

# PPTA NEWS

The magazine of New Zealand secondary teachers



Inside Blake House –  
Waiopēhu College's  
community hub  
pg 12-13

## PPTA News



ISSN 0111-6630 (Print)  
ISSN 1178-752X (Online)

PPTA News is the magazine of the New Zealand Post Primary Teachers' Association. Approximately 18,000 copies are distributed free to secondary and area schools and other institutions. Not all the opinions expressed within PPTA News reflect those of the PPTA.

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Printed by: Toolbox Imaging

Cover: Georgia Dougherty - Network of Establishing Teachers committee

### Deadlines

March/April edition, March 2 for articles and ads

May edition, April 9 for articles and ads

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## Leading our country forward

Outgoing PPTA president Jack Boyle uses his last PPTA News viewpoint to pay tribute to his predecessor Angela Roberts.



Jack Boyle | NZPPTA President

In my final viewpoint as PPTA president it is a pleasure to acknowledge a woman who has truly shown the courage of her convictions. Former president Angela Roberts has been returned as a list MP for Labour in the recently named 53rd parliament of Aotearoa.

It is a well-deserved achievement (and comes as little surprise to those of us who have had the privilege of watching her in action). The first PPTA president to serve four consecutive terms, Angela stood toe to toe with ministers Anne Tolley and Hekia Parata, and seeded the joint campaigning of our union with the NZEI which helped us see off bulk funding (again).

She also showed how we could work alongside government of any stripe, by taking the performance pay edges off the National government's Investing in Educational Success initiative, while working hard to build relationships with Catherine Delahunty (Greens), Tracey Martin (NZ First) and Chris Hipkins (Labour).

### A catalyst for working in a new way

Fearless but not inflexible, Angela's leadership was a catalyst for working in a new way; changing the view of unionism within government and across the sector for the better. Through her forthrightness she empowered teachers to challenge the case for Charter Schools and a new regulatory body, resist bulk funding and online schools and demand increased resourcing for young people to thrive at school.

Through her advocacy the importance of PPTA having a seat at the table was acknowledged (if at first begrudgingly) and a blueprint for more collaborative policy design was able to be realised soon after.

### Not done yet

I remember a conversation not long before she left office where Angela worried that she hadn't achieved as much as she could have. I took it to mean she wasn't done yet and that this was more of a sign of her huge ambition to improve the lives of educators, children and community than a reflection on what she had actually achieved.

It appears I may have been right. After returning to the classroom in rural Taranaki, Angela has nearly tipped a staunchly blue rural electorate red – slicing more than 10,000 off the incumbent's 2017 majority.

While much is likely to be said about the mandate given to the new government following a huge swing to the left in this year's election, I'm certain that it will be a welcome relief for our nation's educators that someone with the determination, integrity and understanding of Angela will be amongst those leading our country forward over the next three years.

*Kia kaha Angela.  
In solidarity.*

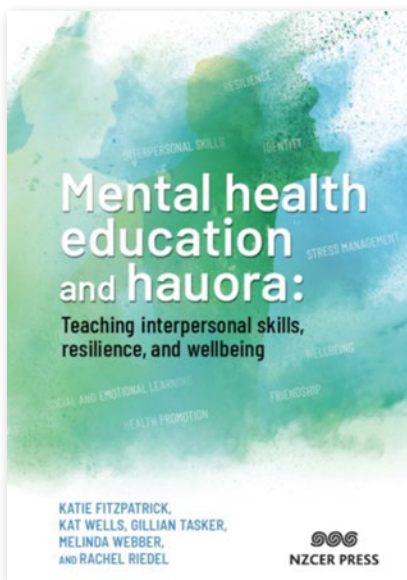


Image by Jack Boyle.

## Mental health teaching resource heading for schools

Lynfield College teacher Kat Wells talks about the mental health resource she helped develop that is now being provided to New Zealand schools.

The last time PPTA News spoke with Lynfield College teacher Kat Wells, she was celebrating the launch of Mental Health Education and Hauora: Teaching interpersonal skills, resilience, and wellbeing – a mental health teaching resource for year 7-13 students.



With the aid of a Beeby Fellowship grant, she teamed up with Auckland University researcher Katie Fitzpatrick to give school mental health resources, that hadn't been updated since 1994, a much-needed upgrade.

Now the Ministry of Education has gotten on board with the project and hard copies of the book are being delivered to all schools with year 7 students and up, along with two ideas for teaching units. Teachers can also download it, along with supporting resources as a free PDF.

### The go-to resource

Since Mental Health Education and Hauora was published in 2017 by New Zealand Council for Educational Research (NZCER) Press, copies have been flying off the shelves. Kat is excited by how well it has been received and pleased to have Ministry of Education support.

"All schools with year 7 or above students will be able to access it now.

It feels great to be able to create what teachers like me have been asking for," she said.

At the book's launch Kat said the aim was for it to become the "go-to resource" for teachers wanting to teach about mental health, resilience, interpersonal skills and wellbeing. Clearly it has achieved that, with positive feedback from both teachers and students.

"It's nice to have a big resource that teachers can dip in and out of and design their own programmes. The feedback I've received is that students really valued and enjoyed exploring these concepts," she said.

### Schools have an important role to play

Current research tells us young people in New Zealand are experiencing unprecedented levels of loneliness and stress, Kat says.

"Schools can't solve the mental health crisis alone, but they do have an important role to play by checking in with students and supporting them through difficult times.

"As teachers we can empower and equip our young people with the skills and knowledge to navigate through challenges, changes and relationships.

We know that young people who are happy and healthy and feel safe and confident in themselves learn better. This book can support teachers and schools with this work," she said.

### Covid and mental health

Anxiety around the Covid-19 pandemic had definitely driven a demand for mental health resources, but lockdowns had meant less face-to-face time to deliver it, Kat said.

"From a curriculum point of view, it has been hard because we haven't had as much face-to-face time this year and we have had to focus on other things. Mental health resources work best in a face-to-face environment."

Both Kat and Katie would like to see a larger focus on mental health, and health education in general, in the curriculum.

"We have to prioritise this stuff. A whole school approach to mental health is good, but there needs to be specific space in the curriculum," she said.

Visit [ppta.org.nz](http://ppta.org.nz) for links to download Mental Health Education and Hauora and a video of Kat talking about the resource.



