
Joint Media Release

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TE AKATEA MĀORI PRINCIPALS' ASSOCIATION AND NEW ZEALAND PRINCIPALS' FEDERATION (NZPF)

Attention: Education and Political Reporters

for immediate release

MĀORI LEARNERS WILL GET LIFT FROM TODAY'S ANNOUNCEMENT

The Minister of Education's announcement to fund a full time coordinator and provide ongoing funding to support an initiative for lifting Māori children's learning was met with enthusiastic applause at the Te Akatea Māori Principals' conference today.

The initiative, the Māori Achievement Collaboratives, are the result of school principals from both Te Akatea and NZPF working together with Ministry officials to find a better way to approach learning for Māori.

'The answer lies in creating a school culture that equally respects a Māori and Pākehā world view,' said Robert Clark, President of Te Akatea. 'That means reaching out to iwi and to whanau and making the school a place where our Māori parents belong and are welcome to contribute rather than school being a foreign place where they feel no sense of ownership,' he said.

'The problem we faced as leaders of schools was in fully appreciating the Māori world view,' said Denise Torrey, President of NZPF. 'Most Māori children are in mainstream schools and most have Pākehā principals who struggle to understand how to create truly bicultural school environments', she said. 'What our principals needed was the opportunity to understand the elements of biculturalism they were lacking and this requires collaborative groups working together with a facilitator who has the knowledge and skills to bring that understanding to the group,' she said.

'The Minister's commitment to funding this initiative now means that principals across the country will have the opportunity to address learning for Māori children in a way that is meaningful for their particular context, so that tamariki everywhere can truly enjoy success as Maori,' said Clark.

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