

## MEDIA RELEASE

25 October, 2021

### **Professor Phil Riley recognised as a ‘Hero of Primary Education’**

#### **The Australian Primary Principals Association has recognised Deakin University’s Professor Phil Riley for his outstanding work in education by awarding him with the ‘Hero of Primary Education’ award**

A prestigious award, the ‘Hero of Primary Education’ has been given only twice before, in 2007 to Professor Max Angus and Harriet Olney of Edith Cowan University (WA).

The award was presented to Professor Riley by Hon Celia Hammond MP at the Parliamentary Friends of Primary Education event and was awarded to Professor Riley for his work in shining a light on the pressures faced by primary school principals across the country.

“Phil Riley has been a wonderful standard bearer for the school principals of Australia for a very long time. His research into school leader wellbeing has supported morale as work has intensified and the pressure on school leaders has increased,” said Malcolm Elliott, President of the Australian Primary Principals Association.

Since 2010 Professor Riley has helped to conduct the *Australian Principal Occupational Health, Safety and Wellbeing Survey*, with the research shining a light on the demands of the role of primary school principals across the country.

“The research provided by Professor Riley, his colleagues and research team has been invaluable in opening discussions and driving policy to improve the working conditions of school leaders and will continue to be very influential across schools and systems,” said Mr. Elliott.

Mr. Elliott described Professor Riley as a true hero of primary education and said that his nomination for the award was met with spontaneous agreement by the APPA’s Board.

“Professor Riley has resolutely presented this high-quality research, at times in the face of criticism. He has made clear and bold recommendations, which have direct implications for major change across all parts of the education community – particularly including school principals,” said Mr Elliott.

In 2017, as an extension of his research work, Professor Riley was instrumental in collating the results of the survey into a report, called *Back to Balance: How Policy and Practice Can Make Primary Principals Highly Effective*.

“Phil has been courageous and determined. His work has been, and will continue to be, positively impactful in regard to policy, public awareness and the practice of the principalship across Australia for years to come,” said Mr. Elliott.



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## **Media Contact**

The APPA President Malcom Elliott is available for interview and to arrange please contact Malcolm directly on 0418 312 265 or via email [president@appa.asn.au](mailto:president@appa.asn.au).

## **About the Australian Primary Principals Association**

The Australian Primary Principals Association (APPA) is the national professional association for primary school principals in Australia. APPA represents affiliated state and territory Government, Catholic and Independent primary schools across the nation with over 7,000 members. It is the national voice on national issues and speaks directly to the Federal Government on matters that concern school principals and their school communities.

For further information on the APPA please visit our website <https://www.appa.asn.au>

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