

# PPTA News

**Uniting secondary teachers of Aotearoa**



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**Staffing Summit 2021 – sowing  
the seeds for a new model**

pg 11

## PPTA News

PPTA News is the magazine of the New Zealand Post Primary Teachers' Association. Approximately 20,000 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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# Making it work

By working together and speaking up, we will make it work for kaiako and ākonga during these parlous times

I left writing this President's Viewpoint as long as I could in the hopes that I would find some stability from which to write. These are not the times for that.

Tāmaki Makaurau has just been told that it's another week at Level 4, and parents are baying for the holidays to be moved. If the holidays are moved, more parents will start baying in response.

Teachers are exhausted and depressed and worried about their students and how much work there will be to be caught up when we finally return to school. How will we carry these anxious students through to the end of the year? How will we carry ourselves through to the end of the year?

I've always been a fan of the television show Project Runway in which a dapper man seeing contestants working against impossible odds pulls a concerned face, then says "Make it work". And they do make it work. Sometimes their completed garment is tacked together with safety pins, it may not look like it was initially intended to, but there's something there on the runway.

Teachers are like that. We make it work. We make it work because if we don't, we know it's our students that suffer. The problem is we're not always that great at remembering to take care of ourselves. All that making it work comes at a cost.

As a union we must work to represent our members, and with 20,000 plus we are a broad church with teachers from the most traditional of urban grammar schools to the tiniest of area schools.

In normal times our strong regional structures, papers, debates and conferences allow us to set policy that has gone through extensive consultation, but in these times questions are asked and need answers within hours.

We must look to existing policy and draw it across while being aware that there are no perfect solutions because this is a deeply imperfect situation. The decision we have had to make to move annual conference online this year is an example of this.

**Teachers are like that. We make it work. We make it work because if we don't, we know it's our students that suffer. The problem is we're not always that great at remembering to take care of ourselves.**

Meanwhile there's a thing I've noticed with educational types who don't spend much time in the classroom. Whenever you raise a concern about some new innovation or proposed 'solution', they'll feel obliged to remind you that it's all about the students.

I don't know that there's any classroom teacher who really needs reminding of that, and I've never understood how they can think that running teachers ragged won't have an impact on ākonga. For them, students are some amorphous blob, but we know their names and whānau.

We look them in the eye everyday (assuming of course in Tāmaki Makaurau that they have a device and have switched their camera on). We are always thinking of the impact on our students and you can't separate teaching from learning.

Covid has shone a light on the massive inequity that our students experience. Between those who have devices, internet, somewhere quiet to work, and those who are living without. So too have we seen the difference between schools in how they approach online learning.

Some schools have simply shifted their entire timetable as it stands online, hour zoom after hour zoom with students required to turn up in their school uniform (though surely there's no shoe inspection).

Others are experimenting with more flexible models that allow students to access their learning at different times (not least because in some households there are still not enough devices and they're forced to share).

It's the disjointed nature of our schooling system with all its attendant benefits and risks writ large, and teachers working their hardest to make it work.

Seeking to resolve some of the disconnected issues of our education system is Te Mahau or the Education Services Agency.

Intended to house a curriculum centre and the 'brawn' of the leadership centre, consultation around this has had to cease due to this latest lockdown, but we continue to be concerned as to whether the service that was envisioned in the Tomorrow's Schools report will be able to become a reality under Ministry leadership.

Throughout all this uncertainty, National Office continues to work to make sure teachers' voices are heard. I spent three days in the first week of this latest lockdown watching members present to the Education and Workforce subcommittee and it was inspiring to be part of a union with such articulate members so ready and willing to speak up for their profession.

That is what we have to hold on to in these parlous times. That by working together and speaking up we will be able to make it work for kaiako and for ākonga.



# Powerful PPTA submissions on Teaching Council bill

Members from around the motu did PPTA proud with their oral submissions on proposed legislation to expand the Teaching Council's fee setting powers.

**An unexpected highlight of lockdown was watching more than 90 PPTA Te Wehengarua members make powerful and dignified submissions on the Training and Education (Teaching Council Fees and Costs) Amendment Bill.**

On August 9 the Minister of Education, Hon Chris Hipkins, introduced the Training and Education (Teaching Council Fees and Costs) Amendment Bill to parliament. This bill would see the Teaching Council's powers to set fees greatly expanded, and was met with great concern by PPTA Te Wehengarua members.

**“Due process needs to be followed and it needs to be open and transparent between all parties. It is good that the voices of teachers are being heard.”**

Minister Hipkins also announced that the bill would be moving through the select committee process in an unusually short timeframe. PPTA members were left with only 13 days to get their written submissions into the select committee, making it very hard for branches and regions to get together to make group submissions. Eight days into the process, Level 4 lockdown was announced, but the select committee process went ahead. Undeterred, more than 1000 people made submissions to the select committee, and more than 90 PPTA members made oral submissions via Zoom.

PPTA members from all around the country, of all ages and levels of experience, gave their submissions in English or te reo Māori, with power and

dignity. They stood tall for themselves, for the union, and for the profession. We thank all members who made written and oral submissions to the select committee.

## Here are some highlights:

Sam Dockery from Mt Albert Grammar School commented that the Teaching Council was charging teachers for “two functions that seem vastly overpriced and one that we don't want at all”.

Chris Abercrombie, PPTA Junior Vice President, from James Hargest College, said “I really support having a bouncer on the door – that's the key role of the Teaching Council – to control who enters and to help people out who shouldn't be there.”

