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## QASEL Newsletter Edition 12, 2021

### Vale Roselynn Anderson



By now I am sure that you will have all heard the sad news of the passing of our dear friend and immediate past president, Roselynn Anderson.

As well as being a fierce advocate for students with disabilities during her time as QASEL president, Roselynn also left her mark as a former Principal at Beenleigh Special School and was actively involved in the Queensland Teachers Union. In fact, Roselynn held the rare honour of being awarded life membership to both QASEL and the QTU. In the coming days and weeks, QASEL will investigate ways in which to formally honour and remember Roselynn's contribution.

For now, our thoughts and prayers are of course, with Roselynn's husband Trevor and daughter Nikki. Over the last few days we have been overwhelmed with messages of condolence, love and support. These messages have come in from members, and educators from all over Queensland and beyond, from the Minister, Senior Officers, Principals,

HOSES, teachers, admin officers, other education stakeholders and more. Roselynn's reach was broad, and her kindness felt by many.

We have had a number of enquiries about Roselynn's Service. We will endeavour to let everyone know once plans are finalised.

For now, please be good to yourselves and each other at this difficult time. 🙏

### President's Update

#### COVID-19 Update

Across the course of the last 2-3 weeks, most members across the state have been impacted upon in some way by COVID-19 and the restrictions that follow. I again commend you on the resilience, flexibility, adaptability and problem-solving skills you have shown through this period of time. I appreciate just how difficult it is to provide stable leadership through situations that are constantly changing. At times, it feels like it's impossible to plan for tomorrow until it arrives. This can be unsettling over time. Having said that, there are a few things I would encourage you to start considering and planning ahead for that may be useful in the coming weeks and months.

#### Registering for Vaccinations

As you would be aware all school staff are now considered a priority for the COVID-19 vaccination.

To book your vaccination:

1. Click the link [Register your Interest](#) and enter your personal details.
2. Select the cohort titled 'School and early childhood workers.'
3. You will be sent an email confirming your registration.
4. Wait for an email inviting you to book. The email will contain instructions on how to book an appointment at a location

that suits you.

If you have registered before this change, or experience any difficulty registering, then you may need to call 134 COVID (13 42 68)

I strongly encourage all members to take up the opportunity to receive a COVID-19 vaccination. Being vaccinated helps ensure your own safety, and also the safety of your families, your colleagues, students and our community.

### **Releasing Staff for Vaccination**

While we welcome the prioritisation of school staff in the 1b priority groups, we also understand that appointments will depend on vaccine availability. In the coming weeks and months, we should see greater supply of vaccine and an increase in staff accessing vaccines.

I strongly encourage school leaders to start planning now to maximise the uptake of the vaccine, and wherever possible, support employees to receive the vaccine. To achieve this, principals and staff are asked to work collaboratively to ensure vaccination occurs with minimal disruption to school routines, and in a manner which promotes the effective use of available resources.

If staff are unable to receive a vaccination within their own time, principals should accommodate release to attend a vaccination booking. Options can include being flexible with timetabling and use of relief staff, flexible hours to accommodate early morning or late afternoon bookings, use of accrued time off etc. Start considering your options now and working collaboratively with your staff.

### **Students with disability in face masks**

I appreciate that the face mask wearing requirements in schools in the affected LGAs are a challenge. The department is very aware that not all students with disability will be willing and able to wear face masks all day for a range of reasons (including sensory and medical issues).

My advice is to take a common-sense approach, risk manage the situation, and do the best you can in collaboration with parents and carers. Many of our students with disability in years 7-12 will happily comply with mask wearing, others will not, and for a small number it may create a risk. These complexities are understood and acknowledged.

I am encouraged, in the SE corner, by the number of students with disability who are wearing masks, and many schools are creating focussed lessons on mask wearing and supporting students to build that knowledge and understanding. I'd suggest masks will be part of our lives now for some time. So, some targeted teaching and programming for students to help them be mask wearers is very appropriate. As you create and find resources to help with this please share with each other.

