



# 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

This week's *Principal Matters* was planned to be brief, based on the reasoning that you don't need more to read or more advice. Then Minister Hipkins announced a likely return to school for level 3 students Year 1-10 on November 15, and yesterday, the Vaccination Health Order detail landed.

Government has sent a strong message about vaccination. The guidelines are unequivocal and will be confronting for those staff who do not intend to be vaccinated. Education workers, who choose to be unvaccinated, will not have a guaranteed future in the profession.

The challenge for principals is how to negotiate the short period of time between 15 November and the conclusion of the school year. Principals are encouraged to first examine employment options for the unvaccinated, and if there are none, then leave with or without pay.

Unvaccinated workers may qualify for a medical exemption, but the bar is set high. We have been informed that a future Bulletin will detail which medical practitioners will grant an exemption. It is worth noting that an exemption can be granted for, 'physical or other needs'. I am keen to understand what might constitute 'other needs' and will request more information on this today.

Unvaccinated staff, working in schools operating a hybrid arrangement at level 3, can be accommodated in remote teaching arrangements until the conclusion of the year. The options for unvaccinated staff are much more limited at level 2 where most, if not all staff, are required to be teaching on-site.

Level 3 schools are of course already open and operating the hybrid model of both bubbles of students on-site (for students who need to be at school) and remote learning. The difference from November 15 onwards, is that all students can return to on-site learning in bubbles, however it is expected there will be a substantial number who will continue home learning, making school organization, complex.

It is important for us to understand that the confidence of parents to return their children to school is not high. The percentage of returning Year 11-13 students ranges from 50% to 80%. Given the unvaccinated status of 5-11-year-olds, it is unlikely that the percentage return rate for primary and intermediate students will be high.

You will however need a plan. The Ministry is still undertaking consultation on the parameters of level 3 return to school for November 15 and will release these shortly. However, if the current level 3 rules still apply then you will need social distancing and 'bubbles', as you are doing now. If that is the case, I suggest a staggered attendance plan is too complex and unnecessary given the likely numbers returning and the short period to the end of the school year.

The Ministry's parameters, notwithstanding, you will want to estimate a maximum number of students your school can safely accommodate, in bubbles, on-site. Then, in consultation with your local school community, find out which families prefer to continue home learning, and which prefer to return their children to school. If you have more wishing to return to school than you can safely accommodate, a prioritisation plan would need to be established.

That said, we await the outcome of the Ministry's consultation regarding the plan to return to school on 15 November for those at level 3.

I know you will find this an unwelcome imposition when you are already feeling stretched. The year has been extraordinarily demanding and stressful and many of you, I don't doubt, will be feeling you are barely dragging yourselves to the finish line... and now this!

We know that this Delta virus continues to spread throughout our communities with new cases every day. We accept that our original elimination strategy cannot beat this version of the COVID virus and our only hope is high vaccination rates. When vaccinations become available for the under-11-year-olds, I would encourage you to support a vaccination drive to get high numbers of your children vaccinated. You might offer your school as a vaccination site for your children. It's not that many years ago when schools routinely had vaccination nurses coming in to administer polio and TB vaccinations as a matter of course. We can learn much from those practices. For example, when did you last see a case of polio in Aotearoa New Zealand?

For principals dealing with the challenge of unvaccinated staff, I note the Secretary of Education's comment in yesterday's Bulletin that, *"there may be a small number of cases where adjustments may be required. Your feedback on this will be important, as we have the opportunity before 16 November to further update our guidance to address your circumstances. Please contact us at [employment.relations@education.govt.nz](mailto:employment.relations@education.govt.nz) if you feel this is the case.*

The Secretary for Education and Ministry of Education have a difficult task. The education sector's options are dictated by the Vaccination Health Order and this order, like others for different sectors, sets stringent parameters. The Secretary for Education has invited engagement about the Vaccination Health Order so do respond if you have a situation, you need to share.

We are committed to dealing with our staff and students with respect and dignity irrespective of their stance on vaccination. I acknowledge that timeframes are extraordinarily tight, and you must reach out to the Ministry if your situation requires it.