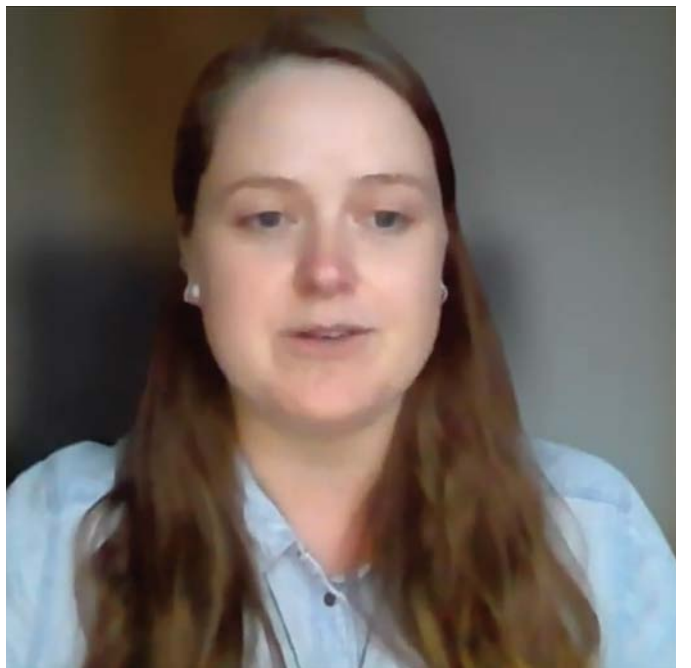
Nicholas Eddy, a mature new entry teacher from Hastings Boys High School, said there seemed to be a lack of good faith in rushing legislation through. “Due process needs to be followed and it needs to be open and transparent between all parties. It is good that the voices of teachers are being heard.”

Natalie Jump, from Wellington Girls College, commented that teachers are not a blank cheque for the Teaching Council. The council had downplayed the fee hike by only referring to it as an annual fee of \$157 – this is deliberately misleading. “If this bill is passed it means that we are to trust the Teaching Council will act in good faith, it will reign in the purse strings and it will not double its fees. However, we do not trust the council. We need time to consult. We propose the Minister of Education provide the interim funding for this to happen.”

Shannon-Mae Read, a sixth year teacher at Upper Hutt College, said the bill proposes to allow the Teaching Council to set fees as it sees fit without sufficient consultation, perpetuating the imbalance of power between the profession and the council. “More importantly, it disproportionately affects our beginning, part-time and relief teachers.”

Conor Dykes, a third year teacher at Tauranga Boys High School, said the Teaching Council was operating outside of its means and providing services that teachers didn't ask for and didn't want “If it is this urgent, let the government fund the costs. This bill does nothing to encourage people into teaching, in fact it actively pushes people away.”

Susan Haugh, PPTA's Advisory Officer campaign coordination, said the urgency of the process meant there could not be a considered, consultative conversation about the bill. “There could have been some government funding to prop this up while we did this process thoroughly. We're taking a lot on trust – we don't need to be doing that. The situation is not so urgent that we need to put in a broad, vague, cover-all clause in the hopes that the Teaching Council will do the right thing with that. Our members feel like they have been burnt by that before.”



PPTA submitters presenting to the select committee on Zoom.



# Presidential elections 2021

It's time to vote for your president and junior vice-president.

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Voting for the positions of president and junior vice-president is being conducted online in early Term 4. This is a change to previous years and one that is being made due to uncertainty around COVID-19 levels, and the potential health and safety issues associated with running paper-based voting.

PPTA has received two nominations for president and two for junior vice-president. Each candidate explains why they should be elected. Voting closes 5pm, Friday 29 October.



## Presidential and junior vice-presidential candidate Miles Langdon – Macleans College

I see remuneration as the key to retaining and recruiting quality staff. Small increases we fight tooth and nail for seem to be consumed by inflation, and/or a hike in fees. Women need to be supported more in the profession but so too do men – given that, for various reasons, the proportion of men in secondary teaching is reducing. Māori, Pasifika teachers, LGBTQ+ teachers, women teachers should all be encouraged to move ahead in the profession, but I just don't think it should be at the expense of collectivism of the union. We need to stand together on the issue of fighting for more pay.

Secondary teachers also need to stand apart from our primary/kindergarten colleagues. For years they have taken advantage of a clause in their contract which requires the government to offer them whatever is offered to us. This has undermined the dignity or 'mana' of the secondary profession.

NCEA continues to be a vexed issue. Proposed changes to the structure of it don't seem to do anything to lessen teacher workload. The writing, assessment and moderation of internals can be very onerous.

The conference paper "A home for everyone" is an issue the PPTA could take the initiative on and propel the homelessness and dire living arrangements of many in NZ into the spotlight. Many state servants (Nurses, Police, Teachers) are being excluded from the property market simply because wages are not conducive to saving for a deposit. In fact the PPTA has a role to play here; in pushing for the right for all working class NZers to own their own home.

Finally, if I was elected I would commit myself to raising the status of secondary teaching in NZ to make it a sought after profession with competitive wages and more diverse. A career that reflects and embellishes NZ's cultural, social and ethnic diversity.



**Presidential candidate Melanie Webber  
- current PPTA Te Wehengarua President**

We are living in curious times. I'm writing this from Level 4 lockdown, so the uncertainty that I am sure will still be looming over us as you read this is heavy on me now. Last year I wrote my statement from the midst of a Level 3 lockdown in Tāmaki Makaurau and the uncertainty was no less then.

In that statement I spoke about how the issues that seemed so big at the start of 2020 - the NCEA review, a grasping Teaching Council, school funding inequities and making the promises of the accord real - were no smaller then, but had been overshadowed by COVID-19.

I said that wasn't to say that these things were unimportant, and we must not take our eye off them as things changed so quickly around us. We needed to continue to make sure that teacher voice, the professional voice, was heard loud and clear when decisions are being made.

We have done that, and we continue to do that. I spent much of the last week in between meetings watching hundreds of our members represent our views on the Teaching Council to the select committee. I was so, so proud of our members. Their passion and their rhetoric. Their ability to stand up for our profession.

I am passionate about public education and I am passionate about 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 a part of a union that does this, and I would be proud to be chosen to speak on your behalf.

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

**Junior vice-presidential candidate Chris Abercrombie  
- James Hargest College**

Having had the experience of working in a range of schools and in different areas of New Zealand, I have an appreciation of the many pressures that we face around the motu.

These pressures are coming to a head in the next year with the NCEA changes, the Curriculum Refresh, and the Collective negotiations. With my role as JVP and acting President in Term Two of this year, I have relished the chance to gain the experience needed to fight for members at this time of great change.

I believe that I can be a strong voice who reflects the diversity of experience of teachers in Aotearoa New Zealand. I understand the many obstacles and concerns we face in our daily working lives. I've also felt the incredible joy and sense of pride that we all have as teachers within our classrooms and schools.

