

## **MOOT SPEECH 2018**

Greetings to you all - from the Far North to the deep South. From the extreme West to the East, Nau mai, Haere Mai!

It's great to see so many of you here today, bringing the voice of your regions to our table.

The Moot is a tradition - about as old as NZPF.

It was established to make sure the executive reflected the regional voice in all of its work, in its policies and in its public statements.

We are a membership organisation and while it is impossible to reflect every single member's view all of the time, we can bring **you** people together / as representatives / to inform us.

We listen to you and that helps shape our advocacy work on your behalf.

Your voice is highly valued by our executive and I thank you for coming here today to share your thoughts with us. Nau mai haere mai. Koutou katoa.

Last year our Moot's theme was all about Change. It was about the changes that we live with every day. It was about how to navigate that change, to stay sane and to maintain the good will of our communities.

Change in education has been all pervasive for us since the late 1980s, from Tomorrow's Schools, through to the Global Education Reform Movement policies.

Change in itself is not a problem and does not create stress. What creates stress for us is change that makes no sense.

Change that no one has asked for and is not based on sound learning theory creates doubt and suspicion because it will not enhance our young peoples' learning – and **that's** the sort of change we have been experiencing for the past decade.

In 2018 we **WELCOME** the changes we have seen so far. They **DO** make sense and they **WILL** be good for our young peoples' learning.

Today, our Moot theme is 'To Tatou Reo' - '**Our** Voices'

I believe that you, as regional representatives, can feel confident that, as we enter a new era, our voices will not just be heard in Wellington's corridors of power, but will be welcomed and valued.

I want to thank you all for coming here today and for bringing the voice of your regions to this national forum.

To Minister Chris Hipkins and Associate Ministers Tracey Martin and Kelvin Davies, thank you for joining us. Nau mai, haere mai koutou.

The last time I addressed an Education Minister was last year at our conference in Queenstown, just 48 hours before the general election. I implored then Minister Kaye to listen to us and reject national standards and every **other** aspect of the Global Education Reform Movement, that her government had adopted over the previous nine years. Today, I stand and thank **YOU** Minister for ridding our education system of national standards, within the first few weeks of becoming the Government.

With national standards gone, we appreciate that there will be flow on effects to many other areas of the system and it will take time to work through every one of those details. But I want to say that we applaud you Minister for introducing the Education Amendment Bill already. That Bill will take national standards out of legislation and free us to focus on our broad and rich, world class curriculum once again. Fortunately, the Bill will also take charter schools out of the system, freeing up much needed funds to apply in other areas. All of this, Minister, shows us that you are committed to a high quality **PUBLIC** education system.

We thank you too for your second Bill, intended to change the name of the **Education** Council to **Teaching** Council and allow us to democratically elect the majority of the Council's members. We thank you for your commitment to democratic processes and returning ownership of the Council to the profession.

We know you have just announced a three-year work plan which is filled with ambition. Today I am announcing that we in this room **want to work with you** to help you achieve the goals of your plan. We want to bring all our professional experience and practical knowledge of how our young people learn best, and how they can grow into confident, contributing citizens.

We want to help you raise the status of our profession. The past decade has made us cynical, distrustful, and weary. We want to change that. We aspire to have status as teachers do in Finland, for example. In that country, the public and the Government respect the teaching profession and trust teachers to make sound professional judgements in the best interests of their young people.

Lifting our professional status will inevitably have a positive effect on recruiting bright young school graduates who are

passionate about making a difference for our young people. We want our profession to become a magnet option for our best and brightest.

Young people of the future need exciting, energised role models to facilitate their learning so that they will grow in resilience, creativity and flexibility. Future work places will want them to have outstanding communication and interpersonal skills / to be independent / and to love learning new things throughout their lives. We want nothing less than the best for our young people and that means having a profession with high morale and high status.

Great teachers need great leaders. To have great leaders we need a succession plan that works. Right now we have an aging population of principals many of whom have been retiring early. We struggle to engage middle leaders in becoming principals. They look at the work load and they look at the stress levels and say, not for me!

