

New Zealand Principals' Federation (NZPF) Submission on the Review of the New Zealand Teachers' Council (NZTC)

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The New Zealand Principals' Federation (NZPF) represents the interests of 2,578 Principals of Primary, Intermediate and Secondary Schools throughout New Zealand. We acknowledge the NZTC review panel's call for submissions on the report of the review of the NZTC and thank you for the opportunity to respond.

Introduction

NZPF welcomes the review of the NZTC and endorses that the NZTC be strengthened in a number of areas. In particular NZPF advocates that the NZTC be granted full autonomy with the full support of the professionals who fund it; that the organisation be focused on raising the status of the profession, developing and designing quality teaching qualifications and administering its own national teaching awards; that it engages in the development and provision of professional development programmes for the teaching profession and that it sets and enforces clear standards of entry, progression and professional accountability.

NZPF offers the following comments for consideration in relation to the questions put by the panel:

1. What should be the focus and responsibilities of the Professional Body?

- high quality people entering the profession
- credible, high performing and relevant initial teacher training
- accreditation and registration of practising certificates
- promoting a code of ethics
- supporting and critiquing research that informs teaching and learning
- maintain ethics, conduct and competency through a disciplinary process

- provide professional learning for leaders to undertake appraisal that develops the professional learning of teachers.
- advocate to government on policy and direction of education
- confirmation of programme approval for initial teacher education
- reservations or opposition to proposal
- 'enforcing leadership standards and entry' suggest an adversarial relationship and one different from teachers.
- support the notion of a set of leadership criteria that compliments the collective agreement

2. Name for new body? - CTALNZ

Council Teachers and Leaders of New Zealand

Or - Teacher and Leader Institute

3. Accountability and responsibility to the Profession and the Government

Profession

1. Promoting and regulating codes of conduct and ethics
2. Approval of I.T.E. programmes
3. Attracting high calibre people to teaching
4. Providing descriptors of standards for registration and practising certificates
5. Financial management

Government

1. Advise government based on International and National Research
2. Initial teacher training provision and supply of teachers

4. What skills, knowledge and experience should be required on the board governing

a professional body for education?

- Successful experience working in education
- High standards of personal ethics and conduct
- Bi partisan and not representative of any specific group or professional body
- Culturally competent
- Some wider community representation (up to 40%)

5. Membership and resourcing

- An autonomous body should be financed independently by

its

- membership
- other income could come from contestable contracts
- genuine autonomy would be invested in by teachers if they have a sense of ownership and responsibility. You would expect a rise in fees to reflect that independence and self determination

6. What changes should be made to the current registration and practising certificate processes?

- support that all teachers trained and qualified be registered for as long as they meet required professional standards and criteria
- right to practise is reviewed regularly (every 3 years) and attested by a principal or peer
- we do not support the notion of a 'scope of practice'
- we support the NZTC leading what evidence should be to meet practising certificate and what appraisal systems and competency procedure must include.
- all registered teachers must meet entry standards and be trained in an accredited course. We do not support a parallel practising accreditation that is an 'authority to educate' without meeting high entry and training criteria.

7. What changes should be made to the process of assessing a teachers competence against R.T.C's

- body must maintain the independent judgement to adjudicate the severity and response to a complaint.
- conduct that if prosecuted would result in imprisonment, should be prioritised and assessed by the disciplinary tribunal
- information between government agencies and the professional body that is pertinent to the safety of students must be shared and disclosed. It should be protected from the O.I.A.
- the new body should be responsible for developing and advising schools on processes and procedures to address competency issues
- the process for addressing competency are different from those that are appraisal and developmental in focus

8. Authority to Educate

N.Z.P.F as stated, is strongly against this notion of an 'authority to teach'. We believe it undermines the status and integrity of the profession. The current limited authority to teach meets most situations that address hard to staff schools.

9. Other observations and recommendations

- Strongly recommend a longer timeframe for consultation and implementation. Any government ambition for an autonomous, self-regulating body needs ownership and input from the profession itself. The risk of the planned timeline and transition is to undermine the integrity and future of the new body and the government's stated intentions.

- Any responsibility for P.L.D. should only be in relation to its core function. NZPF does not believe the new body can and should be responsible for the provider of all professional learning. The risk is over expectations, underfunding and a conflict of interest with its own membership.

- The Government body must be reflective of the profession itself and free from government interference. The appointment of the Board can be endorsed by the Minister from those nominated through an open process.