



Victorian Principals Association

Unit 2, 13-21 Vale Street, North Melbourne Victoria 3051, Australia

t: (03) 8379 4000 f: (03) 9326 9950 e: info@vpa.org.au w: www.vpa.org.au

VPA Position Paper

Cuts to Frontline Services

Purpose

The Victorian Principals Association (VPA) is calling for the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (DEECD) to review its funding of frontline services for Victorian schools in line with the 2010 election promise that no front line service would be cut.

Background to the VPA Position

The VPA position has been determined in the following context:

- i) Occupational Health and Safety (OH&S) and First Aid training school subsidy cutbacks
 - Concerns over significant funding cuts to replacement teachers to enable OH&S training requirements in schools
 - The State Government has cut funding for replacement teachers to enable much needed First Aid, anaphylaxis and asthma training
 - These cuts will impact directly on students and programs in the way of:
 - Student safety
 - School- based programs to meet legislative requirements
 - Programs such as camps and excursions
 - The costs of frontline services vary, based on school location, meaning smaller rural schools will face a heavier burden because of these cuts
 - The cost imposition on schools will very quickly become prohibitive and will impact on the capacity of schools to deliver curriculum programs and in some cases may totally exceed the PD budget for 12 months. For instance, a 5 day training program for rural schools could incur costs amounting to:
 - CRT replacement - \$1,500
 - Cost of the program - \$500 +
 - Accommodation and travel for staff member - \$750 +For a small rural school of 2-5 staff members this would be totally prohibitive
 - The DEECD is devolving their responsibility for providing a safe work environment to local schools without the necessary resourcing
- ii) Reading Recovery
 - Reading Recovery cuts and a lack of staff at the regional level have meant there is no information about the significance of these cuts to the program and training in 2013. This lack of information is at a time when schools are planning their workplace requirements

- No training means Reading Recovery programs will not have current trainers and will not be valid. This will result in a watering down of an intervention program which has proved to be highly successful across many Victorian schools for over two decades

VPA Position

The VPA advocates for:

- Increased resourcing from the DEECD in supporting:
 - OH&S training and implementation
 - First Aid training
 - Allocation of OH&S consultants to complete and maintain the compliance tasks for school clusters
- Immediate advice from DEECD on the implications of the cutbacks to Reading Recovery programs and reinstatement of funding to enable allocation of at least one Trained Reading Recovery Tutor in each Region
- The DEECD to undertake an in-depth review of school budgets to develop an understanding that schools simply cannot carry the burden of these ongoing cuts