

Dear Colleagues

As you return to your school after a well-deserved break it is opportune to begin by mentioning the highlight of Term Three. The APPA National Conference in Hobart, where over 500 principals from around Australia together with visiting principals from PNG, New Zealand and Canada gathered, was without doubt an outstandingly successful event.

In addition to the conference, last term saw APPA putting forward its position on Initial Teacher Education developments; changes to the Australian Curriculum and moves towards NAPLAN Online; the roll-out of the Principal Health and Wellbeing survey; and initiatives with KidsGive. And, of course, there are submissions and participating in national meetings and conferences amongst which I've taken the opportunity to meet with individual and small groups of principals at various venues. Let's not forget, too, the launch of the new [APPA website](#).

By the time you receive this the new Education Minister, Senator Simon Birmingham, is no doubt well in place and APPA will build upon our work of recent years in presenting APPA's positions in effective and constructive ways. We will also continue to meet with the Commonwealth Department of Education and the Minister's office. We look forward to a meeting soon with Senator Birmingham.

2015 APPA National Conference in Hobart: *The Heart of Leadership*

Congratulations to the committee, led by Malcolm Elliot, Elizabeth McDougall and Brigid Knight, for what they achieved in making this an outstanding APPA Conference. The speakers and presenters were well supported and briefed by facilitator Bob Phillips and Tony Fagan. The social program was very enjoyable and the venue excellent. Thank you to Leishman Associates for their organisation. I hope everyone who attended has taken away from the conference something new, something affirming and something to challenge.



The opening presentation was memorable and never have I experienced such a beginning to a conference. Well done to the organisers for the courage to challenge the mindset! We plan to have the presentations on the website, once permissions have been received.

Thank you to everyone who stopped and spoke with exhibitors and sponsors and congratulations to all the prizewinners. The dinner was very special and we can announce that the auction on the night for the daily artwork representations raised \$4168 for the Syrian Refugee Appeal.

Finally, thank you to our Tasmanian colleagues for being great hosts and welcoming everyone to Hobart.

Trans-Tasman Conference in Auckland 2016

Now to get people to Auckland from 31 May to 3 June 2016 for the APPA / NZPF Trans-Tasman Conference! The theme: **Knowledge in Our Hands** will inspire us with the power of storytelling. Presenters will showcase and share the best that Australia and New Zealand have to offer in learning, teaching and leadership, using a dynamic and interactive format. Anyone who attended the 2012 Trans-Tasman will know this is a conference not to be missed.

Check out more details at: www.transtasmanconference.co.nz. Early bird registrations close 31 March 2016.

Australian Curriculum

APPA welcomes the endorsement by the Education Council of changes to the Australian Curriculum. We agree with the structure of the curriculum in learning areas and the expectation that there is flexibility with the how, when and what is taught in schools. [APPA's media release](#) has been sent to principals through the state and territory principals associations.

We continue to work with ACARA on increasing the number of work samples, strategies for curriculum management and online information on understanding the achievement standards. APPA will conduct a survey in 2016 to gauge the impact of the curriculum and progress on implementation. Results will be fed into the ACARA's Australian Curriculum Monitoring and Evaluation process.

NAPLAN Online

APPA has presented ACARA with a number of questions and concerns in relation to NAPLAN Online. A small working party has been set-up to meet with ACARA on the proposed 2017 move. We are waiting for the outcome of the trial program that was conducted in Term 3 and would appreciate any comments that can inform the continuing process and discussion.

APPA Teacher Education Forum at the Conference

APPA was commissioned by the Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL) to write an [Initial Teacher Education Discussion Paper](#). We continue to communicate with AITSL and the Department of Education on this critical area. APPA held a National Forum before the conference, attended by over 70 principals from across Australia. We thank Jan Febey and Alison Cleary from the department and Edmund Mission from AITSL for joining us and participating in the event. We were able to identify key principles for teacher education courses from the forum and APPA will now develop a document that states clearly the expectations principals would expect of teacher education courses. The forum also recommended that principals associations meet and work with their state and territory University Deans of Education to improve teacher education courses.