We share in this journey; we are all paddling in the same waka. Every school - from Te Tai Tokerau Northland, all the way down to the bottom of Te Waipounamu (where I live) - should have what they need. To 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.



## Tiakina e tangata, looking after you

This year's Māori Teachers' Conference focused on the need for Māori teaching and support staff to take time out for themselves.

A line-up of inspirational speakers, dynamic workshops, amazing food and 192 enthusiastic attendees were the ingredients for an awesome PPTA Māori Teachers' Conference, held in Wellington in mid-July.

The theme of the conference this year was Tiakina te Tangata, looking after you. "Very few of our Māori staff take time out for themselves to rejuvenate and spend time with whānau. Too much time is spent of Māori teachers giving of themselves," says PPTA Te Wehengarua Te Kaiahautū Māori hōu, Miriama Barton.

"So the conference was an absolutely awesome opportunity for teachers to network, share resources, teaching kaupapa, planning and their love of teaching. It was also an opportunity for them to impart their love and manaakitanga. And of course they enjoyed listening to the valuable keynote speakers."

Speakers included Hon Kelvin Davis, Associate Minister of Education (Māori Education), Māori Party president Che Wilson, Māori Party MPs Rawiri Waititi and Debbie Ngarewa-Packer, Manea Creative Director and Team Manager Joby Hopa, NZ representative at the World Dignity University, Dr Keri Lawson, and Director of Maori-medium schooling projects for Victoria University of Wellington, Rawiri Toia.

Former New Plymouth Mayor Andrew Judd proved to be an extremely popular speaker. When Miriama Barton was in the throes of organising the conference, she contacted Mr Judd to ask him what his preferred title was. He told her, "recovering racist". Miriama says attendees loved Mr Judd's speech, particularly his calls for more education about the Māori history of Aotearoa New Zealand towns and cities, and greater recognition of te tangata tiriti as a term which is taken to mean 'people of the treaty' and refers to all non-Māori citizens of New Zealand.

In 2014 Mr Judd received national media attention when he and his council supported the establishment of a special Māori ward in New Plymouth in a move intended to increase Māori representation, lift iwi participation in council decision-making and fulfil Te Tiriti o Waitangi obligations. Mr Judd also called for all councils in New Zealand to have up to 50% Maori representation. The proposals were widely criticised by politicians, including New Zealand First leader Hon Winston Peters describing arguments for the ward as childish nonsense.

On the Monday morning of the conference, attendees had an extensive range of workshops to choose from, with subjects including manawa ora, mana kōrero, an update on the NCEA change

programme, fostering collaboration, Indigenous Māori knowledge in the core curriculum and new NCEA te reo Māori curriculum level 1. These sessions gave attendees plenty of classroom tips and new ideas.

Miriama says a particular highlight of the conference was the screening of the movie, Cousins, on the Monday evening. The movie, released this year, is based on a book by Patricia Grace (Ngāti Toa, Ngāti Raukawa, Te Āti Awa) about three Māori cousins, connected by blood but separated by circumstances, who spend a lifetime in search of each other. Both Patricia Grace and her daughter Briar Grace-Smith (Ngāti Wai) who co-directed the movie, attended the screening.

On Tuesday morning, attendees enjoyed a cultural excursion to Te Papa Tongarewa, the national museum of New Zealand.

The only negative comments in the conference evaluation feedback was that the programme was too full on, which is probably the best kind of criticism a conference organiser can receive.

[confer.nz/mtc2021](https://confer.nz/mtc2021)

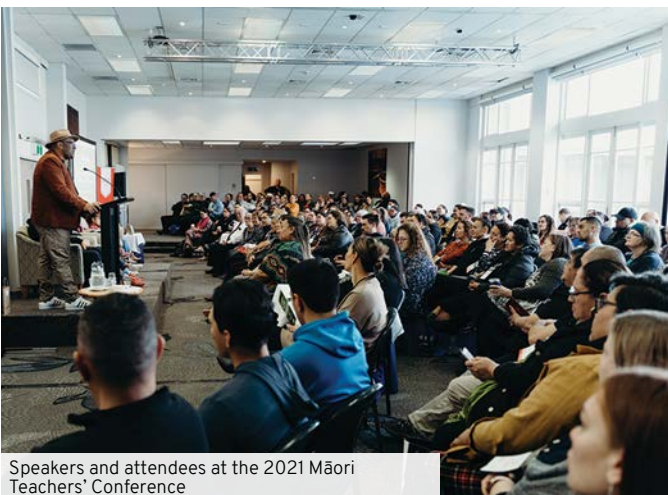
**26th NZ PPTA  
National Māori Teachers' Conference 2021**

**Sunday 11 – Wednesday 14 July**  
**Brentwood Hotel, Wellington**

**Tiakina te Tangata – Looking After You – Tihei Mauri Ora!**  
Hosted by Te Huarahi Māori Motuhake

#huiatau21





Speakers and attendees at the 2021 Māori Teachers' Conference



# Issues and Organising seminar

PPTA activists converged on the Capital in August for a day of inspiration, motivation and collaboration.

Hīkoia te Kōrero - walk the talk was the theme of the 2021 Issues and Organising seminar, which was held in August after being delayed due to COVID restrictions.



We were delighted to have Professor Mark Harcourt, Professor of Human Resource Development at the University of Waikato School of Management, able to join us. He has studied workplace happenings in some of New Zealand's best-known organisations – turnover at the Bank of New Zealand, stress at the Reserve Bank, commitment at the Police and Fire Services, and occupational over-use syndrome at the Building Research Association of NZ.

Professor Harcourt has carried out significant research on collective employee representation, especially the union default. The idea is, that instead of having to opt in, workers have to opt out. Professor Harcourt outlined the various benefits of the union default, not only for the individual but for the collective (being the union) and wider society. These benefits are emotional, physical, financial, and cultural.

A survey he and university colleagues conducted in 2019 found a majority of virtually every group studied in the survey favoured a union default. This included almost every ethnic group, across genders, all income groups except those earning more than \$150,000, every educational group, almost all occupational groups (including managers), all groups by employment status (including employers). Sixty

percent of managers supported union default, as did 62% of employers and 51% of self-employed people.

Professor Harcourt was informative, entertaining and motivating.