Mental Health Education and Hauora authors Kat Wells and Katie Fitzpatrick.

## Meet our new presidential team

Melanie Webber and Chris Abercrombie are looking forward to the mahi of representing members.

PPTA members will start 2021 with a brand spanking new presidential team. Congratulations to incoming president and vice president Melanie Webber and Chris Abercrombie.

Tāmaki Makaurau born and bred, Western Springs College media studies teacher Melanie Webber will be familiar to members. She has been part of the presidential team since 2017 when she was elected as junior vice president, and feels privileged to be a voice for teachers during this time.

Melanie is thrilled to be elected by members to represent their interests, particularly in such “curious times.”

“The issues that seemed so big at the start of the year – the NCEA review, a grasping teaching council, school funding inequities and making the promises of the accord real are no smaller now, but have been overshadowed by Covid-19.

“That’s not to say that these things are unimportant, and we must not take our eye off them as things change so quickly around us. We need to continue to make sure that teacher voice, the professional voice, is heard loud and clear when decisions are being made.”

Melanie is passionate about public education and teaching. “I want the best possible education system for students, and this doesn’t happen without making sure that we first have the best possible system and conditions for teachers.

“Now more than ever we need to be speaking up for what is right for schools, for students and for teachers. I am proud to be part of a union that does this, and I am a proud to be chosen to speak on members’ behalf,” she said.

“Me mahi tahi tātou mō te oranga o te katoa. We must work together for the wellbeing of all.”

### We are all part of this journey

James Hargest College history teacher Chris Abercrombie is excited and humbled to have the opportunity to represent members as junior vice president.



New leaders: Melanie Webber (above) and Chris Abercrombie

“I’m looking forward to working alongside both the members and PPTA staff to improve the working conditions for teachers. As we know teachers working conditions are our students’ learning conditions,” he said.

Chris believes working to reform the Teaching Council of Aotearoa New Zealand will be one of the biggest challenges for our association.

“The teaching council needs to stick is to core functions and not engage in what increasingly looks like empire building.”

The upcoming collective agreement round will also present a new set of challenges in a Covid-19 world, he said.

Having had the experience of working in different positions in different schools and areas of New Zealand, Chris understands the varied pressures we have all faced around the motu.

“Having these experiences means that I can be the voice that will speak for the wide range of teachers that we have in Aotearoa New Zealand. I face the issues and obstacles that we face but I’ve also felt the incredible joy and sense of pride that we all have had as teachers within our classroom and our schools.

“We are all a part of this journey. Every school – from Te Tai Tokerau Northland all the way to the bottom of the waka where I live – should have what they need so that they can truly bring out the best in their teachers, in their students, and in their communities. When we work together, we can do that.”

Chris plans to listen to members and fight for what we need to bring out the best.

“I’m looking forward to cracking into the mahi!”

# I have colleagues teaching in mouldy classrooms

Taranaki regional chair Erin MacDonald spoke with the Green Party co-leaders about their multi-million private school prop up.

PPTA's Taranaki regional chair Erin MacDonald was devastated for her community when she heard the Green Party would be pouring millions into a privately run school.

State schools in the region have damp and mouldy classrooms and students are being forced to learn in libraries, but it was the private Oakura Green School that was deemed worthy of an \$11.7 million cash injection.

The money was part of the government's bid to boost the economy in the wake of the Covid-19 pandemic through 'shovel-ready projects.'

Erin however, says there are plenty of shovel-ready projects in state schools that should be prioritised.

"I have colleagues all over the region teaching in hallways and mouldy classrooms," she said.

## Meeting with Green Party co-leaders

In her position as Taranaki regional chair Erin, alongside PPTA president Jack Boyle and general secretary Michael Stevenson, met with Green Party co-leader James Shaw over Zoom to voice the association's disappointment.

As a follow up she met James and co-leader Marama Davidson at a Taranaki primary school. She found this a challenging environment as she had to push through performances for the MPs put on by the children to have her voice heard.

"I had to push to get things back to ground zero as it felt like primary voices were the only ones being heard. Individual primary teachers had been sending in postcards and invoices to the Greens so it may have appeared it concerned them more, so I had to remind them I was speaking on behalf of our region and the 20,000 members of our association," she said.

In the lead up to the school visit Erin had done a number of radio and newspaper interviews, which she credited her training as regional chair for being able to handle well. "It gave me the confidence to know what to do when they contacted me."



Taranaki regional chair Erin MacDonald (centre) and Green Party co-leaders Marama Davidson and James Shaw.

## Environmental responsibility is funding public schools

When criticised for the decision to ignore the Green Party's own policy against the public funding of private schools, James Shaw claimed it was a "green building project" that would bring jobs to the community.

Taranaki was heavily reliant on oil and gas and looking for projects like this to transition into, he said.

Erin disputed the benefit of one building project when public schools were attempting to address this exact issue with little resources.

"Our community is focussing on a just transition from oil and gas to renewable energy. It affects our students and our community, as many work in that industry. It's a way bigger picture that we need resources to engage with locally. Schools in Taranaki need more time and resources to teach sustainability and environmental responsibility," she said.

The fact that an Enviroschool receives \$10,000 to support this kaupapa and a private school, with a roll of 50 students at the start of the year, gets \$11.7 million has left local teachers and students feeling undervalued, she said.

## Not in tune with community's wishes

The school expansion itself was not in tune with the needs of the Oakura community, Erin said.

"The Oakura council just voted down a subdivision going ahead because they

didn't want more people swamping stretched community resources, yet somehow the Green School needs to be expanded to bring more people here."

The government needed to have empathy with what that region's public schools were going through, rather than funding a private school mostly attended by people from outside of the community, she said.

"If those people wanted to stay and set down roots in Taranaki they would support the schools already in existence here."

## Govt needs to rethink the way it makes decisions

Erin hopes the fallout from the Green School decision will highlight the need for the government to listen to communities.

"The Green School extension will happen now. The money was legitimate, and it met the criteria. We can only hope that this has highlighted the need for the Green Party, and government, to become more aware of the issues of teachers and schools before making decisions."

Even though Labour seemed to escape most of the wrath, they were the party in power, and needed to think about this too, she said.

"The fact the decision was made using a process that gave no consideration to what it would look like in the community means we have to ensure that government is better."

