

March 2022

**New Zealand Principals' Federation (NZPF) Submission on
The Proposal to limit international student enrolments for under year 9
Closing Date 11 March
To: IE.underyear9@education.govt.nz**

Personal Details:

Agency: New Zealand Principals' Federation (NZPF)
Designation: National Executive
Address: National Office, PO Box 25380, Wellington 6146

The New Zealand Principals' Federation (NZPF) is the largest professional organisation for lead educators representing the interests of over 2,000 Principals of Primary, Intermediate, Area and Secondary Schools. Principals are from public, integrated and independent schools and are spread throughout New Zealand. NZPF aims to be the most influential advocate for school principals to enable high quality, well supported leadership for school learners in New Zealand.

General Comments

NZPF welcomes the opportunity to submit comments on enrolling international fee-paying students under year 9. We have sought the views of our own executive committee, principals from different regions and have surveyed our members in constructing this commentary. There are 312 schools hosting under year 9 international students in Aotearoa New Zealand. Just over 150 principals responded to the survey and a high proportion were in favour of continuing the practice of enrolling international students under year 9. In the view of these principals, the benefits far outweighed any negatives.

We note also that the survey was issued at the height of the Omicron outbreak which has been most distracting for school principals. For this reason we did not expect a high response rate.

Historic Background

Educating fee-paying international students in our state funded primary schools, secondary schools, polytechnics and universities has been common practice in Aotearoa New Zealand for many years.

Arguments to support this practice include additional income for the institution, which benefits all students, including domestic students; exposing domestic students to other cultures, even though Aotearoa New Zealand is also a multi-cultural society; creating globally connected and aware citizens; creating pathways for international students to transition on to secondary and tertiary education.

Most under year 9 international students are either individuals or a tour group. It has been argued that having international students under year 9, who are likely to require ESOL resources, will distract teachers from focusing on the education of their domestic students. Those schools who are currently enrolling international ESOL students would argue to the contrary.

Tour groups are generally hosted by a school for fewer than 3 months. It could be argued they bring little real benefit, other than financial, to the hosting school community. On the other hand, there are those who feel exposing international students to our own domestic students in this way can create lifelong international connections and friendships. Further, the international students bring a richer understanding of issues affecting their own countries and an awareness that there are some issues that are shared globally.

It is argued that enrolling international students exacerbates already entrenched inequities in our education system, because it is only schools that have the marketing and recruitment resources that can benefit. These schools tend to be the higher decile schools. It is almost impossible for small and sole

charge schools to recruit international students because they do not have sufficient staffing to set up the systems to attract or accommodate them.

More recently organisations assisting schools to recruit international students have become aware of the inequities. We are now seeing these organisations marketing for international students destined for lower decile schools. This was not the case in previous years.

It is also argued that very few international students under year 9 transition on to secondary school and beyond.

Feedback from primary and intermediate school principals

Those principals who already have international students in their schools support the continuation of this practice.

The reasons for continuation include increased income which they claim benefits all students.

All schools are self-managed under a Board of Trustees and parent communities support the practice.

It demonstrates the entrepreneurship and ambition of the school to always provide better for students.

Domestic students are exposed to other cultures and gain richer understandings of global issues.

Those opposing the practice say that inequities will be made worse by enrolling more international students.

They argue that the key to reducing inequity is providing sufficient funding to meet needs. Most principals agree there are inequities and that increasing funding to schools is the best way to address these.

Principals also raised issues of pastoral care for international students under year 9 saying that hostel living was not always the best living conditions for young students so far away from home and homestays did not always work well.

This observation may or may not be related to the low numbers of international students proceeding to secondary school.

Restricting international students under year 9

Overall NZPF supports the continuation of the enrolment of international students under year 9, provided that progress continues in addressing the inequities currently associated with the enrolment of international students at under year 9 in our schools.

NZPF would emphasise the urgency of addressing the inequities through additional central funding, fast tracking the equity index and creating incentives for a broader selection of schools to benefit from enrolling international students.

Ngā manaakitanga

Dr Cherie Taylor-Patel
National President
[cherie.taylor-
patel@nzpf.ac.nz](mailto:cherie.taylor-patel@nzpf.ac.nz)

PO Box 25380
Wellington 6146

Level 8 The Bayleys Building
36 Brandon Street

THE MOST RESPECTED AND INFLUENTIAL ADVOCATE FOR NEW ZEALAND'S SCHOOL PRINCIPALS

ph+64 4 471 2338
fax+64 4 471 2339

email: office@nzpf.ac.nz
web: www.nzpf.ac.nz