

PPTA News

Uniting secondary teachers of Aotearoa



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PPTA News

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The NCEA we deserve

It's up to secondary teachers, again, to advocate for a vastly improved implementation of the NCEA change programme

One of the best things about being PPTA Te Wehengarua president is the branch visits. Any president will tell you that you never have time to visit as many branches as you'd like. However, the visits I have been fortunate enough to make have all been awesome.

They are a precious opportunity to catch up with grassroots members, find out what's top of mind for you, and answer your questions. It's great to feel the school vibe again. Don't get me wrong - I love everything (well very nearly everything!) I get to do as president but I do really miss the special vitality, activity and liveliness of school environments. Particularly the rangatahi - there's never a day without a laugh, a surprise or an insight.

I've been privileged to visit several branches recently, mainly in Whanganui-a-Tara and Tāmaki Makaurau. I've been to a range of kura but the same thing strikes me wherever I go - teachers' resilience and commitment to student learning and achievement in incredibly trying circumstances.

One of the latest challenges is the shambolic way in which the new NCEA Level 1 assessment processes are being implemented. Resource materials are arriving in schools too late, with no clear guidelines about when teachers should be given them.

Add to this a huge variation of assessment conditions across subjects and between schools, and schools having to spend their own time and money producing resources, organising assessment logistics and administration, and you have an implementation nightmare.

In the last issue of *PPTA News* some teachers compared the Level 1 implementation with building an airplane while flying it. It's not how any of us want to travel - ākongā and kaiako deserve much better.

If the education agencies only do one thing adequately for secondary schools, surely it should be to ensure that a comprehensive change programme

for our national qualification is fully developed, resourced and implemented. But no, the implementation has left so much to be desired, it's not funny. In fact it's deplorable. Teachers are putting in huge amounts of time and effort, doing everything they can to ensure that students are not disadvantaged. To ensure that students do not miss out.

PPTA Te Wehengarua is a strong proponent of the NCEA change programme, designed to strengthen our national qualification. The aims of the change programme are laudable: making NCEA more accessible, reducing the barriers for students with disabilities and learning support needs; providing equal status for mātauranga Māori; providing fewer and larger standards; simplifying the structure; strengthening literacy and numeracy requirements and assessments; and creating, through the NCEA, clearer and stronger pathways to work.

This sounds fantastic. However, the lack of adequate support and resourcing at the national level is taking a huge toll and making the workloads of many teachers, especially Principal's Nominees, completely unsustainable.

As I write this column, we are preparing for Annual Conference, the supreme policy making body of PPTA Te Wehengarua. Among the papers we

will be considering is one calling for an urgent implementation improvement plan for NCEA Level 1, involving genuine engagement with teachers, a commitment to additional resources for the changes, and an effective review process to inform the development and rollout of NCEA Levels 2 and 3.

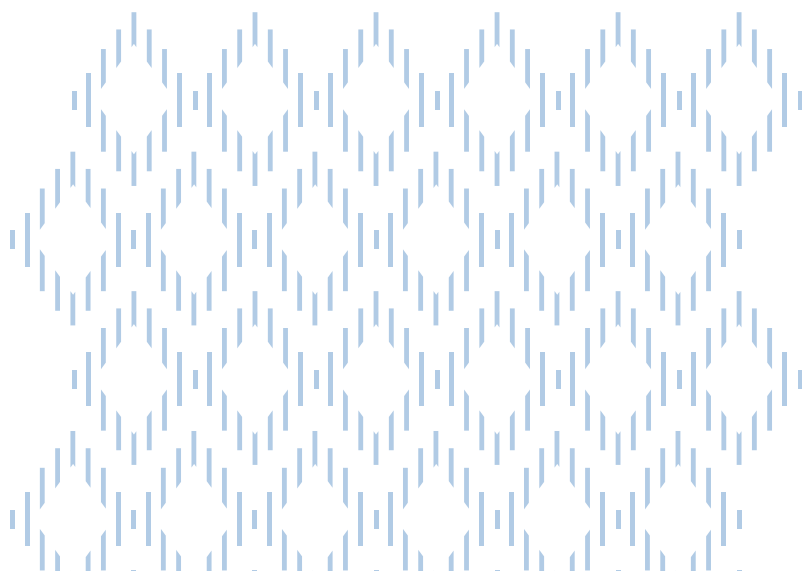
I want to assure members that whatever decisions are made at conference, I, along with your national executive, will use every channel and conduit we have to ensure the NCEA change programme delivers the national qualification our students deserve and in which we can all have confidence.

Moe mai ra, Kiingi Tuehitia

With a heavy heart, I acknowledge the recent passing of Kiingi Tuheitia Pootatau Te Wherowhero VII.

His influence and leadership, particularly in recent months through the hui ā motu, have created a genuine sense of Kotahitanga that will take Aotearoa New Zealand positively and confidently into the future.

Kua hinga he tōtara i te wao nui a Tāne.





Mayor takes a stand for public education

The Mayor of Whakatāne is supporting local schools in his region to oppose charter school conversion, writes Natalie Cattrall

On Thursday 5th September the Bay of Plenty region put on a screening of 'Backpack Full of Cash' (a movie about charter schools in USA) in Whakatāne. This was followed by a Q and A session with PPTA Te Wehengarua junior vice president Kieran Gainsford.

With the local Mayor, Whakatāne district councillors, community members and teachers in attendance, it was heartening to see the discussion the film created.

At the conclusion of the film Whakatāne Mayor, Victor Luca, announced: "From what I've just seen, I can't see any reason why we would want charter schools in New Zealand".

