



Principal **Health and Wellbeing**

Strategy 2020–2022



Queensland
Government

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Wellbeing vision

Safe, fair and healthy workplaces and communities.

We will create workplaces that are positive and constructive, where school leaders feel valued and connected to the community, enabling them to create a positive learning environment.

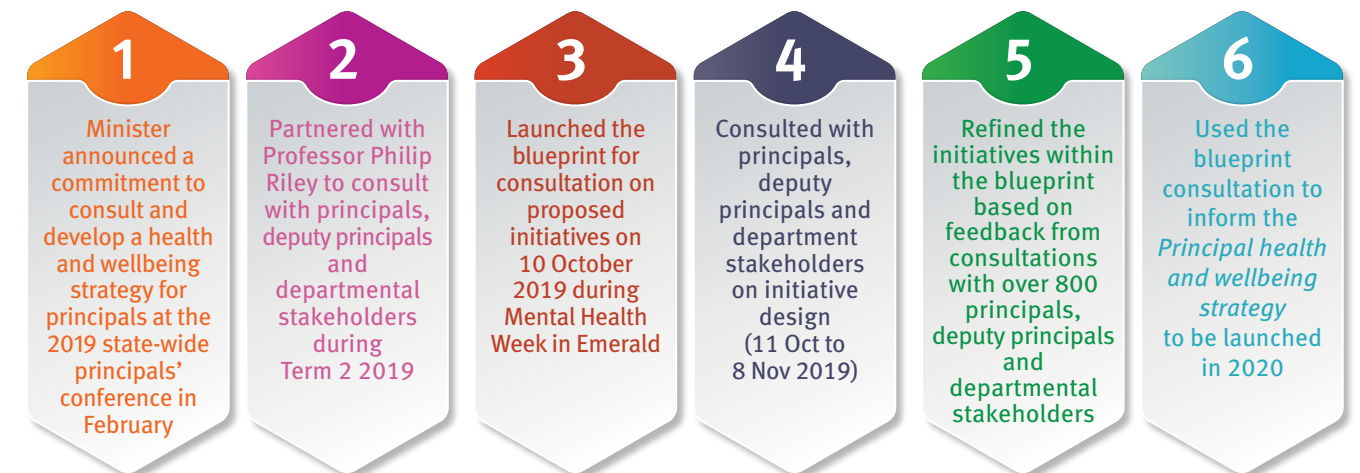
Who is this strategy for?

The *Principal health and wellbeing strategy* is for principals and deputy principals. Where school leaders are referred to throughout this document, it is intended to include principals and deputy principals.

How did we get here?

In February 2019, the department committed to the development of a strategy for improving mental and physical health and wellbeing outcomes for all Queensland state school principals and leaders.

The listening tour and feedback received from consultation on the *Blueprint* in 2019 elevated a number of areas that the department is now addressing.



Related strategies

The *Staff Wellbeing Framework* on page 5 captures the holistic nature of wellbeing that contribute to an individual's wellbeing.

Leadership strategy

A comprehensive *Leadership strategy* has been drafted and is currently in consultation. It is intended to strengthen leadership capability across the department and increase the quality, quantity and diversity of leaders across all levels and contexts. The department believes there is an element of leadership in all roles, and is committed to strengthening the leadership capability of the workforce.

Occupational Violence Strategy

The rising prevalence of aggressive behaviour in our communities; by students, parents and community members is impacting the role and health and wellbeing of school staff. In response, the department is developing a strategy to ensure safe and supportive school communities. This is underway with the launch of the Occupational Violence roundtable in November 2019 and will include a coordinated suite of initiatives from across the department.



Message from the Minister for Education

I am very proud to release the *Principal health and wellbeing strategy*, a suite of initiatives designed to support our principals to flourish and lead Queensland state schools.

Our state school principals play a vital role in creating safe and engaging learning communities. They are passionate, they are talented and their leadership has a resounding impact on the outcomes of students, teachers and the community.

School leadership is a changing and challenging role, and principals tell us that, with the right supports, it is also a uniquely rewarding one. The *Principal health and wellbeing strategy* aims to provide that support, in tangible and meaningful ways, so that the health and wellbeing of our school leaders is improved.

By safeguarding the health and wellbeing of our school leaders we are investing in the futures of our students and our state education system as a whole. At an individual level, positive wellbeing contributes to increased job satisfaction, enhanced self-autonomy, and improved delivery of quality teaching and learning for our students so they reach their potential.