Please note, once again, the importance of seeking clear advice about implementing the Vaccination Health Order. All questions regarding employment processes where you are acting on behalf of the Board as the employer, should be referred to NZSTA.

### Principals' Advice & Support Limited (PASL)

More than half of all NZPF members now subscribe to our wholly owned PASL – Principals' Legal Support Scheme.

For many years, the scheme has been administered by the Dunedin office of Crombie Lockwood, a national insurance broker.

After a longstanding arrangement, recent change to the Financial Markets Regulations have resulted in Crombie Lockwood being unable to continue to provide their banking and invoicing services to PASL.

The Board of PASL has therefore contracted Jacquie Kenton, [jacquie@pasl.nz](mailto:jacquie@pasl.nz) to be the sole administrator for the scheme. Jacquie has worked as PASL administrator through Crombie Lockwood, so is well familiar with the scheme.

Subscribers to PASL will notice no substantial differences with this shift since all of the administration activities will continue uninterrupted.

We warmly welcome Jacquie to her new position.

### Scholastic Offer

We're big fans of Scholastic and today we note a very generous offer to those who reside in level 3 regions, to deliver books direct to homes. Please note this is a special offer, exclusively for schools in level 3. The detail is included in the Scholastic notice at the bottom of today's *Principal Matters*.

### Prime Minister's Education Excellence Awards

I want to acknowledge Frimley Primary School in my neck of the woods, Hastings, for their outstanding achievement in winning the Supreme Award in the Prime Minister's Education Excellence Awards. Principal Tim White is a dedicated and visionary professional and he, the Frimley team, students, and community are richly deserving of this recognition. Congratulations to all the other finalists and category winners. I have to say, 'Go the Hawke's Bay' with Henry Hill School winning excellence in wellbeing and Hastings Girls' High School winning excellence in leading. Recognition is due too for Te Kura Taumata O Panguru in Northland for Excellence in Engaging and Oruaiti School in Northland for the Focus Prize. It is exciting to see such powerful work occurring around the motu.

Ngā manaakitanga

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### PPCB

Kia ora PPCB whānau

Today's update comes to you from Otautahi after the initial scare of a couple COVID cases. I cannot begin to know what it feels like for colleagues in Auckland, Waikato and recently Northland, but the feeling amongst our colleagues down here today was one of, 'we're ready to go!' We have been very fortunate in the south to have a charmed life under Alert Level 2 compared to colleagues in other areas but today was a bit of a reality check!

This pānui is to give you a brief update. Our PPCB team is working with others to craft your survey feedback into draft claims. It is clear you expect some innovation from us, so that is what we are working to deliver. We have been modelling scenarios and have established some exciting claims.

In the next two weeks we will be running small focus groups to share our draft claims and get your feedback. From there we will broaden our meeting base and reach out for feedback from all members. Dates for these events will be shared with you next week. It might be in person or zoom depending on the circumstances.

If you haven't done so already, join us on facebook.

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/251508513648111>

Denise Torrey  
PPCB  
Head of Union

## NZPF Notices



### Rural Principals' Groups - Grant Applications Closing Soon!

NZPF annually awards grants of up to \$1000 to assist local Rural Principals' Groups to run their own seminars and conferences. Applications need to be made now to fund your event in 2022.

For further information and an application form click [here](#). Applications close on 1 November.



### 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



### Important - Scholastic change in delivery straight to homes of schools currently in Level 3

The team at Scholastic are able to assist families and schools with issue 7 of Book Club. Schools that are currently in alert Level 3 are able to purchase through LOOP - Linked Online and Ordering & Payment platform and have their order delivered directly to their door. Parents can also take advantage of free delivery if the order is over \$35.

Issue 7 is a bumper issue with hundreds of books, great deals, top sellers of 2021 and plenty of ideas for Christmas. We really don't want your students missing out.

[Here is a message](#) for you to copy and paste directly into your school newsletter to encourage and update your parents with this initiative.

## 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.

### Gold Partners



### Silver Partners



### Bronze Partners

