



What Boards need to know about Wellbeing

Welcome to the 2021 Governance Virtual Conference

Contact | Mary Hudson, Director of the Leadership Institute HUDSONM@AIS.SA.EDU.AU

What Boards need to know about Wellbeing

COVID-19 brought to the fore the need for agile and responsive leadership from both Boards and school leaders in a way we have never experienced before. Decisions have, of necessity, been made amidst uncertainty and leaders have demonstrated the ability to be agile, resilient and adaptive to the ever-changing context.

A recent Deloitte report (The Perseverance of Resilient Leadership, August 2020) notes:

'As resilient leaders, one of our most critical roles right now is to sustain: to sustain our people, many of whom are experiencing not only fatigue but more stresses than they ever have; to sustain our organizations in continuing to create value for all stakeholders; and to sustain society as it experiences multiple existential threats. But just as important, we must also sustain our own ability to lead so that we can continue to serve over the long journey ahead.'

We cannot be sure what kind of world is going to emerge after COVID-19 but whatever happens we want our students and our schools to thrive. The pandemic has foregrounded the need for school Boards to prioritise wellbeing in ways they never have before.

So, what is it that Boards need to know about their role in creating and sustaining high levels of wellbeing in their school community?

It is now widely accepted that wellbeing affects students' engagement with learning, their social and emotional behaviour and their overall satisfaction with life. However, what is perhaps less well understood, is the Board's role in supporting the Principal and school leaders to build a community of practice that fosters wellbeing and builds social capital within their school community. The way in which the Board supports the wellbeing of the Principal, for example, will have a direct effect on staff and student wellbeing.

I am delighted that Dr Helen Street, Honorary Research Fellow, Graduate School of Education, University of Western Australia and author of **Contextual Wellbeing** is joining us as keynote speaker at the first Zoom session. She will explore contemporary issues and research that will develop Board members' understanding about ways to support school and community wide approaches to wellbeing. She will also explore how Boards can better support Principal and school leader wellbeing, as a vital foundation to building wellbeing across their school communities.

In the second Zoom session, David Runge, Director, Future Schools and Andrew Brown, Director, Adaptive Cultures, will provide an opportunity for Board members to reflect on their own Board culture and to understand how Board culture impacts the health and wellbeing of the school. It is widely acknowledged that culture is an organisation's greatest asset but also potentially its greatest risk and that Boards play a significant role in providing the foundation of a positive culture and direction for the wellbeing of the whole school.

The final Zoom session is a panel discussion focusing on Board processes that build whole school wellbeing. This will include a discussion of ways in which Boards can demonstrate their commitment to whole school wellbeing, and will foreground innovative approaches to Principal appointment, induction, mentoring and review processes and a range of approaches for effective Board review.

The panel will be facilitated by Mr Louka Parry, CEO of The Learning Future.

It has become increasingly clear that wellbeing is a significant area of responsibility, challenge and risk for our Boards and leadership teams and we encourage you to be part of this outstanding professional development opportunity.

To register go to the [AISSA events page](#)

I look forward to seeing you.

Carolyn Grantskalns

Chief Executive

Association of Independent Schools of South Australia

Program

All sessions delivered via Zoom

Session 1 | Tuesday 26 October 7.00pm - 8.30pm

Keynote address | Supporting Principals and Thriving School Communities with Contextual Wellbeing | Presented by **Dr Helen Street**, Associate Professor, University of Western Australia

Session 2 | Thursday 4 November 7.00pm - 8.30pm

Keynote address | What is the Board's Role in Influencing Culture and the Wellbeing of the School? | Presented by **Mr David Runge**, Director, Future Schools | **Mr Andrew Brown**, Director, Adaptive Cultures

Session 3 | Tuesday 9 November 7.00pm - 8.30pm

Panel Discussion | Board Processes that Build Whole School Wellbeing | **Mrs Carolyn Grantskalns**, Chief Executive, AISSA | **Mr Anthony Mackay, AM**, CEO, National Center on Education and the Economy, Washington | **Ms Fiona Hutton**, Hutton Consulting | **Mr David Runge**, Director, Future Schools | Facilitated by **Mr Louka Parry**, CEO & Founder, The Learning Future

Keynote addresses

Session 1 Tuesday 26 October 7.00pm - 8.30pm

Supporting Principals and Thriving School Communities with Contextual Wellbeing

Dr Helen Street

Over the past fifteen years our understanding of what it means to be 'well educated' has broadened and deepened. We no longer focus solely on the pursuit of academic excellence in Australian schools, rather, most educators today, aim to support 'whole person' education with a focus on academic, social and emotional learning.