I would like to thank each of the many school leaders who contributed their time, energy and feedback throughout the development of the blueprint and this strategy and to Professor Phillip Riley, whose involvement helped to ensure that stakeholders' voices were heard and reflected in the suite of services and strategies that have emerged through this process.

We know how demanding and complex the daily workload of principals can be. With this in mind, the Queensland Government is committed to improving the wellbeing of our school leaders, and ensuring it remains a priority.

I would like to acknowledge school leaders for their incredibly valuable role contributing to Queensland's success in providing a world-class education for all students and look forward to seeing the initiatives in this important work improve their wellbeing.

The Honourable Grace Grace MP

Minister for Education and
Minister for Industrial Relations





Wellbeing approach and scope

Wellbeing is important to everybody and includes many positive aspects including being healthy, feeling valued and socially connected, having purpose and feeling fulfilled.

The concept and scope of workplace health has broadened over the years from being solely focused on the individual to considering the workplace as a whole setting.

In the work context, a positive state of wellbeing enables the individual to achieve their full potential, resulting in improved performance and engagement.

The *Staff Wellbeing Framework* recognises that many factors, both inside and outside the workplace, contribute to an individual's wellbeing. The framework has five interdependent dimensions including:



Physical



Financial



Occupational



Psychological



Social and Community Engagement

There is also a range of different approaches to supporting wellbeing, from reactive approaches to managing injury, stress and consequences, to others that take a more proactive approach through a focus on prevention and positive factors. Consistent with leading wellbeing approaches, this strategy adopts a balanced model (THCU)¹ that incorporates responses to individual factors, organisational factors and environmental factors. The three areas of the model are addressed in the strategy as follows:



1. Individual factors

Improving wellbeing by supporting individual lifestyle behaviours, including the provision of practical advice, coaching, and professional support to improve physical health & fitness and reduce negative stress.



2. Organisational factors

Improving job satisfaction and performance by increasing efficiency of work processes so as to reduce stress and optimise time to lead.



3. Environmental factors

Reducing negative impacts on wellbeing by addressing environmental issues such as workplace violence and aggressive behaviour.



¹ THCU (The Health Communication Unit) (2006), Comprehensive Workplace Health Promotion: recommended and promising practices for situational assessment tools, version 1.02, March 2006, Centre for Health Promotion, University of Toronto.

The strategy

The *Principal health and wellbeing strategy* is nested within the broader *Staff Wellbeing Framework* and supports the strategic priority in the *Department of Education Strategic Plan 2019–2023*, to ‘support the health, safety and wellbeing of our people in every workplace’.



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

This strategy aims to support improved principal health and wellbeing through a range of initiatives that focus on leading and managing a school. It is an incremental strategy over a number of years reflecting the evolving focus on individual wellbeing in our workplaces.

The wheel depicts department systems and supports continuously improving in response to changing needs.

The *Principal health and wellbeing action plan 2020/21* identifies an eight point plan to deliver a balanced wellbeing model under the key pillars:

1. Optimise time to lead
2. Support services
3. Safe and respectful workplace
4. Capability.

Diagram 1 shows the *Principal health and wellbeing strategy* nested in a continuum, 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.

Principals receive and access information about their role and requirements in a range of ways during their employment including induction, internal and external training, mandatory training, online/OnePortal, newsletters, networks, conferences and professional associations. It is important that principals are up-to-date with current industry and role requirements, changing legislation and expectations for corporate service delivery alongside their teaching and learning remit.

The department has existing wellbeing supports and programs in place that this strategy is designed to complement and promote rather than replicate or overlap.



Examples include the Employee Assistance Program, the principal coaching and support services and newer initiatives such as the School-based staff wellbeing program and the appointment of wellbeing coordinators.

The *Principal health and wellbeing action plan 2020/21* is also underpinned by ‘business as usual’ services and systems that exist within the department to support principals and school leaders. These include:

- Expert resources: access to supports such as disability and inclusion, legal, human resources, finance and procurement to assist in problem solving and decision making
- Access to quality information: supported by systems, policies, and templates
- Learning and growth: opportunities for growth, including induction, leadership development and ongoing professional development.

As in any organisation these existing supports, systems and services are continuously improving to respond to changing environments and expectations. Improvements are informed by a range of factors including staff feedback, complaints and changing roles and requirements.

Further information is available on the intranet site detailing the journey to develop this strategy and the initiatives in the action plan designed to contribute to principal wellbeing.



