

Principal
Health and
Wellbeing
Action Plan 2021–22





Director-General's message

Much has happened since we announced, in 2019, that the department would develop a strategy to support the mental and physical health and wellbeing of Queensland state school and centre principals. Launched in the middle of a global pandemic, the *Principal Health and Wellbeing Strategy* was designed to be an incremental approach, to be continually refined and built upon through annual action plans.

With one year of implementation behind us, we are confident that the four pillars – optimising time to lead, safe and respectful workplaces, capability, and support services – continue to be the right ones. However, principals have told us that many job-related stressors continue to affect them personally and professionally, in a way that diminishes the experience of what is otherwise an immensely rewarding profession.

We have listened to concerns about what matters most to principals and developed a range of responses and actions designed to have a material impact on health and wellbeing. Under this 2021–22 Action Plan, you will see a series of refined and new actions, including:

- expansion of pilot projects – the Principal Hotline and the Principal Complex Matters Referral Service – to more areas of the state
- a formalised partnership with our peak stakeholders to collectively identify and collaboratively resolve red tape and other health and wellbeing pressure points as they arise
- more timely, coordinated release of new or changed policies and procedures to manage impact at the school level
- proactive development of resources, tools, and automated or pre-populated templates wherever possible to allow leaders more time to focus on the decisions and actions that matter
- a review of the model of supervision and support for principals to ensure it is contemporary and designed to improve performance, leadership and wellbeing
- better coordination of, and access to, a range of health and wellbeing services for all school leaders, and support for principals to undergo regular proactive health checks
- a comprehensive response to occupational violence and aggression in schools, including promoting respectful behaviour in school communities, providing clear advice and support to manage hostile persons, and better capability development and support for conflict management and dispute resolution
- more investment in capability development in inclusive education for school leaders
- investing in experienced school leaders through immersive, high-quality leadership programs

This action plan responds to the perspectives that principals courageously shared around their own health and wellbeing concerns. I thank all who have contributed – either directly, or through the associations who represent you – to identifying issues and co-designing these solutions.

Through our continued commitment to this strategy, our trust, respect and value for the profession will be evident. I look forward to seeing the Principal Health and Wellbeing Action Plan 2021–22 implemented across the state and hope that its impact will be significant, positive, and enduring.

Tony Cook PSM

Director-General

Department of Education

Action Plan 2021–22

Principals of Queensland state schools and centres are passionate, talented and committed. As they lead teams and communities to work together in support of student outcomes, they also shape the future of this state. With the global pandemic has come uncertainty and ongoing changes to the environment within which our schools operate, therefore the health and wellbeing of our principals remains a key priority for the department.

Principals and the organisations that represent them have shared their perspectives as part of a review of the *Principal Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2020-2022* (PDF, 4.7MB), and the 2020–21 Action Plan.

This has informed a refocusing of the strategy, to continue to implement successful activities and initiatives of the 2020–21 Action Plan and build upon these with a suite of new and refined initiatives through the new plan.

The 2021–22 Action Plan outlines a 15-point plan to further improve principal health and wellbeing for the leaders of our state schools and Outdoor and Environmental Education Centres under the four key pillars of the strategy. The initiatives continue to leverage off existing supports, systems and services within our department as we move towards a more sustainable and holistic workforce wellbeing approach.

Further information is available on [OnePortal](#) about our actions to date, and our ongoing commitment to principal health and wellbeing under the 2021–22 Action Plan.

Principal Health and Wellbeing Implementation Group

In recognition of the need for school leaders' voices to continue to inform work in this space, a strengthened partnership has been formed between the Department of Education, all principal associations, and the Queensland Teachers Union. The **Principal Health and Wellbeing Implementation Group** will steer implementation of the strategy and provide an avenue for collaborative action on issues that impact Principal wellbeing.

