

# MEDIA RELEASE

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## **Victorian School Leaders honoured for dedication and commitment**

Seven Victorian principals and school leaders will receive a national award today for their achievements in education. The John Laing Professional Development Awards are administered by the Principals Australia Institute.

“It is imperative that we recognise and value the vital role that principals play in providing leadership in our community,” said Jim Davies, CEO of Principals Australia Institute.

“Great schools do not happen by accident. The quality of our school leaders helps shape and drive excellence in education.

“We all want our students to thrive and flourish at school. We need leaders who have the learning and wellbeing of students and staff as their primary focus.”

“The Institute exists to support principals and school leaders as they seek to build effective, inspirational and sustainable leadership in Australian schools. These awards acknowledge leaders who have achieved exceptional standards in school leadership.”

The recipients will be honoured at a gathering in Melbourne on October 17 2014.

Each of these peer-nominated individuals is considered to have made an exceptional contribution to school leadership and to the professional development of their peers. The six people being honoured are:

- Steve Bellesini
- Tim Blunt
- Jillian Bosanquet
- Mary Fitz-Gerald
- Philip Grutzner
- Justin Lloyd
- Sharon Saitlik

**More information on the honourees is available in the attached backgrounder.**

**The Principals and school leaders are available for interview and photograph.**

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# John Laing Awards Backgrounder

## The Honorees

### **Steve Bellesini**

#### **Principal at Resurrection School, Keysborough**

- Steve has made outstanding contributions to professional learning for colleagues with consistent passion and enthusiasm.
- He's served 9 years in his current role and 38 years in education.

### **Tim Blunt**

#### **Principal at Sunshine College, Sunshine**

- Tim is an inspiring principal in a large secondary school who has made a difference to the outcomes of students and has developed a strong leadership team in his school.
- He has 35 years of experience in education, 9 years as principal at Sunshine.

### **Jillian Bosanquet**

#### **Head of Malvern Campus, Caulfield Grammar School, St Kilda East**

- Jill has worked in education for 41 years including 7 years in her current role.
- She is an outstanding educator and leader who is committed to bringing out the best in children and staff. She leads by example and is a source of inspiration to others. She is admired for her knowledge, wisdom and compassion.

### **Mary Fitz-Gerald**

#### **Principal at Mater Christi College, Belgrave**

- Mary has served at the school for 14 years and worked in education for 32 years.
- Mary clearly has a vision for education. She shares this vision with staff, students and families across a range of contexts. Mary is viewed as a strong contemporary female leader and an important role model for students.

### **Philip Grutzner**

#### **Principal at Carey Baptist Grammar School, Kew**

- Philip has led the school for 5 years and worked in education sector for 28 years.
- He has inspired leadership actions and aspirations among school staff and also colleagues through the Association of Heads of Independent schools of Australia (AHISA). He runs workshops for new principals with Independent Schools Victoria.

### **Justin Lloyd**

#### **Principal, Holy Rosary School, White Hills**

- Justin has been principal at the school for 14 years and has 35 years of service in education.
- Through his thoughtful considered leadership, Justin has developed the school to a high level of curriculum engagement, with excellent facilities to support initiatives such as the Healthy Eating and Active After School Program. He has been an outstanding colleague and someone to whom his peers turn when in need of advice and counsel.

### **Sharon Saitlik**

#### **Principal, Mont Albert Primary School, Mont Albert**

- Sharon has worked as principal at the school for over 5 years and has 25 years of experience in education.

- She has made an outstanding contribution to the professional development of school leaders. She has organised large regional meetings where information and professional practice are shared. When undertaking her own professional development she is generous and effective in sharing her learnings with colleagues.

## **The Award**

John Laing is a former Tasmanian school principal who worked for Principals Australia Institute.

His passionate belief and energy was the driving force behind the first cross-sectoral professional learning projects for all school leaders in Australia.

John's retirement from the profession prompted a special award to be set up in 2004 in his honour.

The John Laing Professional Development Award recognises school leaders who have significantly contributed to the professional learning of their colleagues.

## **Principals Australia Institute**

Principals Australia Institute (PAI) provides quality professional learning, leadership development and support to principals and school leaders.

Our programs and services help build effective, inspirational and sustainable leadership in Australia's 10,000 government, Catholic and independent primary and secondary schools.

The principals' 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)

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