

PPTA NEWS

The magazine of New Zealand secondary teachers

Something to
stand up for

Alternative education brings
community together



PPTA News



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Working with the people who matter most

Working with communities to build a successful education system



Jack Boyle | President, PPTA

Teaching matters. If any of us weren't absolutely convinced of this, survey after survey shows us our community believes it: Teachers are amongst the most trusted professions in Aotearoa.

We are consistently rated amongst the top five most respected and liked professions in the country, while our schools are seen as trusted and valued institutions. (International surveys show we are amongst the highest rated in the world too!)

This trust and respect for teachers came through very strongly in focus groups PPTA did with parents last year. Over two nights we spoke with a random sample of parents of secondary age students about what they liked about schools and teachers, what they were worried about, and what they thought being a teacher would be like. There was a lot of good news for us.

Secondary schools are seen as more responsive, interesting places than they used to be. Parents especially love the range of opportunities schools offer now. Parents also know that you work really hard, and aren't just subject experts but care about your students too.

Not only do parents see all of this from their interaction with schools, but – despite what we might think sometimes – they also get it from the media. While we often tell ourselves the media is filled with bad news stories about misbehaving teachers, and bashing or ranking schools, in fact good news stories are far more prevalent.

A quick Google news search shows it, or a flick through the pages of a local community paper. Visit a small town and look at the free local paper, I guarantee there'll be a story about the retirement of a long standing and much respected local teacher, a sporting victory for a local student or some entrepreneurial activity a teacher and her class is up to doing good in the neighbourhood.

I think this is a critical point because it focuses us on what's important: the role teaching has in building a better future.

Rather than worrying about being positioned as opponents of change we need to continue to build on the connection we have with communities, parents and our own profession. We need to show, as a collection of the most highly trained, passionate professionals in our country, we put our nation's future – our students – in the centre of everything we do.

This gives us a clear direction: If PPTA is seen as a collection of teachers who 'stand for Public Education' (which must include looking after the people who look after our kids), then alliances with sector partners and other socially minded groups, from the Office of the Children's Commissioner to the Human Rights Commission, are a natural and powerful development.

We should be speaking directly to our communities about what they want to see in their education system and build it with them.

Rather than waiting for the Ministry of Education to consider reports on teacher workload or supply and make top down, financially driven and ideologically motivated responses, we should be engaging directly with the people who are affected by shortages and overload; teachers, students and their whānau.

Bureaucracy and rates of pay that stop the best people from remaining in the profession (or even considering it as a career to start with) are not simply political problems. They are social ones.

Our best allies aren't just those in the education sector. They're also the parents, grandparents, uncles and aunts of our students. Last year's win in the Better Funding campaign is perhaps the best illustration of the power of working together and pushing back against what we know is a disastrous model of education. While working together with NZEI, boards of trustees and principals was a powerful endorsement of why bulk funding was not the right way for our government to be heading, it was the parents who really helped us win that battle.

Perhaps it's time to abandon our fears that speaking out won't be listened to because we'll be characterised as whinging unionists by MPs and businessmen, and instead steal a march on them by actually talking to the people who matter most: kids, their families and other agencies who find themselves subject to the same 'divide and conquer' system used to undermine collective voice.

Who are we? We are teachers.



Morning teas a #Winning formula

School staff throughout the country celebrate last year's bulk funding defeat

Last year, we stood together and defeated bulk funding. Now is the time to get together and celebrate our win.

PPTA and NZEI have funded #Winning morning teas for all teachers and support staff in secondary and area schools to celebrate and thank them for standing up for public education.

Schools have been inventive with their celebrations. Howick College in particular had their event catered by their senior food technology students and their teacher Rebecca Roberts, some of whom achieved NCEA credits for their work.

Howick College branch chair Sharon King said it was a "really festive event."

"It was thoroughly enjoyed by all our staff and the students were also really pleased to have been a part of it," she said.

The students produced a lavish spread, which was so generous there was enough left over to cater for the PPTA branch meeting held that afternoon.

"We are fortunate here that our food technology department is very good at giving the students real-life experiences. As well as catering for this kind of event when it fits in with their course work, they periodically offer staff a chance to dine on two or three course meals that the students have planned and prepared. Sometimes they are breakfasts or lunches in the restaurant and sometimes brown-bag lunches that are taken away. Places at these occasions are eagerly sought after by staff," she said.

All staff were delighted by the morning tea, Sharon said.

"It certainly cheered all our staff up – teachers actually get very little in the way of perks, so treats are appreciated. It was an inspired decision by PPTA to offer to do this for all school staff too. We are so reliant on all our colleagues and our support staff in particular," she said.





Feedback and photos have been pouring in from #Winning morning teas throughout the country. Here is a selection.

If you have any #Winning photographs you would like to share send them to news@ppta.org.nz and we will put them up on the PPTA Facebook page.

“Morning tea went down like a treat last Friday and it was good to have the whole staff there to appreciate it.”

“Thanks for giving us this opportunity to celebrate an awesome victory!”

“It was well worth holding to highlight the success of our collective action last year. I was able to point out that our action halted government action where in other cases such as asset sales even a nationwide referendum failed.”

“This is because this win over bulk funding was achieved as a direct result of collective action! Therefore, we should celebrate this as a collective.”

“What a lovely idea from the unions!”

“Last year, because we stood together, we defeated bulk funding. Now is the time to get together and celebrate our win.”

“Being a first year teacher and having gone to the No Bulk Funding meeting in Chch when I was on teaching practice, it was that meeting that sold me on joining the PPTA.”

“It was a lovely surprise for the staff and a reminder that the unions are working behind the scenes for us all the time.”

Professionals gather to advance public education

Moving public education forward at the 2017 Issues and Organising seminar

Enthusiated and engaged activists from throughout the country gathered in Wellington last month to workshop ways of advancing public education.

The theme for PPTA's Issues and Organising (I and O) seminar this year was advancing public education and sessions drew on a number of issues facing our members – from charter schools to 'COOLs' and beyond.

Workshops covered supply and workload issues, Communities of Learning, pay equity, flexible learning spaces and health and safety among other things.

Members heard from inspiring speakers and enjoyed engaging around the issues with their peers.

