

NEW ZEALAND PRINCIPALS' FEDERATION

5 August 2010

SUBMISSION ON: *A VISION FOR THE TEACHING PROFESSION* FINAL REPORT

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The New Zealand Principals Federation (NZPF) represents the interests of 2,578 Principals of Primary and Secondary Schools throughout New Zealand. We acknowledge receipt of the final report of your Education Workforce Advisory Group entitled *A Vision for the Teaching Profession*. The Federation appreciates your commitment to quality teaching and professional leadership, the work of the advisory group in preparing this report and the opportunity to provide feedback on the recommendations presented in the report.

NZPF offers the following comments for consideration in relation to the recommendations of the report under the three sections:

- ***Initial Teacher Education (ITE)***
- ***Recognition, reward and progression of teachers***
- ***Professional leadership***

Initial Teacher Education (ITE)

Moving toward initial teacher education being provided only at postgraduate level

The NZPF is concerned that unless the applicant had majored in a relevant pedagogical area in the course of qualifying for their bachelors degree, they would be inadequately prepared to teach in a classroom after completing the one year postgraduate qualification.

Our recommendation is that it would be necessary for them to meet the requirements of step 7 Q3+ of the present Collective Agreement, which states:

Entry for teachers who hold a Bachelor's degree together with a recognised teaching qualification (e.g. Diploma of Teaching), or a degree conjointly completed with a bachelor degree of teaching, or an honours degree of teaching, or a Diploma of Teaching together with an Advanced Diploma of Teaching together with a level 7, 120 credit relevant specialist diploma, or a bachelor degree of teaching together with a level 7, 120 credit relevant specialist diploma.

NZPF notes the importance of including significant levels of practicum experience in initial teacher training which in turn is supported by high quality supervision and mentoring from lecturers who have current teaching practice. A one year course is too little to achieve sound curriculum and pedagogical knowledge and practice. The expectation of teachers completing two years of postgraduate studies in their first two years of teaching as PRTs is unrealistic and likely to force good teachers out of the profession.

Addressing the balance between the number of teachers being trained and the number of appropriate placements available for trainee and beginning teachers

This recommendation does not explain *how* the balance would be addressed. The Federation would not support a purely Market Driven approach to addressing this balance in that it would inevitably lead to general and geographical shortages of quality trained teachers in the future. Some more work needs to be done here to ascertain the problem and ultimately potential solutions.

Ensuring that trainee teachers are accepted into ITE programmes only after being assessed with a 'disposition to teach' through a formal selection process.

The Federation is concerned about how any criteria for having a 'disposition to teach' are to be drawn up and by whom. NZPF believes that the term *disposition to teach* is a very subjective term and at worst, esoteric and thus not a useful criterion to introduce when selecting candidates for teacher training. Rather, NZPF would prefer that the NZTC teacher registration criteria are used and apply the section ~~Good character and fit to be a teacher~~ in the selection of initial teachers for training. We also have concerns about which agency would be granted authority to formally select candidates for teacher training. In our view professional selection could be achieved through regional panels which would include a principal, school boards representative, Ministry of Education representative and training providers representative.

Strengthening links between trainee and beginning teachers, and teacher education providers and schools...

NZPF supports strengthening these links and resourcing on-site staff to achieve that, notwithstanding the difficulties that may arise when dealing with multiple providers, including distance providers. Encouraging schools to make themselves available

Additional Comments:

NZPF registers its disappointment that this document ~~A vision for the teaching profession~~ does not include education in Te Reo in its recommendations for initial teacher training. Nor does it include any recommendations for English as a second language teaching.

Providing Career development opportunities to support effective teaching and progression through the profession

Training mentors is welcomed provided that the initiative takes account of release time, the impact on workloads and appropriate incentives. Existing models of developing effective teaching and progression which operate in schools now should be taken into account and the most effective models replicated.

Increasing flexibility to support, recognise and reward teaching excellence and educational leadership.

NZPF supports a skills-based pay model where teachers can move from Q1 . Q3 on demonstration of their skills, knowledge and attributes which are evident in their practice. The NZEI developed such a model which we would endorse. This is a system which is transparent, robust and fair. NZPF does not support any performance pay system that is not skills-based. NZPF rejects the idea of using units as a form of performance based pay because they are intended to develop career paths and remunerate teachers in professional leadership positions.

