



2020 – 21 ANNUAL REPORT

WISA Wellbeing in Schools Australasia Pacific Ltd



WISA Online learning became the norm in 2020 and 2021 and accelerated our training moodle being ready for use.



WISA face to face training for Wellbeing staff continued in smaller states where COVID had yet to have an impact during the past year.

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Our Vision

WISA Wellbeing in Schools Australia is a national not for profit organization with a vision of school communities building resilience in all students, especially the most marginalized and those at risk of marginalization, so they can reach their potential in education and in life.

Our Purpose

To achieve this WISA is working collaboratively with and supporting schools communities in building a strategic whole of school approach to health and wellbeing that creates a socially just environment where all students can thrive, particularly those at risk of or who are being marginalised.

WISA key Goals/ Objectives:

- 1. WISA is an ethical, sustainable and member-based not for profit organisation**
 - 1.1. Achievement of charitable status
 - 1.2. Diverse funding sources/streams
 - 1.3. Efficient and effective operations
 - 1.4. Effective in growing and guiding WISA
 - 1.5. Understands and mitigates its risk

- 2. WISA is a valuable support for school leaders of wellbeing for enabling socially just outcomes**
 - 2.1. Identify strategies that increase protective factors and reduce risk factors in marginalised communities in distress
 - 2.2. Empower school leaders of wellbeing to advocate and achieve systemic school improvement
 - 2.3. Lead research-informed professional development and practice in school wellbeing
 - 2.4. Actively engage school leaders of wellbeing through networks and training
 - 2.5. Lead the establishment of a vibrant national school wellbeing association
 - 2.6 Identify and promote the development of national benchmark standards for school wellbeing

Our History

WISA Wellbeing in Schools Australasia Pacific Limited is a national not for profit organisation established in May 2015. *WISA Wellbeing in Schools Australia* works under the auspices of the parent company *WISA Wellbeing in Schools Australasia Pacific Ltd*. The organisation achieved full charity status effective from 1 July 2015 under the subtypes of advancing education, advancing health, advancing social or public welfare and being a Public Benevolent Institution.

The Board, staff and patrons of WISA bring a wealth of expertise and experience to the organisation having worked at a local, state, national and international level in education and wellbeing. **There are very experienced hands and heads with big hearts in our organisation having worked in addressing wellbeing in primary and secondary schools in every state and territory across Australia for the past two decades.**

With the COVID pandemic having a major impact upon students, school staff and families, the wellbeing needs impacting upon schools have more than doubled and the complexity of needs presenting to Student Wellbeing staff in schools across Australia presents a massive challenge. WISA responded in 2020 and 2021 by developing and implementing a range of webinars and workshops for school staff including leaders, as well as parents/carers to care for themselves and their students/children. The feedback on this support and resourcing has been overwhelmingly positive with participants stating it has built their resilience and provided valuable resources to support both them and their students healing and recovery from the trauma of both bushfires and the pandemic. Staff and parents reported

that they shared these resources widely across the school community with other staff, families and students. WISA will continue to offer this specialised support which includes leading Australian psychological and educational support practitioners in 2022 and beyond.

WISA's core business of building school community's capacity and capability to strategically and sustainably address wellbeing is more important now than ever. Rates of marginalised students disengaging and exiting the education system continue to grow with many of these statistics remaining hidden. Safety in schools is still the single biggest school wellbeing issue requiring significant attention at the local level with a staggering 98% of schools not knowing the most effective interventions to prevent, reduce and resolve bullying. Bullying continued to increase further during the pandemic. Unhealthy afterhours device use and remote learning and disengagement from learning is also contributing to relationship breakdown and impacting on the quality of learning.

The majority of staff in school wellbeing and leadership roles continue to feel totally overwhelmed by the recent COVID related growth in demand which comes on top of a trend of recent years of growing demands and greater complexity of needs presenting from students, staff and families. For schools with many marginalised students or those located in marginalised communities the demands for the wellbeing support regularly outstrip the resources available. All of this is occurring at a time where more and more health and wellbeing initiatives are being directed at schools and uptake of these initiatives continues to occur haphazardly with little thought to sustainable whole of school community approaches based upon effective evidence and implementation science. Implementation must be tailored to ensure individual school's identified needs are addressed utilising best practice frameworks of practice and tools and resources. The level of resourcing for Wellbeing in schools must increase in the coming year if Australia is to avoid the impact of direct, cumulative and vicarious trauma within school communities.

