

August 2025

On July 21, 2025, Australia's two national peak bodies for public school principals and leaders, the Australian Secondary Principals' Association (ASPA) and the Australian Government Primary Principals' Association (AGPPA), convened for the first time, representing over 11,000 leaders from 7,500 government schools serving 2.8 million students.

United by our commitment to equity and excellence in education, this joint statement reflects our shared objectives towards achieving a world-leading, child-centred education system led by healthy and effective professional educators.

Policy Priorities for a World-Leading Education System

1. Principal Wellbeing & Efficacy

Objective: Retain and sustain highly professional principals and school leaders.

Key Outcomes:

- Reduced workload and stress, and a sustainable career for principals and school leaders
- Realistic understanding and appropriate classification of the contemporary principals' role
- Recognition of principals and school leaders as respected educational experts and community leaders

● **Strategies:**

- Advocate for effective action on principal wellbeing
- Include clinical wellbeing measures in the ATWD survey
- Implement direct workload reduction measures through additional support personnel and efficient systems
- Introduce legislative protections to support psychosocial safety and wellbeing for educators
- Government funded scholarships for public principals to undertake sabbaticals
- Develop an industry benchmarked, contemporary, consistent, national role description for principals

2. Occupational Violence

Objective: Ensure safe school environments for staff and students.

● **Key Outcomes:**

- Clearer roles and responsibilities for principals and school leaders in addressing violence
- Appropriate community understanding and confidence in schools' purpose
- Safe and welcoming school environments for staff and students

● **Strategies:**

- Implement strong legislative protections, harmonised across jurisdictions to address occupational violence
- Improve data and reporting systems to inform action
- Provide immediate and ongoing support for victims
- Develop public campaigns to build confidence and support for schools, and address in-school violence

3. Policy Design and Collaboration

Objective: Embedded consultation and collaboration between systems and school leaders.

● **Key Outcomes:**

- Effective school policy design and implementation
- Strengthened system/practitioner consultation and collaborative processes

● **Strategies:**

- Prioritise and sustain productive policy collaboration and consultation between systems and school leaders

- Develop principal and school leaders' capabilities to inform and lead reforms
- Strengthen collaboration between principals' peak bodies
- Deepen principals' peak bodies' relationships with parent and industrial organisations

4. National Education Policy Reform

Objective: An equitable, aligned and productive national education system.

Key Outcomes:

- Increased alignment, coherence, and equity in education agencies, systems and policy
- Central national role for principals' associations in achieving better, fairer education outcomes
- Increased socio-economic and cultural diversity and reduced concentration of disadvantage in Australia's schools

- **Strategies:**

- Strengthen the effective working relationship between principals and the federal department of education, national education statutory authorities (AITSL, ACARA, AERO, ESA, ACECQA), and policy makers (Education Ministers -EMM, Senior Officials -AESOC & SPG)
- Streamlined national registration for educators
- Engage Principals' national peak bodies in the design of Better Fairer Schools Funding Agreement (BSFA) Enabling Initiative implementation plans (i.e. measurement frameworks, USI use cases, SRS reviews)
- Increase federal funding to national public principals' associations as key policy partners
- Advocate for ongoing harmonisation of funding and regulatory frameworks for all Australian schools

5. Leadership Support & Development

Objective: World leading best practice in school leadership across Australia.

Key Outcomes:

- Consistent, high-quality leadership pathways for principals and school leaders
- Improved succession planning and career support for principals
- Retention of experienced principals through flexible work opportunities and sector equivalent remuneration and conditions

- **Strategies:**

- Trust and empower principals and school leaders to undertake appropriate professional development
- Strengthen mentoring and technical leadership training for principals at all experience levels
- Review and update AITSL leadership standards to align with modern demands
- Build collaboration between jurisdictions to optimise leadership development for school leaders
- Enable system leaders to spend time in schools to better understand challenges

6. Student Wellbeing, Engagement, and Safety

Objective: Flourishing students and healthy, vibrant schools.

- **Key Outcomes:**

- Improved student wellbeing, engagement, and retention in education
- Cross-sector and inter-agency collaboration to address student needs
- A well-rounded curriculum that supports the holistic development of every child

- **Strategies:**

- Foster information sharing and engagement between sectors and agencies
- Prioritise targeted support for low SES families and ensure equitable access to wellbeing programs
- Increase autonomy and trust for principals and school leaders to determine the appropriate curriculum balance for their context