The predominant response to this broader understanding of education has been to bring wellbeing programs and initiatives into the school context; rather than to consider challenging and developing the school context in and of itself. Yet, research tells us that individualised approaches rarely lead to improvements in long-term wellbeing, motivation or positive behaviours in students. In contrast, a shift to focusing on the school context as a primary means of supporting wellbeing, has been found to improve academic, social and emotional competencies for all members of the school community.

The power of a contextualised approach to supporting wellbeing, highlights the importance of the Principal's wellbeing as a vital foundation for the creation of a thriving school community. All members of governing Boards can play an important role in supporting their Principal's wellbeing. Through careful contextual consideration, governing bodies can help their Principals strengthen their capability, confidence and capacity they need to be well, and to act well as positive leaders and positive role models.

Session 2 Thursday 4 November 7.00pm - 8.30pm

What is the Board's Role in Influencing Culture and the Wellbeing of the School?

Mr David Runge and Mr Andrew Brown

Schools at their essence are communities designed to bring about connection and relationships, and at their best, embrace the growth and development of the whole community. Therefore, Boards should consider enabling strategy and infusing a culture that supports the Principal and whole school wellbeing as a means to encourage capacity building that reflects this intent.

The relationship between a Board and Principal has a huge bearing on the ability of a school to adapt and thrive. There is a growing appreciation that the quality of this relationship; given the direct influence of Principal leadership, represents an integral ingredient in the formation of school culture.

This relationship also has significant influence on what the Principal and other stakeholders across the school believe is possible, how they believe they are expected to act, what they perceive is important to the Board, and ultimately, how they work together in support of the school direction.

It is the central nature of the Principal's role in the formation of culture that highlights the importance of their wellbeing as a vital foundation for the creation of a thriving school community. A healthy and highly functioning Principal is better placed to be able to guide the implementation of a culture that supports the realisation of the global strategy. To enable an effective school ecosystem that upholds its stated values and purpose, the Principal's wellbeing should be at the centre of a Board's thinking. Such a focus brings sharp attention to the important role that all members of governing Boards can play in supporting their Principal's wellbeing and providing direction for the wellbeing of the whole school.

Session 3 Tuesday 9 November 7.00pm – 8.30pm

Panel discussion | Board Processes that Build Whole School Wellbeing

Mrs Carolyn Grantskalns, Chief Executive, AISSA

Mr Anthony Mackay, AM, CEO, National Center on Education and the Economy

Ms Fiona Hutton, Hutton Consulting

Mr David Runge, Director, Future Schools

Facilitated by Mr Louka Parry, CEO & Founder, The Learning Future

This panel discussion will explore Board processes that build whole school wellbeing. This will include approaches to Principal appointment, induction, review processes and ongoing support that are strength based, growth focused and build the competence and capacity of the Principal. A range of Board review processes will also be discussed that provide the opportunity for Boards to reflect on their collective performance and the areas for improvement that the Board may wish to consider.

Biographies

Panel Facilitator



Mr Louka Parry

Louka Parry is CEO of The Learning Future. He is committed to transforming learning structures, systems and societies to better empower individuals to develop the key human capabilities that matter most now and into the future. He also sits on the Executive of Karanga: The Global Alliance for Social Emotional Learning and Life Skills, which connects the global education community at the forefront of the future of education and social emotional learning to empower children, educators and communities across the globe. Louka was promoted to Principal at only 27 years old and in 2012 he was named South Australian Inspirational Public Secondary Teacher of the Year.

Conference Presenters



Dr Helen Street

Helen is one of Australia's most highly respected educators. She works as a consultant, an applied social psychologist and an honorary Associate Professor at The University of Western Australia. With a passion for educational reform and for challenging the status quo, Helen has become known as a pioneer in the development of sustainable engagement, motivation and wellbeing in schools.

Over the past twenty years, Helen has worked with schools in Europe, the UK, Australia and South East Asia. She has also written four books, several book chapters and more than 100 articles and academic papers supporting wellbeing in adults and young people. Her first book 'Standing Without Shoes' includes a foreword by His Holiness the Dalai Lama. Her most recent book, 'Contextual Wellbeing – creating positive school from the inside out' has become an international best-seller in education and has led to an increasing reconsideration of wellbeing at a systems level, involving every aspect of school context.