The birth of WISA and its subsequent development over recent years has focused upon working directly with schools, across all states and territories, to build the capacity and a capability of Leaders of School Wellbeing and their Wellbeing Teams to address these local school community wellbeing needs. This included guiding them to work smarter not harder in a planned strategic whole of school community approach to address wellbeing. Building sustainable evidence informed best practice resources for school communities to improve wellbeing, underpins all our work regardless of the traumatic events and circumstances that present themselves.

The data we collect from leaders of school wellbeing who attend our training, mentoring and conference events has identified significant wellbeing needs and trends across Australia. All of these undermine the quality of Australian education teaching and learning, as well as negatively impacting upon student engagement and attendance rates. This data informs our funding grant applications and initiatives to address these needs. None of which government has responded to address these challenges, which continue to grow. This data is also provided back to school staff who undertake WISA training and has also been provided to education and health Ministers, and has contributed to a number of funding applications, both to government, corporate and philanthropic organisations.

WISA undertook and completed in 2020 – 21 a national quality assurance project addressing all of the WISA training, conferences and support provided to school communities. This project also measured the impact of WISA resourcing in school communities, with a particular interest upon addressing the needs of schools, who benefitted, the building of capacity and capability in schools, as well as sustainable practice and utilising and applying best practice. The results have reinforced that WISA is having a sustained positive impact in school communities across Australia and that the quality of our training and resources is to a high standard and meeting the needs of school and agency participants.

In Victoria the *School Focused Youth Service* continues to fund a large number of WISA trainings to be provided at no cost to marginalised school communities at the local district level. Hundreds of school staff from all parts of Victoria have attended many different WISA training events in the past year and in particular the COVID recovery and resilience building webinars/workshops. The feedback from schools

and the SFYS highlights that this model of collaboration and its school results continue to be extremely positive.

WISA Patrons continue to provide sage counsel. These include Dr Rhonda Galbally OA, currently a federal Government Disability Royal Commissioner, Prof. Ken Rigby, one of Australia's leading international experts in addressing bullying recently awarded an OA, and Emeritus Prof Brian Caldwell continues bringing enormous educational expertise and experience as a previous deputy chair of ACARA and a previous Dean of Education at The University of Melbourne.

SECTION 1

AN OVERVIEW OF WISA

ABOUT US

The CEO, Board and staff of WISA have backgrounds spanning the education, justice, public health, disability, homelessness, banking and investment, youth, student voice, community and health sectors together with education, medicine, business administration, criminal justice, family therapy, health and allied professional qualifications and experience. They have worked across the government, Catholic and independent school sectors in Primary, Secondary and Tertiary settings. This includes staff with expertise in teaching, health, mental health, school leadership, senior management and governance, whole of school approaches to school community wellbeing – students, staff and families; proactive initiatives in wellbeing – including student voice/participation, student leadership and empowerment, youth and community development, school resilience and positive psychology/education, research and evidence-based best practice, mentoring/coaching, peer education school community partnerships including parent engagement and education, social and emotional learning, suicide prevention, Primary and Secondary school mental health and wellbeing initiatives; appropriate responses in wellbeing – special education, effective bullying interventions, conflict resolution, counselling and referral, group work, school nursing, supporting marginalised and homeless, addressing trauma and critical incidents.

All have had experience working both at local, regional, state and national levels across education and health.

Our patrons include leading experts in education, health, disability, justice, homeless, community and philanthropic sectors. Emeritus Professor Brian Caldwell is a previous Dean of Education at the University of Melbourne and past Deputy Chair of the Australian Curriculum Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA). Dr Rhonda Galbally OA is Commissioner on the Disability Royal Commission, previous CEO of Vic Health and the Australian National Preventive Health Agency, previous Chair Melbourne's Royal Women's Hospital. Prof Ken Rigby OA is a national consultant for schools and a leading international authority in bullying and victimisation in schools with more than 100 peer refereed papers and other publications, member of the National Coalition Against Bullying, a former school teacher, psychologist, parent and academic, he draws upon his longstanding experience in providing practical advice to all those who are concerned about the safety and wellbeing of children in schools.