Thanks to Redcliffe Special for forwarding the links below with some helpful resources and social stories:

<https://www.autismspectrum.org.au/how-can-we-help/covid-19-information/helpful-resources-for-families-and-autistic-people>

<https://www.autismspectrum.org.au/uploads/documents/Communications/News/People-wearing-masks-Social-Story.pdf>

[https://www.autismspectrum.org.au/uploads/documents/Communications/News/Social\\_Distancing.pdf](https://www.autismspectrum.org.au/uploads/documents/Communications/News/Social_Distancing.pdf)

Also, worth a look is this lovely story created by Children's Health Queensland (for younger students):

<https://www.childrens.health.qld.gov.au/covid-19-birdie-virus/>

### **Face masks and face shields – for staff?**

As you are aware face masks are mandatory for all staff on school sites in the impacted areas. Face shields can be used as an alternative when working with students who are deaf or hard of hearing. I have clarified with the department, and face shields may also be considered as an alternative when working with students with other communication difficulties. Face masks are typically the most practical and easy to use, but schools can take a risk management approach to decision making, and face shields can be utilised as an alternative. Schools may purchase face shields from our [Personal Protective Equipment SOA providers](#). See attached fact sheet in relation to care and cleaning advice regarding the use of face shields.

Face Shield Care Tips

Face Shield Facts

### **Staying Up to Date**

Please continue to take the time to carefully read the information emailed to you regularly from the Director-General and utilise the links below for further guidance:

[COVID-19 information for staff on OnePortal](#)

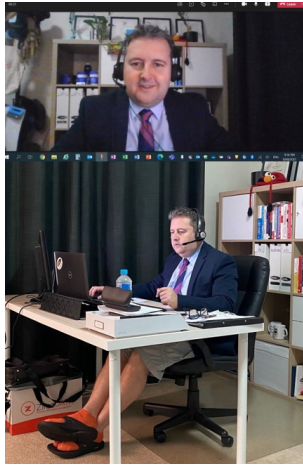
[COVID-19 information for parents and community](#)

[COVID-19 resources for schools](#)

[Staff wellbeing](#)

[Student health and wellbeing](#)

Avoid downloading or printing documents such as the [Queensland COVID-19 planning framework](#). Instead read them live on line as they change frequently.



### Leading, Linking and Learning through a pandemic

Like all corporate staff, I was required to work from home whenever possible throughout the lockdown period. I really appreciated the opportunity to connect with so many of you over text, phone or online. Personally, I hate everything about working from home ... except the dress code.

As your representative, I attended a daily morning COVID teleconference chaired by the Director-General, then an afternoon online briefing with the department's emergency response and HR teams along with other key stakeholders. I'm always happy to take your questions or feedback to these groups, both of which have been very receptive. I am pleased to report that our advocacy this week resulted in some extensions for NCCD data gathering and ECDP data downloads in the areas impacted by lockdown.

While your first port of call for support around COVID related issues should be your regional office, I am available if I can provide any support or advice, even if you just need a chat. You can contact me on [president@qasel.org.au](mailto:president@qasel.org.au) so please don't hesitate to reach out.

I'm also very keen to hear about the things you are putting in place to support staff, students and families at this time. If you've got something working well, even if you think it's a small thing, please share it.

## Leading

**We advocate for equity and influence for positive change.**

### Advocacy and Influence

In our last two newsletters, I've shared some examples of how QASEL demonstrates one of the key actions in our Strategic Plan to advocate for equity and influence for positive change.

In particular, I wanted to highlight the work that relates to our Strategic Plan:

***Intentional advocacy:*** Influence policy and decision making through professional, solutions focussed advocacy. Respond to requests for consultation with collaboratively developed feedback. Proactively put forward positions on issues that impact leadership or student learning.

Currently QASEL members are drafting a range of position papers to present to the department in order to influence change.

Below is a brief summary of just two of those papers. If you'd like to have some input into them, please contact me on [presidnet@qasel.org.au](mailto:presidnet@qasel.org.au) as both papers are still in draft form with the likelihood of finalising them for endorsement at our next State Council meeting on 20 August.