The afternoon panel on the Changing Nature of Work was packed with quality presenters with a wide range of experience and knowledge. It was particularly pleasing to be able to have Yvonne Oldfield as part of the panel to talk on her PhD around precarious work on the global and national stage.

Yvonne was joined by Stephen Blumenfield and Rebecca Downs from Victoria University of Wellington's Centre for Labour Employment and Work, and Bill Rosenberg economist at the Council of Trade Unions (CTU) for more than ten years and Senior Associate at Victoria University of Wellington's Institute for Governance and Policy.

## Change has characterised work throughout history and was highlighted how important the collective and unions have been in shaping that change.

Workshops focussed on key areas such as supporting part time teachers, changes to the NCEA, the judicial review of the Teaching Council's decisions to raise practising certificate fees and replace triennial certification with annual certification, and the upcoming Collective Agreement negotiations.

Stephen talked us through the current trends in employment contracts and Rebecca spoke about how aware students in her Future of Work paper were about the impacts of these changes and they had a real desire to make sure they got the most out of them.

Change has characterised work throughout history and was highlighted

how important the collective and unions have been in shaping that change. Yvonne reminded us that having moved from a harsh "master and servant" model predominated with high levels of sub-contracting, self-employment, home-based work, and insecure jobs through political, industrial and legal action, we need to be aware that any increase in precarious work, hidden through the idea of "choice and freedom", could take us back closer to these models.

Finally, Bill outlined how it's hard to predict what it will look like but it is not pre-determined: we have choices and we can prepare for it, supporting people through change. The CTU maintains there are three key requirements for creating positive change: A capable state (active market labour policies, quality public services); employment laws and policies that ensure everyone shares in the benefits; and industrial policies to replace 'old' with 'better'.

Saturday evening saw a Social Quiz take place. There was a great turnout with eight teams of eight, spot prizes and an amazing quiz created by Michael Cabral-Tarry (Auckland Regional Chair). MC Chris Abercrombie kept the laughter, groans and friendly competition flowing. PPTA staff members spread across teams challenged the specific detail required for some Collective Agreement questions but as we know the quiz master's decision is final!

An 'unconference session' was held on the Sunday and again there was a wide variety of discussions held by members. It's always heartening to see the activism and passion at a grassroots level for teacher professional and industrial growth.

An important acknowledgement to National Office Personal Assistant Julie Elliott this year who singlehandedly organised all members, staff and guests in a very short space of time and dealt calmly with all the last-minute changes and requests.



# Staffing summit

Principals and senior leaders lay the groundwork for a new staffing model to ensure schools meet their needs more accurately.

The Secondary Principals Council of Aotearoa (SPC) hosted a Staffing Summit in July this year for secondary, area, and kura-a-iwi school principals and senior leaders.

The summit was called to consider current staffing needs in our schools and to lay the groundwork for the development of a needs-based, staffing model for the sector. The current mechanism for allocating staffing is almost universally considered to be inadequate both in overall quantum and in targeting staffing to the needs of schools.

On the morning of the first day the 60 or so attendees heard from the summit convenor and chairperson of SPC, Kate Gainsford, about the findings of an SPC survey on staffing adequacy in secondary schools and from Dr Judie Alison on the findings of case study work on the use of staffing across a representative sample of schools.

Kate explained that components of the staffing entitlement are irrational when considered through a needs-based lens and the level of staffing entitlement generally is inadequate. Schools across the country report being on average about 5 FTTE understaffed to meet current needs, compared to actual staffing entitlements. Schools are partially covering the gaps by employing an average of 2.18 FTTE from their own

funds. Often these funds depended on the income from international students.

Dr Judie Alison's findings emphasised the complexity of staffing in secondary school and composite schools and reinforced the understanding that the formula produces insufficient staffing for actual needs. The research highlighted the unmet needs particularly in pastoral care and management. Schools make a range of painful compromises including curriculum constraints, and fewer pastoral services. While trying to accommodate the heavier workloads some schools can employ additional staffing from local funds. Clearly this creates equity issues.

Summit attendees heard from a range of both international and national leaders and experts including Peter Blatchford, Emeritus Professor in Psychology and Education at the University College London (UCL) Institute of Education and his colleague Doctor Tony Russell, who have done extensive work on the impacts of class size. They shared their most recent findings. A copy of their latest book can be downloaded free from the PPTA website.

New Zealand presenters focussed on government expenditure on secondary education, the latest research from Deakin University on the health and wellbeing of secondary senior leaders

in New Zealand and the Equity Index and how this may improve resourcing for equity in our schools.

Workshops looking at current issues linked to the changing demands of staffing used in schools included:

- Collaborative practices
- Blended and online learning
- Community and iwi engagement
- The impacts of streaming and non streaming
- Changing hours of work
- Class size
- Operational funding
- Students with additional needs
- Impacts of current reviews.

Most presentations and the report on the summit are also available on the PPTA website.

The summit was an opportunity for principals to workshop ideas on what a needs-based staffing model for secondary would consist of. Using the information collected and the feedback and research to date SPC has developed a model for a needs-based staffing formula to more accurately resource schools for their current staffing needs. There will be further engagement with the wider sector and the community on this model. Expect to hear more over the coming weeks.



Staffing Summit participants





## Conference catch ups

Two conferences in July enabled provisionally certificated teachers and establishing teachers to connect, support each other, share ideas and gain new skills, insights and knowledge.

Almost 90 secondary and area school teachers, most with only one or two years' experience, attended the Provisionally Certificated Teachers' Conference, held in Wellington on July 20-21.

Participants clearly valued the opportunity to meet in person, compared with last year when the conference had to be held online due to COVID-19 restrictions.

The conference covered a number of important topics including: classroom management; guidance on continued development of curriculum and pedagogical practice; Te Reo and tikanga; surviving and thriving as a provisionally certificated teacher; teacher wellbeing; and how to build a support community and tap into existing networks.

**Overall, delegates found the conference provided inspiration and strategies for them to improve teaching practice, gave them some new ideas to share with staff at their schools and supported them in building critical connections.**

Panel discussions, run by practising teachers who had graduated recently from being beginning teachers, provided valuable insights into how to overcome the kinds of challenges teachers can encounter early in their careers. Panellists also shared things they wished they had known during this stage of their career and advised delegates on how to build the support structures needed to find balance and thrive as provisionally certificated teachers.