A number of attendees remarked on how little they had known about the issue prior and that they were now keen to proactively support public education and oppose conversion in our rohe. Following the screening, the Mayor offered his



Whakatāne mayor Dr Victor Luca and PPTA Te Wehengarua junior vice president Kieran Gainsford

support both with local schools in the region opposing conversion, and in letter-writing and campaigning on the issue to our current government.

As a region we would strongly encourage other areas to make local government

aware of your branches' feelings around charter schools. We are highly encouraged by the support given by our community regarding this issue.

*Natalie Cattrall is secretary of the PPTA Te Wehengarua Bay of Plenty region

School board backs teachers' resolution against charter schools

Massey High School Board has put on the record its opposition to charter school conversion

Massey High School Board has fully endorsed the Massey High School PPTA branch resolution opposing charter school conversion.

Karl Goddard, PPTA Te Wehengarua national executive member and staff representative on the Massey High School board, says when the threat of charter schools re-emerged after last year's general election, he sent information about the proposed legislation to all PPTA branch members. "There was strong interest among members, and discussions with board members made it clear that the board, especially parent and student representatives, did not want Massey High



Karl Goddard

to be converted to a charter school. "After a bit of informal discussion, we called a special branch meeting and members passed unanimously a resolution opposing charter school conversion. We also gave members who couldn't attend the branch meeting an opportunity to vote online."

Karl took the branch resolution to the next scheduled school board meeting, where it was discussed and fully endorsed by the board. The board has formally recorded its opposition to Massey High School becoming a charter school.

Karl encouraged other branches to do the same. "This is a powerful way for school communities to take a stand for public education and against charter schools. We do not need them or want them in Aotearoa New Zealand."

Find out how to organise a branch resolution against charter schools at <https://www.ppta.org.nz/campaigns/charter-schools/branch-resolution-against-charter-school-conversion/>



Summit seeks supply solutions

Te Puke is a region in Aotearoa New Zealand renowned for growing kiwifruit – and it may in future be renowned for growing secondary teachers

Te Puke High School principal, Alan Liddle, says a worsening shortage of teachers has encouraged his school to look for solutions within. “Solutions are certainly not going to come from the Ministry (of Education) or the government.

“As a school we’re trying to grow our own teachers. We get in touch with students who have left our school, particularly those who are not quite sure what they want to do and have demonstrated capabilities for teaching.

“They know the school, they know the way it operates and the pedagogy so it’s pretty straightforward. We offer them a LAT (limited authority to teach) position, and from there we support them and promote the opportunity to go through the TeachNZ programme. That to me is the solution right here and now that will help us build that capacity going forward.”

Alan represented the Secondary Principals’ Council at a teacher supply summit held in Wellington in early September. Participants came from about 20 education organisations from early childhood through to tertiary.

The idea for the summit came from a steering group of representatives from Victoria University of Wellington Council of Deans of Education, PPTA Te Wehengarua, NZEI Te Riu Roa, with input from the Education Review Office and the Teaching Council.

Dr Adele Scott, PPTA Te Wehengarua advisory officer and steering group member, says the purpose of the summit was to formulate solutions for the teacher supply challenges including a long term plan.

“Our opening focus included a proposal to work on a long-term plan, but we maintained pressure to keep the focus tight on the immediate problem of teacher undersupply and the short timeframe in which we had an opportunity to effect meaningful change through the collective agreement negotiations next year.

“During the course of the summit the reality hit home for many participants



Participants at the teacher supply summit

that pay and conditions were fundamentally the core of the problem.”

Another summit participant, secondary teacher trainee Mackenzie Valgre, says the Government cannot rely on teachers teaching for the love of the job. “And nor should we. In the state of Victoria in Australia, for example, teachers start on \$84,000 (NZD) as a beginning teacher. In New Zealand, you are likely to be starting on \$64,000. People with similar qualifications are earning far more in other professions.”

She said that 25 years ago, her father's deputy principal salary was enough to support a whānau with three children. “There is no way you could service a mortgage and raise children on just a teacher's salary now. Similarly, the demands on teachers keep increasing without extra support to do the ever-changing job.

“We need to win a life-changing contract (collective agreement) that makes teaching an attractive and sustainable profession, including a substantial pay increase.”

Summit participants have committed to developing a coherent set of solutions to enhance the teaching profession, replace the current piecemeal approach, and create a sustainable workforce.

A week after the summit, Education Minister Erica Stanford announced a range of measures to address the teacher shortage. They include giving LATs to more people who are not qualified

and registered teachers to work as relief teachers, asking recently retired teachers to return to the classroom and encouraging teacher aides to do relief teaching.

Chris Abercrombie, PPTA Te Wehengarua president, said the Minister was clearly planning to flood classrooms with unregistered relievers as the teaching shortage bites.

“Very few of these relievers will be across the new requirements for the implementation of Level 1 NCEA, or the new English and Maths curricula, or structured literacy delivery. Some teachers without practising certificates won't have taught for well over three years.

“This is evidence of a systemic failure to recognise and value teaching and ensure that teachers are retained and new teachers are attracted to the profession.

“The cold hard fact of the matter is that there are thousands of highly skilled and experienced former teachers in Aotearoa New Zealand today who would come back to school next week if the salary and conditions were attractive.

“Every young person has a right to a trained and registered specialist teacher in every subject. Denying them that right, because of a failure to ensure a consistent supply of New Zealand trained and qualified secondary teachers with current practising certificates, undermines the life choices of our young people and the future of Aotearoa New Zealand.”



Looking at literacy and numeracy assessments through a different lens

A more relaxed approach to the numeracy and literacy common assessment activities is having positive effects, one Maths teacher has found

Taking a different approach to the mandatory literacy and numeracy corequisites seems to be having a positive effect on results, says Hugh*, head of Maths at a North Island secondary school.

His school was involved in the pilot so the assessments have now become part of the school's normal routine and are embedded in the school's curriculum.

