



Consultation Process

Purpose

The Victorian Principals Association (VPA) and the Victorian Association of State Secondary Principals (VASSP), in representing the interests of PCOs, seeks timely, thorough and transparent consultation processes with representatives of the DEECD.

Background to the VPA & VASSP Position

The VPA & VASSP position has been developed in the following context:

- A history of inconsistent approaches to consultation with DEECD representatives in policy development and policy/program implementation.
- Undue pressure placed upon PCOs and staff as a result of untimely and demanding implementation of policies, programs and initiatives.
- A history of ineffective implementation of policies, programs and initiatives.

VPA & VASSP Position

- The VPA & VASSP expects DEECD representatives to honour the consultation definition within the 2008 VGSA:

Consultation is not perfunctory advice on what is going to happen. This is a common misconception. Consultation is providing the Individual, or other relevant persons, with a bona fide opportunity to influence the decision maker....Consultation is not joint decision making or even negative or frustrating barrier to the prerogative of management to make decisions. Consultation allows the decision making process to be informed.....

- The VPA & VASSP are afforded the opportunity to comment on *consultation plans* prior to commencement. The VPA & VASSP will provide advice on the content of the consultation plan.
- The VPA & VASSP will support consultation processes in policy development and program implementation that:
 - Include VPA & VASSP representation
 - Are broadly based with representatives from regions, schools and, when appropriate, academics and consultants
 - Have a clear implementation process, including a rationale for the choice of pilot schools
 - Provide for documentation from pilots being available for review
 - Provide funding for implementation deemed sufficient by PCOs
 - Provide PCOs with adequate advance notice
 - Provide PCOs with briefings preceding significant public announcements with appropriate notice
 - Include a staff and school councillor communication strategy
 - Provide information for parents in appropriate languages.

The VPA & VASSP *Consultation Process* position paper was initiated by VPA Board and Council Members in August 2009 and was further developed by VASSP Committee. Further work on this document was undertaken by VPA & VASSP Presidents and Executive Officer.