Workshops covered supply and



PPTA members engaging with politicians, discussing issues, sharing kai and coming together in solidarity to create a 'path to safety' for victims of domestic violence

Staunch activist stands up for the most vulnerable

PPTA activist Trevor Wilson is awarded for 23 years of standing up for members' rights

Twenty three years of outstanding branch activism at Mt Roskill Grammar School have earned PPTA stalwart Trevor Wilson the Guy Allan award.

Trevor was presented with the 2016 award, which recognises branch activism in the Auckland and Counties Manukau regions, last month at a ceremony at Mt Roskill Grammar School. The celebration was well attended by branch members, family, PPTA president Jack Boyle and general secretary Michael Stevenson.

The late Guy Allan was a field officer to the Auckland and Counties Manukau regions, who had previously been an outstanding branch activist. The award was developed by the two regions in honour of his contribution to the association after his unexpected death in 2002.

Trevor's 23 years of branch activism at Mt Roskill Grammar have included some impressive multi-tasking. He has held many positions in the branch, including being in charge of updating the 'green manuals' (teachers' employment terms and conditions pre collective agreements) acting as treasurer, secretary and chairperson—and at one point doing all of these at the same time.

Trevor has stood up staunchly for the rights of members and has advocated for many. Some of the battles were not won but, in Trevor's own words, "the fight was worth it."

Trevor joined PPTA in 1972 when he began teaching mathematics and physics at Wellington High School. Two years later he shifted north to Hillary College in Otara where he became more involved in PPTA by becoming branch secretary - it was a committee of two with Tahi Tait as chairperson.

In May 1979 he moved to Mt Roskill Grammar School. He retired from his assistant head of department position at the end of 2014, taking up a fixed term position there for 2015 and relieving last year.

Over the previous ten plus years Trevor, as secretary of the branch, worked very closely with chairperson Robert



Trevor Wilson and wife Selani Wilson display the Guy Allan award and certificate for outstanding branch activism.

Kelly, who has greatly appreciated his staunchness and support.

PPTA general secretary Michael Stevenson said, despite Trevor holding office on the association's national executive for a long period of time, he never lost sight of the real heart of the union – the branch.

"Trevor made a real mark on the Mount Roskill branch by always looking after those more vulnerable than him. Whether they were new teachers on suspect fixed-term agreements or part-time teachers not receiving their full salary, Trevor always went into bat for them," he said.

Trevor was also big on succession planning, Michael said.

"Rather than taking a heroic approach to his activism, he quietly worked behind the scenes to ensure others were up-skilled and ready to take over branch roles as his retirement approached. This has resulted in Trevor's hard work in the branch standing the test of time," he said.

Trevor has worked tirelessly with and for members of the union throughout his teaching career. His service to members at Mount Roskill Grammar School, in the southern ward and contributions to the Auckland Regional Management Committee have been greatly appreciated and are a testimony to his determination to stand up for the rights of teachers.

Students may miss out as staffing schools get harder

Efforts to provide a quality state education increasingly at risk

Recruiting and keeping suitably trained and qualified staff in secondary and area schools is becoming so difficult principals are resorting to cold-calling.

Middle leadership positions are also increasingly difficult to fill and relief teachers are becoming scarce. Anecdotally principals are ringing people to ask them to apply for jobs because nobody else has.

PPTA has been part of a multi-agency investigation into these issues and has offered a number of solutions, but at the time of writing the government had yet to respond.

There are problems in our teacher education system (including inadequate funding) but largely the issues relate to pay not being competitive enough, too few graduates from key areas being attracted to the profession and excessive workloads - particularly for middle leaders. Housing costs in a growing number of areas exacerbate these problems.

Comments from PPTA's latest annual staffing survey of schools reflect this:

"We are a hard to staff area and struggle to attract capable, specialist teachers, particularly for maths and technology. We are also unable to provide courses such as accounting, economics and languages because of the lack of trained specialist teachers."

"We must advocate for better remuneration in order to attract more top graduates...or our young people will not be afforded the quality state education that is their right and which everyone deserves."

"Area schools in rural areas (like ours) are particularly badly hit - already hard to staff, relief teachers are nearly impossible to find. Both of ours are close to 70 years old!"

"Aging workforce, we're in trouble."

"In 2016 we had 10 senior teachers leave the profession. They have done so because they can no longer afford to live on a teacher's salary in Auckland."



Age of teaching workforce for 2004 to 2015

"Good science teachers are hard to get. Good maths teachers are hard to get. Good technology (hard materials) teachers are impossible to get and we've had to recruit from overseas."

The chronic shortages currently facing schools are only likely to get worse over time without significant interventions or another major economic crash like that of 2008. Also quietly tricking away are the forecast secondary roll rises from the end of 2019 and the high proportion of teachers who are at, or approaching, retirement age.

A multi-agency 2016 report on the state of secondary teacher supply in NZ identifies problems across a range of subjects, locations and school types, with particular pressure in science, technology, and maths and in low decile, rural and high housing cost areas. But it also acknowledges that shortages extend into subjects like business studies, languages, Māori and, in some areas, even English. In 2015 (the last year full data was available for) most subjects had their highest level of re-advertising since 2000.

The report has 41 recommendations on how to respond to these problems. There are a number of joint recommendations, which the PPTA

and principals' representatives on the working party say are necessary, but not sufficient to address the underlying causes of the secondary teacher supply problem. That would require recognising the high work pressure, declining relative salaries and the spreading pressures generated by the housing supply crisis in Auckland and other centres.

The report was given to the Minister of Education in July and is on the PPTA and Ministry of Education websites. While the ministry has undertaken to try to make progress on some of the agreed recommendations, the minister indicated she had not read the report. It was her opinion that there were no supply issues to worry about and that Communities of Learning would address any pressures.

This response (or lack of) from the government will worry teaching professionals who recognise that strong recruitment and retention has enormous implications for the quality of education we can together deliver for all our students. Schools have not faced a supply environment like this since 2001 and the political indication is that secondary teachers will again be left to defend their profession and the country's secondary students.

Trusting teaching and prioritising teachers' wellbeing

PPTA at the 7th Annual International Summit on the Teaching Profession

The 7th Annual International Summit on the Teaching Profession was held in Edinburgh this year and once again New Zealand was among the nations represented by both an Education Minister and Union leaders (disappointingly, the USA and Australia had no government presence).