A particular highlight of the conference was the Weaving Together Your Kete sessions, enabling delegates to put their new knowledge into a kete for them to take back to their school to support their practice. The sessions gave delegates opportunities to ask questions, build connections with teachers in the same subject area, have more in-depth discussions and share experiences as well as information and resources relevant to their curriculum areas.

Overall, delegates found the conference provided inspiration and strategies for them to improve teaching practice, gave them some new ideas to share with staff at their schools and supported them in building critical connections.

### PPTA Network of Establishing Teachers Conference – July 22-23, 2021

The theme of the PPTA Network of Establishing Teachers (NETs) conference, held in Wellington on July 22-23 was 'Ko te Ao Anamata o te Mātauranga' - 'The Future of Education'. The purpose of the conference was to encourage new and establishing teachers to grow as leaders and to advocate for educational progress in Aotearoa New Zealand.

Our new and establishing teacher members loved the opportunity to network with other NETs and to learn from each other. Highlights of the conference included dinner at Coco at The Roxy, fantastic speakers and workshops, and excellent 'unconference' sessions.

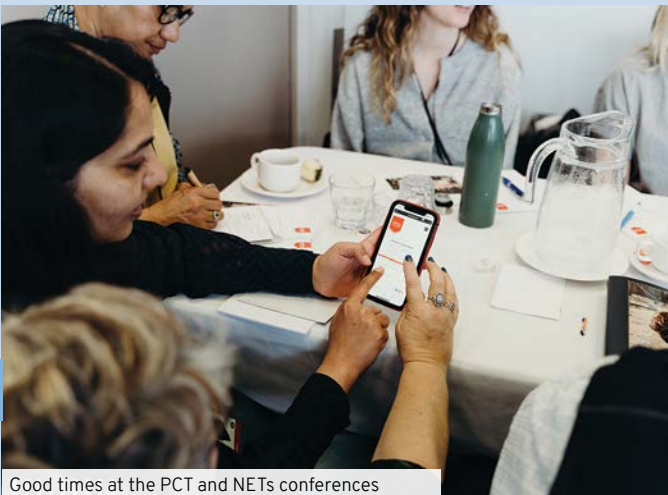
Green Party Education spokesperson Teanau Tuiono spoke passionately about his upbringing and involvement in activism, advocacy and organising. He advocated for the importance of all students having access to te reo Māori classes.

It was great to hear from a panel of bold young activists – Gina Dao-McLay, Matariki Roche, Danielle Marks and Lourdes Vano - who have recent experiences as secondary school students. They laid down a wero/

challenge to those who attended to critically examine their practice, particularly in relation to decolonising education and supporting Rainbow communities.

Attendees chose from workshops that covered a range of topics, both in professional and industrial/activist spaces. PPTA staff led workshops on claims development for 2022, campaigns and messaging, and imposter syndrome, often with support from Establishing Teachers Committee members. Masters of Education Students from Victoria University led workshops called 'Taking a Stand Against Racism', and our panel of young activists led sessions around decolonising education and recognising our own privilege. In the professional space, Hosea Tuita'alili and Kōkā-hauwai Turei, PPTA's new Āpiha Mātauranga, led interactive language sessions for those with little or no te reo Māori. Two informative sessions were presented by Bronwyn Houliston on the new Aotearoa New Zealand's histories curriculum.

Three 30-minute 'unconference' sessions were held. These are opportunities for people to learn from each other through mini workshops, discussions, quizzes or even yoga sessions.



Good times at the PCT and NETs conferences

# PPTA wins legal challenge against Teaching Council

The High Court has upheld PPTA's legal challenge against Teaching Council decisions to raise fees and introduce annual certification.

PPTA Te Wehengarua has succeeded in challenging the Teaching Council's decisions that raised practising certificate fees and replaced triennial certification with annual certification. The challenged decisions had been implemented since 1 February 2021, but have now been quashed.

The PPTA was concerned that the Council had mandated annual certification without consulting the teaching profession. The court overturned the annual certification decision, saying the Council's duty of fairness required consultation.

The court found further serious errors in the Council's decisions over basic issues of law and good process, including:

- wrongly representing to teachers that payment by installment was unlawful
- misleading the Minister on payment by installment
- not considering the pros and cons of annual certification
- imposing a blanket one-year period of certification inconsistently with the Act
- setting an unlawful fee which bundled together all costs of the Council's services

The Court rejected explanations offered by the Council's witnesses that were inconsistent with the documentary record.

The Court quashed the annual certification decision and the fee increase. As a result, the PPTA expects teachers who have certified from 1 February 2021 will be treated as having obtained a three-year practising certificate.

PPTA Te Wehengarua President Melanie Webber says teachers always knew the Council had acted illegally and this judgment confirms that view.

The PPTA welcomes the Council's announcement that it will abide by the judgment, it will continue to work with unions, and it will consult the profession on fees and annual certification.



Lead counsel for PPTA, Dr James Every-Palmer QC and Evan Jones, a teacher plaintiff.

# Thank you for your gold service, Mr Knight!

Tony Knight reflects on 50 years of being a secondary teacher and PPTA member.

Having been a secondary teacher and PPTA member for 50 years, Tony Knight still gets a buzz when an adult past-pupil appears unexpectedly, saying ‘Hello, is that you, Mr Knight? You were my teacher back in such and such a year. I still remember your history lessons’. “I love it when that happens, it is possibly the very best thing about being a secondary teacher.”

Tony’s golden anniversary was celebrated earlier this year, with a special ceremony at which PPTA General Secretary, Michael Stevenson, presented Tony with a certificate, a pin and a book, recognising 50 years of loyal membership and service.

Unionism was compulsory when Tony joined the PPTA Morrinsville College branch in 1971. “I willingly joined the Morrinsville College branch of the PPTA, believing in collective responsibility, strength and effective maintenance of suitable conditions for teaching and learning, as well as adequate remuneration for recruitment and retention of teachers.

