

Media Release

March 15, 2022

Increased support for school leaders still a top priority

The Australian Catholic Primary Principals' Association (ACPPA) says the release today of the Australian Principal Occupational Health & Wellbeing Survey reveals the toll of COVID-19 on school leaders as well as the increased burn out and stress level experienced at the highest levels since the survey began.

Now in its 11th year, the longitudinal study surveyed 2590 school leaders across all states and territories and made policy recommendations to both government and key stakeholders.

The findings show that while School leaders continued to report high satisfaction with Meaning of Work, Commitment to the Workplace, and Self-efficacy and support from external colleagues is at its highest, there is still serious concern with Burnout and Cognitive Stress. The busyness of a Principal's working life, coupled with the effects of the pandemic have contributed to increased risk to their quality of life.

Peter Cutrona, President of ACPPA, expressed continuing concern over the ever-increasing workload of leaders and the worsening results of burn out, sleeping troubles, stress and depressive symptoms. "COVID-19 has had a huge impact and the resultant red flags for Principal wellbeing, especially in early career Principals, is of great concern" Mr Cutrona said.

ACPPA is deeply aware of the long-term costs for our sector and welcomes the recommendations put forward in the report. The desire to develop and implement coherent national teaching workforce training, supply, retention and remuneration policies and practices are key to ensuring a strong and quality workforce of capable and nurtured leaders. We applaud the vision to engage directly with principals on reducing job demands or increasing job resources as well as the initiatives to increase support in local school communities.

As a national association, ACPPA have worked to address these issues in practical ways and created a Principal wellbeing portal for Catholic Primary Principals.

Since launching in 2020, **ACPPAConnect** has expanded its reach and grown to offer a wide range of resources to **inspire, educate and empower** principals across the country to take control of and prioritise their health and wellbeing.

ACPPA has listened to Principals and delivered an industry-leading, free platform in a desire to *provide practical support* for each of them in the light of the complex work they do in communities each and every day.

After a successful first year, with support and engagement from Principals, conversations with diocesan offices and professional associations throughout the country, ACPPAConnect is growing and, in collaboration with **CaSPA – Catholic Secondary Principals Australia**, will **now be offered to ALL Catholic Principals** in Australia, with the new name **ACPPConnect**

ACPPConnect.

Empowering principals across Australia to thrive.

ACPPConnect officially launches on March 20th, 2022

The Australian Catholic Primary Principals' Association (ACPPA) represents over 1240 Catholic Primary School Principals across Australia and is the peak body for Catholic Primary Principals

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