



PRINCIPAL MATTERS

NGĀ TUMUAKI O AOTEAROA

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

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President's Message



Kia ora e te whānau

You will all have received the Term Two issue of *NZ Principal* magazine by now, which includes an historical account of the extraordinary Coronavirus COVID-19 global pandemic. I have said many times, since our country went into Alert Level Four Lock-down, how ethical, responsive and creative you have been throughout this time. I could not feel more proud to be your National President and witness the level of care, can-do attitude and generosity you have all shown to ensure your communities, your staff and your students continued to be supported by their schools.

I wrote about this time of COVID-19 in my *NZ Principal* President's column. Below that column is reproduced, in case you haven't yet had time to read the magazine for yourself! I do hope that the great things we have all learned from the Lock-down experience, particularly about leadership, remain with us into the Post-COVID-19 era, and continue to grow and evolve.

President's Pen

The COVID-19 crisis has exposed the true heart of principalship. As so often happens in times of crisis, the extraneous minutiae of the job have fallen away revealing the core of who we are. Crisis crystallises what is important.

Principals have shown gritty leadership. It has been impressive.

Principals demonstrated effectiveness in response to being asked to turn 'schooling on a dime', not once as we moved quickly to remote learning in level 4, but many times in quick succession as we moved to a hybrid approach with some students at school and some at home and then down the levels. We have needed to be nimble and responsive as we dealt with the vastly different and often difficult challenges put to us. Such changes to our national education system at such pace were unprecedented and principals led the way with aplomb.

Principals uniformly responded to the Prime Minister's call to duty with a 'can do' attitude. There is no more impressive action than the willingness to stand-up as a leader and take responsibility to keep schools open prior to the lockdown in the face of mounting public concern about the spread of COVID-19 and to open them up again as we moved to level 3. In doing so, principals demonstrated courage and commitment to our service ethic. It is an ethic that applies equally to our commitment to young people as it does to our commitment to help our country get up off its knees and start moving again. Principals demonstrated a preparedness to act in the interests of a greater good - our communities.

Principals acted with collegiality. Never have we experienced the flashover of sharing that took place as we grappled with what home-learning would look like. The generosity and helpfulness of principals over the holiday period prior to the start of term 2 and as the term progressed, was impressive.

Principals who deployed kindness and concern for their staff, students and communities. The organisation of food packs for families, the remote digital Friday social hour for staff, the support for vulnerable teachers to remain in remote settings are

only a few of the responses supported by principals working to respond to the human impact of COVID-19.

Principals unfailing good humour and almost complete refusal to grizzle at the hard stuff-the complexity of what was being asked of them and the pace with which they were being asked to work.

And finally, the celebration of teamship, of what it means to be part of a community of leaders confronted with tough challenges. We have experienced a building of a collective consciousness about the power and authority of principalship. We have done so with grace and good humour. I have never seen as many memes circulated online all of which had the effect of enabling us to chuckle at the extraordinary daily challenges we were confronting and the extraordinary circumstances we were experiencing.

But perhaps the most significant learning of this period of COVID -19 crisis has been observing the alchemy of practice-based principalship. We have experienced a renewed sense that the 'buck stops' with principals-our role during this crisis has required sharp decision-making and a 'take charge' attitude. This sort of 'commanding' leadership is not often experienced in our profession. We are well-versed with collaborative and collegial leadership, we embrace 'flat' leadership approaches and see our jobs as enabling others to grow in their leadership. While appropriate, this can have the effect of diluting our collective memory of the authority of principalship. The past months have shown that when direct and decisive leadership was called for, principals delivered.

We must build this renewed sense of authority into our collective professional psyche. We have proven that in a devolved and localised system of education it is possible to be connected to each other with strong horizontal principal networks and that these networks serve to deepen the practice-based knowledge of principals. We have also proven that, when called upon, the expertise and authority of principals comes to the fore. We have a job to now build on and nurture these powerful but fledgling realities to ensure they grow and strengthen the practice of education.

We have experienced decades of big government in New Zealand. This is government that involves itself in setting conditions in schooling that control the professional practice of educators. Governments often need reminding that they serve 'the people' not the other way around. Our job as professional educators is to advocate from our unique position of authority to ensure schooling is supported by government policy that reflects what is needed to succeed for every learner.

The cut and thrust of dealing with government of any stripe will always require principals to judge policy against our practice-based expertise. We support policy that enables a vision of education that is emancipatory for diversity-for every learner to be supported in their own development trajectory. We will oppose every policy that narrows, limits and controls teaching and learning in ways that damage that vision.

Exercising a renewed sense of authority in a principled manner and in a way that is unequivocal is the new normal.

We anticipate no backward step. The COVID-19 crisis has caused a renaissance in our leadership. We will build on what

we have learned and become even more effective as leaders of education in our wonderful country.

Ngā manaakitanga

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NZPF Notices



NZ Principal Magazine also Online

You and/or your team members can easily access the NZ Principal Magazines online, as an e-magazine or as a PDF. Additionally you can search for a previous issue, an article by title or by the author of the article. All magazines back to Term 1 2012 are available in this format. To view or search click [here](#).

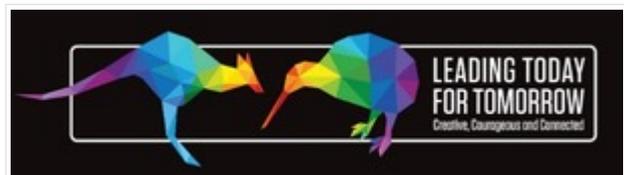


Nominations for NZPF Election 2020

Nominations are now open for NZPF President and Vice President for 2021.

Click [here](#) to download a nomination form.

Nominations close on 5 August and the electoral roll closes on 25 August. Your subscription payment must be received by this date in order to be eligible for voting.



Trans-Tasman APPA/NZPF Conference Postponed

Due to the uncertainty for both countries surrounding large gatherings and travel, the organising committee has made the difficult decision to postpone this event.

The new dates for the Trans-Tasman Conference will be 20 to 23 July 2021. All delegates and exhibitors have been sent correspondence with details of the change.

For more information and to register for the 2021 Trans-Tasman Conference, [click here](#).

Useful Information



David Stewart Memorial Scholarship

Due to the COVID-19 Health Crisis, it was agreed that the timeline for the David Stewart Memorial Scholarship would be extended.

The agreed extended date for receiving applications is now July 31, 2020 not 31 May 2020 as originally published.

Please share this information with any colleagues who might be interested in taking up the scholarship.

For more information about the David Stewart Memorial Scholarship, please click [here](#).

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