What WISA offers

There are four key strategic areas that WISA has created to help school communities to work in a planned strategic sustainable approach to addressing school wellbeing. These are as follows:

1. Provide support and build the capacity of Leaders of School Wellbeing

- Provision of three levels of training incl. tools, resources and skills practice.

Essential / Basic Training for School Leaders of Wellbeing

Consolidating the School Wellbeing role

Sustaining best practice in the Wellbeing role

- *Mentor support for Leaders of School Wellbeing*

- Annual membership for Leaders of School Wellbeing to receive quarterly newsletters, resources/tools & discounts.

2. **Enabling school leadership and governance to effectively resource wellbeing in their school**
 - A step by step guide
 - 2 day training for school leadership and governance bodies with a focus upon *Leadership Wellbeing* and *Leading and Resourcing Wellbeing Effectively*
 - Mentor support
 - Training in the *Most effective interventions to prevent, reduce and resolve bullying in schools*
3. **Strategies for working with your most vulnerable students**
 - Whole school staff strategies 1-day training in *Strategies to support marginalised students*
 - A hardcopy and online guidebook with specific tools and links
 - *Staff Wellbeing training* whole day or modules
 - *Nurture Whole School Nurture Approach to Learning* and *Practitioner* trainings
4. **Population based approaches to school community wellbeing**
 - WISA Conferences alternating years – NT, SA, ACT, TAS then NSW, QLD, VIC, WA
 - Wellbeing in Schools Awards (seeking funding for this)
5. **Consultancy in relation to a broad array of Wellbeing initiatives in schools**

OUR PEOPLE

Board members/Trustees 2020 - 21

| Name | Position | Dates acted (if not for whole year) |
|-----------------------|--------------------|--|
| Mary Tobin | Chairperson | 2019, 2020, 2021 |
| Assoc Prof. Bret Hart | Deputy Chairperson | 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021 |
| Kerry Ashley | Secretary | 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021 |
| Wren Gillet | Deputy Secretary | 2020, 2021 |
| Cassim Rawat | Treasurer | 2020, 2021 |
| Kylie Singh | Board Member | 2019, 2020, 2021 |
| Jac Van Velsen | Board Member | 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021 |

Employees/Contractors

| Name | Position | Dates acted (if not for whole year) |
|----------------|---------------------------------------|--|
| Jac Van Velsen | Voluntary CEO | 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021 |
| Linsey Hart | Contractor SA & NT WISA State Manager | 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021 |
| Maria Hart | Contractor WA WISA State Manager | 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021 |

| | | |
|--------------|--|---------------------------------------|
| Paul Cahalan | Contractor Leadership Wellbeing | 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021 |
| Kaye Dennis | Contractor Marginalised Training Provider | 2017 – 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021 |
| Jo Dwyer | Contractor NSW WISA NSW State Manager Leadership Wellbeing, Staff Wellbeing | 2018, 2019, 2020 |

Volunteers

| Name | Position | Dates acted (if not for whole year) |
|--------------------------|---|--|
| Troy Slade, Slade Design | Graphic and Web Designer | Since inception |
| Adele Hamlyn | Data and strategy | 2020, 2021 |
| Gemma Merryfull | Student Australian College of Applied Psychology - placement WISA Quality Assurance | 2020, 2021 |
| Liz Carr | Data Management | 2021 |

Acknowledging our Supporters

Many people continue to support us as we grow. Continued thanks go to all of our fabulous life partners.

To those who kindly volunteer their time and resources, including those listed above, we would not be where we are today without you. In particular the huge voluntary efforts of Linsey Hart with conferences, Mary Tobin, Bret Hart and Cassim Rawat in guiding the organisation together with Kerry Ashley who also addresses WISA policies. To our contractors and the Board thank you sincerely for your continued generosity and support so that WISA can continue making a significant difference in the lives of students, staff and families in our school communities across Australia.

STRUCTURE & MANAGEMENT

WISA is a registered Company Limited by Guarantee with ASIC and the ATO and also registered with the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission (ACNC), holding Deductible Gift Recipient and Tax Concession Charity status.

