

Friday 24 July 2015

## **NESLI AND PAI PARTNERSHIP: AN EXERCISE IN SCHOOL LEADERSHIP**

**The National Excellence in School Leadership Institute (NESLI) today announced a partnership with Principals Australia Institute (PAI).**

The partnership – which incorporates \$65,000 in sponsorship and support for the PAI Principal Certification Program – was announced by NESLI CEO Damien Farrell at the Australian Principal Certification Prototype Trial launch in Melbourne today.

The shared values of PAI and NESLI make it a symbiotic partnership. Both organisations recognise the importance of quality school leadership and the vital role of the principal in creating a vibrant learning culture.

Mr Farrell said the trial has come at a critical time for Australian schools.

“We’re very aware of the massive generational change underway in Australian schools,” says Mr Farrell.

“70 per cent of Australia’s 10,000 school principals are reaching retirement age in the next five years. The decline in numbers will result in a huge leadership gap.”

Mr Farrell believes the best way to respond to such a challenge is through best practice in leadership. This has been contextualised for schools.

“Many schools do not have the same developmental budgets as corporates,” says Mr Farrell, “but principals shouldn’t be denied recognition for their leadership and access to quality learning.”

The Honourable Susan Lenahan, Chair of the Board of PAI, says the Principal Certification initiative is an effective way of achieving sustainable social change for students and the communities in which they live.

“Principals are central to quality schooling and student success,” says Ms Lenahan. “Educational research for over 25 years supports this – students need to be led by professionals.”

Ms Lenahan also emphasises that it is important that principals take the lead on certification as a collective effort.

“Principal Certification champions exemplary educational leadership and elevates the professional standing of principals in the community,” says Ms Lenehan. “It is also about student learning and whole-school improvement. It benefits the entire local community.”

Mr Farrell agrees. He says the profession needs a higher standing, citing the example of Finland where principals enjoy a professional reputation alongside lawyers and doctors.”

He sees the PAI Certification Program as one of the mechanisms that will reposition the profession in Australia.

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For further information – or to arrange an interview with Damien Farrell or The Honourable Susan Lenehan, please contact:

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#### **About NESLI**

Through a powerful network of education stakeholders, the National Excellence in School Leadership Initiative [NESLI] responds directly to the need to prepare our emerging school leaders to rise to increasingly complex leadership challenges in changing school environments. NESLI offer a range of dynamic leadership development programs targeting different points in the school leadership life cycle.

Through its expanding international work, NESLI benefits from partnerships and alliances throughout North America, Asia Pacific, New Zealand, the UK, and Middle East.

#### **About Principals Australia Institute (PAI)**

PAI was established in 1993 to provide support for principals for their own professional development.

Its mission is to provide professional learning and support for school leaders and build the capacity and profile of the profession.

The principal associations that founded PAI are:

- Association of Heads of Independent Schools of Australia (AHISA)
- Australian Primary Principals Association (APPA)
- Australian Secondary Principals Association (ASPA)
- Catholic Secondary Principals Australia (CaSPA)

#### **About PAI Certification**

Principals Australia Institute in consultation with Australian principals is leading the development of a voluntary Australian Principal Certification Program. This endeavour will allow the profession to lead and develop its own quality assured and publically accountable process for certifying the leadership capacity and expertise of Australian principals, aligned with the Australian Professional Standard for Principals.

Further information can be found at [certification.pai.edu.au/content/principal-certification](http://certification.pai.edu.au/content/principal-certification)