

### SCHOOLS PORTFOLIO CONFERENCE REPORT – 2020

Since conference last year, the main areas the Schools Portfolio have been lobbying for include:

#### **Long term acting executive positions situation**

Extensive and promising discussions with the Department identified the following points:

- Acting positions of over 18 months were identified as being problematic, however there are workplace entitlements which allow principals to take leave from substantive positions and still have their job remain.
- In regard to schools where issues are arising from long term acting positions (other than those where maternity or Long Service Leave are involved), communication should initially always be with the relevant Regional Office.

#### **P-10 schools being included in bypass schools**

The Department is about to conduct a review of the bypass system. ICPA Qld requested that they be involved in this review as a key stakeholder, and this was positively taken on board.

#### **Behaviour Management**

As far as seeking additional staffing resources for serious behaviour issues in rural and remote schools is concerned, the Department reiterated that Principals have access to:

- Their own discretionary funding which they can redirect and utilise as needed – including for extra behaviour management requirements.
- Extra funding can also be made available through the Whole School Support – Student Learning Resource (WSS-SLR) program, and regional office support.

There is currently a Behaviour Management Review underway. Schools are also being supported/resourced through:

- Staff training in Bullying programs, Positive Behaviour through Learning (PBL) Program, Functional Behaviour Assessment (FBA) and the 'Our Watch' trial where respectful relationships are the main focus of the curriculum.

In regard to inappropriate behaviour from school staff, there is a DoE investigation process when complaints against teachers are lodged. The school community may not see the consequences of the employee's actions and perceive this as 'inaction' on the department's behalf. This is not often the case.

#### **Chaplaincy Program**

Funding for the Chaplaincy program has ceased. Affected schools will be asked if they want a chaplain or a welfare worker. The Department will collect the information and collate data. This decision will be based on need.

#### **Moratorium on school closures**

The department continues to undertake monitoring of enrolment growth, student and school infrastructure needs, and assessment of a range of factors when considering the future viability of schools. A part of these monitoring activities, serious consideration is placed on environmental and community factors such as drought. Any decisions will be made on a case-by-case basis after extensive community consultation, on behalf of the Minister for Education.

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