The WISA Board of Directors provide ongoing strategic governance and oversight of the WISA strategic plan and operations, financial management, providing leadership and structure for growth.

Our CEO, state based contractors and Board continue to make every effort to meet and advise both Commonwealth and State Education Ministers and staff, of the work that WISA is undertaking to attract greater resourcing and support for wellbeing in schools, with the aim of collaborating with government partners to deliver training and support to schools.

WISA continues to raise awareness of what we do, the needs we have identified and how we can support Governments to improve and increase teacher and student engagement in education, along with their wellbeing, which is essential for improved academic and educational outcomes for students.

The WISA Board continues to be supported and backed by a very impressive group of academics and leading practitioners that help inform WISA's work and involvement in schools, as well as very highly skilled and experienced Patrons. Our sincere and continued thanks go to Professor Helen Cahill, Prof. Donna Cross, Emeritus Prof Dorothy Bruck, Prof David Hillman, Assoc Prof Bret Hart, Andrew Fuller, Dr Lyn O'Grady, Bob Bellhouse, Kaye Dennis, Mary Tobin, Dr Katherine Dix, Assoc Professor Peggy Kern, Dr Annie Gowing and Vivienne Archdall. Providing evidence-based tools, resources, mentoring and training is essential to our work and we thank them all for their generous support, professional and academic rigour to support the work we undertake.

Our model of business until we have secured long-term programmatic funding and philanthropic funding is to provide training and support through a group of WISA approved trainers who together set up a schedule of training and conferences across Australia. The contractors undertake all arrangements and risk, with a percentage of earnings paid to WISA. WISA sustains a website and partners with contractors in the development and ownership of training materials.

WISA has also developed a *Leader of School Wellbeing Network* organisation where members can receive collegiality, shared resources and discount to further training offerings.

Whilst the above business model maintains the security of WISA operationally the model is very tight and is only able to be offered on a 'user pays' approach. What we have learnt is that if the training is sponsored by school networks or State Department's we have attendance and training can be more targeted to schools in greatest need. As our purpose is to provide the necessary training and support to marginalised schools, our lack of external funding support limits schools' participation, as most have already committed their budgets to a range of activities to support their school, so they invariably are not able to send their teachers to 'user pays' training.

Ideally, we would like to be delivering free training and support to any school that is marginalised (as they are often the most in need of assistance) with the backing of the Commonwealth Government and State support. WISA will continue to grow online training and support to improve access challenges presented by the pandemic but also to enhance rural and remote accessibility. This remote training has also enabled many more staff to access training during working hours from their home or school.

CHAIRPERSON'S ANNUAL REPORT 2020 - 21 Mary Tobin

The Wellbeing in Schools Australia (WISA) Board has experienced another year of working together in a constructive and visionary focused way, albeit it in the midst of a continuing global pandemic. The WISA Board and all WISA programs continued all business through an online environment including webinars and videoconferencing. Through the careful stewardship of the CEO, Jac Van Velsen, WISA continued to provide a range of high-quality programs and, importantly customised many of its professional learning offerings in direct response to the needs of school communities at this particular time.

During 2021 the WISA Board welcomed three new Directors. Wren Gillett, Student voice Advocate, works to ensure today's systems reflect and empower the views and strength of young people. She is the Alannah Madeline Foundation's Media Literacy Lab youth ambassador and is Pivot Professional Learning's student voice advocate. From 15 - 18 years-old, Wren was part of Victoria's Student Representative Committee (VICSRC) as Chair of the student executive team for part of this time. Wren is currently in her second year of university majoring in Journalism and we are grateful to her for accepting the role of Assistant Secretary for the WISA Board this year. Wren's appointment has supported the Board in strengthening the young person's perspective on a range of issues. Wren has also supported WISA in the exploration of marketing and branding. By the end of the year this has provided new marketing profiles for WISA on a range of social media platforms including LinkedIn and Instagram.