"I don't see the corequisites as high stakes assessments any more. I know a lot of other teachers do, because of the whole NZQA / NCEA mentality - you sit your assessments and if you don't pass, it means you can't go forward.

"Before we do other actual NCEA assessments we give our students practice papers to sit so they can improve for the real one. So if you look at it as we're going to do the first numeracy and literacy assessment for the year as a practice run so when we do it next time, you know what it's like, you've had a go at it, that takes the stress out of it. If you pass the first time, that's great. But if not, we'll talk it through and support you to sit it again next time. So it's not as high stakes for the students. But I know I'm in the minority on this."

However, that approach might be paying off - 57% of students at Hugh's school passed the numeracy assessments in May / June - well above the national average of 45%.

"When you look at the national average that's pretty good, and we don't select the students to go through. The whole of our Year 10 sit the assessments.

Readiness questionable

"NZQA recommend that students sit the assessments only when they're ready but how do you really know when you're ready? We had some students whose Progressive Achievement Tests results were low but they passed. And there are some students who want to have a go anyway.

"Other students say they're not ready, when they actually are, because they're

too scared to have a go. Our philosophy is that they all sit and if they pass, great. If they don't, that's okay too. It's a learning curve."

He compares the literacy and numeracy assessments with a driving test. "People don't get up in arms when they fail it. They just keep going back - they know they've got to get it because they can't go on the roads so they'll keep practising. If you look at it the same way as a driving test, you keep going until you pass it, that's my view on it."

"If you look at it the same way as a driving test, you keep going until you pass it, that's my view on it."

He acknowledges that after failing the literacy or numeracy assessments two or three times, many students lose heart and give up, not even turning up for the next assessment. "Partly this is because we're dealing with students who are not quite at the same age of maturity as Year 11 when they seem to be able to deal better with that sort of success or failure.

"You can see Year 10 students, in particular, growing up and maturing as the year goes on and they become more thoughtful in their responses. If you've got students who aren't that mature and they're sitting these assessments I can see how that would knock them back. Which is why we shouldn't regard them as high stakes tests, we've got to change our mindset."

Alternative approach concerns

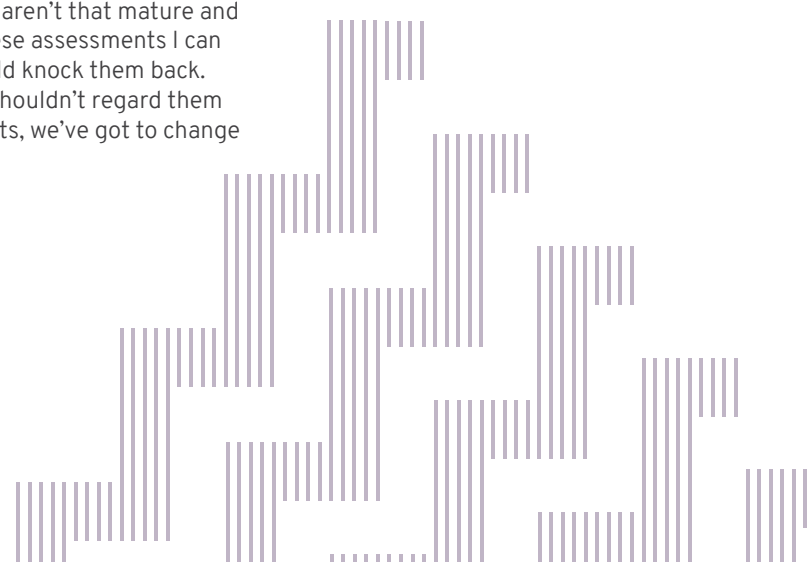
Hugh has concerns about continuing with the alternative to the common assessment activities - which has recently been announced by the Minister of Education. This means that students will continue to be able to attain the literacy and numeracy credits through other NCEA subjects for another two years.

"I'm in two minds about this. I noticed years ago that students could get the 10 numeracy credits by doing scattergraphs in different subjects three times. So they're attaining numeracy when they're not really numerate.

"Going back to the driving test analogy. If motorists can indicate and go round a roundabout is that enough to let them pass? Not doing any reversing or any T- junctions or any parallel parking - is one skill enough? In a driving test, probably not.

"I would hate to go back to the situation where students could perform one skill three times and pass. So it all depends on the robustness of the system and the standards you assess."

*PPTA News agreed not to use Hugh's real name because of his school's strict media policy.





Professional development for you as a union member

Learning about your rights at work is an essential part of being a PPTA Te Wehengarua member – take a Mahi Tika course and find out more

Want to know about your rights at work or what kind of allowances are in your collective agreement? A Mahi Tika course is the ideal way to find out.

Mahi Tika is the professional development programme for PPTA Te Wehengarua members. Mahi Tika courses are practical adult education seminars based on case studies, collaborative problem-solving and discussion.

The courses are delivered by PPTA Te Wehengarua field officers each year at a location near you. All members are encouraged to attend, particularly those who have taken on a role in their branch or region.

Fionn Murphy, an arts teacher at Pakuranga College, took part in a Mahi Tika course to learn more about his employment rights and obligations. “When I first started my teaching career I found our employment agreement long and confusing. Teacher training, the school I worked at, the Ministry of Education – none of them actually gave me guidance in understanding it.

“Mahi Tika has empowered me to have the knowledge and confidence to help and explain things to my colleagues about our collective agreement.”

Ellie Reynolds, PPTA Te Wehengarua Counties Manukau regional secretary and head of Psychology and Media Studies at Pukekohe High School, said she took part in the courses when she became a branch chair. “Understanding the collective, how to run branch meetings, how to manage difficult conversations and pushing for teachers’ rights was important to me being in that position within my branch. The Mahi Tika courses covered all of that and more.”