# Workload and our collective agreements

## PPTA's workload provisions taskforce reports to executive.

A PPTA member taskforce has been working since the start of 2020 to make sure the workload provisions in our collective agreements are clear, modern and legal.

This important work has been carried out by principals, senior leaders, timetablers, branch chairs, middle leaders and classroom teachers and a final report, which has been unanimously endorsed, presented to PPTA executive.

Executive has approved all the report's recommendations for further discussion with members.

"The report has provided executive with a strong, well-reasoned framework for discussing improvements to the collective provisions, with PPTA members, the Ministry of Education and any other relevant groups," president Jack Boyle said.

### How the work was done

The group was able to meet face-to-face once before the Covid-19 lockdown and then twice by Zoom. Further discussion was conducted by email.

The taskforce drew on:

- The personal experience of its members as leaders and teachers in a variety of schools,
- The 2017 PPTA Annual Conference paper on Modern Learning Environments (MLEs),
- Two 2018 surveys of PPTA members
- A 2019 PPTA survey of deans
- Surveys conducted on behalf of the taskforce – a survey on hours of work, a sample of online teachers, a sample of teachers and leaders in schools with MLEs
- A 2019 research paper into MLEs by Amanda Robinson
- Unpublished research by Tamara Yuill Proctor on collaboration in MLEs
- Advice from Ken Pullar, e-principal of NetNZ, on the work of online teachers.

The group identified a set of principles to guide changes to the agreements. Some existing provisions need to be clarified, some new provisions are



**Making sure workload provisions in our collective agreements are clear, modern and legal.**

necessary to modify the agreement, and some areas require new clauses to ensure the STCA is compliant with current legislation.

### Under-resourcing and hours of work

An important finding of the taskforce was that in most instances the provisions themselves are clear and workable, but under-resourced by government. One example of this was that the progressively inadequate curriculum staffing for larger schools and junior high schools puts unequal pressure on those schools in administering the average class size provisions.

A major component of the taskforce's report is advice on how we can introduce an hours of work provision (required by the Employment Relations Act but currently not part of the agreements) which is flexible enough to accommodate differences between schools and strong enough to provide wellbeing and workload protections for teachers at all levels of the school.

### Next steps

The next step is to familiarise members with the content and recommendations of the report, including discussions at next year's Issues and Organising conference and with regional groupings of members. Resources have been developed to facilitate branch discussions on the possible changes, which branches have been asked to hold this term or in term 1 next year. There will also be discussions with groups of members who might be affected by specific recommendations (for example possible workload protections for e-teachers). We are also seeking to open general discussion with the Ministry of Education about the findings of the taskforce.

Any potential changes would be subject to membership approval in the PPTA's normal claims development process in 2021-22 and to negotiation and membership ratification in 2022.

*A copy of the report can be found at on the members only side of [ppta.org.nz](http://ppta.org.nz).*

# Double bubble for PPTA annual conference

PPTA's annual conference was held in two locations for the first time because of Covid-19 gathering restrictions.

The Covid-19 pandemic has meant having to do things differently in many ways, and PPTA's annual conference was no exception.

For the first time in the association's history PPTA's member-led decision making body, was held in two cities - linked together digitally.

With gathering restrictions still in place for the Auckland delegation, and future level changes uncertain, the conference was conducted with a limit of 100 people in mind.

This meant around 100 Te Ika-māui delegates met in Wellington while

a smaller, but perfectly formed, Te Waipounamu delegation met in Christchurch.

The cities were joined remotely, with candidates able to see and hear each other, take part in the debate and vote simultaneously. Robust discussion was had across the motu with opportunities for online caucusing also used to good effect.

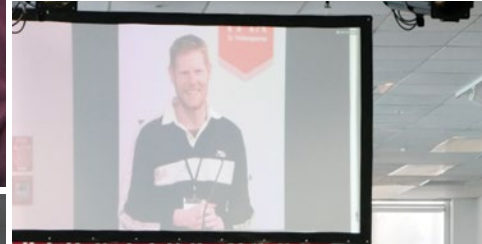
### Keynotes from across the country and globe

Keynote speakers took part from all over the globe. From New Zealand and Australia to as far afield as Bahrain.

From Wellington NZCTU Te Kauae Kaimahi national secretary Melissa

Ansell-Bridges spoke about doing things better and fairer for our people and planet, Minister for Māori Development Nanaia Mahuta talked about her work outside of the school gates and NZEI Te Riu Roa president Liam Rutherford delivered his first speech to a PPTA annual conference, focusing on solidarity and the opportunities unions have to depoliticise education.

In Christchurch, Secondary Principals Council chair James Morris spoke about the strength of having principals as members of PPTA and was presented with a pounamu for his services to principals (see page 18 for his full speech).



Connecting Wellington, Christchurch and the globe at the 2020 PPTA annual conference



Minister of Education Chris Hipkins joined us via Zoom from Rotorua to announce \$9 million for teacher wellbeing resources as a result of the accord agreement between PPTA, NZEI and the Ministry of Education, negotiated as part of the Secondary Teachers' Collective Agreement.

Australian Education Union federal president Correna Haythorpe spoke to us from across the ditch, sharing the struggles teachers and the state education system face in Australia and the solidarity they feel with their New Zealand counterparts.

An absolute highlight was an address by Bahrain Teachers' Association vice president Jalilia al-Salman – a woman who has been jailed multiple times for her work defending teachers and students. Members across the motu were honoured to hear her speak about her continued fight for public education. "It's either die or stand. I choose to stand," she said.

### PPTA Education Conference 2021

During his annual conference opening speech, president Jack Boyle announced the relaunch of the PPTA Education Conference: Whakatairangatia – Advancing the dream of public education.

The conference was postponed this year due to the Covid-19 pandemic, but has now been rescheduled for the 2021 April school holidays.

"It was disappointing that we had to postpone the conference this year, as almost 300 people had signed up to attend. However members are telling us that they feel comfortable coming together again and that they are still interested in the programme we have developed," he said.

The conference will be held at the Intercontinental Hotel in Wellington.

All the keynote speakers will be back including Rawiri Toia from Victoria University, Pasi Sahlburg on the Global education Reform Movement and

Travina Kang talking about teacher professional development in Singapore.

