



## AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT PRIMARY PRINCIPALS ASSOCIATION

### Media Release

# Principals frustrated by lack of government support in the education system

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The Australian Government Primary Principals Association (AGPPA) is calling for decisive government action comprising of a clear federal vision and resource investment to ease pressure on government primary school principals.

The Australian Government Primary Principal Association, representing over 5400 government schools across all States and Territories, met in Canberra and identified a key priority is maintaining the health and well-being of principals and the education system.

AGPPA has highlighted the stark situation that an increasing amount of complex pressures threaten to overwhelm overworked principals.

“This year alone, school leaders have tackled the introduction of a new curriculum, differing mandated assessment regimes at both state and national levels and the uncertainty of sustainable government funding,” said AGPPA President Gabrielle Leigh.

“Compounded by a lack of support by governments and the changing face of our society that has placed schools in the front line; it’s not surprising that principals are feeling stressed and unsupported,” said Ms Leigh.

“Education is so important, yet the teacher profession remains habitually undervalued and under resourced. Until the government addresses this imbalance, principals will continue to detrimentally bear the brunt of systemic dysfunction.”

A key finding from the eminent Australian Health and Wellbeing survey emphasises that more systematic attention needs to be paid to the professional learning of principals, and presumably teachers, in the emotional aspects of their roles and the emotional investment of parents in their children.

“ Principals experience nearly five times the incidence of threats of violence and six times the incidence of actual physical violence at work than other population groups measured on the COPSOQ-II. Government school principals working in large towns and rural locations appear most at risk” says Prof Phil Riley.

AGPPA has emphasised the necessity of prompt, decisive and visionary government action to address these concerns, starting with raising the status of the teaching profession.

“Principals across Australia need a clear long term vision where education is seen as an investment for the future and resourced appropriately for government primary schools,” said Ms Leigh.

#### **Further enquiries and interviews;**

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