#### Resourcing Review for Students with Disability

QASEL believes that it is timely to review the resourcing methodology and process that sit around SWD, to ensure that resource allocation is fair, equitable and accountable, while at the same time ensuring that it maximises the impact of all available resources to support student learning. QASEL welcomes the opportunity to actively participate in this review and sees it as imperative that leaders currently working in special and inclusive education settings are consulted throughout the process.

- QASEL supports discontinuing, or significantly changing, the current EAP / Verification program. There are a number of concerns and inequities with the current resourcing methodology.
- QASEL supports the implementation of a new methodology that explicitly includes targeted resources for all students identified through the NCCD program.
- QASEL supports a new methodology that is less reliant on parents needing to seek external medical experts or professionals (e.g., paediatricians signing forms). A new model should ensure that families only have to "tell their story

once", allowing schools to form a more productive partnership with parents that focuses on supporting the learner to be successful.

- QASEL supports a new program that reduces workload for teachers, school leaders and regional and central office personnel, ensuring that all available department resources are aligned and utilised to support student learning.
- QASEL believes any new program of resourcing for students with disabilities needs to be predictable and transparent for both special education programs and special schools alike.
- QASEL supports a new model that is more responsive to emerging needs of schools, eliminating the need for current regional based over allocation processes, which are inconsistent across the state and often overly complex and time consuming.
- QASEL supports the current guiding principles identified by DoE for the review (i.e. fair and equitable, financial sustainability, efficiency, transparency and accountability and predictability). Putting student needs at the centre of this model should remain our guiding principle.

## Occupational Violence in Schools

The health, safety and wellbeing of all members of the school community could be increased with a focus on prevention of occupational violence. Cross agency collaboration, meaningful dialogue, flexible and appropriate resourcing and effective systems and procedures all play a part in reducing the impact of OV in schools. QASEL appreciates the complexity of the issues surrounding OV and remains committed to proactively contributing to ongoing discussions and problem-solving activities that enhance the safety and wellbeing of all.

- QASEL supports the position that all school staff have a right to attend a workplace that is safe from all types of harm. Similarly, students, families and community members also have a right to attend school sites and participate in school activities that are safe from harm.
- Staff working in special schools and special education contexts can, more frequently, be exposed to experiences or events that may be considered violent. At times, these acts are a function of a student's disability and are not intended by the student to cause harm to others.
- QASEL believes that all behaviour is a form of communication. For students with disability, the outcome of the behaviour may not always align to the intended message of the student.
- Sometimes staff become involved in situations of OV when staff are seeking to support students who are in danger of self-harming themselves, and the staff member sustains an injury while attempting to support the health and wellbeing of a student
- QASEL acknowledges that regardless of the intent of students, incidents that cause physical harm or psychological harm impact negatively on school staff. The cumulative effect of ongoing exposure to these incidents is also a concern for school-based staff. It is important that we recognise the risk of desensitising staff to OV through repeated exposure.
- Effective communication, clearer definitions and a shared vocabulary around OV as it relates to students with disability would benefit ongoing planning and problem solving.
- QASEL acknowledges that OV in relation to student behaviour is a complex issue that often requires high levels of collaboration across all stakeholders and effective communication to resolve these complex issues. A focus on providing appropriate learning programs, adjustments, accommodations and resources is critical. Dialogue that encourages binary thinking (e.g. zero tolerance approaches) is largely divisive and unconstructive.
- QASEL believes that incidents of occupational violence are under-reported in special education contexts. More effective mechanisms to capture incidents of occupational violence are necessary. Linking MyHR WH&S incident reports to One School behaviour records could reduce workload and increase the accuracy of data.
- QASEL believes that OV that pertains to parent and community conduct can take many forms and is equally complex. Increasingly school leaders and staff experience ongoing unreasonable behaviour from parents and community members that causes significant psychological harm due to the persistent nature of these behaviours.
- While the Department of Education's procedure on [Hostile people on school premises, wilful disturbance and trespass](#) provides options for Principals under the Education (General Provisions) Act 2006 (Qld) (EGPA) to assist in preventing and managing unsafe situations, it is often underutilised and does not support school leaders adequately when dealing with persistent and ongoing parent or community member harassment.

