



Rob Stokes
Minister for Education

MEDIA RELEASE

Monday, 11 September 2017

SUPPORT FOR PRINCIPALS TO FOCUS ON LEADERSHIP

A focus on principals as educational leaders not school administrators is the rationale behind a new school leadership strategy announced today by Education Minister Rob Stokes.

The strategy includes a new leadership institute to train and identify future principals and \$50 million a year to enable principals to focus on core duties such as curriculum planning, student progress, teaching quality, and student wellbeing.

Mr Stokes said principals should be free to use their expertise as educational leaders and focus on improving outcomes in classrooms.

“School leaders are critical to shaping the future of our children and young people,” Mr Stokes said.

“The research is clear that the most effective principals are strong instructional leaders – leaders who are constantly seeking to improve teaching quality and student results,” he said.

“The additional \$50 million in school support funding will assist principals to employ extra support staff so they have more time for instructional leadership.

“Schools could, for example, employ a business manager or share one across a number of schools.”

The strategy follows findings in an independent study that found school principals are spending too much time on management and administration tasks and not enough time on improving teaching and learning.

The study involving principals at 119 government schools found principals’ workload had increased in recent years with responsibilities in areas like planning, policy, finance, compliance, risk and work health and safety.

Examples of tasks undertaken by principals include fixing plumbing, organising cleaning, minor asset repairs, tree audits, and troubleshooting technology.

Key elements of the strategy include the following:

- An additional \$50 million a year in flexible school support funding to free up principals from administrative activities so they can focus on instructional leadership;
- A new leadership institute to develop and support school leaders and those preparing to take on leadership roles;
- Coaching and mentoring for new principals and support for existing principals who request this support;
- 20 scholarships a year for principals to participate in internationally renowned leadership programs;
- A new team of trained officers to remove the compliance burden off principals and undertake annual work, health and safety inspections.

The leadership institute's programs will be developed with school leaders in partnership with experts and universities. The first flagship course will be a 12-month development program starting in 2018 for aspiring principals.

The strategy was produced in consultation with the NSW Primary Principals Association and the NSW Secondary Principals Council.

Secondary Principals Council President Chris Presland said: "We believe this is one of the most comprehensive multi-phased strategies put in place to support schools for some time."

More information on the school leadership strategy is on the Department's website: <http://www.dec.nsw.gov.au/about-the-department/our-reforms/leadership-strategy>

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