“I was sorry to see the end of compulsory unionism, so I am certainly one who would advise new secondary teachers to join PPTA. I’d say ‘Have a good look at your pay and conditions of work; and if you’re still unsure, compare them to others’. All the material, as well as many of the skills benefits, that come with being a secondary teacher, have been won for you and your colleagues by the collective strength, the power of belonging, of the NZPPTA.”

In the late 1970s and early 1980s, while Tony was Deputy Principal at Opononi Area School, teachers’ pay increases were set by negotiations between PPTA and Ministry of Education representatives before arbitrators who heard statements about workloads and responsibilities by teachers selected by PPTA for their “typicality”. On several of these pay-rounds Tony represented Area School Deputy Principals for PPTA, appearing at hearings in Wellington as an “expert witness”.



PPTA General Secretary Michael Stevenson presents Tony Knight with his 50th anniversary certificate.

In 1983-1984 he taught at Thames High School, where Tony Steele, then PPTA President, was a colleague. On Tony’s recommendation, Tony Knight served on PPTA’s Curriculum Committee from 1984 to 1986, helping develop PPTA curriculum policy.

The last of the five schools he taught at in his fulltime career was Whangamata Area School, where he was a teaching (history, social studies, English) Deputy Principal for 15 years before “retiring” in 1999. Since then he has worked as a day reliever at various schools around Auckland where he now lives.

“Working as a day reliever, I have noticed that there is much less opportunity for teacher-talk and board-work than there used to be. Now it seems to be mostly screen-time and keyboard does it.”

In the 50 years of his PPTA membership, Tony says the biggest “change” has been the way PPTA has held together as a union, gaining strength as other unions have faded. “The willingness of members to join in direct action in support of

teaching and learning issues is a credit to our ongoing leadership’s ability to work with the Ministry and politicians, and to members’ trust in their elected union representatives.

“For me the best thing about being a PPTA member over the last 50 years has been the feeling of belonging to a community of fellow professionals - supportive, active and caring about the best outcomes for their students and their colleagues. There has been the important teachers’ pay and conditions aspects of PPTA as well - the material benefits of the collective that have made my teaching life a career of no regret.

“Having been a secondary teacher over these past five decades has had numerous rewards. Obviously, it has enabled me to be well-housed and to raise a family in the traditional New Zealand manner.

“It has offered me work with scores of wonderful professional colleagues of a variety of disciplines in a variety of locations.”



# Introducing Miriama Barton

Miriama Barton, PPTA's Kaihautū Māori, brings 20 years of activism to her new role.

**Every day Miriama Barton, PPTA Te Wehengarua Kaihautū Māori, sets out her work plan and every day it never works out that way.**

Miriama (Te Whānau o Ruataupare, Te Aowirirangi nga hapū, Ngāti Porou rāua ko Ngāti Tara Tokanui ngā iwi, Te Uri-o-Hikihiki te hapū, Ngātiwai te iwi), who took up the role in June, says she is loving the job and the challenges it brings. “The thing that attracted me most to this role was the challenge of a new road for me. I’ve always been involved in Māori education and this is a new journey which will enable me to add more to my basket of knowledge.”

When she arrived, Miriama plunged into organising the Māori Teachers Conference, attended by almost 200 teaching and support staff around the motu. Inevitably, there were last minute issues, including a couple of speakers falling ill so Miriama was very appreciative when others she approached stepped up at short notice.

At the time of writing, Miriama’s current challenge was assisting with the Ngā Manu Kōrero competitions, regarded as the most significant event on the Māori education calendar for nurturing the oratory skills and providing the stage for young people to express their views and to lay down their challenges to a critical audience of peers, parents, whānau and judges. The finals were due to be held in Manawatū at the end of September but because of the COVID-19 outbreak, they will take place online. “So the crème de la crème of Māori speakers will be able to be seen and heard online. What it will look like, we don’t know, but we’re going to try our best.”

Contingency planning for an online event has been going on since the start of the year as organisers did not want to cancel the competitions, like they were forced to last year due to COVID.

Before she started working for PPTA, Miriama was a member of PPTA and actively involved in the union for 20

years. “I’m a primary trained teacher and originally taught in total immersion schools as that was where I thought the highest need for our Māori children was. However, I gradually realised that there were bigger challenges for our Māori students in non-immersion schools. So for the last 21 years I have taught at Hamilton Boys’ High School. I loved it. There are almost 2,500 boys there now. When I first started there about six percent of students were Māori, now there are about 30 percent.”

Outside of work, Miriama enjoys spending time with her whānau, and is busy working on a feather cloak that she needs to finish in time for Christmas.

She has also been excitedly watching the progress being made on a new home that her two youngest sons have just built. “One is in a wheelchair and the other is 6ft 4 so that made things very interesting.

“Having time with family is the main thing for me - I loved the lockdown walks.”



Kaihautū Māori Miriama Barton, centre, plunged into organising the 2021 Māori Teachers Conference when she took up her new role in June.



# Myanmar teachers strike for six months plus

Myanmar teachers and civil servants appreciate PPTA's support as they continue striking in a bid to restore democracy.

**Seven months on from the military coup that rocked Myanmar, brave teachers are still striking in a desperate effort to return their country to democracy.**

Since Myanmar's military general brutally suppressed street demonstrations, killing more than 1,000 protestors, a nationwide civil disobedience movement (CDM) has emerged as a key tactic in the struggle for democracy. The movement is made up of hundreds of thousands of civil servants across the country taking continuous strike action by refusing to work for the military junta they see as illegitimate. The ongoing strikes of civil servants have crippled the junta's ability to gain control of the country, severely undermining its claims for international recognition.

Teachers have been at the forefront of the civil disobedience movement with the junta's own reports stating 121,455 teachers across the country still striking as of July. That is almost one-third of the total workforce. In areas not under

full military control teachers have been working to set up alternative schools and education for local children.

UnionAID, the Aotearoa/NZ union movement's international development charity, works extensively in Myanmar supporting the CDM through its trade union partners and links with other human rights defenders in the country. Executive Officer Michael Naylor says the strike action comes at a huge cost to the workers.

"Dozens have been arrested and an estimated 23,000 teachers suspended or dismissed. All those striking are facing real hardship having gone months without pay."

"The people of Myanmar are literally starving themselves in their fight to force out the junta. We get calls to support people facing hardship every week."

