

I am a qualified teacher of the deaf. I have worked for over 30 years in both special schools for the deaf and integrated settings.

In my role as Deaf Facility Leader at a Victorian funded Deaf Facility, I experienced the following-

- Being told there was no special funding for Deaf and Hard of Hearing (DHH) students; when I produced the SRP funding model and the funding for DHH Facilities; I was told it was rubbish and the principal team had never seen it before
- Being forbidden to access, report on or respond to previously specifically donated annual funds where the school told the donating organisation \$10,000 had been spent on a specialist counsellor for DHH students. No such person was employed
- Being told that despite my qualification in wellbeing, I was not to do any of this at the school and was not to provide support for DHH students
- Referring to policy and guidelines from the United Nations right down to Victorian DET policy re safety; was told to "butt out" when I asked about a flashing light emergency system for the school
- Attempts to work collaboratively with staff in supporting students in selecting subjects and pathways; told by the school it was none of my business, it was "not my role"
- When requesting working with staff in supporting them in developing skills in differentiation, working with DHH students, wellbeing issues, giving professional development, I was told "no" and was eventually allocated one meeting per year to work with staff
- Blocks placed to prevent me from using funding for deaf role models and deaf specific programs at the school
- DHH students who were suspended up to 50 days who were never involved in restorative support or follow up or provided with student wellbeing support more than as a one off
- When a DHH student was sleeping at McDonalds; being told I was not allowed to support him or help him to access deaf support or NDIS; it was not my role. The school did nothing to support the child
- Being told often; "This school does not revolve around the Deaf Facility"
- Having the Deaf Facility leader position "abolished" despite there being specific funding for it in the funding package.
- When raising concerns about support for students using United Nations, Program for Student with Disability, World Federation for the Deaf policy and other legal documents I was laughed at, ridiculed and personally attacked.

- Department of Education at Regional Level frequently said they would support the Facility however they did nothing to assist.
- **Feedback from DET was that despite policies and specific funding; it is up to the principal to do what they want with the money.**

Issues regarding funding, staff education, policy etc were raised in the last review; why haven't they been addressed?

Inclusion is not "one size fits all"

Deaf students need additional support with language development, Social and Emotional Learning and wellbeing. This needs to be recognised and addressed through schools working with Deaf facility to staff collaboratively to enable better outcomes for Deaf and Hard of Hearing students.