Rewarding individual performance will encourage competition and undermine the collaborative culture necessary for successful curriculum implementation. NZPF rejects using non-contact time for professional development because it is intended for planning and preparation activities which would still have to be completed.

Recognition, reward and progression of teachers

Setting clear standards so that effective, transparent and robust judgements of teacher capability and performance can be made.

NZPF believes that there are more than sufficient standards now for measuring expertise, skills and attributes of teachers. We refer to the professional standards negotiated by NZEI, MoE, NZSTA and NZPF which comprise four areas of practice and are collectively called the professional standards. NZPF does not support introducing any more. NZPF would oppose any link between the measurement of standards and pay. If collaboration is being promoted as an effective approach to sharing good practice within and across schools (pg 6), then the will to compete against colleagues for limited reward dollars+ would extinguish any motivation to collaborate. Determining why and to whom the reward might go becomes problematic, counter-productive and divisive in the culture of co-operation so recognised in NZ schools as a positive factor.

Focusing more on supporting educational leadership (rather than just administrative management)

NZPF wants registered teachers to be leading New Zealand schools. NZPF supports the mentoring programmes in place for principals, especially the First Time Principals Programme (FTPP) and the professional development of principals and schools through projects such as the Ariki project that schools can themselves choose to participate in. We believe there needs to be a balance between supporting principals in sound systems of management as well as educational leadership - neither one nor the other is sufficient. School leaders need to make their own call from what is on offer or via a mentoring/cluster colleague and/or through a local community of practice. Principals and schools would benefit from additional administrative support resourcing in order that their time was spent on educational leadership.

Professional leadership

Establishing compulsory training and development for aspiring and new principals and focusing more support on growing distributive leadership within schools.

NZPF supports the programme for aspiring principals and the FTPP for first-time principals. NZPF is open to engaging in debate which might lead to the establishment of further partnerships with agencies which could support teachers in developing leadership potential. Any notion of mandatory training would need to be carefully explored and developed in consultation with the sector, teaching practitioners and school leaders.

Introducing Secondments across schools for teachers aspiring to become principals

NZPF would offer cautionary support for the notion of secondments for aspiring principals provided that sufficient and appropriate resourcing was granted to support secondments, agreed protocols and safeguards were in place. Some thinking needs to be done first.

Introducing a system of professional mentoring for all principals to support professional discussions/development

The Ariki project is a good example of providing professional development for principals and NZPF supports the expansion of this programme of principal mentorship. This project is supported by the MoE.

NZEI, STA and MoE have a long term working programme under the Primary Principals Collective Agreement to support principals in their professional work and to facilitate the

exploration of career pathways, principal appointment and opportunities within principalship to ensure ongoing retention and recruitment of high quality principals in the NZ education system+ (appendix 7 (10), *Primary Principals' Collective Agreement*) .

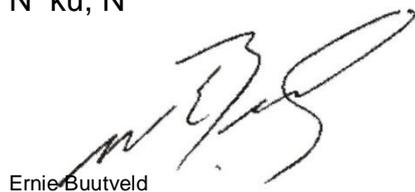
Providing flexibility for principals to support, recognise and reward teaching excellence and distributed leadership

The notion of rewarding perceived individual excellence is anathema to the culture of New Zealand classrooms. This introduces competition between teachers which will work against practices and classroom culture based on collegiality and cooperation in delivering the New Zealand curriculum. It is these qualities which make New Zealand teachers unique and better able to deliver quality education to children.

Refocusing the NZTC as the professional body for the teacher profession...

The NZTC is already in the process of reviewing its activities and responsibilities, including entry to the profession. The NZTC is currently a Crown entity partly funded and controlled by its members who are teachers. NZPF believes that the ownership of NZTC should lie with the profession and that it should be an entity charged with scrutinising its own self-governing profession. NZPF does not envisage that the NZTC would have a role in instructing teachers in the kind of professional development they should pursue, nor does it believe that such a role would be desirable for self-managing schools. NZPF believes that now more than ever, NZTC requires the ongoing contribution of teachers to its deliberations to ensure that debates about entry criteria, continuing professional development and ethical accountability are relevant and grounded in the every day classroom practice of NZ schools. This needs to remain in place. Teachers are already accountable to their employer through their professional standards and also the profession through meeting the registered teacher criteria including of ~~Good~~ character and fit to be a teacher. Teachers can be challenged at any time by the council if deemed to be acting unethically.

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