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## QASEL Newsletter Edition 5, 2021

### President's Update

#### COVID-19 – Greater Brisbane Lockdown

Given the challenges we all endured during 2020, the Greater Brisbane three-day lockdown this week, so close to Easter vacation, was frustrating to say the least. I just wanted to commend members on their calmness and resilience as they met this latest challenge.

I also want to acknowledge that for many of you, this latest event may impact on your holiday planning. (At the time of writing this newsletter I'm currently considering when I should start unpacking my camper trailer – I know many of you will be in similar situations).

The constant impact of COVID-19 no doubt causes stress and anxiety for our staff, students and their families. As school leaders, it is easy for this stress to accumulate on us. I remind you all again to take care of yourselves and look after each other. I've contacted a number of you this week to check in and I know from those calls many of you are staying closely connected to each other as a network of support.

I'd also echo the Director-General in reminding you of the importance of accessing information from credible sources, below are some links and contacts that may be of use:

From Qld Health:

- [Queensland Health website](#) (statistics and lockdown information)
- [COVID-19 symptoms](#)
- [contact tracing alert](#) for locations visited 20-28 March 2021

From Department of Education:

- [COVID-19 information for staff on OnePortal](#)
- [COVID-19 information for parents and community](#)
- [COVID-19 resources for schools](#)
- [Leave Guide](#)
- [Looking after yourself during COVID-19](#) OnePortal page
- LifeWorks 24/7 on 1800 604 640, DoE's external [Employee Assistance provider](#).

Again, I appreciate that these latest events are another test of your agility and resilience, but we've been here before and we'll push through it again, together.

#### Road Trip – Rockhampton to Gympie

During week 8, I had my first opportunity, as QASEL president, to get out on the road and connect with members and leaders outside of the south east corner of the state. The trip started with an early morning flight from Brisbane to Rockhampton to spend time in the Central Queensland Region.

The first visit was to Rockhampton North Special School and a chance to connect with the leadership team - Sam, Lisa and Kate. We had terrific discussions about supporting new and aspiring leaders. I then took the opportunity to have a cuppa with one of our regional councillors, Erin King. Although Erin is currently on maternity leave she was good enough to meet with me to discuss QASEL's strategic plan and future direction. Then onto Biloela State School to meet with Jenny McLeod, also a regional councillor in CQ. Jenny was able to provide me with some wonderful



insights into the work of a cluster HOSES. Then onto Gladstone for the night and the disappointing realisation that despite all my careful planning I'd not packed toothpaste.

Fuelled with an early morning service station sausage roll, I then met with the Gladstone HOSES and Inclusion Leaders, discussing how QASEL can support capability building. (Thanks to Jenny McLeod and the CQ regional team for the invitation).

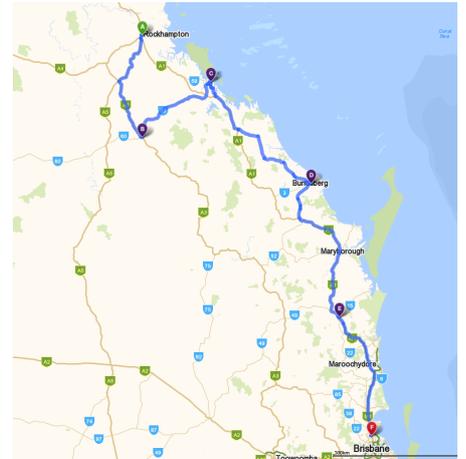
Then down the highway, across the regional border, to Bundaberg for some terrific conversations with Steve Leese (management committee member) and the Principals at Bundaberg Central and Bundaberg West State Schools, reflecting on their inclusion journeys – the challenges and the opportunities. The day finished with a chance to connect with members in the Bundaberg area over a coffee and lots of discussion about strategic planning and key agendas for QASEL to influence moving forward.



The last stop was speaking with the North Coast Region, Special School Leaders Alliance. Sharing the work of QASEL and hearing about the terrific work being done across the region. (Great to see old friends too.)

It's was a very productive 3 days connecting with members. During the trip I managed to cover 885km on the road and spoke with 12 principals (special and primary, small and large schools) and 33 HOSES, DPs Special, DPs Inclusion and aspiring leaders. 40 schools in total were represented in some way across the trip. I'm very grateful to everyone I met with, for the honest conversations and feedback which will help shape QASEL's work into the future. I'd like to particularly thank Steve Leese and Jenny McLeod for facilitating the opportunities to connect with network groups.

I'm currently in the planning stage of the next regional trip to North Queensland next term. First thing on the to do list - pack toothpaste.