There will be 21 workshops run by teachers who will share their knowledge, expertise and insights and 14 researchers will present papers on effective teaching and learning in the classroom.

The conference is funded through the PPTA PLD fund which covers registration and catering, and support towards travel and accommodation for those coming from outside of Wellington will be available.

Those who signed up for this year's conference will be contacted first to see if they are still interested.

"We've got a great venue and a challenging programme of speaker and workshops, but places are limited. So join us in Wellington next April to debate public education," Jack said.

*For more details see the advertisement on pg 20.*



## Leadership with a Pasifika lens

PPTA News talks with Porirua College principal Ragne Maxwell, one of the pilot participants of the Tautai O Le Moana project for leaders of Pasifika students

Porirua College principal Ragne Maxwell has always wanted to work in a school with a strong Pasifika population.

“It is such a strong part of the richness of New Zealand,” she said.

When the principalship for Porirua College came up, Ragne jumped at the chance. “This was my dream school to work at. I wanted to be in the Porirua community, and this was my first-choice school.”

“We have some of the nicest, most respectful, warmest, most open and affectionate kids in New Zealand. I have been teaching for 30 years in schools in New Zealand, Britain and France, and none has matched the warmth and whanau feeling,” she said.

### **Out of her comfort zone.**

Porirua College is Ragne’s first principalship and in the four years she has been at the helm she has already made a lot of changes, both within the school and within herself.

Coming from the position of deputy principal at Kapiti College, a school made up of mostly Pakeha and Māori, Ragne felt she did not have the background with Pasifika students.

When Ragne heard of the *Tautai O Le Moana - Strengthening the capability of Principals to improve outcomes for Pasifika Learners* pilot, she was a bit nervous about signing up.

She heard a number of principals in her Kāhui Ako Community of Learning were going to do it however, and that’s what drove her to join.

“If they were going to do it then, as a pakeha principal of a largely Pasifika school, I should. The group had a shared interest in what it takes to be leaders in Māori and Pasifika learning, and the majority of them were Pasifika and Māori. I needed to be a part of that,” she said.

### **Seeing through a Pasifika lens**

Participants would meet individually with mentors – for Ragne this was Wellington facilitator Sose Annandale, principal of Porirua’s Russell School, and national coordinator Auckland’s Target Road School principal Helen Varney – and then meet as a whole group.

“During the group meetings we would share challenges and questions, ideas and what we were actually working on in schools. We talked through shared experiences, sharing stories and unpacking what it is to have a Pasifika lens. It was a very different way of learning from lectures. You could take an issue you had and have a Pasifika lens on it. It was really helpful for me,” she said.

### **Go in with an open mind and heart**

The Tautai O Le Moana project is now being extended (see opposite) and Ragne urges leaders to step out of their comfort zone and take part.

“We are all learning. Go in with an open mind and heart and know that you won’t be judged for your lack of knowledge. They are there to share with you.

“We have 60% Pasifika so the need to know for me was really obvious, but there are other schools out there with a significant Pasifika population. We have got to step up to the challenge that this opportunity puts in front of us. It would be great to see more Pakeha principals coming into the course. It is learning from people who are leaders in Pasifika schools in a way I can’t be, and I can take that and bring it to my school.”

### **Making the curriculum relevant for Pasifika students**

Before Ragne took part in the Tautai O Le Moana project she was already well on the way to changing things at Porirua College.

With a background in curriculum change, that was one of the first things she looked into.

“I found that parts of the New Zealand Curriculum didn’t work very well for our



Porirua College principal Ragne Maxwell

students. It's a Western curriculum, very focussed on individual success and working as individuals. Group work and assessments are not particularly highly valued, yet group work is more culturally relevant to Pasifika students. We changed our approach to the curriculum to make it more group based and relevant to Pasifika kids," she said.

### Whare learning

PPTA News was given first-hand experience of the school's educational vision of VAI (Voice, Action and Identity) during a tour of the school.

Their curriculum covers traditional subjects and also offers students the opportunity to learn in new areas, related to their passions. The classrooms are clustered around four learning houses – Kenepuru, Rangitūhi Tangare and Whitireia – and students stay in one house for their whole time at the college.

"It's like a whanau in a whare. The juniors do all their core subject learning in the whare and the seniors move about the school, but the whare is their home base," she said.

### Ko te Hapori

All students have a Ko te Hapori course for one fifth of their timetable. These courses are across year levels, to develop tuakana/teina (the relationship between an older and a younger person) learning.

"It involves the whole school, across year levels. We are large, connected, and team-taught. Exploring language and culture together."

Students and whanau contributed to the development of the courses, which cover everything from carving and computer programming to designing and building electric bikes.

Year 12 and 13 students have a 'Life after school' option, which organises them into a flatting environment and has them deal with issues such as income and bills. "They experience what it's like to put the practical puzzle together," Ragne said.

### They are us

PPTA News also visited the school's Who Wants to be a Millionaire? class, where students learn about running their own businesses. There we met They Are Us – a Syrian-Pasifika fusion jewellery company.

Inspired by the support following the March 15 mosque attacks in Christchurch the group produces both paua jewellery and wooden bracelets carved with Arabic.

"We make jewellery inspired by our cultures – Muslim and Pacific Islands, CEO Vaveao Schuster said.

"Everything is handmade and we buy the materials with the money we earn."

You can find They Are Us on Instagram as @Theyareus.nine

## What is Tautai ole Moana?

With the Tautai ole Moana programme now set for an extension, PPTA News spoke with national coordinator, Target Road School principal Helen Varney.

Helen says the programme, spearheaded by the New Zealand Pasifika Principals Association, the New Zealand Principals Association and the Ministry of Education, was aimed at creating opportunities for Pasifika learners.

"To be able to do that, their leadership has to have a connection with them. What we are trying to do is really around strengthening leadership capabilities in a way that improves outcomes for our Pasifika learners," she said.

The programme was not about blame, but rather about growing principal leaders in our system to support Pasifika learners. "We worked on looking at things, having uncomfortable conversations and uncomfortable recognitions within ourselves. Participants look at who they are, where they've come from, why they make the decisions they make."

### Navigators

The programme sees students tautai – navigators. "We know that the Pasifika people navigated through the South Pacific. Instead of looking at a Pasifika student and thinking that they don't understand, it's about looking at them and seeing that they have come to school in a place that doesn't look like where they are from.

