



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, I conducted an informal snapshot poll. Results show pleasingly high COVID vaccination compliance rates in our schools across the motu.

Data collected on November 16th 2021, from Wellington, Kapiti, Whanganui, Christchurch, South Canterbury, Masterton, Kaipara, Central King Country, Otago, Selwyn, Nelson, Hunua, Eastern Southland, Manawatu, Western and Eastern Bay of Plenty, Waiuku, Waitakere, Mid-Canterbury, Central Otago, South Taranaki, and New Plymouth Principals' Associations showed that as of Wednesday 17th November, 2.2% of teachers have not yet had their first vaccination and 4% of support staff, including administration, cleaners, caretakers and teacher aides were non-compliant with the mandatory vaccination requirements.

The survey is not fully representative and does not represent some low vaccinated areas.

That said, 54% of the schools participating have 100% of their staff members vaccinated at least with their first dose and 46% of the schools had at least one non-compliant staff member.

Principals responding to the survey also indicated that according to informal conversations they have had with staff,

the introduction of the Astra Zeneca vaccine is unlikely to have any impact on vaccination compliance. Principals also reported that high numbers of non-compliant staff received their first vaccination during the weekend, to meet the November 15th deadline enabling them to continue teaching on site. Many reported that having a deadline was a helpful incentive.

I acknowledge the work that principals have been doing with their unvaccinated staff, encouraging them to be vaccinated, respecting them and showing them that they are valued colleagues within the school community. Your leadership has helped many hesitant teachers and support staff to retain their positions in your schools and avoid the stress of having to fill staffing shortages at this late stage in the year.

There are, however, principals facing the challenge of meeting with non-compliant staff to progress discussions about their status. I expect further advice from NZSTA today to assist principals with information about next steps.

While dismissal for a non-compliant staff member may well result, it is critical that Boards of Trustees and principals acting on behalf of their Boards, ensure there is no predetermination and that consultation with non-compliant staff continues and is documented until all options and alternatives are exhausted. Non-compliant staff have the right to support and representation.

Please take time to check you have carefully reviewed advice and checked your employment processes with NZSTA so you can confidently engage with your non-compliant staff.

NZPF is actively engaged with both the Ministry of Education and NZSTA on your behalf. Concerns have been raised this week about the accuracy and timeliness of employment advice. Over the past few days, we have seen a much more focused effort to establish accurate advice which I expect you will have shortly.

Invitation to be part of Mitey

I was privileged to work with the Sir John Kirwan Foundation to develop a mental health resource for schools.

This early work evolved into Mitey, a mental health programme that has been successfully trialed in schools.

Mitey supports schools to deliver an Aotearoa New Zealand specific, bicultural, research driven approach to mental health education for Years 1-8. Co-designed by the University of Auckland and teachers, Mitey is a whole school approach to mental health education, delivered through professional development from a Mitey coach who is a senior trained teacher. Mitey provides a stepped progression of learning and is free to all schools. It ensures mental health education is taught in all schools as an important, but ordinary subject.

Mitey is inviting registrations of interest across the motu. I encourage you to sign-up.

<https://www.mitey.org.nz/for-teachers-and-schools/becoming-a-mitey-school>

OIA Request

Some schools have been subject to an Official Information Act Request submitted by a Mr Regan Cunliffe. Click [here](#) for legal advice regarding how to respond to this request.

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](#).

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