## Senior Officer Meetings

While my diary is always full of meetings with key departmental officers, I wanted to highlight three particularly significant meetings in recent weeks with Minister Grace, Director-General Tony Cook, Deputy Director-General State Schools Peter Kelly, and unpack some of the discussion points across these conversations including:

### QASEL Strategic Plan:

Across all three meetings I took the opportunity to socialise our early thinking about QASEL's Strategic Plan. Feedback was very supportive of our direction and our framework - *Leading, Linking, Learning*. We discussed the importance of QASEL continuing to provide strong advocacy and feedback, supporting members wellbeing and growing opportunities for professional learning and support.

### Policy changes:

I was able to share the extensive list of policy and procedures' feedback QASEL has provided in term 1 this year as well as our engagement in stakeholder groups and working parties. I did raise concern about the number of changes within a short timeline and the potential impact on school leaders. This advice was well received and steps have been put in place to monitor and manage this closely into the future.

### Including all students in curriculum advice:

I was able to pass on the feedback from members that students on highly individualised curriculum are at times underrepresented in curriculum advice and support materials. We also discussed the importance of including all our learners in curriculum advice and have created opportunities for further discussion around this.

### Disability Royal Commission:

We discussed the ongoing work of the Royal Commission and QASEL's submission. I was able to share that in addition to QASEL's submission as an organisation, many of our members and their P&Cs have been active in providing their own submissions.

Reminder to members:

*"Anybody can make a submission. A submission can be submitted in any way you feel comfortable – by telephone, email, video or through our website". – DRC Website*

Make submission forms: Submission form – for an individual

<https://disability.royalcommission.gov.au/publications/make-your-submission-forms>

There are a range of other ways to make a submission

<https://disability.royalcommission.gov.au/share-your-story/make-your-submission>

### Integrity Reforms:

We discussed the department's ongoing work beyond the 90-day action plan and how QASEL can best support members to meet the highest standards of integrity and conduct. The 90-day plan had a sharp focus on executive appointments, speaking up when there is suspected misconduct, corporate card use, gifts and benefits, and managing conflicts of interest. Beyond the 90 days the department is continuing its work on a range of strategies to be implemented through this year and beyond. Integrity and ethical decision making must be part of the every day actions of all school leaders.

### Term 1 New Member Special – Ends in Two Days

Only two days left to take advantage of the current Term 1 membership special - join now and pay nothing until 1 July 2021. The deferred payment allows new members to take advantage of all QASEL has to offer without making payments until they receive their scheduled pay rise from 1 July. The special is available by **payroll deduction only for Term 1 only**.

A reminder also that QASEL no longer accepts membership payment directly from schools. Your membership is attached to you personally and follows you through your career in whatever site you work in or role you hold.

If you know a potential new member please alert them that this opportunity is ending soon. For more information please email our business manager – [bm@qasel.org.au](mailto:bm@qasel.org.au) or forward them the three documents below.



[How to Join](#)

[Membership Application](#)

[Payroll Deduction Form](#)



### Happy Easter Break

There is no need to restate the challenges of 2020; all the adjectives have been used up. School leaders began 2021 with a strong sense of optimism, positivity and energy. Throughout the term it has become clearer that the wake of COVID-19 will be with us for some time. The impacts on our families and communities plays out in our schools and creates new challenges for us as school leaders. Term 1 certainly did not finish in Greater Brisbane as we had hoped it might.

Through all of this I have seen school leaders maintain their strong sense of optimism and continue to lead their teams with a sharp focus on ensuring all learners are succeeding. As we come into the Easter vacation can I implore you to engage your own self-care strategies over the break. Try to close the laptop, and do whatever it is you need to do in order to return in term 2 with your batteries fully charged.

Happy and safe vacation to you all. I acknowledge your resilience and thank you for your commitment.

## QASELcon21

### Building Collaboration, Confidence and Creativity. Wednesday 16 – Friday 18 June, Hilton Brisbane.

## Registrations now open!

[Register Now!](#)

#### Spotlight on a Speaker

QASELcon21 *Building Collaboration, Confidence and Creativity*, is your opportunity to access high quality professional learning that supports your leadership development and the education of students with disability across Queensland.

Your fellow delegates are special education leaders and decision makers who like you, value this annual opportunity to network, expand their professional learning and connect with new and not so new friends.

Our theme, *Building Collaboration, Confidence and Creativity* will be brought to life through the many keynote and concurrent sessions across three days.

I am pleased to confirm that one of our keynote addresses will be delivered by Deborah Dunstone, Assistant Director-General, State Schools - Disability and Inclusion.

Deb has been ADG, Disability and Inclusion in the Department of Education since 2017 when she took on the challenge of leading the whole-of-agency response to the Queensland Disability Review. Across a long and successful career as a Secondary Principal, Assistant Regional Director, and Regional Director, Deb's passion for inclusive practice has always been evident.