The Conference is a joint OECD and Education International event that looks to interrogate international performance and academic research and has a broad sort of focus for each year (reflecting the diverse contexts nations find themselves in). This year's discussions revolved around professional learning: in particular, what governments and unions need to put in place for professional learning and development to be effective, and what the barriers to effective implementation are.

Unsurprisingly, Finland and Singapore were streets ahead in the investment made in teacher learning, from initial teacher education to on-going professional support. The way they have achieved this is through financial investment without the draconian 'proof of life' accountability that New Zealand, the UK and Australia appear to prefer. In contrast to us, it appears co-host Scotland, Sweden and the Netherlands are also heading into higher trust approaches.

New Zealand's contribution focused initially on Communities of Learning (CoL), both the potential of the model but also the need to identify and overcome the challenges. The minister of education covered the former, PPTA president Jack Boyle, the latter.

Boyle pointed out that "listening to the profession and being willing to confront challenges in order to overcome them is needed to ensure the model works for teachers and kids".

Once the Minister had finished talking up communities of learning there was a chance to focus on the wider issue of professional learning and development (PLD), with Boyle commenting that "guaranteed access to effective PLD for teachers and their involvement in designing PLD are critical to teaching and learning". This was supported by the OECD's Andreas Schleicher and referenced by delegates from a range



Top; Sunny Edinburgh Castle. Bottom; PPTA president Jack Boyle, NZEI Te Riu Roa president Lynda Stuart, NZ Principals' Federation president Whetu Cormick

of high performing nations. In fact, the general consensus of the summit was that PLD was good, guaranteed access to PLD was better and co-constructing PLD frameworks with unions was best.

Most importantly, PPTA, NZEI Te Riu Roa and the NZ Principals Federation were able to gain a commitment from the education minister to focus on teacher wellbeing over the next year.

The New Zealand commitment is as follows:

"Society and its expectations on education have become more complex with greater demands on teachers, and therefore their wellbeing must be a priority, both for their personal and professional efficacy and for the quality of their students' learning experiences.

Accordingly our New Zealand delegation commits in the next year to work together to grow the time for better quality teaching preparation through a rearrangement of time, space, and people, for better quality learning outcomes for every one of our children and young people, and we look forward to reporting on our progress at ISTP 2017, Lisbon, Portugal."

This commitment was agreed as an umbrella for PPTA, NZEI and NZPF campaigns around workload, bullying and violence and the precarious conditions of some of our workforce. The commitment made at the summit will be reported on next year in Portugal where our delegation will have to outline the steps we have made together to address this issue.

School, iwi and community join forces for students

PPTA News visits Taihape Area School to see an innovative mentoring programme in action

There is a common perception that living in a small town can limit your opportunities – but Taihape’s community, iwi and area school are determined to prove the opposite.

A collaborative relationship between social and cultural support group Mokai Patea Services and Taihape Area School has resulted in the Rangatahi Mentoring Programme.

The programme provides extra support for students who need it, working with mentors from within the community. It aims to motivate and inspire them to achieve NCEA level 2 or equivalent and expose them to opportunities both within and outside Taihape.

Iwi education manager Ngahina Transom said there had been a huge level of engagement, particularly since the students were coming in their own time after school.

“The students want to be involved. We provide kai every week, which is important. For some of the big kids it’s the highlight. It’s the end of the school day and it keeps them going,” she said.

The programme receives iwi funding and also has a contract with the Ministry of Education.

“Whatever we do there is no cost to the students at all,” Ngahina said.

The programme started in term 4 with a trial group of 10 students and has grown from there.

“Our first success story was a student who came from a family that had a lot to do with the police. He came from a challenging background and we got him back on track.”

The local police were very supportive of the programme. “We have a good relationship with the police, who want to see our youth succeed,” she said.

Connections and Consistency

Taihape Area School principal Richard McMillan said it was a productive partnership that was going from strength to strength.

He believes they are also the only school in the country where iwi



Taihape Area School students and staff show pride in their Rangatahi Mentoring programme

representation on the school board is mandated.

“It’s been a positive part of who we are – a point of difference we have at the governance level,” he said.

An event both Richard and Ngahina were particularly proud of was a formal Matariki dinner, which was attended by 80 to 100 students and whānau. “It was a celebration of student success. It gave them a sense of achievement and their whānau were so proud of them,” he said.

Ngahina believes the consistency the programme provides is a big draw card for students.

“We will be there every week. Sometimes they show up, sometimes they don’t, but they know every week that’s where we are going to be,” she said.

This was particularly apparent during a traumatic time last year when the school lost one of its students. “We continued as normal, providing support and a way for them to process the emotional trauma.”

Members of the Taihape community come and speak to the students about a diverse range of topics. This has included talks on financial literacy by local bank staff and members of the community explaining what they need to know about transitioning into tertiary and the workplace.

“We had four locals from Kiwirail, some past students, who have young families and mortgages in the community. They worked every day, worked in a team and discussed those life skills with the kids.”

The army has also been very supportive, providing speakers and letting students use its confidence course. “We recently had an artillery expert come and talk to the kids. They loved it,” she said.

Students on the programme are also exposed to experiences outside the community. One particular success story came from a visit to Victoria University, where the students travelled to Wellington and stayed at the Te Herenga Waka Marae.

A year 13 student who had her heart set on joining the military didn’t make it into the training course, didn’t have a back-up plan and figured she would stay in Taihape. She joined the trip to Wellington and, through the mentoring programme’s connections, toured

the university. “It was a wall to wall, corner to corner, look at places and spaces you wouldn’t get to see on a normal tour and we met some really cool people on the way through.” The student returned home and announced “I want to go there. If they can do it, I can do it.”

Ngahina hopes the tour will become an annual event.

“We want to show them there are no barriers if you come from a small town. If you want to be a doctor, cool. We will do what we can to help you become that,” she said.

Whānau Champions

The students each have a whānau champion from the community. The champions receive training for the position and have discussions with students and their whānau about aspirations and make plans to go forward. Anyone in the community can be a whānau champion, she said.

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“Our first success story was a student who came from a family that had a lot to do with the police. He came from a challenging background and we got him back on track.”