"They have navigated through different worlds. We need to see the child who comes into school speaking fluent Tongan, rather than one struggling with English. We need to face our own unconscious bias and become more aware," she said.

*Abridged – visit [ppta.org.nz](http://ppta.org.nz) for full interview with Helen.*



They Are Us CEO Vaveao Schuster presents PPTA News with her business card

## Putting school at the heart of the community

PPTA News visits Waiopehu College – a school with a community hub model we would like to see emulated round the country.

Just across the road from Levin's Waiopehu College sits an unassuming house. It looks like any other on the street, but inside is bustling support service - and at times lifeline - for the college's students.

Blake House was donated to the school by Helen and Collis Blake, a local couple who had a strong affinity with the community. It offers guidance counselling, drug, alcohol and smoking counselling, and access to health nurses and a social worker.

It is a working embodiment of PPTA's policy of putting schools at the heart of the community, so PPTA News went to investigate.

### Schools at the heart

What happens outside of the school affects what happens in the classroom, which is why PPTA wants secondary schools to become community hubs, president Jack Boyle said.

"We want to make it easier for kids, families and the community to access all the services they need in one place. Immigration, Inland Revenue, your GP or nurse, Work and Income New Zealand, mental health services, the community pantry – when social services can be accessed at school, people get what they need and are linked more deeply into the fabric of the community.

### The needs of young people are more complex

Blake House's donors, Helen and Collis Blake, had an affinity with the school and a passion for helping young people. They wanted to create a space for students where guidance and alcohol and drug counselling were accessible on a day-to-day basis, Waiopehu College principal Mark Robinson said.

The fact Blake House was separate from the school was hugely important for young people, Mark said.

"It's confidential, you can have counselling sessions without your mates seeing. Kids are more likely to go somewhere like that, than an office in the middle of the school.

"The needs of our young people are becoming more and more complex. It feels like the whole world's shifted on its axis a little and our kids are feeling that.

We want to make it as easy as possible for them to access the services they so desperately need," he said.

Waiopehu College has a teen parent unit on site that uses services from Blake House as well. "It is a way of providing education and life skills to yet another group of young people who will in turn make a difference to the next generation."

### Early intervention

Since it opened in March 2011, Blake House has provided a wraparound service, beginning at year 9. When they start at the school students undergo a HEADS (Home, Education, Drugs, Sexuality and Safety) assessment at the facility.

This is a vital early intervention tool, with students having access to all the services they need in the same place and the ability to move from one to the other with ease, Mark said.

"If any red flags are raised with our guidance counsellor for example, they can head across to the nurse or social worker. As simple question like 'have you eaten today?' can open up a lot of things, and then all they need to do is go down the hall."

The outcome of many of these health assessments was an ongoing relationship with the staff at Blake House, where necessary, and issues dealt with in a timely manner. "They get early experience of a place where they will be listened to and respected. They know they have a place they can go for help and they will get it."

### Each time you see a student you build a bigger picture

School health nurse Sue Burton has been with Blake House since the beginning. Since then an increase in students has funded a team of three nurses, with a clinic held four days a week.

The nurses saw every year 9 student with parental consent, she said. "Each time you see a student you build a bigger picture," she said.

When Blake House first started up it was a drop-in situation but, the more students they saw, the more likely it was they would turn up at the same time, she said. "So we needed to develop a system that respected the students' privacy."

Now when a student wants to come over to the clinic they set up an appointment time that suits them. They also use a student runner system so if they are doing something in class it is not a nurse that is pulling them out. "It makes it easier and is more respectful of the students," she said.

### An essential service

The result of this is less time spent out of school to attend medical visits, Mark says.

"We have noticed a decrease generally in time spent away from school due to health issues. Early intervention means a student is more likely to succeed. This is holistic. It could be a physical or mental issue that is reflecting on their wellbeing at school. With education and understanding we have accomplished a lot."

"It is definitely an essential service. We are seeing more presentations of anxiety and within that other mental health issues such as depression and suicidal ideation. When it gets to that point, we need a service in a safe and trusted environment they can access when they need it. That is what the house is," he said.

### Cross-agency support

Levin is part of the Social Sector Trials (SSTs) a community-based approach aimed at improving the way government plans, funds and delivers social services.

Being involved with this has meant the only staffing cost to the school from Blake House has been their guidance counsellor. The property itself was sold to the Ministry of Education for \$100,000 and the school pays a peppercorn rent of \$2 a year.

The school also has support from other community-based organisations and agencies and has fortnightly meetings to work with the students in the top 3% in terms of need. These meetings include Oranga Tamariki, the police, young people, and their families.

"It stops kids from falling through the gaps. We are all on the same page with what the young person needs. We have a great relationship with the local community and we can use those connections to get the most out of the local services," Mark said.



**Left: Waiopahu College principal Mark Robinson, Right: School health nurse Sue Burton shares the previous vibrant décor of what is now her office.**

“Lower decile schools trigger more services, but the difference for us is how we are integrated. The fortnightly meetups and the support from the DHB and Ministry of Education.”

Assistant principal Alison Spencer provides the link between the senior leadership team and these agencies. “We have found out about young people we may not know about, who have things going on that we might need to know,” she said.

“It is highly confidential, we are dealing with sensitive information. We get to have a really good discussion about who are the best people to take the lead with the student. We are learning new things all the time.”

#### **A few steps from smiling face to smiling face**

Glenice Hoskins is involved with Blake House through her work at Life to the Max Horowhenua, a youth service organisation in the area. Supported by the Ministry of Social Development and the Ministry of Health she acts in a youth coordination role.

Young people might access her for one reason and with the team so close together she can act as a bridge to the other services. “Kids have a lot going on, we’re an umbrella service,” she said.

Glenice is connected with organisations such as the Horowhenua Abuse Liaison Team. “We always look in on young people in the college if the police have been called to an incident. We also have an activities programme that focuses on self-esteem and general health and fitness.

“We do practical things, working with young people and their families. We always work with whanau when we can. We are an incredibly collaborative organisation – the nurses, me, the

counsellors. It’s only a few steps from smiling face to smiling face. There are no pieces of paper. You don’t have to wait. It’s confidential. It takes the pressure off the family space and young people don’t have to be taken to appointments,” she said.

