



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

I write to you from Taupō where I am participating in an 'unconference conference'!

"Whatever is that?" I hear you exclaim.

Fifteen years ago, a small group of us decided that the best form of professional learning occurred when we gave ourselves time to get away from the pressures of our schools to learn alongside each other. So, every year, we take ourselves away for a 3-day conference that isn't a conference. It is professional learning that we run ourselves by sharing our own professional successes and problems of practice. We often use a controversial excerpt from a book or piece of research to provide a challenge to our thinking and then use the dissonance created to innovate new ideas and new directions.

Wrapped around this learning is plenty of hauora-time to connect, relax and recharge. We make our wellbeing a priority.

The Boards of Trustees of the participating principals support this time as important professional learning and renewal. On my calendar of PLD, it is a rock-solid priority.

So, this year thank you Craig Mullan, Craig Price, Daniel Birch, Deborah Fenton, Faye Hauwai, Luke Sumich, Marcus Norrish, Maurice Young, Mel Taylor, Neill O'Reilly, Pelu Leapepetele,

Blair Giles, and Fraser Hill for another marvellous time of reflection and learning.

Don't forget that our strength lies in our capacity to spend time together sharing the experiences of principalship. Don't wait for that 'right' conference to come along or you might be waiting a long time. You can make powerful professional learning happen yourself by scheduling an event that lets you connect, through learning conversations, to your inspiring colleagues and also nurtures your wellbeing.

ERO

My recent Principal Matters (Issue 34) about ERO elicited a terse response from Nicholas Pole, the Chief Executive of ERO.

In a [letter](#) to me Nicholas took issue with my criticism of ERO's past remit and the concerns I expressed regarding the new model.

In response, I wrote a [letter](#) to him setting out my belief that the new model will not succeed without a substantial change to ERO mindset, staff capability and culture.

Key to this change is a shift away from the dominance of hard data and ideas like target setting and acceleration in the core curriculum.

Fundamental in any new partnership approach to school reviews is a newly minted ERO mindset about what constitutes a 'good' education.

ERO must reenergise its thinking about evaluation. To fail to do so runs the risk of the past continuing in a different guise.

Please take the time to read both Nicholas' letter to me and my reply.

If you are one of the 75 schools piloting the new approach, you have an important job to insist that the new model is substantially changed not only in practice but in the [educative mindset](#) of ERO.

I have asked Nicholas to respond to several questions:

- What professional learning and change programme is being provided to ERO staff to facilitate change?

- What feedback loops are there within ERO's own self-review processes to ascertain culture change?
- How will ERO make evident the nature of culture change and mindset?

I have indicated I would like to meet with Nicholas to discuss issues outlined in my letter.

I await his response.

Bespoke Principals' Union

As of 9am this morning 850 principals have responded to the survey about a bespoke Principals' Union. Of this number, 92% are in favour of this occurring.

Thank you for taking the time to respond.

The NZPF National Executive will now meet to discuss the survey findings and consider next steps. I will be in touch shortly to give you an update.

If you haven't already voted, then you have until 5pm today to do so. The survey can be found [here](#).

Ngā manaakitanga

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NZPF Notices



NZPF Grants for Rural Principals' Groups

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 2021.

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](#).

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