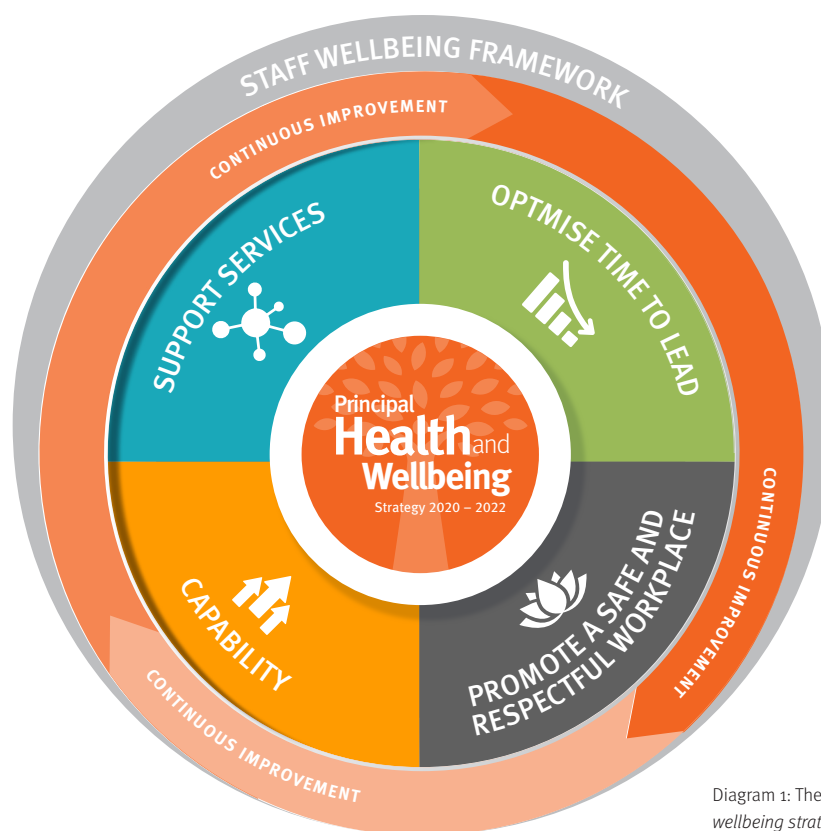









Diagram 1: The *Principal health and wellbeing strategy wheel*









The department's Staff Wellbeing Framework captures the holistic nature of wellbeing, recognising that many factors, both inside and outside the workplace, contribute to an individual's wellbeing.

Diagram 1 shows the *Principal Health and Wellbeing Strategy* nested in a continuum within the broader Staff Wellbeing Framework, which represents the continually improved and built upon systems and processes that we operate in, and responds to the changing dynamics and nature of the school environment.

Principal Health and Wellbeing Action Plan 2021–22

Initiatives	Staff wellbeing dimensions	Supporting Business Activities
 <p>Optimise time to lead</p>	  <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Implement a change to the way new and revised policies and procedures are released, and maintain a forward plan to better manage the impact of change on schools. 2. Proactively develop templates and resources to assist schools where appropriate. 3. Refine and clearly communicate departmental requirements around mandatory training for principals and school leaders. 4. Support engagement with Local Consultative Committees (LCCs) to assist workload management. 5. Provide clarity, resources and support for principals to manage and resolve human resource matters. 6. Increase support and resources for managing minor integrity matters. 	<p>Mandatory Training Ready Reckoner</p> <p>Student Wellbeing Workforce</p> <p>OnePortal Review</p>
 <p>Support services</p>	   <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 7. Continue to implement the Principal Hotline and Principal Complex Matters Referral Team services through a staged rollout to all regions throughout 2022. 8. Review the Assistant Regional Director scheme and Lead Principal roles to deliver a strengthened model of supervision and support for principals. 9. Better coordination of access to health and wellbeing support services, including health checks. 	<p>Review of the model of Principal supervision and support</p>

Principal Health and Wellbeing Action Plan 2021–22 (continued)