WISA also welcomed Cassim Rawat to the Board. With his background in business and banking, Cassim supports the Board through strategically encouraging deep questioning around the business model and funding sustainability. Cassim is an experienced Finance professional with over two decades experience in Private Wealth businesses on two continents. From a leadership perspective, he held roles as Sales Manager & Operations Manager leading a team of professional staff in South Africa. Since migrating to Melbourne, Australia he was also Acting Relationship Director at Westpac Private leading a team of 6 high achieving Private Bankers with great success and most recently joining the National Australian Bank as a Private Client Director. Education and providing kids with hope is another huge passion of his and we are pleased that he has joined the WISA Board.

Doctor Robyn Ramsden recently joined the WISA Board. Robyn brings a rich experience in the Wellbeing and prevention space including a strong base in research. Robyn is currently a Senior Research Advisor for the NSW Rural Doctors Network (RDN). She completed her Doctorate in health and social sciences at Deakin University, Melbourne with special research interests in youth health, health promotion, evidence-based practice, capacity building, and the integration of evidence into healthcare policy and practice. From 2000-2012, she was the Manager of the State-wide Programs Unit for the Victorian Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (DEECD) during which time she led a team responsible for the development of health and education policy, and programs and resources for educators, students and their families. We are grateful to Robyn for joining the work of the WISA Board.

This year sees the retirement from the WISA Board of two significant members. Professor Bret Hart joined in 2016 and Kerry Ashley has been part of WISA since its inception. They have each served in a variety of roles including Chair and Deputy Chair as well as Kerry having the role of Board Secretary and Public Officer. Bret and Kerry demonstrate deep commitment and dedication to WISA and have provided significant strength to Jac and the vision and mission of WISA. WISA will always be indebted to them for all that they have contributed. WISA continues to move forward building upon this strong history. Thank you, Bret and Kerry.

The Covid pandemic has supported the WISA Board in continuing to interrogate the work and business of WISA. WISA has a large vision and the Collaborative Space – an innovative meeting space introduced this year – has provided the WISA Board with a platform to further explore its 'brand', product and programs so that the Board can continue to support WISA in building a Business Plan that optimises resources, makes a difference to a defined audience and is sustainable into the longer term with clear evidence of impact. The work of the Board in this area will support WISA in promoting itself and accessing funding through clarity of message. This work will continue in 2022.

Jac and her teams across Australia have worked tirelessly during 2021 with all programs being delivered virtually. A significant number of programs have been delivered and in particular it is important to note the following programs for 2021.

WISA has partnered with UK based *Nurture International* in bringing an important initiative to Australian schools. It is aimed at enabling some of the most vulnerable students to heal and thrive in education. WISA is also part of a national Mental Health in Education Roundtable of key stakeholders with Beyondblue's *BeYou* initiative.

As always Jac is committed to the purpose and vision of WISA. During 2021, through Jac's efforts WISA has received some grants. The Victorian Government provided \$20,000 to WISA for loss of revenue due to Covid. WISA has continued to partner with Liminal VR, an innovative virtual reality company on a few federal grant applications, including RMIT Centre for Innovative Justice and Prof Donna Cross from the Telethon Kids Research Institute and the University of Western Australia

The WISA Partners continue to be a vital component of the WISA family. In particular we note and value the partnerships with Nurture International and Bendigo Bank.

We also thank our Patrons Dr Rhonda Galbally, Emeritus Professor Brian Caldwell and Prof Ken Rigby for their continued support.

The Board thanks and congratulates Jac and her team for all that you have given and achieved during 2021. Our deepest thanks to you Jac for your tireless work and dedication.

As we move towards 2022 the WISA Board is committed to building upon the learnings of 2021 to review and redevelop the Business Plan with a focus upon marketing and clarity of purpose and message. This will lend support to accessing a steady income stream to support the great work of WISA. The areas of positioning the business of WISA and marketing will be a strong focus for the Board as we move into 2022. The Board wants to support WISA in embedding, consolidating and streamlining its vision and purpose across the sector.

As Chair for 2021 I am grateful to be working with a group of people who genuinely want to make a difference. Each Board member brings a unique perspective and skill set to the Board. Importantly each member brings a sense of humility and an openness to wanting to explore the ways in which the Board can support WISA in realising its vision and making an impact. The Board continues to build upon all who have served and supported WISA since its beginnings. The WISA Board is committed to supporting WISA to build capacity across the sector so that school communities are supported to strengthen their capacity and capability to promote flourishing learning environments which enhance the wellbeing of all to support learning and teaching.