Ellie did all three Mahi Tika courses in a year. “They have given me confidence for sure. I’m more confident in my understanding of the collective, more confident in my interactions with our principal and staff members. I know my rights, and I am pushing for staff to know theirs better too. It is still continual work as a branch chair, but we have had some



very positive outcomes for our branch. I feel that our branch is seeing the benefits of the work I have put in.”

Liz Minogue, branch co-chair at Gisborne Boys’ High School, says an extremely valuable takeaway from Mahi Tika was a recommendation that the branch chairs set up regular meetings with our principal prior to board meetings. “This has helped us establish open communication on issues that are affecting staff.”

For schools outside the main centres of the country, having travel and accommodation costs covered by PPTA Te Wehengarua is much appreciated, says Liz. “And the fact that we get employment relations education leave is really essential for selling it to school management.”

Mahi Tika courses available later this year are:

Mahi Tika One

Auckland, 7-8 November

This is a foundation employment relations course relevant to all members, and essential for those who are branch office holders.

Mahi Tika Three

Hamilton & Christchurch, 7-8 November

The stage three course is challenging and builds on the previous two courses. Participants learn how to negotiate solutions to workplace issues by doing it.

For more information and to register, visit <https://www.ppta.org.nz/events/mahi-tika-learning-to-make-a-difference-2/>



Māori Vice President election

Voting opens on Monday 14 October for the position of PPTA Te Wehengarua Māori Vice President for 2025. PPTA has received two nominations for this position. Here are the candidates' personal statements.

Hemi Ferris-Bretherton, Te Kura o Hirangi

E raurangatira mā, ki ngā kaiako Māori kei ngā tōpito o te motu, ka karamihi ki a koutou katoa. Ko te amorangi ki mua, ko te hāpai o kei muri...E kore te puna o mihi ki tō tātou Te Hāpai O, ko ia tō mātou māngai mō ngā tau e rua kua pāhure ake nei. Ka nui te mihi ki a koe e te mareikura!

He uri ahau nō te roanga o Te Tāirawhiti. Ka tīmata ki te whanga o Anaura heke iho ki Whangara mai Tāwhiti i te taha o tōku tīpuna matua. Ko James Hiki Ferris ia. Ko tōku kuia i whānau ai ia ki te pito o te ao kei Nuhaka. Engari i te wā he kōtiro paku ia ka nuku ki Manutuke. Ko Wikitoria Katerina (Taurima) Puha tōna ingoa.

I puta taku ihu mai i Te Whare Wānanga o Waikato, ā, i riro mahi au ki te kura tuarua o Tongariro High School. Kātahi ka peka atu au ki te kura o Hato Patariki kei Te Awakairangi. Engari mai i te tau 2005, he pūmau taku noho kei roto i te poho o Te Mātāpuna o Ngāti Tūwharetoa. He ringa raupā tonu ahau kei Te Kura o Hirangi. He kura-ā-iwi. Ko Hēmi Ferris-Bretherton ahau.

I noho au kei runga i te kōmiti matua o Te Huarahi Mana Motuhake mō ngā tau e whitū. He ringa raupā hoki mō ngā kōmiti ICT me te Political Strategy. I tērā tau he kaiāwhina hoki i roto i te rōpū ASTCA mō ngā mahi whakawhitwhiti kōrero i tērā tau. Ka mahi tahi mātou i te taha o ngā māngai o Te Riu Roa. I te mutunga o tērā tau ka whiriwhiri au i Te Huarahi hei māngai mō mātou kei runga i te kōmiti mātua o te Executive mō Te Wehengarua.

Kei te tuku tāku tono ki a koutou e te hunga pōkaikaha. Ka hiahia au i tō koutou tautoko me ngā whakaaro ki te whakamana i a ahau hei māngai mō Ngai tātou kia anga whakamua. I tēnei wā ka kaha patu i te kāwanatanga i ngā momo tāmitanga. Pērā i te pire Tiriti Principles, he tata te wā e puta mai ana i tēnei taniwhā mai i te Whare Mīere. Nā te Pirimia i kī mai kei Tūrangawaewae, nō mātou te iwi Māori i tuku atu i tō mātou ake kingitanga?!? E hē rawa! Ko ngā ture hou o Te Tāhūhū mō ngā mahi tautokorua



Hemi Ferris-Bretherton

tuhituhi me te pāngarau, ko ngā mahi whakahounga o te NCEA, he aha atu, he aha atu....

Me aha koutou? Me tuku mai i tō pōti ki ahau hei māngai mō koutou. Mauriora ki te kaupapa o Te Wehengarua!!

To all kaiako of Te Reo Māori across the land, I salute you all. The leaders are to the front and the workers behind the scenes. And tremendous expression of graditude is given to our current Māori Vice President who has been an outstanding spokesperson for the past two years and currently is our known face, seen at hui across the width and breadth of the country. I salute you and your outstanding efforts Te Aomihia.

I graduated from the University of Waikato to begin my teaching career at Tongariro High School in the year 1999. After a short time I then moved to Saint Patrick's Silverstream to take up a position as a teacher of Te Reo Māori. From 2005 I then moved to my current school, Te Kura o Hirangi, a special character kura based in Tūrangi. My name is Hēmi Ferris-Bretherton.

I currently sit on the Te Huarahi Māori Motuhake Executive for the past seven years as the Te Arawa Waka māngai.

I have previously represented interests on the ICT Advisory Committee and still do on the Political Strategy Committee. Last year I was selected on the ASTCA negotiations team and bargained for kaiako based in wharekura and area schools across the country. What a tremendous honour it was to work alongside our NZEI counterparts in this important role, which then led to me being asked to represent Te Huarahi on our National Executive PPTA Committee.