#### **Student seal of approval**

Waiopahu College head girl Carla Maclean and head boy George Edwards both really appreciate the services available.

“I think it’s really cool that we’ve got a facility onsite, that’s so accessible. We’re super fortunate,” Carla said.

“It’s a really cool facility. Every kid has the opportunity to access these services. They are so private and easy for students to access in sensitive situations,” George said.

#### **Couldn’t stay away**

Belinda Allatt is the school’s newest public health nurse, having started this June. “I’m fresh in and learning the ropes,” she said.

The school itself isn’t unfamiliar, however. “I was a student here back in 2010 and as a student nurse I can to work here and loved it so much I came back.

“It’s great seeing the students come over here and have access to people straight away, rather than get a piece of paper and be sent elsewhere. As a previous practice nurse, I know how hard it can be to get into a GP.

“We can tell them about our resources and make them comfortable with the idea of seeking help so they aren’t resistant to it when they’re older,” she said.

#### **Pandemic changes**

The Covid-19 pandemic forced Blake House to adapt, but students didn’t go without its services, Alison said.

During level four lockdown they went completely digital, working with students using Messenger and their own devices.

“The school was phenomenal. What they put in place, ensuring students had devices. Our team would talk at least once a day, every day. There were lots of texts,” she said.

The centre itself continued to operate in a fashion during lockdown with nurses available and safety precautions in place. “It was our own sort of isolation, so treatment could continue.”

#### **The wish list**

Even with a really good operation there is always more that can be done, and Blake House is no exception.

Previously they had a doctor on site for a couple of hours in the morning, who could do things nurses aren’t qualified to do. Mark would love to see that happen again.

“Having a doctor on site meant that young people attended appointments they may not have been able to get to outside of school with their parents working etc. Though currently our nurses do drive students to doctors appointments if needed,” he said.

There was a cost barrier with accessing doctors outside of school too, and if a patient had an outstanding bill the child wouldn’t be seen until it had been paid. “We want to have as few barriers to getting assistance as possible.”

“We would love another guidance counsellor too. At the moment the high needs students get in first and the not so urgent ones have to wait a bit because we only have one to go around. We end up triaging a bit. In a perfect world we would have enough resources not to have to do that,” he said.

# Pay heed to the mana of women.

## Dispatches from PPTA's Women in Leadership Summit.

Women in educational leadership met to break down barriers last term at PPTA's first Women in Leadership Summit.

Funded through the union-led PLD fund, negotiated as part of the Secondary Teachers' Collective Agreement, the summit's theme was Me aro ki te hā o Hine-ahu-one. Pay heed to the mana of women.

Incoming PPTA president Melanie Webber described the summit as "a unique part of the global movement of women breaking down barriers," during her opening address.

"Over the next two days we will set the direction for women's leadership in the education sector. What we do here will shape what happens in schools over the next years and decades... your involvement is critical if we are to reach our aspiration of equity, equality and an education system that works for every teacher and every child," she said.

### Challenging workshops and speakers

Around 70 women leaders met at Wellington's Rydges Hotel from 8-9 October, taking part in workshops on supporting each other, a leadership culture that works for women, recognising women's skills and abilities and system change.

"The various workshops challenged us about our understanding and preconceived ideas about what a leader might look like and what leadership really is," participant Debra Eno said.

Keynote speakers and facilitators included activist, educator and writer Catherine Delahunty, New Zealand Council for Educational Research (NZCER) senior researcher Jo MacDonald, Equal Employment Opportunities commissioner Saunoamaali'i Dr Karaninia Sumeo, former Green Party co-leader Metiria Turei, community organiser Kassie Hartendorp, Waiheke Island Auckland Council Youth Advisory Panel member Matariki Roche, NZCER chief researcher Cathy Wylie and Minister for Women Julie Anne Genter.

### Barriers, supports and enablers

In the lead up to the summit PPTA commissioned NZCER to conduct research into the literature on barriers and supports for women to succeed in secondary school leadership.

This research will help shape the association's future work to address gender-based inequities.

The overview questions were:

The current state—What do we know about women in secondary school leadership and their pathways to and through positional leadership roles?

Barriers—What are the barriers to women being in positional leadership roles in secondary schools? Why are women 63% of the secondary teaching workforce, but only 37% of secondary school principals?

Supports and enablers—What policies and practices have been identified to better support women's pathways into and through positional leadership roles in secondary schools?



Breaking down barriers at PPTA's Women in Leadership Summit

“This research is important because it shows that gender inequity in school leadership has been slow to change, and it identifies key ways we can achieve greater equity,” NZCER’s Jo MacDonald said.

Chief researcher Cathy Wylie said the research highlighted the lack of good information about how many women are in leadership roles in secondary schools. “Other gaps in our knowledge are the experience of wāhine Māori and Pacific women. It’s really good to hear that the PPTA is planning more work in this area.

“We’d like to see this research picked up by the education agencies, to galvanise action to improve gender equity in secondary school leadership,” she said.

*The Women becoming secondary school leaders: Barriers, supports, and enablers* report is available on the NZCER website or on request from news@ppta.org.nz

**Capable, powerful women**

Summit attendee Rosa Hughes-Currie left the conference feeling confident women will be able to change the systems holding them back.

“It was such an amazing experience to be in a room full of capable, powerful women working in education,” she said.

“I really appreciated how we tackled the structural problems that prevent women from having as much power

in education as men. We have a lot to do to ensure women have equal opportunities to become school leaders, and the disappointing fact we don’t even have any research into Māori and Pasifika women leaders in schools shows how important it is to do this work in supporting each other to demand equality in gender, culture and everything else!” she said.

Another issue that came up was supporting trans and gender non-binary teachers to thrive and lead in schools, she said. “The conference was such a well-run, warm and agentic environment that I feel confident we will change the systems that are holding us back.”

**High time for systemic change.**

Attendee Bernie Lee said the summit enabled a wonderfully diverse group of women to address the important issues of cultivating and embracing female leadership, recognising the benefits women bring into the school system.

“When responsibilities are divided by strength and not gender, effective change can occur. Our discussions highlighted the importance of the need for effective mentorship and support, both within and outside the workplace,” she said.

“We felt gender inequities have minimized the integrity, respect, and the general excellence of women.”