We can change that. Together, we can harness the wealth of experience and knowledge that we know is embodied in our senior professionals / many of whom sit in this very room today! We know what will make the difference. Minister, let us help you secure a future succession of school leaders for our young people. Let us show you what is needed to make the critical changes that will set us on a path to future success.

Our last decade has been dominated by models of education from the UK and the USA. You have recognized, Minister, by pulling the pin on national standards, that our context here in Aotearoa New Zealand is not California or Birmingham! Thank you! We have been world leaders in finding solutions for learning problems before and we can be again. Take our reading recovery system,

invented by Dame Marie Clay forty years ago and still used in our schools today. Give us the incentives Minister, and the backing and we will find solutions to our challenges.

Together, Minister, we can do this!

We look forward to hearing more about your plans shortly / but meanwhile....

We warmly welcome Tracey Martin, and Kelvin Davis our two Associate Ministers. Thank you both for coming and we are looking forward to hearing from you too. You both represent areas very dear and important to us.

Associate Minister Tracey Martin, your determination to overhaul our special education services is hugely welcomed by all of us who struggle daily to find solutions especially for our most highly challenged young people. I know under your leadership that we will make progress.

For those of us working in schools, the Ministry's transformation of Special Education to Learning Support hasn't made an ounce of difference. Everyday I'm hearing from my colleagues how difficult it is to access professional supports for our young people with special needs, learning and behavioural needs, trauma and other mental health issues.

We want to support you as you strive to turn our special education service into a functioning and aspirational service for the young people who so desperately need **and deserve** so much better.

And Associate Minister Kelvin Davis. E hoa, nau mai, haere mai ki roto I te korowai o nga tumuaki. E mihi ana matou ki a koe.

Like you, Minister, we are determined that our tamariki Māori can and will succeed better than they have done in the past. Social structures, racist attitudes and assimilation policies have in the past ensured that Māori did not attain the success they might have.

I am confident that in 2018 and into the future we as school leaders will make our schools places where all tamariki and their whānau feel connected and engaged. Where tamariki Māori feel safe to be who they are, where our history, our tikanga and our Reo is respected and valued.

We know that where schools are led by principals who acknowledge diversity and difference, and where culture, language and heritage is valued we see higher levels of engagement, motivation and success. We have more work to do with you e hoa and I know that all of us here want to participate and learn together, from one another and from you, sharing our knowledge and expertise so that the next generation of Māori can proudly take their place within their iwi, in communities, in all areas of our workforce and contribute to making our beautiful country even better.

Now, returning to our regional presidents. Thank you for the work you do, developing, mentoring, creating networks and supporting the principals in your regions. This work is on top of running your own schools and you do this voluntarily to strengthen school leadership in your regions. You know that when school leadership is confident, strong, and well supported, the quality of the learning that teachers can give our young people is so much richer and more relevant.

That is why you make time to organize professional learning seminars, regional events and local conferences. That is why you fundraise so that the principals in your regions can have the opportunity to attend conferences and sometimes international events to expand their horizons, be exposed to new ways of thinking and new research in teaching practice so they can share these new ideas with their own teachers and support staff.

You also play an important role for us - your national Federation. It is to you we look to guide us in our work. You form our regional representative team and once a year at this Moot, you bring the voice of your regions to our table to debate and discuss the issues in front of us and help guide our work for the year.

This year we sent out a list of issues to share with your local principals so that you could bring their feedback to us. Many of these issues such as the teacher shortage, special education, Māori Education, tomorrow's schools and long-term planning for future education policy are also on our Ministers' agenda.

I hope as we hear from each of the Ministers today, you will have your questions and comments ready to put directly to them. I would ask that you keep your questions brief and clear so that as many of you as possible can participate in the question session. Our Ministers have limited time with us, so please do keep your questions focused.

We know that the agenda for education is extensive and our Ministers cannot tackle every issue at once. After today, I hope that we will be able to establish priority areas that we can immediately start working on. In that way we can help our Ministers develop policies that reflect our professional experience, knowledge and understanding of how our young people learn best. We want **Young People and Their Learning**,

not data and league tables, to be the central focus of our education system.

No reira!

And now I warmly welcome Minister of Education, the Honorable Chris Hipkins to the stage, Welcome Chris