Initiatives		Supporting Business Activities
 Safe and respectful workplace	<ul style="list-style-type: none">    	<p>10. Address occupational violence and aggression towards principals and school staff, and set clear expectations for respectful communication and behaviour in school communities.</p> <p>11. Clarify and communicate the provisions, resources and support for responding to hostile persons.</p>
 Capability	<ul style="list-style-type: none">    	<p>12. Refine and improve induction and development materials for school leaders, aligned to the broader organisational induction approach.</p> <p>13. Provide professional development opportunities to support school leaders in people management, including conflict management, dispute resolution and de-escalation skills.</p> <p>14. Increase leader capability in leading inclusive schools.</p> <p>15. Design and support access to high quality and immersive leadership programs for experienced principals.</p>

Occupational Violence and Aggression Prevention Strategy

Leadership Strategy

Staff Wellbeing Framework







The Staff Wellbeing Framework has five interdependent dimensions including:






Looking Back: Action Plan 2020–21

The *Principal Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2020-2022* (PDF, 4.7MB), launched in June 2020, saw the release of a 2020–21 Action Plan comprising eight initiatives under four key pillars: optimising time to lead, support services, promoting a safe and respectful workplace, and capability. The work under this plan has advanced with a number of the initiatives implemented across the department, and others continuing to be progressed under the 2021–22 Action Plan. An overview of the status of the action plan is outlined below.

Information about the Principal Health and Wellbeing Strategy and the action plans is available on [OnePortal](#), or contact PrincipalWellbeing.HR@qed.qld.gov.au, or sign up to the [principal e-newsletter](#).

Key Pillar	Project	Initiative Status	Completion Status
 Optimise time to lead	Workload Advisory Council (WAC) <i>Integrity and Employee Relations</i>	The Workload Advisory Council (WAC) was established in 2020 to monitor and review workload issues at school, regional and system levels. The council is progressing reviews and reforms in four focus areas: Senior Assessment and Tertiary Entrance (SATE) processes; Information Technology; Human Resources and Student Behaviour.	 (work will continue)
	Complex Matters Support Service <i>Principal Health and Wellbeing Project in collaboration with State Schools</i>	The Principal Hotline pilot and Principal Complex Matters Referral Team (PHCMRT) pilot was launched in October 2020 in Darling Downs South West and North Coast regions to provide a complementary service to support and assist on matters that arise in the day-to-day management and leadership of their school.	 (extended under Action Plan 2021–22)
 Support services	Wellbeing coaching program <i>HR Business Partnering, Safety and Wellbeing</i>	headspace engaged to provide wellbeing coaches for principals who are experiencing a critical or traumatic incident. This initiative builds on the existing coaching programs available to our school leaders, with a specific focus on health and wellbeing.	 (program will continue)
	Stress and resilience program expansion <i>HR Business Partnering, Safety and Wellbeing</i>	headspace training programs developed to build the capacity of school leaders to manage stress and create resilience in the work environment to support their ongoing psychological wellbeing.	 (program will continue)

Looking Back: Action Plan 2020–21 (continued)

Key Pillar	Project	Initiative Status	Completion Status
 Safe and respectful workplace	Complaints management process <i>Policy, Planning and Performance</i>	A new procedure and refined suite of tools and resources available to school leaders so they are able to confidently and consistently respond to unreasonable complainant conduct and school complaints.	✓
	Respectful school communities communication strategy <i>HR Business Partnering, Safety and Wellbeing and Strategic Communication and Engagement</i>	A targeted communication and engagement campaign is near completion that will assist school leaders with promoting and enhancing respect within their communities. This initiative partners with the Occupational Violence and Aggression Prevention Strategy that is currently being developed.	 (extended under Action Plan 2021–22)
 Capability	Principal induction revision <i>State Schools Performance in collaboration with Learning and Professional Development</i>	An audit and assessment of principal induction resources has been completed and will contribute to new principal planning and induction portals that are fit-for-purpose and provide consistent and targeted content relevant to the role.	✓ (extended under Action Plan 2021–22)
	Essential training for principals and school leaders <i>Learning and Professional Development</i>	A new Management Foundations online training program has been developed for school and corporate leaders and was launched on 31 August 2020.	✓