Most recently a group of striking teachers and other civil servants in the

township of Kawkaareik reached out to UnionAID for support. Many had gone six months without a salary and were relying on food from neighbours or loans from money lenders to support their families. UnionAID responded, providing \$4,000 to support 30 teachers and 13 doctors and nurses so they could afford to continue their strike action for a further month. This was possible thanks to the donations to UnionAID's Myanmar Democracy Appeal, including a generous \$1,000 donation from the PPTA.

U Kyaw (not real name) who helped distribute the funds to the striking teachers said they are grateful for the support from New Zealand. "Although it is only a small amount of financial aid for these CDM participants it will give them strength during this crisis time. The CDM workers are truly our heroes who are determined to fight until they win the Myanmar Spring Revolution."





## Is my job safe?

Out in the field – information and advice from PPTA Te Wehengarua’s intrepid field officers.

### Sunrise High School

At morning briefing Hira, the Principal of Sunrise High School, announced to her staff that unfortunately the school needed to lose the equivalent of three full-time teaching positions.

Hira acknowledged it was not an easy message to be delivering and that she understood the next period of time would be challenging. Hira gave assurances that the school would run a thorough and transparent process in line with the collective agreement and she reminded staff they could contact EAP for support during the process.

James, the Branch Chair, was surprised and asked why staff would be losing their jobs as he knew the school roll had grown over the past year.

Hira explained that for a number of years the school had been staffed over and above the guaranteed minimum staffing funded by the Ministry of

Education. Although it was expected that there would even be a small increase in Ministry funded staffing for the next year the school could not afford to keep funding additional staff out of its operational funding

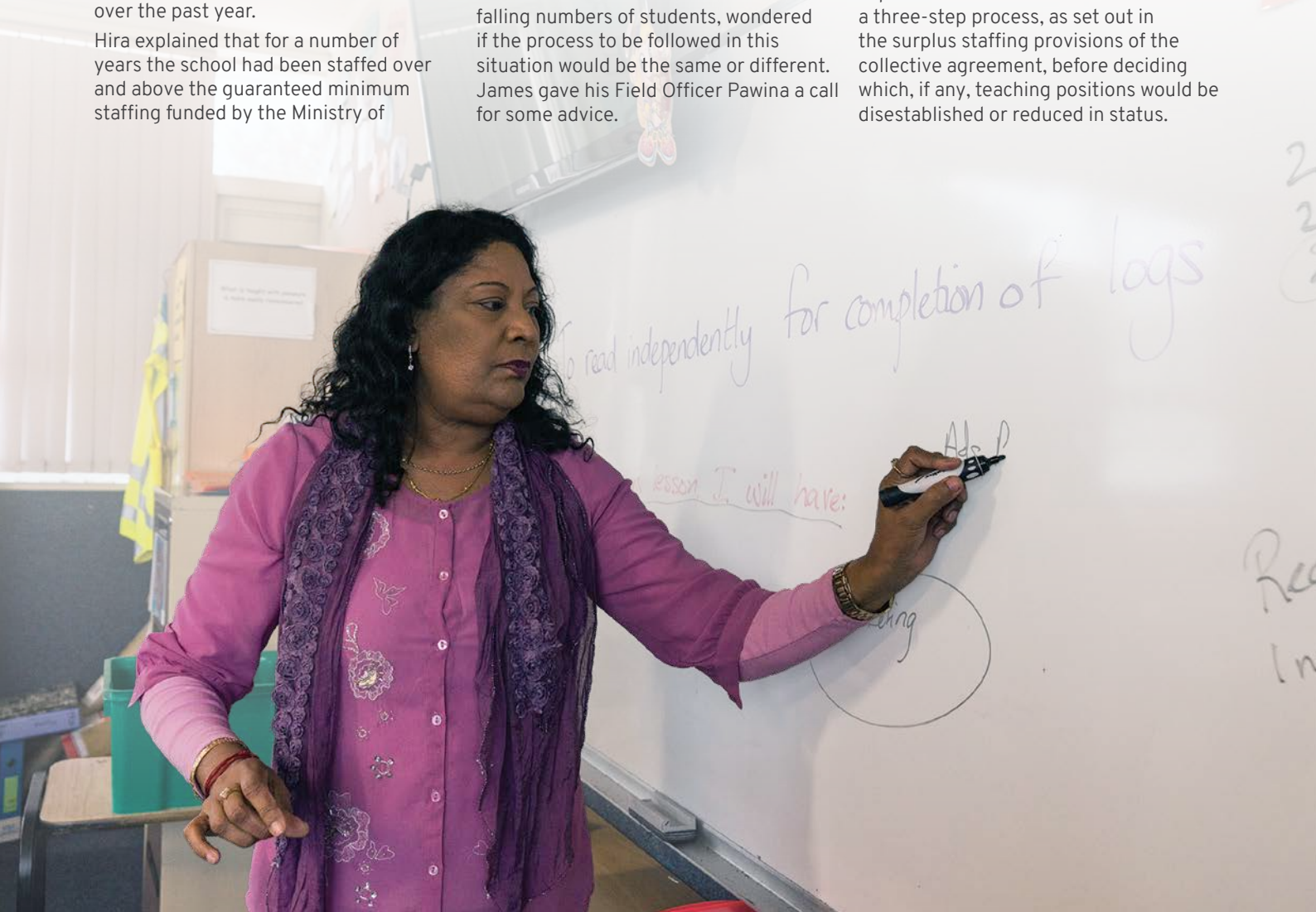
Hira explained that funding generated by the school’s previously large number of foreign fee-paying students had been considerably reduced for over a year and that it was this additional funding that had supported the three additional positions. The money was no longer there to support extra staffing and the school could no longer adopt and wait and see what happens approach.

James, who had been involved previously with a situation of staff losses due to falling numbers of students, wondered if the process to be followed in this situation would be the same or different. James gave his Field Officer Pawina a call for some advice.

Pawina explained that irrespective of the reason for the staffing reduction, the same process needed to be followed. Pawina told James she had a presentation on surplus staffing processes and offered to meet with the branch and share the information as well as answer questions. It was agreed that the presentation could occur during a regular staff meeting time.

