

30 August 2024

Dear Committee Secretary,

I am a 52 year old full time primary teacher in DECYP who has experienced bullying from a student, enabled by a Senior Staff member as a tool to bully me.

My experience is vast, and have been in Tasmania for 10 years, originally from Victoria, with significant leadership experience and qualifications.

In 2023 at a northern suburbs of Hobart primary school I was having success being awarded Science Teacher of the Year for Early Childhood. (DECYP never acknowledged this or celebrated me – neither did Tim Bullard). This came at a cost, as a male senior member of staff with only ten years experience in schools and limited teaching experience in PE (and no leadership qualification) was jealous and felt threatened. There was a sudden change of staffing with teacher assistants in my room, and a very difficult ASD Level 3 boy in Year 3 couldn't cope with the change. This said SS stood down the TA for something in her job description (since cleared), as he had issues with her being so successful in my room, and saw it as a way to remove my supports to bully me.

This child was extremely violent daily towards me, all other staff, and students. Over a period of a term he was unmanaged by senior staff, and he escalated. SS refused to manage, including calling parents in to inform and support. They had no knowledge of their child's distressing behaviour. This aforementioned senior staff decided that I needed performance managing, so he called in the Inclusive Practise Coach as a tool to bully me. Once she attended, and was assaulted for a prolonged period of time by said child, the only recommendation was for no coaching, but to have parent meetings and other supports for child in place. This senior staff refused to do this, at the frustration of IPC, me and Principal. IPC kept requesting parent involvement, and senior staff continued to ignore. This senior staff used said child to bully me by refusing to act to support. When the non-substantive Prin went on leave for two weeks, this senior staff took over and continued to bully me, this time using his contacts through HR. My husband was witness to said bullying, and HR didn't turn up to supposed HR meeting or respond to my emails of help, and therefore enabled that senior staff too. The Prin on leave was also being bullied by said senior staff and felt unable to manage him or support staff for their and student wellbeing and learning.

I ended up on Workers Comp, initially only for a week while the school got things sorted so it was safe for me to return, but they chose not to. (Workers Comp independent doctor ruled in my favour, even though DECYP refused to hand over my evidence as they tried to manipulate the situation.) The condition was for said child to be moved into another class in Term 4, and to transition him for 2024. I was unable to return to that school safely, and ultimately had to move schools when I was the victim.

HR then bullied me by being difficult, and lying to me to say that the school I have moved to is safer, when I now know that they knew it was not safer. In fact it is a hard to staff school, so further backlash from HR. They knew that my husband had just been stood down, and no compassion or support was given to me. I met with a third member of the HR team in person in T2 2024 as they refused to take my calls, and requested they move me, but they refused. I knew of a number of ex colleagues and friends who had moved or left DECYP altogether, and therefore were actually available positions to move me to, but still HR South refused to assist.

I made a complaint to Work Safe Tas in Oct 2023, which was eventually successful, despite Tim Bullard lawyering up and denying that working in DECYP is a psychosocial hazard as there have been no policies

to manage. Since Jan 2024 ruling of WST, DECYP must be compliant and create such policies to address these hazards, which is now happening.

The impact here is grave:

- My class in 2023 without their teacher and learning and care impacted
- Inconsistent staffing of that class for remainder of the year impacting outcomes and attendance
- Not managing violent student caused emotional and physical harm to all people
- Violence impacted attendance of staff and students
- Fractured professional relationships at school due to stress of said unmanaged violence
- My wellbeing compromised permanently
- Me starting at a new school traumatised and stressed
- Me very sensitive to violence received now on weekly basis from kids bigger and stronger than me
- I was moved to a much more violent school, with older and bigger kids as punishment for asking HR for help (I was teaching 3/4, now 5/6)
- HR didn't let new school know of my trauma or need to be supported to return to work
- Tim Bullard's insistence on all students attending school has made primary schools less safe, and appalling illegal behaviour is expected to be tolerated so kids now who are 'good' are traumatised from unmanaged Tier 4 level students who simply should not be in mainstream schools
- DECYP needs to create Tier 4 schools at the Primary Level for such students, with relevant supports
- That Principals are career blackmailed that their data must be good – ie don't suspend or you are in trouble. How does this make schools safer? For instance if you are a non substantive Prin, you wouldn't manage staff or students for fear of recrimination, which could prevent you from gaining a substantive appointment in the future.
- Data of students who are violent towards staff and students is hidden: for instance if they attend school that day but are sent home 'early pick up' for poor behaviour, then that is used as a consequence instead of logging it as suspension/behaviour.
- The AEU has been overwhelmed with cases such as this

Personally because I am not originally from Tasmania, DECYP is a closed shop in respect to my career. I am 'only' a teacher, as nepotism rules and it doesn't matter in Tasmania about achievements (acting Prin level prior to having kids) or qualifications, no amount of applying for senior positions has ever even helped me gain an interview. I have therefore given up any future leadership aspirations as the culture under Tim Bullard is broken – there are yes people, but never be brilliant and challenge bureaucrats indirectly with your achievements. (also this Standing Committee hasn't been advertised by DECYP – shame!).

Thank you for your attention, if you would like further elaboration I would be delighted to support a more positive learning culture in Tasmania be developed.

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