Group discussions tackled issues such as unconscious gender bias, particularly in schools that have not previously included female leadership. Lifting the veil on ‘imposter syndrome’ brought about heightened debate and ideas. “We felt it was high time to recognize and acknowledge our skills and abilities with the intent of making systemic change.”

**A conference I will never forget**

Debra Eno described the summit as a conference she would never forget. “For me it started when I arrived, with a note inside a card, with a quote from Kristine Bartlett, ‘No matter what you do or what you want, you stand up for your rights, cos in the end you can win it!’ Then during the conference there were the little, confidence boosting post-it notes we would send to each other in our various workshops. On the last day, before I left, I found a note on my bag, ‘I am supposed to be here!’ Wonderful, thoughtful touches that enhanced the whole experience,” she said.

Highlights for Debra were the presentation of the NZCER research and the challenging workshops.

“Catherine Delahunty spoke about what attitudes/beliefs exist in the sector that work against women. Metiria Turei asked us how we shift to more inclusive, power-and-load sharing models of leadership.”



# Taking a stand against bullying

## New Zealand schools joined Kiwis throughout the country to Speak Up, Stand Together and Stop Bullying on Pink Shirt Day

Teachers and students joined thousands of New Zealanders throughout the country to take a stand against bullying during this year's Pink Shirt Day.

Celebrated annually around the globe, the day began in Canada in 2006 when two students took a stand against homophobic bullying after a peer was bullied for wearing a pink shirt.

In Aotearoa, Pink Shirt Day works to create schools, workplaces, communities and whānau where everyone feels safe, valued and respected. The campaign is coordinated by the Mental Health Foundation and supported by PPTA.

Usually held in May, the Covid-19 pandemic meant New Zealand's 2020 Pink Shirt Day was celebrated on October 16. With the theme Kōrero Mai, Kōrero Atu, Mauri Tū, Mauri Ora – Speak Up, Stand Together, Stop Bullying, thousands joined the movement, thrilling organisers.

Schools up and down the country dressed in pink, held pink morning teas and raised funds for Pink Shirt Day, the Mental Health Foundation and rainbow youth groups such as InsideOut.

"Aotearoa, what can we say. Your incredible support has filled us with hope, aroha and gratitude. Thousands of you came together to celebrate our diversity and take a stand against

bullying. Thank you to each and every one of you for taking the time, doing the mahi and wearing the t-shirt. Together, we can put an end to bullying.

"We see you, we care about what's happening to you, we want to make a

better Aotearoa for you. #pinkshirtdaynz isn't just about wearing pink - it's about having hard kōrero, taking real steps to increase inclusion, celebrate diversity and make sure no one ever has to stand alone," organisers said.



**Kōrero Mai**  
**KŌRERO ATU**  
**MAURI TŪ, MAURI ORA**  
 SPEAK UP, STAND TOGETHER, STOP BULLYING  
**FRIDAY 16 OCTOBER 2020**  
 JOIN THE MOVEMENT:  
 WWW.PINKSHIRTDAY.ORG.NZ  
 #PINKSHIRTDAYNZ  
 Mental Health Foundation  
 PINK SHIRT DAY

New Plymouth Girls' High School (above) and Havelock North High School stand together to stop bullying.



## Crisis support for Bangladeshi garment workers' union

UnionAID support the National Garment Workers Federation of Bangladesh as the industry is devastated by Covid-19

Covid-19 has devastated the garment industry in Bangladesh. With no universal social security and few savings, the workers and their families are facing long-term hardship.

Some 200,000 workers have still not been compensated for work already completed and an estimated 30,000 workers have had their employment terminated illegally.

Until the pandemic hit, the National Garment Workers Federation (NGWF) of Bangladesh, had been increasing union membership and strengthening

collective organising. With UnionAID's support over 50 delegates were trained and nearly 5000 new members recruited in 2019. Now the union needs help to sustain its organisation and defend garment workers' rights, as membership revenue drops and workers face long-term hardship.

With a return to pre-pandemic employment levels expected to take months or years, the sustainability of the NGWF is at risk. Its membership revenue dropped to zero in May as members faced serious hardship. Yet NGWF's 11 full-time staff are working harder than ever to follow up grievances and campaign for justice.

UnionAID will be supporting the union to retain its organisers so they can respond to the needs of garment workers, research and address labour rights violations, and run small local pressure campaigns to push garment factories and the government to better support the workers.

By supporting UnionAID you can support NGWF and some of the world's most vulnerable workers.

*PPTA supports the work of UnionAID as a financial contributor for the work they do for our union comrades in Asia Pacific. To find out more about them visit [unionaid.org.nz](http://unionaid.org.nz)*



NGWF members stage a sit-in protest outside the Windy Group factory ground after being targeted for redundancy during Covid-19.

## In the struggle for democracy, teachers are essential

PPTA pays tribute to teacher Samuel Paty, the victim of a terrorist attack in France

PPTA expresses solidarity and support with those in France gathering to pay tribute to history and geography teacher Samuel Paty.

The association condemns, in the strongest possible terms, the terrorist attack near his school which took his life. Paty was decapitated following an internet campaign against the use in

his class of a caricature of Mohammed as part of a course on freedom of expression. It was one of the images published by satirical magazine Charlie Hebdo, promoting an attack in 2015 where 12 people were killed at 11 injured.

In a letter to its French member organisations, Education International (PPTA's global peak body) general secretary, David Edwards, expressed

the solidarity and support of the world's educators and trade unions and affirmed those values Samuel Paty died defending.

"Freedom of conscience and freedom of speech have been hard won. In the struggle do defend democracy, the role of teachers is essential to deter the forces that would destroy it. In this fight, trade union organisations are, more than ever, on the front line," he said.

## We are better together

Secondary Principals Council chair James Morris shares the benefits we all reap when principals are part of PPTA.

The Secondary Principals Council is the representative group for principals who belong to PPTA. There are representatives from each of the 12 PPTA areas as well as women principals, Māori principals, and Area School principals

This broad coverage enables us to advocate with a good level of confidence for the principals we represent. We are part of PPTA but also have leeway to have an independent voice.

### Including and supporting each other

The benefit of being together as principals as part of PPTA is that our advocacy and comments are made with care to include and support each other. It would be easy to retreat to a them and us, management/worker, principal/teacher dichotomy when issues arise - both nationally and within schools.