Deb is well known for her capacity to inspire and challenge leadership teams to develop the vision of a system where every student belongs to their school community, engages purposefully in learning and experiences success. Queensland's Inclusive Education Policy and implementation of the Queensland Disability Review is recognised nationally and internationally – their success is about policy and practice being led at a system level to support school improvement.



### *Building Collaboration, Confidence and Creativity*



Wednesday 16 – Friday 18 June

Hilton, Brisbane

## New and Returning Members

On behalf of QASEL I'd like to welcome the following new and returning members:

- Kylie Glencross - North Lakes Regional Office
- Jessica Dominko - Yugumbir State School
- Peta Purdon - Coombabah State High School
- Terry Forster - Mackenzie State Special School
- Stacy Edwards - Pine Rivers State High School
- April Persini - Chevallum State School
- Thomas Murray - Mabel Park State High School
- Julietta Heywood - Caboolture East State School
- Christina Hansen - Palmview State Special School
- Jordan Moore - Marian State School (Pioneer Valley Cluster)

We look forward to linking, leading and learning with you.

## President's Diary

If you have any thoughts or feedback on any recent or upcoming events in the president's diary please don't hesitate to send me an email. Your feedback is always welcome.

### Meetings and events in recent weeks

- Minister Grace Grace Quarterly Meeting
- ADG Finance and CFO
- Rockhampton to Brisbane Road Trip – see above for details.
- QCE Principals Reference Group
- Director-General Quarterly Meeting
- Rural and Remote Stakeholders Reference Group Meeting
- ADG Infrastructure Service Branch – Combined Associations Meeting
- Digital Learning Project Board Meeting
- QASEL staff Mental Health and Wellbeing reference group
- QELi Collaboration Meeting
- ECDP Subcommittee Meeting
- School visit to Western Suburbs State Special School

### Upcoming meetings and events

- QASEL Executive and Management Meeting
- School visits to Beenleigh Special School and Logan City Special School
- Associations Presidents Meeting
- Strategic Directions Steering Committee
- Easter Vacation
- ARD Ways of Working, Briefing for Associations
- QASEL / QTU meeting

## Other Messages

### New Parent and Community Code of Conduct now available

The highly anticipated *Parent and Community Code of Conduct* is now available (on OnePortal).

The Code, which is optional for schools to use or adapt, outlines how parents, carers and visitors should conduct themselves while they're on school grounds, at school activities, and interacting with others in the school community.

Schools are being given time to consider and discuss with their communities how the Code might be used to suit local needs, prior to it being made publicly available on the Department of Education's website.

The Code supports the department's [Principal Health and Wellbeing Strategy](#) and contributes to schools being safe and respectful workplaces.

To support implementation of the Code, a *Guide for Queensland State Schools: Promoting respectful conduct by parents and visitors, and managing difficult or unsafe situations*, has also been developed.

For more information and other resources (including a poster and FAQs), search for "parent code" on OnePortal <<https://intranet.ged.qld.gov.au/EducationDelivery/Stateschooling/wellbeing/parent-and-community-code-of-conduct/Pages/default.aspx>>

### Queensland's public sector employment law reforms – what the changes mean for all school leaders

The Queensland Government recently amended the *Public Service Act 2008* and *Public Service Employment Framework* to reflect recommendations to the laws, policies and procedures of employment across the public sector arising from a 2018 independent review (Bridgman Review – [A fair and responsive public service for all](#)).

As a result, 11 new and amended directives took effect from 25 September 2020. This includes five new directives (positive performance management, discipline, suspension, investigations, and appointment to higher classification) and amendments to six current directives (appeals, independent medical examinations, grievances, recruitment and selection, temporary employment, and casual employment).

Key areas of the department are now collaborating to review and amend our policies, procedures, practices and delegations to align with these significant employment changes. The department and the unions have agreed that implementation of the reforms will continue until 31 March 2021 to enable human resources to process the volume of requests.

The changes to the directives mean that there are a number of new responsibilities for departmental staff, including school

leaders. Find out more information about the public sector employment reforms and your responsibilities by reading the [people leaders and managers fact sheet here](#).

General information about the changes is available by visiting the links below.

- Visit the [Industrial Court of Australia's Public Service Appeals page](#)
- Read more about the [recent employment law changes on OnePortal](#)
- Access the [Queensland Public Sector Reforms – quick reference guide to stage one \(PDF, 281KB\)](#)
- Visit the [Understand changes to the public service employment framework page](#) on the government website
- Search current directives on the [Search for directives, policies, circulars and guidelines page](#) on the government website.

For queries, please contact [HRPublicServiceEmploymentReforms@ged.qld.gov.au](mailto:HRPublicServiceEmploymentReforms@ged.qld.gov.au).



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