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No two whānau conversations were the same. “For some students it’s Dad they talk to, some it’s nana and some it’s the netball coach. It’s about developing these relationships and understanding it’s not always Mum and Dad,” Ngahina said.

The students have a WEAP (Whānau Education Action Plan) which the whānau champions look over every week to make sure the students are on track.

This has led to students being excited and enthused about progressing their education, Ngahina said.

“Term 1 starts with goals and in term 2 we start amping up the credits to reach those goals. Now students go to class and say to their teachers – ‘I’ve finished that assessment, where are my credits?’ It’s a good thing. It keeps everyone on their toes.”

The programme dovetailed well into work at the mainstream school, Ngahina said.

“At first we weren’t sure how it would align with the dean structure, but it fits in really well. Often we have secondary teachers across the hallway who come in and explain things when asked. They come in and support the group just like that,” she said.

Any student can be part of the programme if they want and those who need it the most are often referred by staff and deans. “They come to us and say ‘so and so needs some support’”.

Students do practical and physical activities as well. There are facilities provided for them to learn to cook and some of the older students work out at a local gym with the aid of one of the whānau champions who is a personal trainer.

Given its level of success so far Ngahina hopes the ministry continues to fund the programme to keep it sustainable.

“It’s grown a life of its own. Students are seeing others in the programme achieving credits and thinking ‘if they can do that, we can too’,” she said.

The Students

Rangatahi students spoken to by PPTA News were really positive about the programme.

Year 13 student Shailah Katene said it was “cool”. She particularly enjoyed the trip to Victoria University and doing the army assault course. She plans to head to Te Wānanga o Aotearoa when she has finished school.

Year 12 student Ty Payne sees the programme as a good opportunity to get homework done and “gain heaps of credits”. It was a good place to get extra work done because he didn’t do homework at home, he said.

Ty appreciated the different perspectives offered by the guest speakers. “I like it when guests come and share the different options for us when we leave school, what you can do in a small town and what they have achieved – and the food.”

In future he would like to go to university to study sports and recreation or join the army.

Year 12 student Kale McClay said it was a place to learn about what is available around town. He liked being able to get “some life perspective of what people do around here and what we can achieve” – and also the food.

Something to stand up for

Alternative education brings community together

Students from Wainuiomata's Rangatahi Learning Centre turn a graffiti-plagued wall into a stunning mural for children with motor disorders.

A project designed to prevent vandalism has brought two very different groups of young people together.

The students at Wainuiomata's Rangatahi Learning Centre and the children at the Conductive Education Wellington Trust haven't had the easiest start to life.

The Conductive Education Trust supports children with motor disorders such as cerebral palsy and spina bifida, while the Rangatahi Learning Centre provides young people previously considered

'unreachable' with a second chance.

The alternative education provider works with students aged between 13 and 16 who have struggled in the mainstream system, guiding them towards NCEA level 1.

To this end some of the Rangatahi students spent time with the children at Conductive Education Centre as research for an NCEA art project, gift and community service all wrapped into one.

With the support of local artist Ranga Tuhi the Rangatahi students created a mural for the children at the early childhood unit.

The project was sponsored by the Hutt City Council, which employs Ranga to remove graffiti in the district and replace it with murals. Once a year he

works with the young people who are most likely to be doing the tagging, giving them something to take pride in.

"If you get them involved, they don't tag what they create," he said.

"If you bring them on board it gives them something to stand up for. It gives them confidence."

The students spent time at the Conductive Education Wellington Trust learning about the children and how they spent their days.

Centre administrator Karen Garrison said the children loved having the alternative education students around.

"They came and did a bit of a study of what the kids get up to, finding out what they do in their everyday learning.



Clockwise from top left: Riko's horse design represents when the Conductive Education children go out riding with RDA; Students from the Rangatahi Learning Centre take pride in the mural they created for the children of the Conductive Education Wellington Trust; Karen Garrison, Trish Morgan and Ranga Tuhi admire the students' handiwork.

They took that away and came up with what they did for the mural," she said.

The children have music sessions, go horse riding with New Zealand Riding for the Disabled (RDA) and have a swimming programme among other things. "We do exercise and mobility work to make them as independent as they can be," she said.

Trish Morgan, the teacher in charge of the alternative education programme said the students did their research, came up with the ideas and put it all together. The results will earn them NCEA credits, she said.

At the moment there are 10 students at the Rangatahi Learning Centre but the numbers are likely to bump up to their maximum of 15, she said.

The students had a morning tea with the early childhood centre's children to celebrate the unveiling of their art.

"It's a nice low-key way of celebrating and for the students to view the mural's final resting place," she said.

The space where the mural now resides was once heavily tagged. Now it is a source of pride with students showing their families their signatures on the piece.

Progress was being made with young people previously considered unreachable, Ranga said.

"They show up to school more. When it's a painting day they always turn up.

"It's something that gives these kids pride. A place that was tagged is now a mural, these kids get NCEA, everybody wins - the community especially, he said.

The project was also supported by local businesses, with Resene providing the paint and Placemakers the wood to paint on, he said.

Ranga hopes the project will help young people avoid going down the road their parents may have.

"It ticks the education boxes, it ticks the community boxes. If you don't motivate them they will end up in gangs or doing crime and going to prison. This gives them hope and an opportunity to better

themselves. If we can save just one of them, it's worthwhile," he said. '

By all accounts the project appears to be working, with one of the artists having returned to mainstream schooling and another starting a course at the Wellington Institute of Technology.

Three of the mural artists spoke to PPTA News about their designs.

Wairuatapu painted the kowhaiwhai designs and sun at the centre of the mural. It represents the whānau unit, he says. "It symbolises unity and family."

Riko created the stylised horse on the mural to represent when the children went out riding with the RDA.

"It's about when they go out on their horses, but my own design. I like my horse," he said.

Mari painted the music-themed silhouettes on either side of the mural and a tree. She says they represent the past, present and future students of the conductive education centre.



2017 Māori Teachers' Conference

Transformation in Māori Education

Nau mai, haere mai!

Held in July of every year the Māori teachers' conference is for Māori teachers working across the curriculum, including guidance counsellors, transition teachers, teachers of te reo Māori, teachers involved in Māori medium education and for those who have an interest and passion for Māori education.