In 2009, Helen co-founded the highly respected and well-loved Positive Schools conference series across Australia and Asia. The disruption of the pandemic of 2020 has now resulted in Helen co-creating Positive Schools Online, a professional learning platform for educators. Positive Schools Online provides opportunity for a global education audience to access a continually expanding library of cutting-edge talks and interviews in support of whole school mental health and wellbeing.

Helen lives in Perth, Western Australia with her partner, their three daughters and their cavoodle, Barney.



Mr David Runge

Co-founder and Director of Future Schools, an organisation committed to the future of schooling and innovation in education, David collaborates with numerous schools, universities, Education Departments, and corporate organisations to implement innovation and deliver cultural change. He is passionate about evolving organisations so that they are more adaptive and future focused; therefore, better able to meet the needs of a changing social landscape.

David has worked on numerous executive teams to lead school wellbeing programs and whole school change initiatives. He is passionate about self-authorship and co-constructed education, and imagines a world of purpose-filled, empowered learning.

With extensive knowledge in foresight, culture and innovation, and as an Adaptive Cultures practitioner, David supports schools to meet their strategic agendas by collaborating alongside both Boards and Leaderships Teams to deliver cultural evolution and organisational adaptation.



Mr Andrew Brown

Andrew is a Director and co-founder of Adaptive Cultures. Adaptive Cultures has been recognised at senior executive and Board level as 'turning around' cultures, leadership behaviours and results, helping leaders to make changes with a substantial positive impact on the wider organisation and community.

Andrew's passion is to support people to bring their innate compassion and wisdom into creating humane and impactful places to work. Andrew has been drawn to the work of building adaptive capacity, as he believes it is essential for our organisations, industries and communities to grow and thrive.

Andrew has held executive positions across the Asia Pacific region. These include Chief Actuary for AXA Life Singapore, Chief Financial Officer for Philippine AXA Life and Head of Learning and Leadership Development for AXA Asia Pacific Holdings. Andrew was previously a director for the Actuaries Institute (AI), and has also been a member of the global AXA Learning and Development Board.

Panel Members



Mr Anthony Mackay, AM

Anthony Mackay, AM is CEO / President of the Washington DC based National Center on Education and the Economy.

Anthony is moderator of the annual International Summit on the Teaching Profession and the Annual Global Education Industry Summit.

Anthony is Co-Chair of the National Project, Learning Creates Australia. Anthony is Deputy Chancellor Swinburne University, Melbourne, and Senior Fellow, Graduate School of Education, The University of Melbourne.

Anthony is immediate past Chair of the Australian Council for Educational Research, and immediate past Deputy Chair of New Zealand's Education Council. He was Inaugural Chair of the Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership and the Inaugural Deputy Chair of the Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority.

Anthony is an expert consultant to OECD, Senior Fellow IBE UNESCO, and Council Member of Asia Society's Center for Global Education.



Ms Fiona Hutton

Fiona Hutton is the founder and Director of Hutton Consulting Australia. Fiona moved from a distinguished educational career teaching and leading in a range of independent schools in Melbourne, into leadership search. A sought-after executive search consultant, her client portfolio includes a broad range of organisations within the not-for-profit sector, schools sector and for profit educational companies. Fiona's specialty is in forming high performing teams at an executive level, leadership appointments and designing ongoing processes of induction and review. A strong advocate for inclusion and diversity, Fiona is proud that Hutton Consulting is working towards closing the gender gap in Education with 63% of successful appointments being female.



Mrs Carolyn Grantskalns

An experienced educational leader, Carolyn began her teaching career in what was then known as the Education Department of South Australia moving to the independent sector in 1988. In 1990 she was appointed Principal of Wilderness School, a position she held until 2006. During that time she was variously Chair of the Industrial Relations Committee of AISSA, President of AISSA, and a member of the Boards of a tertiary residential college, St Ann's, the teacher credit union then known as SATISFAC and the National Council of Independent Schools of Australia.

In 2006 she was appointed Principal of Lowther Hall Anglican Grammar School in Essendon, Victoria. In addition to that role, she also held the positions of Chair of the Victorian branch of the Association of Heads of Independent Schools of Australia (AHISA) and membership of the AHISA Board, Treasurer of Girls Sport Victoria and Board member of the Centre for Strategic Education.

Carolyn has been the Chief Executive of the Association of Independent Schools of South Australia since 2013. She is also the Deputy Presiding Member of The Teacher Registration Board of SA, a Fellow of the Australian Council of Educational Leaders, a Graduate of the Australian Institute of Company Directors and a member of the Board of ACARA.