My request goes to all of you kaiako, particularly those frustrated with the current state of the educational landscape that we are forced to operate in. I ask you all to carefully consider my nomination as we seek to progress forward in the face of oppressive forces and racially motivated legalisation being introduced into Parliament. The Prime Minister had the audacity to state at Tūrangawaewae recently that Māori ceded their sovereignty! Absolutely and categorically could he be more wrong in his thinking.

What should one do? Please give me your vote so I can advocate for you all. Give strength to the entire family and network of Te Wehengarua.

Te Aomihia Taua-Glassie, Tikipunga High School

He kaitautoko hau mō te mātauranga tūmatanui hoino, inā tata nei i kōrero hau ki te Komiti Whiriwhiri Take Mātauranga me te Ohu Mahi ki te Whare Miere, he toa takitini mātou, ngā mema o PPTA Te Wehengarua e hapahapai i ngā mātāpono o te mātauranga tūmatanui i te whakahokinga mai o ngā kura hourua. I ahu mai taku wheako i Te Huarahi Māori Motuhake o PPTA Te Wehengarua, i whakaaturia e hau te hiahia mō te whakawhitinga kōrero ki ngā rōpū Māori, ngā hapori Māori me te whai tikanga i Te Tiriti o Waitangi. Ka mutu, i whakaatu aku tāpaetanga i waenga i te 2014 me te 2016 i te pānga o ngā kura hourua, ā, e whakapono ana hau kua pai ake tā mātou whakamōhio atu ki ō mātou hapori mā tētahi huarahi rautaki. Hoino, e pūmau ana hau ki te whakapakari i tō mātou anga kura kaupapa Māori me te whakarite kia whiwhi ngā ākonga katoa, otirā ngā ākonga Māori, i te mātauranga kounga e tika ana mō rātou.

'Ka haere te tupuna ka arahia tōna waka ki te awa...'

Hei whakamutunga, ko tōku tūmanako ka whai hua aku kupu me aku wheako mō ngā kaiako Māori i taku hipokina i ngā mātāpono o Te Tiriti o Waitangi. Me te mea anō, e tautoko ana hau i ngā kura kaupapa Māori, te mātauranga reo Māori, me ngā kura ā-iwi hei tauira whakahirahira mō ngā ākonga Māori, e mōhio marika ana rātou ki te poipoi i ngā ākonga kia tū rangatira ai. E mihi kau ana hau ki ā mātou mema i ngā wharekura, ngā kura ā-iwi, me ngā rumaki reo e tiaki ana i te reo me ōna tikanga Māori. Waihoki, ka toro atu taku ringa pūmau ki ngā wāhanga katoa o te mātauranga tuarua me te mātauranga hangarau, e whakarite ana i ngā hiahia o ā mātou ākonga Māori me te tautoko i te mana ōrite mō te mātauranga Māori i te mātauranga auraki. Hoino, ka arotahi hau ki ngā kaupapa whakawhanake kaiako hei whakarite i ā mātou mema mō ngā panonitanga tā te marautanga me te



Te Aomihia Taua-Glassie

NCEA, kia whai angitu ā mātou ākonga, kia whai oranga anō te kaiako na runga i tana mōhioanga ki te wāwahi ana mahi kura me tana noho kainga, kia whai wā ki a ia anō me tana whanau ake.

As a committed advocate for public education, I recently spoke at the Education and Workforce Select Committee, joining many of our members in upholding the principles of public education against the reintroduction of charter schools.

Drawing from my experience with PPTA Te Wehengarua's Te Huarahi Māori Motuhake, I emphasised the need for comprehensive consultation with Māori entities and adherence to Te Tiriti o Waitangi. My contributions between 2014 and 2016 highlighted the impact of charter schools, and I believe we are now better prepared to inform our communities with a strategic approach.

I am dedicated to strengthening our existing kura kaupapa Māori framework and ensuring all ākonga, especially ākonga Māori, receive the quality education they deserve.

'Ka haere te tupuna ka arahia tona waka ki te awa...'

In conclusion, I hope my words and experiences will benefit kaiako Māori as I uphold the principles of Te Tiriti o Waitangi. I advocate for kura kaupapa Māori, Māori medium education, and kura ā iwi as vital models for ākonga Māori, recognising their role in nurturing proud learners in their reo and identity.

I acknowledge our members in wharekura, ngā kura ā iwi, and rumaki reo for protecting te reo me ōna tikanga Māori.

My commitment extends to all phases of secondary and technical education, prioritising the needs of our ākonga Māori and advocating for mana ōrite mō te mātauranga Māori in mainstream education.

I will focus on professional learning and development to prepare our members for curriculum and NCEA changes, enabling them to guide our ākonga to academic success while better managing their workload to create time for themselves and their whānau.

* Only members on the Māori electoral roll can vote in this election.

The state of our schools

Inaction and uncertainty around school property funding is creating some deplorable conditions for teaching and learning

In late December 2019 the Onslow College community, just northwest of Wellington CBD, received the best Christmas present.

Then Education Minister Chris Hipkins visited the school to announce that after years of waiting, the school was set to get 20 brand new classrooms and seven to replace old ones.

“This is a welcome boost for the students and staff of Onslow College. I know they have been waiting patiently for this and they can now look forward to teaching and learning in warm, dry and modern classrooms,” Chris Hipkins said at the time.

Five years on, students and staff are still waiting, while much of the school seems to be falling down around their ears.

“For various reasons, some of it out of the Government’s control (such as COVID-19), things haven’t got going and five years on things have very much come to a head,” says Cameron Stewart, PPTA Te Wehengarua branch co-chair at Onslow.

“It’s been incredibly frustrating particularly for our teachers of science and technology which are the two areas where classrooms have been really badly affected, largely due to mould and poor air quality.

