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Making Schools Safer for Everyone

Education and Training Reform Amendment (Protection of School Communities) Bill 2021: Information for Parents, Carers and Families

This information is for parents, carers and guardians about the new Education and Training Reform Amendment (Protection of School Communities) Bill 2021.

Victorian school communities are overwhelmingly positive and safe places for teaching and learning where we all play a role in supporting students in their achievements, engagement and wellbeing needs.

It is likely that you have heard the recent media announcements that the Victorian Government has introduced the *Education and Training Reform Amendment (Protection of School Communities) Bill 2021.* If passed through parliament, the proposed Bill would come into effect in May 2022.

The Bill aims to protect and keep school communities safe by preventing and deterring violent and aggressive behaviours from adult members of the school community and ensure that schools are positive, safe and inclusive places to work and learn. This Bill will apply to the small minority of adult members of the Victorian school community who engage in this behaviour, after early conflict resolution measures through non-legislative avenues have failed.

The proposed law will empower principals and other authorised persons to issue School Community Safety Orders in response to parents, carers and other adult members of the school community who engage in harmful, threatening, abusive or disruptive behaviours on school grounds or places where school activities take place, or inappropriate and harmful communication through emails and social media.

This Bill will apply to the small minority of the school community who engage in this behaviour when all other reasonable interventions have failed. The changes would ensure that all members of the school community are kept safe and to minimise any harm to their safety and wellbeing. There will be internal and external review mechanisms in place if a person who is subject to a School Community Safety Order wishes to appeal an Order.

Arrangements will be available to ensure parents can still remain engaged in their child's learning to and to minimise any disruption to the student.

This Bill would not replace the existing avenues to raise any complaints, issues or suggestions with schools. By continuing to engage with these communication channels in a respectful and collaborative manner, we can continue to work together to support our students

Further information about the details of the Bill will be communicated to you if the Bill is passed by parliament.

Monique Corcoran PRINCIPAL

Wednesday, 12th May, 2021