This year, workshops will focus on place-based learning, digital tools, enhancing te reo Māori, whānau and children's learning, Kaupapa Māori, engagement, transformation, success, making a difference and leadership.

Speakers hail from throughout the motu and are guaranteed to inspire and motivate.

The conference will be held at the Sudima Hotel, Rotorua on the 9-10 July 2017. To secure your place download the registration form from the PPTA website. Go to ppta.org.nz and click on "Events".



Pem Bird QSM

Pem Bird is Ngāti Manawa and Ngāti Tahu. He is the Principal of Te Kura Kaupapa Motuhake o Tawhiuau – New Zealand's first designated character iwi/tribal school. Pem has extensive experience in education and is currently advocating for Māori language and history to be core curriculum subjects in New Zealand schools. He is renowned as the educator who found a way forward for his community, based on "the values of taking care of one another come what may."



Portia Woodman

Portia Woodman affiliates to the Ngāpuhi iwi. She is currently a member of the New Zealand Women's Sevens team. Before playing rugby union she played netball for the Northern Mystics. Portia comes from a sporting background, her father, Kawhena and her uncle, Fred Woodman were former All Blacks. Portia is a whānau person who loves having family around. She is also a disciplined high performance athlete with a philosophy that "you can do it [succeed] if you really believe you can."



Keriana Tāwhiwhirangi

Keriana is of Ngāti Porou descent, a truly inspirational leader who is passionate about nurturing the very best qualities in people and communities. She is highly skilled as an educator, mentor, administrator and advisor. Keriana has a broad background in the union movement and in public policy. A former school principal, Keriana has the gift of communication, care and building trusting relationships.



Te Hira Paenga

Te Hira Paenga affiliates to Ngāti Hine, Ngāti Kahu ki Torongare, Ngāti Rangī, Te Māhurehure, Ngāti Kanohi and Te Whānau ā Ruataupare ki Tūpāroa. He is currently the Assistant Principal at Te Aute College. Te Hira is a kapa haka tutor and passionate exponent of te reo Māori, haka and weaponry. He is keen to encourage rangatahi "with their creativity, singing and writing" while students at Te Aute.



Marama Davidson

Marama Davidson is of Ngāti Porou, Te Rarawa and Ngāpuhi descent. She is a Member of Parliament for the Green Party and advocates for Māori development rights, protecting the environment, women's rights, ending child poverty, ending homelessness and addressing the housing crisis. She recently launched the Green Party's plan to support universal te reo Māori in all public schools to year 10. "We have a responsibility to ensure that our indigenous language not just survives, but thrives in Aotearoa."

A commitment to social justice and workers rights

PPTA member Helen Pearce pays tribute to former PPTA president, Gunther Warner

Gunther Warner
23 May 1921 – 3 January 2017
PPTA President 1976

Gunther Warner, (born Wachsner), came to New Zealand in May 1939, an 18 year old Jewish refugee from Berlin. His parents and maternal grandparents later perished in the Nazi death camps. He only returned to Germany once, in 1978. A memorial stone was placed in the pavement outside his family's apartment building in Berlin in June 2013. In an interview in the Sunday Star Times on 30 June 2013, Gunther said he would never forget the effect on his father of November 9, 1938, Krystallnacht, when Jewish shops and businesses across Germany were destroyed. His father, who had regarded himself a good German, hid for 10 days during that time and came back a broken man. Gunther quoted his father, "This country is absolutely rotten. We have to get you out." Later, his brother and sister also fled Germany. To Gunther, New Zealand was the country of his rebirth.

In Germany a cabinet maker, Gunther worked in the building trade when he arrived in Wellington. During the war, he served in the air force. After the war, he worked in the government service

and graduated with a BA from Victoria University in 1947 followed in 1959 with a MA. He then became a teacher of languages, first at Hastings Boys High School, then head of department at Tauranga Boys' College, and from 1967 to 1977, Westlake Boys' High School in Auckland, also as head of department and finally, Senior Master. According to his children, Gunther loved teaching. At his memorial service on 24 January, one of his Westlake students, lawyer Andrew Mahon, later a personal friend, spoke admiringly of his language teaching.

With a strong commitment to social justice and the rights of workers, Gunther was actively involved in PPTA from the beginning of his teaching career. His son, John, a teacher, remembers his friendship with other active PPTA members in Tauranga while teaching there. In 1970, he became one of the three Auckland National Executive members. In 1976 he was PPTA president and then spent 1977 as Senior Vice President and in 1978 spent another year as an Executive member. My memory of him in those years was that he was a forceful and eloquent speaker at meetings with absolute commitment to the welfare and rights of members and education in general. He was never afraid to take a strong position

on what he believed to be fair and just.

Of the many issues facing PPTA in the 1970s, the issue of state aid to private schools, strongly opposed by PPTA, and the eventual decision to offer them integration into the state system were consuming issues. Gunther was PPTA's representative and the only teacher in the working group which, after a conference on state aid in 1973, drafted the final legislation, the 1975 Private Schools Integration Act. At the time, Gunther said that although PPTA had not achieved all its objectives the act was "a fair deal" for private schools.

Another difficult issue in the 1970s was the use of corporal punishment on boys which many teachers opposed. When president, Gunther aroused some membership opposition when he stated publicly that the PPTA executive was working towards policy on its abolition. It was finally achieved in 1985.

With a lifelong love of music, literature, politics and history and discussion about them, Gunther had a wide range of friends, several of whom spoke at his memorial service. His three children also spoke, Mark, a professor of physics at Cambridge University, Kirsten, a writer and journalist and John, a teacher.



Gunther Warner (Image courtesy Fairfax Media NZ / Sunday Star-Times.)

“Lightbulb moment” with staff at morning tea

Howick College HOD Hospitality Rebecca Roberts and her win/win morning tea

Students at Howick College relish the chance to create wonderful, tasty and interesting food for functions.

Our latest function was to make a full staff morning tea for 214 staff members for the PPTA. Students worked out that all staff could have 6-8 pieces of food for the strict budget and then planned and trailed the options, settling on a menu that ensured that staff special diets were met, that sweet and savoury options were available and that there were healthy as well as indulgent items. Our fridges were full to capacity and our pantries had tray after tray of baked goods ready for the next process. The class arrived early in the morning to make sandwiches and mini pizza, with mini quiche Lorraine and mince and gluten free chicken balls.