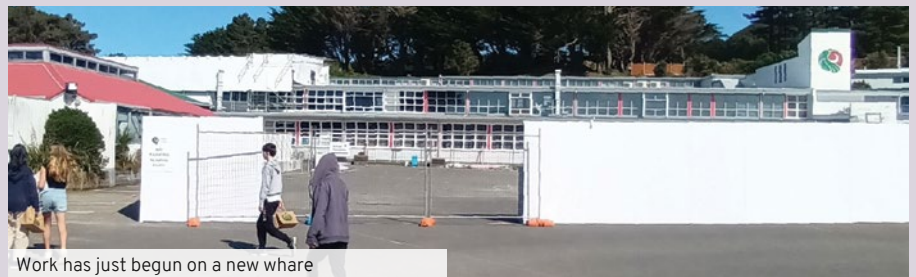
“A couple of science classrooms are permanently closed because they’re not safe. Our tech classrooms are just a bit past it and particularly in that area there’s a lot of capital expenditure that needs to be made. Understandably, the board is reluctant to put a lot of money into buildings that have been scheduled for demolition for five years.”

For several years now science and tech classes have been held everywhere around the school, with teachers altering their programmes so they could maximise their times in specialist classrooms.

The school’s second gymnasium has been forced to close recently as leaks have made it completely unfit for purpose.



A dilapidated classroom block



Work has just begun on a new whare

Many classrooms that are still operational have mould and water stains, holes in the ceiling and paint peeling off the walls.

“One of the downsides is because the buildings are in such a sorry state the kids no longer respect the property.”

Understandably, the board is reluctant to put a lot of money into buildings that have been scheduled for demolition for five years

However it has encouraged the students to get active politically. One of Cameron’s Year 13 classes organised a petition.

“We’ve been in touch with the local member of parliament. Other students and whānau have contacted Minister of Finance Nicola Willis, who lives not far from Onslow College, and other Ministers as well, making it really clear what the conditions are like here.

“We’re lucky that we’ve got the Minister of Finance and a Labour backbench MP here to be able to advocate for us. I often think if we and (neighbouring) Wellington Girls’ College are having these issues, what are other schools, that don’t

have the same access to politicians, going through?

Cameron says the branch has been working closely with the staff representative on the school board. “Earlier this year, for example, we coordinated to get a more complete list of the issues teachers and students were facing and made sure that went to the board and the Ministry.

“We think our board is doing the best it can under these trying conditions but they’re not teachers, they’re not here every day so it is really important that they know exactly what we are facing.

“It is all about being collaborative and we know if there’s anything that pops up, we’ll get a heads up from the principal when we need to.”

At the time of writing, work had just begun on a new whare on the school site. “Our whare will be the centre of the school and it will be a really beautiful space.

“It’s good that something’s started but when we see ground breaking for a new classroom block that would indicate for me that something really is happening.”

Recommendations from the report of the Ministerial Inquiry into the Ministry of Education’s School Property Function, were due to go to Cabinet by the end of September.



Te Mataroa

Daniel Hapuku is PPTA Te Wehengarua Te Mataroa, working to assist members who want support in a Māori context

Although Daniel Hapuku has been Te Mataroa for about a year now, he's still surprised by the fact that members recognise him so quickly and know about his role.

“Matua Bill Anderson, as Te Mataroa tūturu, had really set the foundations for me in this role. He had already created national networks and relationships with so many people in so many places. When I talk about my role with our wider whānau across the motu, whānau are generally aware of what my role is and what they expect of me. Having travelled a lot already, it's nice to be recognised as PPTA and as Te Mataroa.”

Daniel was appointed to the role after 24 years as a kaiako in Ōtautahi Christchurch. “I was born and bred in East Christchurch, my mother was born in Kaiapoi and my father was a soldier. They met when dad was based at Burnham Military Camp. Mum was first generation to be born in Aotearoa,



Daniel Hapuku

her parents immigrated from Scotland. “Daniel’s father hailed from a tiny marae-based papakāinga called Te Hauke, not far away from Hastings. “We have many iwi: Ngāti Kahungunu, Ngāti Pahauwera, Rongomaiwahine, Ngāti Māhuta and Ngāti Tāhinga.

“My wife, Vanessa, and I, met as teenagers and we have five amazing children, Samuel, Jacob, Yani, Mini and Itea. Vanessa was born in Tauranga so our kids also share her whakapapa into Ngāti

Ranginui, Ngāi Te Rangī, Ngāti Pūkenga, Te Arawa, Ngāti Awa and Tūhoe.”

Working as Te Mataroa, providing support for PPTA Te Wehengarua whānau, is Daniel’s dream job. “I absolutely love it and I really enjoy working with our kaiahautū, kaumātua (Matua Moeke) and Whaea (Whaea Gazala) as well as the entire Te Huarahi Māori Motuhake whānau.”

One of the things he misses most about teaching is speaking te reo every day. “Not speaking te reo Māori every day, that’s certainly one thing that I miss.”

Another is the bell. “After 24 years of teaching with an hourly bell, sometimes, even now, I forget to have breaks, or even stand up, if I’m office-based for the day or the week.”

Members wanting support from Te Mataroa can contact Daniel at dhapuku@ppta.org.nz

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The short-lived 2012 staffing cuts

An excerpt from a newly published history of PPTA Te Wehengarua over the last two decades

Even while the [Secondary Schools Staffing Group] was still mulling over its final report, Treasury was beginning to pressure the Minister of Finance about actually increasing class sizes to save the government money.

