

**MEDIA RELEASE**  
**18 March 2026**

**APF Rejects Department of Education Offer “Fails to Recognise the Complexity of the Principal Role ”**

The Australian Principals Federation (APF) negotiating team has formally rejected the enterprise agreement offer put forward by the Victorian Department of Education on 16 March 2026, determining that the proposal does not adequately recognise the complexity, responsibility and increasing challenges faced by the principal class across Victoria’s public schools.

Following careful consideration, the APF negotiating team concluded that the offer falls short of addressing the priorities outlined in the APF Log of Claims and does not meet the expectations of members.

APF President Andrew Cock said the proposal fails to reflect the realities of modern school leadership.

“The Department’s offer does not acknowledge the complexity of the principal role or the challenges school leaders are currently navigating every day,” Mr Cock said.

“Principals are responsible for leading increasingly complex organisations - managing staff, escalating student needs, growing compliance obligations and heightened community expectations, all while remaining fully accountable for the educational outcomes and operational performance of their schools.”

The APF Log of Claims reflects the collective voice of principals across the state and focuses on several key priorities, including:

- Remuneration that reflects the scale and accountability of the principalship and is comparative to complexity of the work and end of line responsibility.
- Maintaining salary differentials between teacher class, Assistant Principals and Principals that make the role attractive for future aspirants.
- Measures to address the growing and unsustainable workload facing school leaders
- Improved support structures for principals and assistant principals
- Conditions that strengthen attraction and retention of high-quality school leaders

Mr Cock said meaningful reform is required if Victoria is to maintain a strong and sustainable principal workforce and National ranking as the highest performing schools.

“If we want great leaders in our schools, the system must properly recognise the role and provide the conditions that make the principalship sustainable.”

The APF remains committed to constructive and good-faith negotiations with the Department and will continue advocating strongly for outcomes that appropriately recognise and support the work of the principal class.

Further negotiations will occur in the coming weeks and members will be informed as discussions progress.

**Media enquiries**

Australian Principals Federation

☎ 0412 584 002

✉ [apf@apf.net.au](mailto:apf@apf.net.au)