Classes were pushed to complete the icing, cutting and plating of platters and plates of goodies, and then transport them up to the staff room for interval. We also had to ensure that staff with rolling morning teas were able to come down to get a plate of goodies and did not miss out. Food was abundant and the faces of the staff were amazed as to what my wonderful students had produced. There was a hum around the room as staff were urging each other to try yet another tasty morsel. Feedback was wonderful, and the students were full of smiles.

Part of the students' responsibilities was to make a recipe book of all the items that were produced. This is a favourite of staff and students alike and we get loads of feedback of the items that are made at home following a function. Our plum cake was a major hit.

So why do we do this; spend many hours out of class and move others out of rooms so we have full access to the kitchens? Put simply, it's for our kids. The unit standard we use as a base is 9681 'Contribute within a team or group' that has an objective, a level 3 and worth 3 credits. It's very achievable and allows students to realise credits in a practically based subject. Doing cafes, meals and morning teas mean our students have access to that light bulb moment- they “get it” - they see a pathway that will

lead to employment, they see people enjoying the food they make and the coffees they have cried tears over, and

they see their teacher so proud of the enormous steps they have taken and the success they have achieved.



Top; Howick College food technology students Lasalle Lafale and Tuli Fungavaka with chocolate cakes and feta and spinach muffins. Bottom; Howick College food technology students carry the goodies to the staffroom

Charter schools and tino rangatiratanga? Please...

Guest columnist Morgan Godfery on why charter schools are worthless

Here's some advice, a truism from years of talking and writing about te ao Māori: never mention the Treaty of Waitangi in polite company.

People shift in their seats, their bellies tighten and they think you're accusing them of something sinister. "Oh, yeah, I'm right behind the Treaty" - this is the necessary qualifier - "but it has to mean what it says." This sounds all well and good, but meaning what it says is often code for "I disagree with the way Māori interpret it."

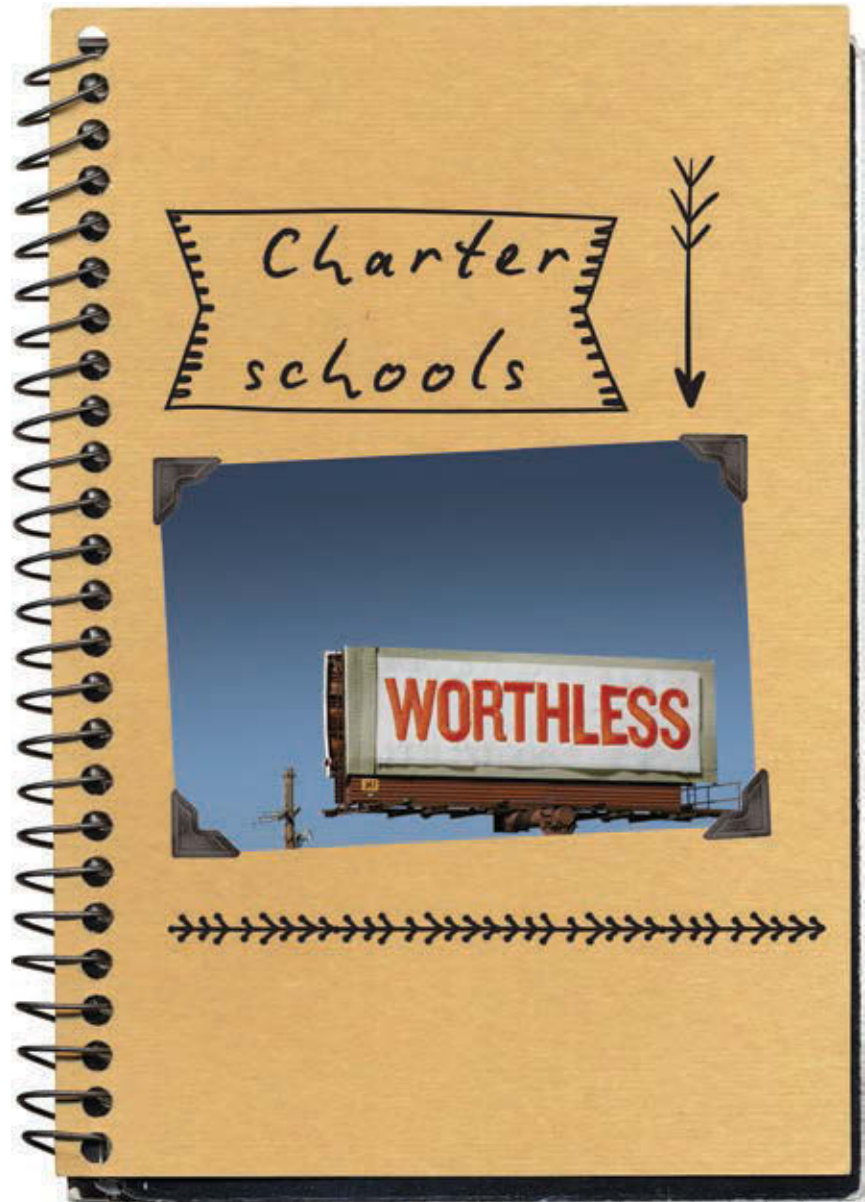
This is sometimes called the Don Brash position.

But sometimes this position works in less obvious ways. Let's call it the David Seymour position, a political tactic where policies that harm Māori lives - think of asset sales, resource management reforms and charter schools - are framed as beneficial because of "the Treaty partnership" or "tino rangatiratanga." The Treaty is taken as authority for any policy, however regressive, that might include Māori in one way or another.

It's a seductive tactic. As Māori, we take the progress we can secure, even if it comes from unlikely politicians and places. But agreeing to frame charter schools as an example of the Treaty partnership or tino rangatiratanga means we stop adhering to what the Treaty actually means. Partnership guarantees equality, but iwi, hapū or any other Māori organisation running charter schools aren't equal partners in a flourishing relationship: they're dependent parties in a transactional relationship.

That means charter schools can never meet the requirements of tino rangatiratanga - the full powers of chieftainship, to take the traditional definition, or "Māori control of things Māori" to take the fashionable definition. Iwi, hapū or Māori organisations might have some control over curriculum and the day to day functioning of a charter school, but the Government still ties charter schools in a tight knot with, one, the fact they control funding and, two, they retain the right to control standards and so on.