'Improve educational attainment at a lower cost'

This began with Treasury's 2011 post-election Briefing to the incoming Minister of Finance, Bill English. It included two particular recommendations relating to the education system: that the government should 'Reform the education system to improve educational attainment at a lower cost', and 'Implement initiatives to improve school teacher quality, funded by the consolidation of the school network and increasing student/teacher ratios'.

Treasury head Gabriel Makhoul told a group of business leaders in Wellington that lifting class sizes by two or three students and using the savings for improving teacher quality would be a beneficial policy for government. The same day, Treasury released a paper on lifting student achievement which advocated increasing student teacher ratios in order to free up funding to support initiatives to enhance the quality of teaching, 'such as more systemic use of value-add data and a more professionalised workforce'. Smaller class sizes had a positive impact, he admitted, but this was minor compared with raising the quality of teachers.

On 30 May, DGS Bronwyn Cross wrote to Makhoul asking him to send references for the 16 pieces of research Treasury was reported as relying on 'to bolster its campaign for raising class sizes in New Zealand schools'. She referred him to a much larger body of work carried on PPTA's website, and one in particular. PPTA's files do not appear to contain a reply from him...

Staffing cuts signalled

The response at the time from the new Education Minister, Hon. Hekia Parata, was equivocal. She said that Makhoul's

comments were not government policy, but she was 'keen to sharpen the focus on teacher performance'. This response was in March 2012, during the finalisation of the 2012 government Budget, so it is likely she already knew what was coming.

'It would be much more comfortable for an education minister of whatever political complexion to attribute such a humiliating backdown to parents' reactions than to the anger expressed by teacher unions or other education sector groups'

The Budget was released on 22 May 2012, but Parata had been allowed to make a pre-Budget announcement to a business breakfast on 16 May that gave the first clear signal that staffing cuts were in the Budget. The speech notes are titled 'Raising achievement for all in Budget 2012'. The speech was quite long, and largely focused on her plans for education to 'get five out of five'. She began to hint at the staffing cuts by using phrases such as 'making good choices with the money we have'. And then it came, with quite a lot of detail:

We will fund the improvement in teaching quality by making a small change to teacher:student ratios. These changes will free up just over \$43 million, on average, in each year over the next four years.

We will continue to emphasise the most critical transition years of new entrants and senior secondary school. The way we will do this is by maintaining or lowering the ratios at new entrant year 1 and years 11-13, and making a small adjustment to achieve consistency of teacher:student ratios in the mid-years of schooling...

What this means is that 90 per cent of schools will either gain, or have a net

loss of less than one Full-time Teacher Equivalent (FTTEs) as a result of the combined effect of the ratio changes and projected roll growth. These changes will take effect over the next five years.

Urgent call for PUMs

The cuts were confirmed in one sentence in the Budget speech on 22 May: 'To increase investment in raising student achievement, and to manage the costs of increased primary-school-age children over the next four years, we are making small changes to current school funding ratios.'

PPTA's Executive met that evening, and called urgently for PUMs about the staffing cuts, to be held between 12 and 14 June... Invitations went to other sector groups to send representatives to the meetings, and the speech that was prepared began by thanking the Minister of Education for so successfully bringing together in common cause 'teachers, principals, NZEI, PPTA, Secondary Principals' Council, SPANZ, Principals' Federation, the Intermediate and Middle Schools' Association, the School Trustees Association, PTAs, parents and a fair swag of the media'.

The response from the media appears to have been relatively quiet until a Budget Briefing meeting Parata held the following Thursday, on 24 May. By that time, journalists had had a chance to study the Budget detail and talk with the education sector... General Secretary Kevin Bunker attended the Budget Briefing, reporting:

The hui began with the Minister presenting us with the press kits and the accompanying one-liners. 'It's all about better results for kids.' 'Five-fold increase in teacher numbers relative to student growth, no corresponding increase in student achievement.' 'Achievement improvement has plateaued at best.' 'The system is failing kids.' 'Time to invest in quality, not quantity.'

Deliberately provocative comments

At that point, exchanges became heated, but it would appear from the General Secretary's summary that

they went nowhere. After the Budget Briefing, though, debate became more public and angrier. On 25 May, PPTA President Robin Duff wrote to the Minister, ostensibly to thank her for her attendance at the May Executive meeting, but really to express the union's anger at the staffing cuts, and the links made to her claim that one in five students was failing because of poor teaching. He wrote:

We are somewhat disappointed that in spite of your expressed commitment to collaboration at that meeting, your recent comments on staff cuts and teacher quality seem to be deliberately provocative. Linking staff cuts and the increased workload of larger classes to 'quality teaching' in a way that suggests they are directly contradictory is a false construct designed, we suspect, for political reasons not educational ones. The fact that the schools that have the highest number of Māori and Pasifika students have been particularly singled out for cuts does tend to confirm this viewpoint...

The idea that teacher quality can be improved by a public campaign that implies that teachers are ineffectual and lazy and will not do their jobs with commitment and integrity unless they are subject to constant surveillance and a carrot-and-stick reward system is misguided

and destructive. The goal of lifting achievement, which we all share, cannot be done with a profession that is demoralised and bitter.

Backdown

The pressure on the Minister continued, to the extent that on 30 May, she rushed out a press release trying to reassure schools that none of them would 'lose more than two full-time teachers (FTEs) as a result of the Budget changes', as if that would mollify the angry sector.

However, the lobbying, the media coverage and the email traffic – and perhaps focus group feedback to the government – must have been intensely negative, because on 7 June, only two weeks and two days after the Budget, the Minister backed down. In her press release, she announced that 'the Government has decided not to make any change to teacher:student funding ratios.' She said:


We have heard the concerns of parents and are reversing this part of our education plan. We are firmly focused on raising student achievement and getting five out of five of our kids succeeding and we continue to believe that investing in quality teaching and professional

leadership is the best way to do this. We had thought that some modest changes to teacher-student funding ratios in Budget 2012 would help us fund this investment but over the past week, it has become apparent that these minor adjustments have caused a disproportionate amount of anxiety for parents, and that was never our intention.