## Linking

**We collaborate with purpose and support each other's wellbeing.**

### DPs Special / Inclusion / Diversity – New Subcommittee Opportunity

I'm pleased to advise that we've had a very positive uptake for our call to form a subcommittee for members in DP Special, DP Inclusion, DP Diverse Learners or similar roles.

In recent years, schools have undergone a lot of changes to their middle leadership structures in terms of who supports student with disabilities, diverse learners and inclusive education. Most recently, we have seen an increase in the number of DPs in primary and secondary schools leading this work from the DP level.

In order to create opportunities for this group of leaders to lead, link and learn together, QASEL has formed a new subcommittee for members who hold these titles. If you are interested in being involved, please email me at [president@qasel.org.au](mailto:president@qasel.org.au) and I will forward you an invitation for our initial MTeams meeting



scheduled for Wednesday 18 August at 3pm.

My thanks again to Robyn Ferguson DP at Forest Lake for working with me on the initial planning for this group. I look forward to seeing where we can take it.



### Virtual Road Trip – Far North Queensland

My thanks to the members of FNQ this week who were happy to pivot with me and turn my planned road trip into a virtual one. It was great to connect with so many of you and I look forward to visiting face-to-face in the future. There were some key themes that came through our conversations, but perhaps the loudest of these messages was the challenge that our colleagues in FNQ face attracting and retaining qualified teachers and teacher-aides. While this is a message that I hear in all areas around the state, it is a much bigger challenge for those outside the South East corner. QASEL will continue to prioritise this as an issue to take forward.

### Voting for 2022 Executive and Management Positions

Later this term we will be calling for nominations for vacant positions on the QASEL Executive and Management committee, as well as regional councillors for 2022. Following the nomination process, an election process follows, as required, for positions where there are multiple nominations.

This year, QASEL will be working with a third-party provider to run our election process electronically. This will be a new process and we ask for your patience as we utilise this for the first time.

We are also currently in the process of developing a roles and responsibilities document that aligns to these positions, and we will make that available to all members once complete. If you have some interest in nominating for a position in 2022, please don't hesitate to contact me for more information.

## Learning

**We learn together to build our individual and collective capability.**

### Townsville Conference – Date Claimer 4-5 November

Great news! We are full steam ahead for a QASELcon out of Townsville on 4-5 November.

My thanks to Claire Cheyne (NQ Regional Councillor and Principal Burden School) and Tracy Cronin (QASEL Management Committee Member and Principal Townsville CLC) for leading this work.

Program information and registration information is coming soon. Watch this space.



### QASELcon22

My thanks again to Andrew Thompson (conference convenor) and the entire 2021 Conference Planning committee for what was by any measure a truly successful conference again this year.

The team has already begun planning for a bigger and better QASELcon22. Our conference planning committee will have

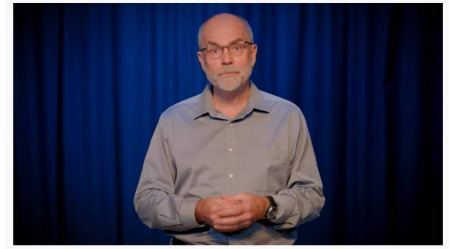


its first formal meeting in the next few weeks. If you'd like to be a part of the conference planning committee, please email our conference co-ordinator Andrew Thompson [athom138@eq.edu.au](mailto:athom138@eq.edu.au). Many hands make light work and the contribution from a range of members is really important to ensure that the conference meets the needs of all members.

## Curriculum Teaching and Learning Team ED TV Update

My congratulations to the Curriculum, Teaching and Learning, State Schools – Performance team for creating another terrific resource for schools.

The latest episode of EDTV includes a segment titled *Accessing the Australian Curriculum achievement standards for all students*. This segment describes how a deep understanding of key terms used in the Australian Curriculum can support differentiated teaching and learning for students with diverse learning needs.



Accessing the Australian Curriculum achievement standards for all students

To access the segment, please navigate to: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=72RR-ZnJkao>

I strongly encourage every member to check it out and share it with your staff. Jeff Souter, AVT Assistive Technologies, who is well known to QASEL members, presents a six-minute video. It's a great resource with a clear and powerful message.

