

www.ppta.org.nz

PPTA NEWS

Volume 36 • Number 5 • July / Hōngongoi 2015

STCA campaign launched

PAGE 8



PPTA NEWS



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

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

Editorial and advertising

Enquiries should be addressed to: The editor, PPTA News, PO Box 2119, Wellington, New Zealand.

Ph: 04 384 9964 Fax: 382 8763

Online: www.ppta.org.nz

Editor: Anna Kirtlan Email: akirtlan@ppta.org.nz

Layout and design: Ben Weston

Printed by Toolbox Imaging

Deadlines

August edition: 5pm, 3 August for articles and ads.

September edition: 5pm, 24 August for articles and ads.

PPTA field officer contacts

Contact your local field office for all queries about your collective agreement entitlements or for assistance with employment relationship problems.

Auckland

4 Western Springs Road, Morningside
P O Box 52 006, Auckland 1352
ph (09) 815 8610 fax (09) 815 8612
email: auckland@ppta.org.nz

Hamilton

Level 1, ANZ Building, 650 Te Rapa Rd, Te Rapa
P O Box 20 294, Hamilton 3241
ph (07) 849 0168 fax (07) 849 1794
email: hamilton@ppta.org.nz

Palmerston North

Guardian Trust House, cnr The Square and Main Street
P O Box 168, Palmerston North 4440
ph (06) 358 4036 fax (06) 358 4055
email: palmerston@ppta.org.nz

Christchurch

Level 1, 501 Papanui Road, Papanui, Christchurch 8053
ph (03) 366 6524 fax (03) 379 4011
email: christchurch@ppta.org.nz

Dunedin

Queens Garden Court, 3 Crawford Street
P O Box 1561, Dunedin 9054
ph (03) 477 1311 fax (03) 477 1804
email: dunedin@ppta.org.nz

PPTA member benefits



Education Benevolent Society

Life Cover - Income Protection -
Disablement - Living Assurance.

EBS Health Care provides a comprehensive and growing range of low-cost medical benefits.

Ph 0800 268 3763 | www.ebs.org.nz



PPTA members are eligible for a special banking package with Kiwibank.

Kiwibank is 100% New Zealand owned and operated. It's been thinking up ways to give Kiwis better value banking since 2002.

The banking package currently includes 0.25% off Kiwibank's advertised fixed home loan rates (excludes special offers or one-offs), 0.50% off Kiwibank's advertised variable home loan rate (excludes revolving home loans and offset mortgage), free EFTPOS on your everyday accounts and great discounts on credit cards and insurance.

Visit www.ppta.org.nz/membership/benefits to view the complete package, and the terms and conditions that apply. If you'd like to join Kiwibank, call 0800 629 008.

Kiwibank Limited's Disclosure Statement is available from your local Kiwibank or at www.kiwibank.co.nz.



Hertz rental car

PPTA members can receive special member rates - quote CDP no 1674602 when booking. Ph 0800 654 321
www.hertz.co.nz

Inside this issue...

Māori Teachers' Conference	4	STCA campaign launch in Auckland	8
Safer sport for LGBTI students	6	Members hold fast to Charter Schools boycott	9
PPTA membership card	7	Policing (Cost Recovery) Amendment Bill OIA delayed	15

A qualified report

This month initial results from the Teaching and Learning International Survey (TALIS) were released and the minister was quick to respond with a bouquet for teachers, complimenting them for being “amongst the most highly-trained, best qualified and most experienced in the world.” I know there’s a temptation to read ‘experienced’ as a synonym for ‘old’ but I’m going to take the win.

I don’t think it’s an accident that New Zealand teachers are so well-trained and qualified. I think it’s a result of teacher unions and national collective agreements. It has been a thirty-year struggle to establish training and qualification requirements in the Secondary Teachers’ Collective Agreements because it is a truth widely acknowledged that, left to their own devices, employers are inclined to prefer employees to be cheap and unqualified rather than well-qualified but expensive.

Politically, governments are terrified of teacher shortages. The spectre of students being sent home because there is no one to teach them plays havoc with the popularity polls and the market solution for recruitment problems - pay more - is equally unpalatable. So the first thing our political leaders do when a teacher shortage looms is try to plug the gap with overseas recruits and the second thing they do is lower the qualification requirements. This is a situation nurses and doctors know well.

No one would be celebrating the TALIS findings today if PPTA members hadn’t held fast to the ideal of a trained and qualified secondary service.

Of course, now so much of the cost of tertiary education is on the individual, the government has been much more interested in prescribing higher qualification requirements, thus the move to teacher education courses at level 8 and 9. The evidence that that makes for better teaching is sketchy; the evidence that it delivers more money to universities is more convincing.

At the same time as raising the bar for the public sector, the government has lowered the bar for charter schools. Apparently charter schools can better lift achievement if they have the freedom to recruit people who know nothing about teaching. Ah yes – it’s all those qualifica-

tions and that rich experience that stop us being creative and innovative.

Then there’s the new wording about the issuing of a LAT (Limited Authority to Teach) in the Education Act. The Teachers Council played a positive role in assisting the move to a trained and qualified profession by ensuring employer requests for LATs were genuine and not just a convenient way a school could provide employment to a popular local, or worse, a relation. Now we no longer have the Teachers Council and the conditions for the issuing of LATs in the Education Act are looser, the situation may well change. No one would be surprised if the new Education Council buckled under the inevitable political pressure that will be exerted on it to conceal teacher shortages.