The significance of the backdown being linked to reactions from parents was not lost on PPTA. It would be much more comfortable for an education minister of whatever political complexion to attribute such a humiliating backdown to parents' reactions than to the anger expressed by teacher unions or other education sector groups. At the same time, PPTA was aware, from the research it had done into parents' perceptions of secondary schools and their opinions about class size, that parents would have reacted pretty negatively too.

The following day, PPTA's Paid Union Meetings were cancelled.

* *A Union of Professionals* (Mary Egan Publishing) by Dr Judie Alison, honorary PPTA Te Wehengarua member, and former advisory officer and national executive member. A copy of the recently published book will be in branches soon.



Then Education Minister Hekia Parata at a media door stop after a frosty reception at PPTA Te Wehengarua annual conference 2012



It's about time

It might be time for your school's timetabling policy to be reviewed

A timetabling policy, developed in consultation with teaching staff, is a legal requirement for all schools and it's important the policy is reviewed regularly.

The Secondary Teachers' Collective Agreement (STCA) 5.2 and the Area School Teachers' Collective Agreement (ASTCA) 4.2.2 set out the legal requirements, yet there are still schools in which the policy is not compliant with the collective agreement. In other schools the policy may at one time have been adequate but has not been sighted for several years.

An adequate, up-to-date and accessible timetable policy is the best way for teachers to ensure they are getting their contractual entitlements in terms of non-contact, class size and some other matters. This is because the policy is the board's policy; if there is any dispute about such matters the policy can be referred to, and the board must support its own policy.

The policy should be a living document, not something stored away in a file somewhere that no-one knows how to access.

Non-contact entitlements, class size and duties outside of the classroom

The collective agreement clauses set out some requirements for the timetable policy. STCA 5.2 states that it must incorporate: the non-contact entitlements; class size matters, including the average maximum class size and what happens if that can't be met; reference to other matters, such as duties outside the classroom, which impact on timetabling practices, and a process which applies when, "for genuine reason", the non-contact entitlements cannot be provided, or the average maximum class size cannot be provided. The ASTCA has equivalent clauses.

All of these matters must be included. The details of what they look like in practice is something to be negotiated between the teaching staff and the board.



The purpose of the timetable policy is to reflect how each individual school adapts its workplace practice to the requirements of the collective agreement. There are sample policies and FAQs available on the PPTA website, and field officers can provide advice, but each school's policy will be an individual document tailored to the requirements of the collective agreement.

A living document requiring staff consultation

Beware outside consultants who offer to come in and write a timetable policy, as part of a "job lot" they are doing for

the board. These people usually lack a good understanding of the collective agreement or of how secondary schools actually work, and there is no intention to consult. They are "tick box" exercises.

The timetable policy needs to be a living document that has been consulted on with the staff. The timetable policy needs to be regularly reviewed and the PPTA branch may initiate that process.

As part of the review process, you could send the policy to your field officer for them to suggest any changes that may be needed. Field officer contact details are on the inside cover of this PPTA News.

PPTA
Te Wehengarua



National Secondary Education Leadership Summit

14–16 April 2025

Te Pae, Ōtautahi Christchurch



Visit the website

For Key Dates & Registration Details



The **National Education Leadership Summit** returns in April 2025.

The Summit is a key event for secondary education leaders in Aotearoa New Zealand. While all teachers are required to be leaders, this conference will focus on supporting those in, or aspiring to leadership roles - principals, aspiring principals, senior leaders, heads of faculties, and deans.

Join us for a transformative three-day experience featuring collaborative discussions, inspiring keynote speakers, and respected thought leaders.

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The 2025 Organising committee are pleased to announce that full conference registration is complimentary this year through support from the PPTA PLD Fund.*

Registrations and Call for Research Proposals are now open.

<https://confer.eventsair.com/ppta-leadership-summit-2025/>

Continue your professional development journey with us.

Attend the 2025 Leadership Summit and take the opportunity to walk away feeling inspired and reinvigorated, with new contacts and a game plan towards being a leader others aspire to become.

We look forward to seeing you there!



To learn more about the National Secondary Education Leadership Summit, email conference organisers Conferences & Events Ltd: PPTAleadership@confer.co.nz

For any other queries, email PPTA Learning and Development Centre: pld@ppta.org.nz

Leaving teaching? Please fill in our survey



PPTA Te Wehengarua runs an ongoing survey to provide annual information from secondary teachers and school leaders on why they leave teaching in New Zealand schools.

This information is not collected by the New Zealand Ministry of Education or any other organisation from those who leave. We believe this information is essential in planning for the future.

The survey can be completed in five minutes and responses will be anonymous. Just go to ppta.org.nz and search 'leaving teaching'.

If you have any questions about the survey please contact Rob Willetts – rwilletts@ppta.org.nz



Members – update your details with us!

At PPTA Te Wehengarua, we share a lot of vital information with our members, but we can only do this if we know where to find you.

If you have changed your school, address, email address or phone number, please let us know.

You can do it online...

Did you know, as part of the PPTA Te Wehengarua whānau, you can update your details with us online?

All you need to do is visit ppta.org.nz and look for the 'My Page log-in' tab at the top right of the page. Once logged in, you will be taken to the member dashboard, where you can update your details by selecting the 'manage profile' tab.

If you have any difficulty logging in, just email webmaster@ppta.org.nz

Or talk with a human

If you would prefer to get in touch with our dedicated PPTA Te Wehengarua membership team, they will be more than happy to help.

You can reach them at membership@ppta.org.nz or call our national office on 04 384 9964.

