



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

The re-emergence of COVID in our country has made for a frustrating past week. Reality bites hard and our pride at being COVID free has taken a battering.

Being captain of your school ship is a challenging job even in good times. In earlier COVID times we stood at the helm in the storm confident that we would see calmer waters again. They arrived but unfortunately the tempest found its way back to us. At this juncture of the term and with the reality of a long struggle with COVID dawning, many principals are considering instructing the boson to lash them to the helm lest the tempest get the better of them.

It is often our first instinct in times of crisis to want to continue to be the energetic, brave, take-charge leader. Over the course of a long-term crisis it is simply impossible to be that all the time. Increasingly, it becomes hard to stop the mask slipping so that others might catch a glimpse of the real you; determined but increasingly exhausted and bombarded by the negativity of wall to wall COVID media.

Remember that the mark of real leadership isn't exercising some sort of machine-like heroism, rather it is in your capacity to be authentic and real. This means allowing others to see the vulnerable you-the human you.

Nothing is more powerful for team-ship than a leader reaching out to their team to receive support, a leader that is honest and forthright about the challenge of leading.

I am not suggesting you book a session to pour your heart out to your team but simply acknowledge the strain and remind everybody that getting through this is about the ebb and flow of a good team working in unison. When a team member tires and falls back others step forward allowing them to recharge. Remember you are part of that team and participate in the same ebb and flow. Seeing you hold yourself to the same standards that you expect of your staff and community is authentic leadership. We must always be prepared to match our rhetoric with action. Authentic leadership is key to helping humans survive and flourish in times of crisis.

So, my message today is simple. The collateral damage of COVID includes an unparalleled mental health and wellbeing challenge that is not going to go away anytime soon. Leading your community through this crisis will certainly last for many more months or perhaps even years.

We must respond accordingly:

Principals must not continue to lead as though this is normal times.

Principals must change the way they work to ensure it is sustainable.

Principals must proactively plan to take the foot off the accelerator and give time to decompress.

Principals must be sensitive to the needs of students and staff and be prepared to challenge the system if it is not meeting the wellbeing needs of your people.

Principals must anticipate the drain on their well of resilience and do the things needed to regularly top up the tank.

One way to do this is to grow our connectedness with each other. Let's keep talking together in our local Principal Associations and professional forums, seeking to be honest about the challenges we are dealing with.

I have been particularly impressed with the NZ Principals' Closed Facebook page which is a source of great professional

information and sharing. It is packed with lots of fun and humour much of which makes you smile at the unique challenges of principalship. It is moderated by colleagues that have a firm commitment to high standards of ethical conduct. I encourage you to join.

Let's keep sensitivity about the impact of COVID to the fore.

We are learning that leadership in this COVID landscape isn't a sprint. It is a marathon. Let's plan to get across that finish line in good heart.

Urgent Response Fund

This week I have been in touch with the Ministry regarding the access to the Urgent Response Fund.

This \$50m fund is a COVID response and is open for applications for resources and programmes that help young people to re-engage in schooling and address issues of attendance or wellbeing.

The fund is managed through your regional Ministry of Education who by now, should have information to you about how to apply. Many schools have started to receive funding for small projects, most larger projects or across school initiatives have been allocated to regional assessment and allocation panels made up of local sector representatives.

It is good to see the Ministry seeking to build on the positive engagement with the sector through COVID by working closely with the sector in the assessment and allocation of this Urgent Response Fund.

Please be in touch with me if you have an issue regarding accessing these urgent funds. Young people need support currently and expediting speedy service for them is critical.

NZPF Road Trip Follow-Up Survey

Shortly you will receive a special flyer with a link to the *Post-Road-Show* survey, which I signalled to you in an earlier newsletter.

The survey should take you no longer than 6 minutes to complete, so please do fill it out and send it back.

Your responses give us critical feedback that I can use to advocate for the things you want.

Ngā manaakitanga

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NZPF Notices



NZPF Elections

If you wish to participate in the 2020 elections for NZPF President (elected unopposed) and Vice President, you must be a financial member. If you have not yet paid your subscription to NZPF this year, you have until 25 August to do so.

The electoral roll closes on 25 August and voting will open on 1 September and close at noon on 21 September.



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](#).

Useful Information



WENZ Wellbeing in Education Conference

Join the team of respected local and international speakers at *Wellbeing in Education, he ākonga aumangea, he ākonga tū maia* – New Zealand's largest wellbeing conferences this September.

Coming to Auckland for the first time on 13-14 September and back for a fourth year in Christchurch on 16-17 September, both conferences are a must for anyone wanting to learn, share and connect with others around the important work of building hauora wellbeing in and across our school communities.

Click [here](#) to register now.

Take a look at [plenary speakers](#).

Check out the conference programmes in [Auckland](#) or [Christchurch](#).

Business Partners

NZPF assures its business partners that, as members, you will contact them to have a conversation if you are purchasing products, services or solutions for your schools that a business partner supplies. Please support our partners as their assistance to NZPF means better membership services to you.

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