## SECC Conference – now online!



Given the restrictions that have been put in place, following the recent lock down in South East Queensland, we are no longer able to proceed with a face to face conference. We have worked closely with the Emporium Hotel and an audio-visual company to offer the conference virtually. This change may provide you with an opportunity to register, where you may previously have been unable to attend. Some of our sessions were so popular that they filled quickly. We are now able to re-open these sessions to more participants. We have taken the opportunity to drop our registrations fee to \$150 per day for SECC members and hope that you are able to take advantage of these rates.

The SECC Conference is always designed to provide our members with the most up to date information from the relevant branches of our department such as the Curriculum Teaching and Learning team and Disability and Inclusion. We have a great relationship with ACARA and welcome members from the Curriculum Specialist team to strengthen our understanding of the Australian Curriculum. We are very fortunate to have an early look at the progressions and the role they will play in supporting access to the learning areas for students who require a highly individualised curriculum. This year we are very excited to work with Allison Posey, CAST senior team member. Universal Design for Learning is our way forward, providing the mindset and the tools required to support every learner to achieve.

On behalf of the Steering Committee we look forward to welcoming you to this year's conference.  
Please [Register here](#)

SECC Con Program

## Sponsors and Business Partners

**QASEL wishes to thank and acknowledge our Gold Business Partner:**



**QASEL wishes to thank and acknowledge our Silver Business Partner:**



**BFX Furniture**

## **QASELcon22**

**Date Claimer: 16 – 18 June 2022**

On the back of the tremendous success of QASELcon21, the conference planning committee are hard at work to make sure QASELcon22 is even bigger and better. Watch this space for more information coming soon.

## **New and Returning Members**

A massive welcome and thank you to the following new and returning members;

- Jane Vanelli- Ferny Grove State High School
- Zoe Elsworth- Eatons Hill State School
- Annie Snow- Toowoomba ECDP

We look forward to *linking, leading and learning* with you throughout 2021 and beyond.

## **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**

- Director-General's Daily COVID Response Update Teleconference
- Darling Downs and South West Regional Council Meeting - online
- Department of Education Daily Emergency Response Team Stand-up Meeting
- 1-1 Regional Director Far North Queensland
- Far North Queensland Virtual Road Trip – Mareeba State High School, Innisfail State College, Atherton State High School, Parramatta State School and ECDP, Isabella State School
- QCAA ABLES resources meeting
- QASELcon22 planning meetings
- QASEL/USQ joint meeting RE ITE opportunities
- Principal Health and Wellbeing (PHWB) Stakeholder Group Meeting
- QASEL Townsville Mini-Con Meeting
- Metro Regional Council Meeting - Online
- Professional Association Meeting with DDG People and Corporate Services

### **Upcoming meetings and events**

- Initial sub-committee meeting DPs special and inclusion
- Digital Learning Project Board Meeting
- QASEL Executive, Management & State Council Meeting
- ERC Meeting
- 1-1 ADG Disability and Inclusion, Dion Coghlan
- SECC conference
- EDCP collaboration day
- 1-1 meeting Director-General, Tony Cook
- QCE System Principals' Reference Group (PRG)

## Other Messages

### Urgent Message RE: Pre-service Teachers

Pre-service teachers are an important part of our school community—they offer new perspectives, bring innovation, inspire students and ensure a strong pipeline of teachers into the future.

As we did in 2020, our education community is responding to COVID-19 with both universities and schools finding themselves managing risks and navigating flexible approaches to teaching and learning. This has understandably resulted in some professional experience placements for preservice teachers being interrupted.

In responding to COVID-19 the Department of Education has indicated that preservice teachers are to be considered in the same way as staff and welcomed on all school sites ([school operations COVID-19 information](#)). It is important that schools, principals and teachers lean-in and share expertise to guide our next generation of teachers.

Currently for terms 3 and 4, universities have identified about 150 placements across primary and secondary in the south east corner that need a host school and about half of these are to commence in August 2021. These placements represent those students who are either graduating at the end of this year or who need these placements in order to stay on track to graduate next year. Details of these priority placements are available on the department's intranet – OnePortal (search for HEI).