Reviews and Submissions

APPA has provided responses and submissions to various inquiries. We have completed a submission to the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse, the Senate Inquiry into Students with Disabilities, a response to the Vision for a Science Nation and a response to AITSL's paper on demonstrating the impact on student learning of teacher education and supervisors of students. Copies of these papers are on the website.

Other News...

Smith Family Advisory Board

I attended the Board's first meeting and we discussed these topics: partnerships with schools, parental engagement, and program effectiveness and improvement. The group is providing advice and guidance about the Smith Family's approach to working with schools to maximise potential outcomes for children and young people from disadvantaged backgrounds.

SchoolAid: KidsGive

The major project was the ***That's Not Fair Week*** held in early Term Three after being launched by the Governor-General in Canberra. The appeal for Nepal has been very successful in raising over \$20,000 dollars. During the term I attended the NSW IPSHA Social Action Expo. Twenty-five schools attended and set up stalls to display action they had taken in their school. The Kids Advisory Team (KAT) presented their projects and showed how the SchoolAid program works. SchoolAid is hoping to roll out the KAT concept to other states and territories in the near future. www.kidsgive.com.au



Maths Project

The Chief Scientist has engaged a research company to survey and talk with schools on the factors that have contributed to improving their NAPLAN maths results. APPA is a member of the project's reference group. At a recent meeting we heard preliminary feedback from the small sample of case studies completed. There will be further work completed in Term Four, including a survey sent to principals, teachers and students.

Conferences and Principal meetings

I attended the *New Zealand Principals Federation Conference* in July. Some of the key presenters were Professor Angus MacFarlane, Professor Meg Maguire, Professor Alma Harris, Professor Michael Fullan, Vice Chancellor Steve Maharey and Dr Peter Cammock. Key themes included leadership as a calling, new challenges in rebuilding a school district after an earthquake, the focus on learning or assessment, collaboration to achieve greater gain, leader's health and wellbeing, and the call to resist the global education reform movement.

During the Term I was able to meet with NT and ACT Catholic principals. The topic of discussion was teacher education and I appreciated the feedback and contribution to the position paper for APPA. I also met with the NT Principals Association at an event to acknowledge John Laing award recipients.

Congratulations to Ms Carin Symonds, Ms Susanne Fisher and Mr Hylton Hayes. Additional presentations are being held across Australia to recognise principals. The Principals Australia Institute (PAI) website will have a full list. APPA will be working with PAI to review the awards and the process for nomination and presentation.



In other activity, APPA was an ambassador for National Health and PE Day. We also had representatives attend the National Forum on School Autonomy, and contributed to AITSL's Teacher Education and Workforce project and the Supervising Teachers' Workshop. We hosted a workshop on improving children's health and wellbeing through physical activity. APPA was also involved with Science Week, National Literacy and Numeracy Week, and Book Week. I visited Largs Bay Primary School in Adelaide to hear more about their Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) and its implementation. (APPA is planning to launch our RAP in February 2016.)

I also welcomed teachers from the Primary School attached to Capital Normal University in Beijing who visited Canberra. We are supporting principals to establish a Beijing Primary Principals Association and hope that a small group can attend the Trans-Tasman Conference in 2016. There is also a proposed visit by Australian principals to Beijing in 2017.

At the APPA National Forum we officially launched the new APPA website. We say a huge thankyou to Rose Nuttall for her work in constructing and organising the site. The site will hopefully provide better access and links to resources and information for principals. We welcome photos from schools celebrating all aspects of primary education.

Thank you for the warm welcome received when visiting schools and I enjoy the opportunity to talk with principals, teachers and students. I look forward to further visits in term 4

All the best for the term ahead,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Dennis'.

Dennis Yarrington
APPA President