In fact, special character schools and kura kaupapa - proven models - likely give more freedom as their previous



success guarantees that public scrutiny will not be as severe.

But what I find most offensive is that vested interests arguing for charter schools indulge in deficit thinking about Māori. They argue because Māori aren't doing as well in the schooling system then perhaps we should step outside of it. But this isn't necessarily a failure on the part of the school system - it certainly isn't a failure on the part of individual teachers - it's a government's failure to address the problem of poverty in New Zealand.

Poverty is a barrier. When kids come to school hungry they won't learn as

effectively as the kids who come to school with a full tummy. When kids are living in cars and garages they won't learn as effectively as the kids who are growing up in warm, dry homes. When kids are taking time off school because they're sick from preventable diseases they won't learn as effectively as the kids who are immunised and well. Charter schools don't address (let alone solve) any of this. For that reason, they're worthless.

Morgan Godfery is a writer and trade unionist. He publishes extensively on Māori politics and history and regularly appears in the media as a political commentator.

Contemplations from the classroom

The 'tyranny of positivity'

PPTA member Roger Gregory explores the constant drive for change and 'progress' in New Zealand classrooms through the work of Danish academic Svend Brinkmann.

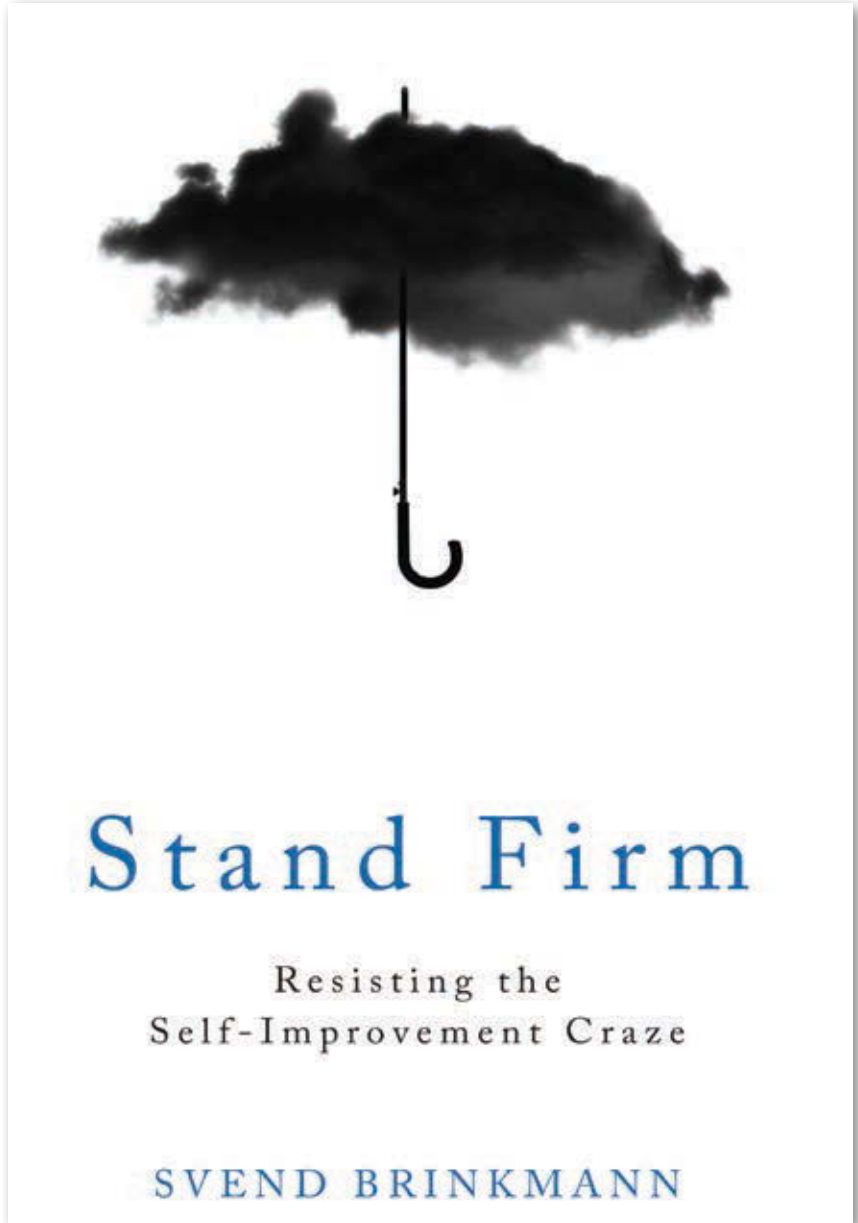
"Next time you have a performance review at work, why not try this? When your boss asks you how you plan to 'develop' and 'progress' over the {year}, look them in the eye and reply: 'I don't need to develop myself, thanks, I'm happy as I am'" - Svend Brinkmann, Professor of Psychology and Qualitative Methods, Aalborg University, Denmark from his book *Stand Firm – Resisting the Self Improvement Craze*.

This extract piqued my interest, not only because Brinkmann has been hailed the most important intellectual in Denmark, but also because I, along with a number of my colleagues, have become increasingly concerned at the almost desperate necessity to be seen as continually 'improving', 'changing', and 'progressing' - what Brinkmann describes as a "culture of social acceleration". In contrast, simply being content and not needing to constantly 'grow' is seen as negative, backward, even "heretical".

We are constantly bombarded with the mantra of the necessity of "perpetual change, to keep moving, adapting, improving and updating." How many times have we heard that 'change is good' and 'if we're not changing we're going backwards'? If we were to critically analyse this, I would suggest that this is not always true and neither is it always desirable. Sometimes it is good and necessary to pause, take a breath, stand back and admire the view. It is also refreshing and energising, both for the individual and for the organisation.

Brinkmann continues by suggesting that we should "stand firm against the tyranny of positivity, the obsession with introspection and self-analysis" as this leads to increased stress, guilt, depression and a feeling of never being good enough. This is neither healthy for the individual nor the organisation.

Perhaps today's workplaces have been captured by this ethos which coincidentally (or not) seems to parallel the neo-liberal economic thinking that continuous growth is both good and



a necessity, despite the fact that it is realistically impossible.