Mary Tobin

CEO REPORT 2020 - 21 ON WISA ACTIVITIES Jac Van Velsen

The 2020 -21 year has been an extraordinary time. Wellbeing in Schools Australia (WISA) in addition to providing its core training to build schools wellbeing capacity and capability as part of a strategic whole of school community approach, has diversified in response to requests from schools. WISA has developed and implemented 14 different workshops for school communities to support them in responding to wellbeing challenges related to COVID and understanding loss, grief and trauma and building resilience. These workshops have occurred across multiple states with over 1000 participants including parents, principals, and school staff from 185 schools. We have also taken on a very exciting initiative aimed at enabling some of our most vulnerable students to heal and thrive in education. It is called *Nurture* and it comes with 50 years of evidence of effectiveness from the United Kingdom. WISA has partnered with UK based *Nurture International* in bringing this exciting much needed initiative to

Australian schools. This included a new business arm for WISA called *Nurture in Schools Australia*. Sadly, we have lost two long term contractors Linsey Hart and Jo Dwyer partly due to the loss of opportunity for face-to-face support and connection but also the instability of our funding, with many schools not utilising training due to lockdowns. We have since however gained three new contractors. WISA warmly welcomes Dr Lyn O'Grady, Westley Field and Adele Hamlyn. We have also welcomed a fabulous new dynamic volunteer Liz Carr who loves processing our participant feedback data and our training data. This is vital information we feed back to training participants, to government and to academics and we truly appreciate this work. WISA also completed a year long quality assurance project undertaken by Gemma Merryfull from the Australian College of Applied Psychology which affirmed 'WISA has created a sense of community within schools right across Australia. The whole school community approach that they strive for, extends through from the student at its very core, to staff and families, to agencies and community.' And the most exciting development has been left to last. WISA has embraced the pages of social media through our youngest Board member Wren Gillett undertaking some contract work with us and launching WISA and our story onto Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter and Instagram. So go have a search for wisawellbeing and on facebook for Wellbeing in Schools Australia and like and share us with your contacts to spread the word.

One of the most important aspects beyond quality and assurance processes for WISA was to really hear the feedback from school communities. **The biggest challenge for school communities currently is the long-lasting effects of COVID.** Over half of the responding participants listed various impacts of COVID as being the biggest challenge for school wellbeing. These include school refusal due to online learning, disengagement of students, breakdowns in communication and relationships due to COVID, poor mental health, difficulties with emotional regulation and trauma. The quality assurance project results have demonstrated a very high success rate with the WISA professional learning offerings and resources provided across the various trainings, conferences and workshops provided since WISA's inception in 2015 – 2021. It also affirmed that our resources are being used by participants for their own professional learning and they are also sharing these presentations and resources with their fellow school staff, students, and families for prolonged periods after WISA events. **95% of participants of WISA events recommend Wellbeing in Schools Australia to others.**

Collaboration has increased with WISA continuing to partner with Liminal VR our innovative virtual reality company on a few federal grant applications, also including RMIT Centre for Innovative Justice and Prof Donna Cross from the Telethon Kids Research Institute and the University of Western Australia. As mentioned earlier, we have our new Nurture International partnership. Victorian Legal Aid recently engaged our support with promoting sexting and sexual consent education for school teachers across Victoria. WISA is part of a national mental health in education roundtable of key stakeholders with Beyondblue's *BeYou* initiative. WISA is also currently looking at possible funding partnerships with Outlook Australia, a social enterprise in the Disability sector.

COVID and natural disasters have provided both a massive internal as well as external challenge in navigating this brave new world. I wish to thank our patrons Dr Rhonda Galbally, Emeritus Professor Brian Caldwell and Prof Ken Rigby for their continued support. It is greatly valued. I would like to take this opportunity to thank our hard-working core contractor staff Maria Hart, Sharon Sperling, Suzanne Hobson, Jo Dwyer and Linsey Hart who have been under considerable pressures, for their continued support and help in keeping WISA operating. Their core business transformed into foreign online learning environments with an extremely stressed large-scale number of end users of our service who have never been so exhausted, uncertain, and going constantly in and out of remote learning, whilst dealing with high levels of anxiety and trauma in students and families. To Adele Hamlyn sincere thanks for your continued hard work in WISA strategy being enacted to enhance our work and funding opportunities. Thanks also go to Troy Slade our design and website magician, we love your work, especially the new online booking system.