Pawina explained that Hira had correctly followed the first step of any surplus staffing situation by telling staff that the school was in a surplus staffing situation. James, in contacting the Field Officer, ensured that members were getting access to advice about the process.

When she met with members, Pawina explained that the school had to follow a three-step process, as set out in the surplus staffing provisions of the collective agreement, before deciding which, if any, teaching positions would be disestablished or reduced in status.



Here's how the process happened at Sunrise High.

### Step one: Attrition

Attrition is the non-replacement of teachers who might, for example resign or retire, or fixed term positions that come to an end.

The school was compliant with the legislation around fixed term employment and so there were no fixed term positions to consider under attrition. Whetu, a Maths teacher, had just accepted a position at another school. Karen, a science teacher, had been thinking about retirement but decided to put that thinking on hold, as she wondered if she might benefit from the next stage in the process. Following the attrition stage there were now two positions that needed to be identified as surplus.

### Step two: Voluntary Options

For the two remaining positions the school called for volunteers. It was explained if any staff member made a voluntary offer and it was accepted they would be able to choose one of three redundancy options: supernumerary employment; retraining, for up to one year; or long service payment.

Karen, who had been teaching for 33 years, was keen to get the long service payment and made a voluntary offer. Her offer was considered and accepted because there were other staff who could cover the curriculum areas Karen taught. Karen was delighted. She received a 30-week lump-sum payment and continued

her relationship with the school by relieving there in future years.

### Step three: the CAPNA process

The next stage was much more challenging. As there was one position left to disestablish, the BOT moved to a formal Curriculum and Pastoral Needs Analysis (CAPNA) process. Here the Board needed to decide which teaching position had to be disestablished or reduced in status. As part of this step the Board consulted with a nominee of the PPTA National Executive. A full analysis of the current and predicted curriculum and pastoral needs was undertaken and shown to teachers as part of the legal required consultation process.

The Board met in two stages. The first to make provisional decisions on how the reduction was to be met. Unfortunately, Jasmine's position was identified as surplus. Jasmine was the school's Japanese teacher and the BOT, having considered the CAPNA document, decided there were insufficient student numbers taking Japanese to warrant retaining her position.

Jasmine was notified of the Board's provisional decision and given all information relevant to that decision. Pawina supported Jasmine to comment and make submissions to the Board.

The Board considered Jasmine's response before making its final decision. The decision to disestablish her role was confirmed.

Jasmine was notified in a manner she had agreed to and advised she could

choose from the following four options: supernumerary employment; retraining, for up to one year; long service payment; or severance payment.

Jasmine chose the retraining option but was not happy with the decision. She and Pawina discussed the viability of raising a personal grievance. In the end a grievance wasn't pursued. Jasmine received full salary for a year while she upskilled through completing a post graduate diploma in Special Needs Education in the following year. Jasmine then became a SENCO working in a different school.

### Hillborough College

John, the Principal at Hillborough College, had a similar morning briefing announcement. At Hillborough, the reason for the staffing reduction was different. It was because of falling student numbers and the school had been advised that the Ministry of Education would be funding fewer positions. The process that Hillborough College then undertook to reduce staffing was the same process as detailed above in the Sunrise scenario.

Remember, if your school is facing a surplus staffing situation for any reason your Field Officer will meet with your branch and explain the process in detail and support any members affected. These situations are difficult and occur through the fault of no-one. Contact your Field Officer, if your branch is affected by surplus staffing, so supports can be put in place.

Photo by Melinda Gimpel via Unsplash



**Members –  
update your  
details with us!**

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

If you have changed school, address, email address or phone number, please let us know so we can update your membership details.

#### **You can do it online...**

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

All you need to do is visit [ppta.org.nz](http://ppta.org.nz) and look for the log-in tab at the top right of the page. Once logged in, you will be taken to the member dashboard, where you can update your details by selecting the 'view profile' tab.

If you have any difficulty logging in, just email [webmaster@ppta.org.nz](mailto:webmaster@ppta.org.nz)

#### **Or talk with a human**

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

You can reach them at [membership@ppta.org.nz](mailto:membership@ppta.org.nz) or phone our national office on 04 384 9964



# PPTA Annual Conference moves online

COVID-19 restrictions and ongoing uncertainty around alert levels has forced Annual Conference to be replaced by an online annual general meeting.

As this issue of PPTA was being printed, plans were under way for an online Annual Conference this year, due to the current recent outbreak of the delta variant of COVID-19. This has changed the way New Zealand responds to COVID-19.

The proximity of the most recent outbreak to the Issues and Organising conference has required PPTA Te Wehengarua National Executive to think long and hard about the health and safety implications of running a face to face conference.

In order to plan and run a successful conference we need a degree of certainty as to how the event will operate. There are challenges that are associated with regions of New Zealand being at different alert levels. Additionally, there are concerns around requiring



members to travel to regional hubs or to a central conference.

Therefore, and to meet the Association's constitutional obligations, PPTA Te Wehengarua National Executive decided the 2021 annual conference would be replaced with an online annual general meeting (AGM), with constitutional

amendment papers, on the afternoon of Tuesday 5 October 2021.

Delegates attending by webinar/Zoom would be entitled to speak and vote, with the President chairing either from PPTA National Office in Wellington or her home.

The next issue of PPTA News will include a report on the AGM.



## \$1,500 AD&D

All members of the PPTA are now covered by a \$1,500 Accidental Death & Dismemberment Benefit provided through American Income Life Insurance Company, including \$500 spouse coverage and a further \$500 coverage on dependent children. This is an automatic membership benefit of belonging to the PPTA.

**Members have the option to increase their coverage an additional \$10,000 which costs just \$2 for the first year.**

**To have an AIL representative deliver your certificate of coverage and explain additional insurance coverage available:**

**Reply online: [AILNZ.co.nz/Request](https://AILNZ.co.nz/Request)**

**Reply by telephone: (09) 320 3031**

Please note: To qualify for the \$10,000 of additional ADB coverage, an AIL representative must visit you, obtain an enrollment form and collect premium for the first year. You may renew annually for \$5.

A.M. Best, one of the oldest and most respected insurance ratings companies, has rated American Income Life as A (Excellent) for overall Financial Strength (as of 7/20).



in New Zealand

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