Brinkmann also comments on the place of the ancient philosophers in this regard. The Stoics – Seneca, Epictetus and Marcus Aurelius – advocated 'negative visualisation'. Not that they would necessarily argue for a 'glass half empty' approach, but neither would they argue for a 'glass half full' approach. Rather, Brinkmann suggests they would have a neutral approach and be prepared to listen to and argue all points of view.

So, with regard to the workplace appraisals: is there anything wrong with saying that you are content with where

you are? Brinkmann says that people who state this are mistakenly "seen as rigid and reactionary; even when they are simply satisfied with what they do and have sufficient experience and expertise to do a good job". Being flexible, he goes on, isn't necessarily a good thing, because we end up focussing on ever changing and exhausting short-term goals rather than seeing the big picture. And, if the expertise of experienced employees is ignored, organisations risk problems of lack of stability, continuity, loyalty and trust.

(Acknowledgments to The Times, London and journalist Carol Midgley)

Supporting our colleagues in precarious employment

Information and advice from PPTA's intrepid field officers

Susan completed her training last year and is eager to start her teaching career. Although she has received a couple of job offers, unfortunately they were for temporary, fixed-term employment. One such offer gave no reason, while another simply cited “uncertainty around roll growth”.

Teachers employed under a temporary (or ‘fixed’) agreement face several negative consequences. Income insecurity makes gaining bank loans more difficult. For fixed-term part-time teachers salary increments take longer to achieve. Holiday pay can be reduced

and access to parental provisions is also limited. Surplus staffing provisions are not available. In some schools access to a proper induction and mentoring programme is also restricted for fixed-term teachers. Such members feel vulnerable and may find it hard to plan their lives.

Like many other beginning teachers, Susan wonders if all this is right. In fact, the offers she has received may not comply with the law. Clause 3.2.3 of the Secondary Teachers Collective Agreement, and section 66 of the Employment Relations Act, both stipulate that employment can only be offered on a basis if there genuine reasons based on reasonable grounds.

The law also requires that reasons be set out, in writing, in the teacher’s letter of appointment.

Decisions from the Employment Relations Authority and Court have clarified what constitute reasonable grounds. It is acceptable for a position to be fixed-term if it is a genuine relieving position, or is for a specific project such as IT implementation. It may also be justifiable if the school is in a current falling roll situation, although even then, that may depend on what subject the teacher is being employed to teach.

However, broad generalisations about roll or resourcing uncertainty do not constitute sufficient reason.

PPTA is very concerned about the unjustifiable growth in the use of temporary, fixed-term agreements. Your Union will support any member in this situation.

If the school’s justifications for the position being temporary are not “genuine reasons based on reasonable grounds”, or the reasons are not stated in the letter of appointment, the member can challenge the nature of their employment. Under the legislation the member may elect to treat their employment as permanent, and provided the teacher has taken proper steps to advise the school of this, the school should advise payroll that the teacher is now deemed to be a permanent employee.

In practice, schools may ignore the member’s lawful claim, or deny the validity of that claim. It is also the case that many members, feeling isolated, may be unwilling to take such action without support. The best approach for members is to seek support from their Branch and local Field Officer. Branches can organise meetings for teachers holding temporary fixed-term positions. The Branch can then act in support of those members to pursue permanent employment. The Field Officer will provide advocacy support. If needed, PPTA will pursue legal remedies on behalf of the member.

Too many teachers are being appointed to positions wrongly classified as fixed-term. PPTA wants to stop this practice, and asks all members to support your vulnerable colleagues.



PPTA field officers are here to support vulnerable members with their contracts.

Communities of Learning – what's going on?

.....
Important PPTA survey out now
.....

This is your chance to express your experience and opinions of Communities of Learning.

PPTA executive has given approval for a survey of teachers and principals in schools which are in Communities of Learning (CoLs). If your school is in a

CoL, a survey link has been sent to your email address.

The email has the subject line 'PPTA CoL survey 2017'.



The survey will be used to help determine PPTA's future policy and direction on CoLs. It will also be the basis of PPTA input into the evaluations of CoLs being done on behalf of the MoE. Please complete the survey when it arrives. It will be the only opportunity for all teachers and leaders in schools in CoLs to have their voice heard in the official evaluation.

The survey will be suitable for every teacher and leader in the school – regardless of how involved or not you are with the CoL.

If you do not receive an email link to the survey and you know your school is in a CoL contact rwilletts@ppta.org.nz

Education Council plans to massively increase fees

.....
It is important to protest now
.....

The Education Council are consulting on raising their fees. The increases they propose are substantial.

For example, the practising certificate renewal would go from \$220 to \$510 per three year period.

While PPTA executive will be making a submission on behalf of the whole membership, branches, regions and individual members should also respond.

Members should remember that the current arrangement whereby the government pays teachers' Education Council fees only lasts to the end of the existing collective agreements. This is because it was agreed through the Terms of Settlement and not through clauses in the collectives themselves. That means that to continue that payment would be a cost against any future settlements, at the expense of pay rises, and

the government will be even more reluctant to pay it, knowing how high the fees are to rise.



It may surprise you what HealthCarePlus covers

HealthCarePlus offers PPTA members health, life and disability insurance.



Most medical issues appear out of nowhere and the associated costs tend to add up very quickly.

From GP visits, prescriptions, physiotherapy or osteopath trips, prescription glasses to health screening – your wallet can definitely get a big shock.

Having a 'day to day' health care plan can help you manage those 'shocks' and start from as little as \$3.05* per week.

Family members can be added to your plan so that everyone is covered. Another unique benefit is that all pre-existing medical conditions are covered after a short initial stand-down period.

And no matter what life stage you're at things come up, we should know – Primary Care and Primary Care Extra has covered claims for a variety of things such as:

Young adults: Physios, travel vaccinations, help with prescription glasses

Young families: Birth benefits, fertility/sterilisation treatments, GPs, Prescriptions

Older families: Orthodontics, chiropractors, dieticians, counselling

Older members: Minor surgeries, osteopaths, help with prescription glasses, dental

Retired members: Flu vaccinations, health screening, hearing and other medical aids as well as a small bereavement grant

*Based on Primary Care rates for single members 45 years or younger.