Universities have placements commencing throughout terms 3 and 4, and there are opportunities in addition to the 150 identified as urgent. All schools are encouraged to consider hosting additional placements and contact the relevant university directly.

If you have any questions, please contact Fiona Haynes in the Workforce Policy team at [StrategicTransformation@qed.qld.gov.au](mailto:StrategicTransformation@qed.qld.gov.au).

(insert preservice teacher photo)



### Apple - Education Leadership and Learning Manager

I wanted to share these particular events:

Deep dives into Cognitive and Vision Impairment workshops which build on the 'Reaching All Learners' series. It is aimed at educators with students who may have a specific disability in these areas, in mainstream schools, in special needs settings and visiting teachers' programs (those educators that go out into several schools to support).

We have setup an EventBrite page below, so anyone can register and attend. The session is free and the series is repeated throughout September and October.

<https://www.eventbrite.com.au/o/laura-meney-creative-ipad-classroom-34067650845>

#### September:

RAL - Supporting Students with Cognitive Challenges, Thurs 2 Sept - 3:45pm

RAL - Supporting Students with Vision Impairments, Thurs 16 Sept - 3:45pm

#### October:

RAL - Supporting Students with Cognitive Challenges, Thurs 14 Oct - 3:45pm

RAL - Supporting Students with Vision Impairments, Thurs 28 Oct - 3:45pm

### From Dion Coghlan, Assistant Director-General, State Schools – Disability and Inclusion

As you know, the Department of Education has been refreshing its *Every student with disability succeeding* plan.

I am pleased to advise that the new [Every student with disability succeeding plan 2021-2025](#) (the new plan) has been released. The new plan is an important part of the [State Schools Improvement Strategy 2021-2025](#) as we continue to support every student to succeed.



Every student with disability  
succeeding

The whole-of-agency plan aims to support the success and wellbeing of every student with disability through each stage of learning in an inclusive education system.

In implementing the new plan, we will continue to monitor student outcomes including academic achievement, school disciplinary absences, access to full-time educational programs and Queensland Certificate of Education attainment. As part of our new plan, we will also monitor student wellbeing, student satisfaction, parent satisfaction, and retention in Years 10 to 12.

A significant action in the new plan is implementation of the Queensland Disability Review's final recommendation, and commitment to transition to a new resource allocation model for students with disability (the review).

The department has commenced the initial phase of the review, and as discussed at the Strategic Directions Steering Committee on 21 June 2021, we seek to engage with all stakeholders, including principals' associations, to develop a new model that streamlines processes for staff and parents, focusses on the needs of students, is more transparent and provides greater predictability for staff, schools and regions.

We will invite QASEL to participate in a stakeholder reference group to inform the development of the new resource allocation model.

Thank you again for your important contribution to developing the new plan, and I look forward to continuing to work with you as we implement actions to improve outcomes for students with disability.

### **ASEAP: Muted Voices Research National Launch**

The aim of this research project is to explore the differential perspectives of families of students with disabilities (SWD) regarding their children in Australian special schools, and to highlight measures by which such voices might be heard by significant stakeholders.

At the outset, the project was conceptualised to achieve the following outcomes:

- to establish a credible body of evidence from families regarding their experiences of special education settings
- to provide information from families on curriculum and other school practices that add value to the learning experiences of SWD
- to illustrate those mechanisms which enable families of SWD to be included in dialogues regarding the educational and social progress of their children
- to offer suggestions regarding the ways that families of SWD in special schools can positively contribute to advancing the inclusive practice agenda in all Australian schools.

The study was specifically designed to capture the perspectives of families regarding the opportunities to consult and engage with teachers on the education of their child or children with disabilities across special schools in Australia. The methodology provided a framework of investigation critical to the research in this study.

The Australian Special Education Principals' Association (ASEPA) funded the study. The scope of this research was ambitious in its targeting families of SWD in Australian special schools across all educational jurisdictions in each State and Territory in Australia. To our knowledge, this project is the first to specifically survey this group of parents, guardians, and carers of SWD in special schools across the whole of Australia.

Further, a significant body of parental voices have been manifested through this study providing a rich bank of perspectives regarding their preferred delivery models of education for their families and children with disabilities.

Muted Voices Info