I also wish to thank our Board and in particular the support of our chair Mary Tobin who has provided sage counsel and support to me both professionally and personally. Mary has also guided our Board on a new journey, revisiting our vision and purpose. Sincere thanks also go to Bret Hart our Deputy Chair for

continuing to inspire us to look upstream at how we can enhance wellbeing and reduce the enormous cost to life and budgets of current government priorities in resourcing downstream intervention projects. Our Board secretary Kerry Ashley has our sincere thanks for her continued labour on our WISA policies as well as secretarial tasks and regular finance approvals. To Cassim Rawat our wonderful treasurer thank you for re-shaping how WISA operates with new technology and further best practice innovations being planned and in the pipeline. Wren Gillett has brought a fresh perspective to the Board through the voice of a young student. As a passionate student voice advocate Wren is eager to ensure WISA continues to strive to enable all students to thrive in education and in life. We are so fortunate to have you Wren as part of our Board. The Board also recently welcomed Dr Robyn Ramsden who comes with substantial experience, knowledge, and expertise in addressing health and wellbeing both in education and in health. We are fortunate to have such a talented WISA family.

There are many other stakeholders who provide support and guidance in the work that WISA undertakes. I would like to particularly thank Dr Lyn O’Grady for her work in supporting parents and carers struggling with anxiety within their families and with their students in our COVID workshops. I would also like to acknowledge and thank Andrew Fuller for his video and paper for school staff and leaders on strategies to strengthen their mental health whilst supporting the broader school communities through times of great trauma and distress. Special thanks also to Associate Professor Peggy Kern from the University of Melbourne who also provided video for our COVID workshops on positive psychology in education. To Mary Tobin special thanks for her exciting school family community partnerships work and to Paul Cahalan for Principal Wellbeing training. To Maurice Billi from the School Focused Youth Service for inspirational conversations and embracing innovative best practice when times get tough and ensuring school students, staff, families, and principal strengths and challenges are under WISA’s radar. To Roger Holdsworth our sincere thanks for your continued support and collaboration with WISA in the Student Voice and Agency arena, which included an international workshop involving WISA in late 2020. You are pure gold! To Kaye Dennis and Bob Bellhouse thank you for your continued support of WISA and providing support.

Prior to COVID, WISA was hearing from schools that wellbeing needs were increasing and becoming more complex. School wellbeing leaders are currently telling us that too many students are entering school without the basic social skills, which increases their anxiety. We know that there are large numbers of students who have disengaged from education during COVID. We also know that many students have missed key milestones in their development due to the pandemic and very sadly for some students they have experienced family violence and trauma due to family, economic and job security pressures resulting from COVID. We are seeing unprecedented levels of anxiety in students with great uncertainty about their future and that of the planet. There is significant work to be done in the school wellbeing space and WISA looks ahead with optimism and confidence that together we will continue to make a greatly needed positive difference in school communities so our students will thrive in education and in life. The upstream health promotion and prevention focus is required more than ever. ‘You can’t teach a drowning person how to swim.’ Whilst the 2020-21 year threw more than a few somersaults in everyone’s path, we are pleased to acknowledge we are having a positive impact and fulfilling our purpose. Our door is always open to anyone who wishes to come and join us on this journey.

Jac Van Velsen

SECTION 3

OUR FINANCES

TREASURER’S REPORT – Cassim Rawat

WISA has continued to demonstrate financial resilience through extremely tough and challenging conditions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. The main impact was a significant decrease in WISA’s core business activities being a decrease in the number of schools attending WISA training sessions. The decrease in school attendance was mainly due to the erratic nature of schools going in and out of lockdown in the larger Eastern States and WISA’s decision not to offer conferences during the pandemic.