However, our commitment to our shared goals means that we will always look for an integrated approach.

During the last collective negotiations for example, although industrial action is challenging and potentially divisive; SPC was focused on speaking in support of the need for teacher supply and good salaries to enable this to happen. This voice helped with the significant community support that teachers had throughout the negotiations.

### Our voice is stronger and more persuasive

I believe it is important that principals are members of PPTA. Our voice as a union on education sector issues is stronger and more persuasive when we can speak on behalf of both principals and teachers.

I have been a teacher and active member of PPTA for 27 years. As such my support for the aims and aspirations of PPTA runs deep. This is not necessarily the perspective of all of principals.

I can understand why some find it difficult to be a principal and a PPTA member. As a senior leader you can quickly feel as if you are one of the 'them'. In particular when doing the



SPC chair James Morris.

employer role – conduct, discipline, collective agreement provisions, workload, timetabling. There will always be conflict where there is competition to allocate limited resources. The resources most schools are allocated is less than the job our communities expect us to do. As such the more effectively we work together the better the outcomes for our students.

As I have expressed – we are better together.

### Joint response to Covid-19

A good example of where a well-connected system working together can have positive impacts is our response to Covid-19 lockdowns. We were able to work together, at pace, to support learners and each other.

Recognising that everybody's experience was different: what did we learn or were reminded of about our profession?

- In a crisis we get stuck in and do what is needed. At short notice we quickly transitioned to an online system and did what we could to continue learning and pastoral support.
- The work of schools and teachers is important and valued. Parents who now had to homeschool their children quickly came to this realization.
- Electronic tools such as Zoom and Google Classroom present great opportunities for how we structure learning but they do not replace the centrality of the 'human' in teaching or the 'art' of teaching.
- Wellbeing is a core priority – being kind. Interesting we needed a crisis to remind us of this.

- NCEA can be changed and world keeps turning. I saw excellent advice and feedback from PPTA members feed directly into some good decisions with NCEA.
- There are limits to our capacity – by the end of term 2 we were all tired and the wheels were getting wobbly. We all needed the term break.

### The collapse of international education

The Covid crisis also brings challenges of how best to approach the collapse of international education. Each school's ability to benefit from international students is particularly uneven, often depending on things they do not control such as location and decile.

Many (if not most) schools have not put aside resources to cover the sudden loss of income. The job losses that are likely to occur in some schools are to PPTA members and we must support them where we can.

While the collective agreement has processes and conditions to support potential job losses the PPTA rightly advocates for government support.

We must also recognize the inequity that international education brings to our already uneven system. Not that international education is necessarily the problem however we must continue to work to support students and schools that don't have the same access or opportunities for their learners.

*No reira*

*Whakapuputia mai o Manuka, kia kore ai e whati.*

*Cluster the branches of the Manuka, so that they will not break.*

# Insecure employment – when it is not lawful

Information and support from PPTA’s intrepid field officers.

Kim was offered a job as a maths teacher on a fixed-term basis for one year. The stated reason for the position being fixed-term, was roll uncertainty.

Kim was disappointed as she was wanting to buy her first home and the bank would not approve a mortgage unless she was permanently employed. As it happened, things worked out for Kim who was offered a permanent position at another school, which she accepted.

This situation however got Kim thinking and researching about fixed-term employment and what it meant for her and others. Kim discovered that there is a legal obligation on schools to appoint teachers to permanent positions unless there are genuine reasons based on reasonable grounds for the position to not be permanent. There are limited reasonable grounds that can exist such as covering a position for a person on approved leave. The roll uncertainty reason Kim had been given for the fixed-term job was vague and she thought probably spurious.

### Genuine reasons on reasonable grounds

Would the stated reason of roll uncertainty have met the legal requirement of being a genuine reason based on reasonable grounds? In seeking to answer this question, Kim discovered an Employment Court case called *Morgan v Transit Coachlines Wairarapa* limited relevant to her situation. Mr Morgan was a bus driver doing school runs. He was employed by Transit Coachlines on a fixed-term basis year after year on the basis of uncertainty of ongoing Ministry of Education funding. Mr Morgan wanted to have his position made permanent.

The court found that Mr Morgan should be permanently employed. The court said that the reasons Transit Coachlines had given Mr Morgan, around uncertainty of funding was speculative, and not grounds to make an employee fixed-term. Kim also read in the Morgan case that financial uncertainty of itself is not a reason for an employer making any position fixed-term, otherwise virtually job could



Photo by Alejandro Escamilla on Unsplash

**Talk with your field officer if you are unsure about fixed-term positions.**

lawfully be fixed-term, which was plainly not the intention of parliament when it passed the legislation.

Kim realised that the reason of possible roll fluctuation that she had been given by the school was not a valid reason.

### Maintaining a stable teaching workforce

Sometimes field officers see reasons being given for fixed-term tenure such as schools being dependent on external funding sources and uncertainty of student numbers. The Morgan judgment reinforces the point that such reasons, if given, would require much greater explanation and scrutiny, as in and of themselves such reasons would not meet the threshold for making an employee fixed-term.

This issue is important in maintaining a stable teaching workforce and also in upholding the rights of individual teachers. Teachers employed on

a fixed-term basis lack security in their employment. It can also have ramifications around teacher registration, and there also are some provisions in the collective agreements that are not available to fixed-term teachers, for example accessing maternity leave and study awards.

### When in doubt, ask your field officer

If you see fixed-term advertisements in your school that could be for spurious reasons, then through your branch you can ask why the position is fixed-term. Contact your local field officer for support on how best to raise concerns. Teachers in, or being offered, fixed-term employment who are concerned the reasons may not be legally valid can contact your local field officer for support.

*There is more detailed advice about genuine reasons for fixed-term appointments at [ppta.org.nz](http://ppta.org.nz)*



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# ISSUES ORGANISING 2021

PPTA's 2021 Issues and Organising seminar is set to be held in Wellington on March 6 and 7 with a delegate training day on the 5th.

With the proposed theme of *Hīkoia te Kōrero – Walk the Talk*, the goal of the seminar is for members to walk away informed, inspired and supported with skills, resources and organising plans to make change, encourage best practice and uphold members' entitlements within their branches and regions.

The seminar will be held at the Brentwood Hotel in Kilbirnie.

Members interested in attending should contact their regional chairs.