Principal Health and Wellbeing Action Plan 2020/21





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Blueprint initiatives	No.	Blueprint commitment	Business improvement activity underway	Existing DoE strategy underway	Strategy action plan 2020/21	Strategy action plan 2021/22
Streamline and refine administrative processes Address principals concerns about the level of administrative workload	1.1	Use the Workload Advisory Council to identify and refine areas of administration that school leaders find most burdensome		✓	✓	
	1.2	Enable principals to delegate a greater range of administrative tasks		✓	✓	
	1.3	Implement a structured procedure, tools and templates to streamline complaints management, including setting clear expectations for students, parents and the community, and a process to terminate contact with a complainant if their conduct is unreasonable	✓	✓ ◊	✓	
Improve policy and procedure management Improve the consistency, clarity and overall quality of policies and procedures	2.1	Improve consistency and clarity of policies and processes across the department with a focus on what school leaders need to know	✓			
	2.2	Make policies and processes more accessible including notifications and a summary to highlight changes	✓		✓	
	2.3	Develop pre-populated, downloadable, school-based policy and procedure templates that can be tailored to meet specific needs				✓
Provide differentiated support for principals and strengthen networks Redefine and strengthen the relationship between principals and Assistant Regional Directors (ARDs), and improve peer support networks	3.1	Document a 'ways of working' framework for ARDs	✓			
	3.2	Build principal and ARD capability in the provision of differentiated and tailored support, including coaching and mentoring		○		
	3.3	Use the Centres for Learning and Wellbeing to better understand and respond to the wellbeing needs of rural and remote principals	✓			
	3.4	Build on existing school leader networks to collaborate on school improvement opportunities			✓	

○ Leadership Strategy; ◊ Occupational Violence Strategy



Blueprint initiatives	No.	Blueprint commitment	Business improvement activity underway	Existing DoE strategy underway	Strategy action plan 2020/21	Strategy action plan 2021/22
Support responses in complex school communities and situations Provide additional support to principals in the management of complex matters	4.1	Pilot the establishment of dedicated support to provide hands on intervention and case management of complex matters		◈	✓	
	4.2	Provide clear advice on the management of unreasonable conduct and provide mechanisms to terminate contact where wellbeing and safety are at risk		◈	✓	
	4.3	Define core leadership capabilities for principals in the leadership strategy, including leading in a complex environment		○		
Develop a contemporary leadership strategy Build leadership capability and confidence across the system	5.1	Incorporate role-specific management and leadership development into the strategy		○		
	5.2	Establish pathways for all school leaders to build leadership insight and capacity, and develop broad and transferable leadership expertise		○		
	5.3	Align the leadership strategy with best practice leadership capability frameworks		○		
	5.4	Provide differentiated learning methods including coaching, mentoring, on-the-job and formal learning, and 360-degree feedback tools		○		
	5.5	Facilitate and deliver place based coaching to rural and remote leaders through the Centres for Learning and Wellbeing	✓			
Enhance induction processes for principals and deputy principals. Create a more effective, tailored and timely induction for school leaders	6.1	Create a suite of induction resources that are fit-for-purpose and can be accessed based on individual needs			✓	
	6.2	Develop toolkits, masterclasses and 'how to' guides to help principals and deputy principals navigate new role responsibilities				✓
	6.3	Refine essential training for school leaders			✓	
	6.4	Establish a principal induction portal				✓

Blueprint initiatives	No.	Blueprint commitment	Business improvement activity underway	Existing DoE strategy underway	Strategy action plan 2020/21	Strategy action plan 2021/22
Promote strong and respectful school communities Promote strong and respectful relationships and partnerships between school leaders, parents, students and the wider community	7.1	Develop a communication strategy and resources to set clear expectations for respectful communication and behaviour in school communities		◈	✓	✓
	7.2	Address occupational violence and aggression towards principals and school staff, and develop a strategic approach to articulate that violent and aggressive behaviour will not be tolerated in any circumstance		◈		✓
Build resilience and create a culture of self-care Strengthen proactive self-care and resilience among school leaders	8.1	Offer a proactive wellbeing coaching program for principals with independent experts			✓	
	8.2	Offer a range of programs to develop individual capacity to manage stress and build resilience			✓	
	8.3	Raise awareness of the existing health and wellbeing support offered within the department for school leaders, staff and students			✓	
	8.4	Develop a proactive check-in system for principals (eg new, moving bands, rural and remote and otherwise nominated)			✓	
	8.5	Promote and strengthen a school-based wellbeing program for principals and staff			✓	

○ Leadership Strategy; ◈ Occupational Violence Strategy



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