Whilst income had fallen by circa 50% when compared to the prior year, the overall net performance had improved because of receiving a material grant from the Bendigo Bank and the corresponding lower expenditure amount for the year. The grant received from the Bendigo Bank was obtained to support Nurture training and was a very welcomed inflow during March 2021. It needs to be noted that had it not been for the receipt of this grant, WISA's financial performance for the year would have been very different. Notwithstanding this, the positive end of year result lays the foundation for further improvements from a financial perspective during the next financial year.

On this front, in addition to WISA continuing to seek government funding, applying for various philanthropic grants and pursuing Corporate Opportunities, the Board has also started to re-look at the current business model in conjunction with Jac as CEO to explore these ideas and strategies further. This includes getting an understanding of WISA's core programmes and exploring the possibilities of developing an annuity type of income stream for WISA. The Nurture relationship is also starting to develop and whilst this is still at the very early stages at this point, the Board is optimistic to reaching a mutually beneficial relationship between WISA and Nurture.

As the vaccination rates continue to increase and we start to emerge from the pandemic we envisage that WISA will be busier than ever due to the resumption of WISA's core in person training programmes and conferences plus the focus on WISA's business model. I am thus very optimistic that WISA will be in a stronger financial position when we meet again this time next year.

Cassim Rawat

WISA Board Treasurer **FINANCIAL REPORT – See attached 2021 report**

SECTION 4

OUR OTHER IMPORTANT INFORMATION

HOW YOU CAN HELP

WISA is a not for profit Company Limited by Guarantee and a registered Charity with the ACNC - PBI, holding DGR and TCC status. Our work is aimed to keeping all students engaged in education to enable the best of outcomes for students in their future life trajectory. In doing this we also help alleviate poverty, discrimination and distress by supporting schools to build resilience in all students, especially the most marginalised and those at risk of marginalisation. We are supporting school communities to be better able to address their Wellbeing needs through training, conferences and critical support directly into schools, promoting the best of outcomes for students in their future life trajectory as well as building stronger, safer, thriving local communities.

If you are able to assist us in any way to drive our vision and purpose, we welcome you to contact us for further discussion. We have a **donate button on our website** to directly fund practical much needed support, training and resources to support students, staff and family's wellbeing. Perhaps you have heard of some funding that could assist or you are able to offer or are aware of donations or pro-bono work or goods and services to support our work. We welcome all contributions to support us to grow this worthy not for profit organisation and promote optimal outcomes for our Australian students and school communities.

Volunteer your time

WISA has a number of opportunities for volunteers including Board driven committees, and we are seeking general support to maintain these, as well as expert opinion and advice.

If you feel you could assist us or know of someone who can on any of the following topics, please contact us for further discussion.

- Marketing and Promotions (Website, Social Media)
- Financial planning and strategic positioning for growth
- Corporate Governance (Structure, Policy, Risk Management, Strategic Planning,)
- Human Resource Planning (Contract Management, preparing for Employed staff)
- Research and Data Collection and Analysis

As a growing Not-for-Profit company, we need all the help we can to get started, so volunteering your support and assistance will assist our capacity and deep and direct our work to better able to support school communities.

Make a donation and how you can support us.

WISA is a not for profit Company Limited by Guarantee and a registered Charity with the ACNC – with PBI. WISA holds Deductible Gift Recipient (DGR) status and therefore able to provide tax receipt for any donations made to WISA. Donations can be made online on our website www.wisawellbeing.com.au or contact us.

All donations will be mentioned in future Annual General Reports and off course our Website as a supporter, unless requested not to do so.

As a growing company we have many ways in which individuals, company's or groups can support us, whether through promoting our work and services or providing your time, expertise, goods, services or financial donation.

Without a community of interest and support we will not grow WISA to its full potential to meet school and community needs. We welcome you to contact our CEO to discuss how you can assist. Details are below.

Leave a bequest

Similar to making donations think about leaving a donation from your will or property that WISA can use to further this important work.

Support an event or fundraising activity

Our most marginalised school communities often do not have the resources to attend WISA conferences and training events from which they can benefit greatly. Your support can enable them by providing free registrations.

Become a corporate partner

Our conferences and training events can benefit from your support.

Other ways you can help our cause

Talk to us.

LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

Our 2022 focus area is continuing to address wellbeing needs in school communities related to the pandemic, supporting school leadership and staff and families and enabling student voice, participation and empowerment in school communities.

CONTACT US

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