after last year's tour being such a great success. An exciting MOU partnership between the VPA and Jiangsu Education Bureau (JESIE) China has been established.

This tour will give an invaluable insight into the Chinese educational system, the teaching of Chinese and an understanding of the Chinese culture through working in schools across Shanghai, Suzhou and Nanjing. You will discover firsthand the importance of developing a meaningful Asian Studies curriculum in your own schools. One of the most significant things participants took from this experience last year was the development of sister school relationships forged between the schools visited and their own schools back home in which letters and email are exchanged between students and staff.

"The opportunity to gain insight into another education system and to compare and contrast it with our own proved to be an outstanding experience. We visited 5 schools to observe classroom instruction, student learning, teacher professional development and school operations. To view school assemblies, a range of lessons across a range of curriculum areas and student performances was a great experience."

~James Bell (Principal, Brentwood Park Primary School and 2010 China Study Tour participant)

Some amazing sight-seeing will consist of visiting the Nanjing wall and the Nanjing Brocade Museum and going on a Shanghai night river cruise and exploring the Shanghai temple market. It is anticipated that the tour would cost \$4900. This is a rare opportunity to access really high level Professional Learning inside the Chinese culture. I do thank Aileen for her fantastic connections and work to bring Australia and China closer. Please send me an email if you are interested in finding out more. **There will be a minimum and maximum number for the tour so please let us know of your interest ASAP.** There will be an information session in March.

VPA Facilitates Collegiate Support for Members

The Australian Child and Adolescent Trauma, Loss and Grief Network

The Australian Child and Adolescent Trauma, Loss and Grief Network (ACATLGN) has recently updated the training and conference information available on their [website](#).

You can find a range of conferences and training that will be available Australia wide over the next twelve months.

2011 Schools Clean Up Day

Register now for the 2011 Schools Clean Up Day happening on Friday 4 March 2011. Make a difference to your local environment! Last year's Clean Up involved more than 470,000 students across 2,100 schools Australia wide. Inspiring children to care for the environment is a vital part of Clean Up Australia. Register [here](#).

ACARA Update

The latest ACARA Update is now out. It includes information regarding curriculum development in Languages, Geography, Technologies and dates for NAPLAN tests. Click [here](#) to read in full.

KidsMatter

KidsMatter Primary is an Australian mental health promotion, prevention and early intervention initiative that aims to improve the mental health of primary school age children. It involves the people and organisations who significantly influence these children's lives – schools, teachers, parents, carers, health agencies and community groups – in making a positive difference to children's mental health and wellbeing. Below are a couple quotes from principals who have been involved with KidsMatter;

"Look it really works. It can change school culture, which changes the way kids relate. It really does. By having that focus and by really thinking about how kids relate to one another; how the staff relate to the children and teaching them a set of relationship skills to help them cope. You can really make a profound difference in your school and in those children's lives..... I think that there has been a fairly profound effect and one of the best parts of KidsMatter I think it's changed culture and focus within the school community." *Principal*

"It has change school culture, I think. it's changed the way the school views mental health. It's given a greater awareness, but it's also changed the way, I think, people relate to one another, particularly the students, and the way the classrooms operate." *Principal*

Visit the [website](#) to learn more.

VPA Connects & Enlists Members



Why join the VPA? A member's experience...

I joined the VPA upon entering the Principal Class as I wanted to be involved with a professional organisation that represented and understood the issues I faced in my role. The VPA has enabled me to keep abreast of current topics of interest and has provided me with a voice to contribute to the education agenda. I particularly like the opportunities to provide feedback on the position papers that represent the views of the members. Additionally the professional learning opportunities provided are current, topical and relevant to my role.

I have gained information through both regional meetings and as a councillor. This has enabled me to make more informed decisions when leading my school and afforded me the chance to develop stronger collegiate links.

My belief in the support offered by the VPA prompted me to join my school's leading teachers as associate members. We all enjoyed the recent conference together and were able to use this along with the Leadership in Focus and eletter publications as points of reference and discussion at our leadership meetings. Most importantly to me though is the knowledge that I know that there is always someone on the other end of the phone who cares about my job.

~Anne-Maree Kliman, Principal St Albans East Primary School

Interesting websites...

[Australian Inspiration](#) is a unique and uniquely Australian project dedicated to capturing and celebrating the collective wisdom and inspiration of Australians through quotes that inspire and motivate.

[Teachers Pet](#) is a free resource site for teachers. The site features lots of downloadable resources, in different subject areas, for Foundation stage, Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 classrooms.

The creators of the site are also keen to receive suggestions, so teachers can get in touch with them and request

resources. You can find out more about the site on [their blog](#), [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#) pages.

Kind regards,

Gabrielle Leigh
VPA President

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