



# 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

Last week, I watched the Ministry of Education's National Director of Learning Support, David Wales, interviewed on Breakfast TV about New Zealand's high rate of bullying at school.

When asked how this rate could be lowered, he replied that, 'Schools needed to do more'. He pointed to the 2019 ERO national research report entitled *Bullying Prevention and Response in New Zealand Schools May 2019*. The report showed 'most schools were working towards a bullying free environment: 38 percent to a great extent, 45 percent to some extent, and 17 percent to a limited extent.

This surprised me. Shouldn't every school have high expectations of student conduct and have bullying prevention and response strategies working in their schools to a 'great extent'? If not, why not?

David's comments about dealing with bullying, come a week after I attended a meeting of the Bullying Prevention Advisory Group (BPAG), sponsored by the Ministry of Education. This group was established in 2013 and meets regularly to make decisions on how to reduce and eliminate bullying. It is made up of sector and interest group representatives. All good people with good intentions.

Since the inception of this group, instances of bullying in schools have increased, not reduced. In other words, over the lifetime of the group, set-up to reduce bullying, the exact opposite has occurred.

The challenge for the Ministry is to grasp that pointing the finger at schools and saying 'do better' isn't a strategy nor is it an action. To be influential in attacking a complex problem such as bullying, we need decision makers who can see the problem as multifaceted and are prepared to marshal resources and support around the issue.

We need decision makers to back action.

Our schools reflect society. The behaviours we deal with at school reflect the challenges experienced by young people growing up.

Yes, some schools can do better, and we as principals need to own that. However, we need much more from our Ministry than a finger pointing exercise.

At the recent BPAG meeting I shared 4 action-based strategies to attack the issue of bullying. All would require the Ministry to make a fiscal investment-to match rhetoric with funding.

1. Research from a young person's perspective that seeks to better understand the problem of bullying particularly the impact of social media
2. The funding of student counsellors south of Year 9 because when you have the highest youth suicide rate in the developed world and the second highest rate of bullying you need to take drastic and immediate action to cater for youth mental health
3. An immediate increase in primary management staffing to match that of secondary so primary schools have adequate management resourcing to follow through on students with conduct issues
4. Resolve schooling options for students who are violent or have serious behaviour issues so that these students are not able to hurt and harm those around them

No more finger pointing please! Tackling bullying is a shared responsibility and we need to commit to action.

I invite the Ministry of Education and BPAG to join principals to work on agreed solutions which can be appropriately resourced.

So, David, the next time either of us have an invitation to be interviewed on Breakfast TV, let's be interviewed together. It would be wonderful to announce to the New Zealand public a raft of practical strategies and resources that we have agreed to deploy that will make a tangible difference to this distressing problem!

Let's get it done!

### School Camps

School camps have been in the news lately. They are a Kiwi icon in many ways and parents, kids, teachers and principals would not want to see the learning opportunities that school camps afford, be taken from our kids.

The thing is, we have to seek financial support from parents to cover the costs of taking kids to school camp. The operations grant has never covered the costs and still doesn't. Largely, parents are happy to support schools by contributing to the costs and have been doing this for as long as we have been running school camps.

What we have to remember is that when we ask parents to help with camp costs, we are technically asking them for a donation, not an extra-curricular fee. That has always been the case, because camps are considered part of the curriculum.

It seems ridiculous that the costs for camps are deemed to be donations and that payment is therefore voluntary. This is an issue I raised with Minister Chris Hipkins this week. The law needs some tidying up as schools are now confronted with parents making a legitimate claim that payment for attendance at school camp cannot be enforced yet schools are not funded to provide for the costs of camping.

I am interested to know if your plans for school camp have been affected in any way. Please let me know.

We want the Minister to move decisively to address these concerns as we would not want school camping to be adversely affected.

Ngā manaakitanga

Perry Rush

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## NZPF Notices

### Australian Bushfires – Message from NZPF President, Perry Rush

The President of the Australian Primary Principals' Association, Malcolm Elliott, discussed with me how the recent devastating bush fires have affected schools. It's easy to forget the ongoing problems once a crisis has peaked, but for many schools, the affects remain real.

Close bonds connect Kiwis and Aussies, and just as our Australian colleagues have reached out to us in times of crisis, it's now our turn to reach out to them.

You can support Australian schools by running a fundraising event in your school. Send me photos and I will pass them on! Funds raised can be banked in the NZPF account. Below are the details.

Please include the code 'Bushfires' when you make electronic payment to the following NZPF account: 12-3140-0342890-00 (Bushfires)

I will ensure that these funds are transferred directly to the Australian Primary Principals' Association President, to distribute to the schools most in need.



### NZPF/APPA Trans-Tasman Conference

This conference brings together the Australian Primary Principals' Association (APPA) and the New Zealand Principals' Federation (NZPF) in Melbourne, 15 -18 September 2020.

The conference theme 'Leading Today For Tomorrow: Creative...Courageous...Connected' encapsulates the joys, challenges and demands of contemporary leadership.

This is a not-to-be-missed opportunity to mix with 1200+ primary school leaders from our two countries as well as international guests.

The conference website can be found [here](#).

Early Bird registrations close Friday 29 May.



### 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

### Banking Staffing Update - March 2020

March Return Information for schools with New Entrants (Primary, Area, Contributing)

Look for both the Staffing and Funding Notices which will be generated once MOE processes your Recent March Return.

The Staffing Notice will either confirm your provisional roll based staffing or increase it. Any increase will reflect the fact that you have a more favourable roll on the March return than the provisional roll generated last year, and if an Area school, you will also see that there is a new entrant adjustment applied to your March Year one roll. Other primary school types miss out on this assistance designed to give you sufficient staffing the get to 10 October before needing to apply for a “staffing roll change”. Resulting increases to entitlement staffing are backdated to the start of the year, but probably not soon enough to offset any of last years overuse that you might be trying to manage by moving Staff to BG during PP 23 to 26.

The good news is that there is a new entrant adjustment included in the Funding Notice for all of you, not just Area Schools.

Look at the roll number/s on the recalculation page you receive. The total roll number you see will be greater than the actual roll you sent in on the March Return because MOE will have recalculated the roll by adding 11/12ths of the March year on roll to your actual total. Your recalculated funding is improved in this boost creates a greater total roll than you received provisionally in September.

File the Table generated by your SMS, probably Called M1 or M3 and probably described as “Funding Year Level”, as the Y1 roll on that Table provides you with a minimum safe prediction to use when prediction the 2021 year 1 Staffing during the July Return process on the Supplementary Questions email you will receive in July. That number is also my recommended number to use for your prediction concerning the number of year ones you expect to arrive between 1 March and 10<sup>th</sup> October on the supplementary question email. It becomes the initial prediction of the “New Entrant Adjustment” for next year’s provisional staffing considerations by MOE.

Contributing Schools: Make yourself aware of the Year 7 roll you may see on on M1/M3 and probably on the new Staffing Entitlement notice. Keep this in mind when you do the July Predictions! There is danger in including them in the year 6 box and leaving the Y7 box blank.

Gavin Price

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## 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