And that’s the pointy end. New Zealand secondary schools have been well-served by a generation of skilled and experienced teachers, dedicated to their subjects and committed to their students. For many of them, retirement now beckons. The most recent PPTA survey showed shortages appearing in all the usual subjects and the same old places; one in four middle management positions had either no applicants or only one person applying.



by Angela Roberts

It would be nice to think that the section of the Ministry of Education which has responsibility for workforce planning, was on top of this data, understood the implications and had already recommended to the Secretary for Education that he make a pay offer that enhances secondary teacher recruitment and retention with some haste. But that’s too sensible.

Yet we know shortages are bad for schools and bad for students and that, even according to the very odd data that TALIS reported, teachers here work harder than most other countries, so what’s wrong with a fair a reasonable deal for secondary teachers?



"These days it isn't enough to be qualified in just fire or brimstone. Today you have to be proficient in both."

Te ihi *te wehi* *te wana*



Earlier this month around 200 members gathered in Rotorua from around the motu to become part of the unique wairua of warmth and unity generated each year at PPTA's Māori Teachers' Conference.

The hui is a chance for Māori and non-Māori teachers alike to reconnect with kaupapa Māori in a union context – to find inspiration in the knowledge and experience shared by guest speakers and to ask questions about all aspects of our mahi in a safe and compassionate environment.

This year attendees heard from a variety of speakers who had made great efforts to improve communities often neglected by government authorities – people who have made positive steps to curb violence, extend healthcare, defy notions of “limitation” and lead with the idea of Māori succeeding as Māori. Each highlighted the extent to which care and guidance at a community level leaves lasting impressions on

our rangatahi and supports much what teachers are trying to achieve.

Henare O'Keefe, community anti-violence campaigner and Hastings district councillor, described how increased violence in his own community of Flaxmere prompted his organising a public hiko in 2008 with the purpose of galvanising public concern and action.

“How you treat other people, not your wealth or accomplishments, is the most enduring impact you can leave on earth,” he said.

Tracy O'Sullivan, who together with her husband Dr Lance O'Sullivan set up Navillus Medical Limited in Kaitiāia, talked about the success of their school-based programme to meet

a desire to put “total well-being within the reach of everyone”.

“It was about providing the right service to the right people at the right time and place,” she said. “Schools are a great place to build community relationships.”

PPTA's current collective agreement negotiations with the Ministry of Education provided the backdrop to a number of the hui's workshops.

Attendees were able to explore the kaupapa behind PPTA's collective agreement claims in greater detail, clarify several issues around increased teacher workloads and provide some feedback as to the best course of action should negotiations breakdown.



3-day course by teachers for teachers

Wellbeing in Schools:

Growing safe and peaceful
learning communities

This TRCC course, run in partnership with PPTA, is for: classroom teachers, deans, middle managers, senior leaders and guidance counsellors in Intermediate and Secondary School settings (years 7 - 13).

Wellbeing in school can be a minefield of a subject. Bullying, cyber bullying, alcohol and drug issues, suicide, cultural issues, sexuality and working through crisis is just the beginning.

To help guide members through this, PPTA and the TRCC (Teachers' Refresher Course Committee) have put together a three day course called Wellbeing in Schools: growing safe and peaceful learning communities.

The course will be held in Auckland at the Quality Hotel Parnell and runs 6-8 October.

It's aimed at classroom teachers, deans, middle managers, senior leaders and guidance counsellors in intermediate and secondary school settings.

Course director Edgewater College guidance counsellor Mike Williams said it was high time there was a course focussed purely on the essential topic of wellbeing.

The course has been broken down into three streams; student wellbeing, teacher wellbeing and school wellbeing.

"Just as a student's wellbeing can be poor, so can the staff and school culture. This course takes a wide-ranging approach to address all these issues.

"Participants can choose to focus on just one stream or mix and match sessions from different streams," Williams said.

The range of workshops and keynote speakers will provide both theoretical and practical advice. They will include support agencies such as Netsafe and the New Zealand Police, researchers, health practitioners, ERO, Ministry of Education and, most importantly, teachers themselves.

"Because we have utilised the skills and talents of our colleagues, we know the content will be immediately relevant. We are convinced the course will provide participants with practical ideas to take back to their workplace," Williams said.

Highlights include an opportunity to hear University of Waikato's Dr Mere Berryman speak on Māori students' engagement and wellbeing, stress related counsellor John McEwan on teacher wellbeing and University of Auckland's Dr Simon Denny on the youth 2000 health and wellbeing surveys.

Other workshops include:

- Learning from Pacific Students in Distress with Dr Siale Foliaki from Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services;

“Because we have utilised the skills and talents of our colleagues, we know the content will be immediately relevant.”

- Māori practitioners and wellbeing with PPTA Te Huarahi's Henare Hutana and Kui Morrell;
- The impact of poverty on student wellbeing with Sue Sutherland and Vicki Carpenter, and;
- Learning from the Canterbury Earthquakes with University of Auckland's Dr Carol Mutch.

PPTA president Angela Roberts encouraged members to attend the course that was "by teachers for teachers".

"It will be a good chance to hear from teachers, schools and pastoral leaders about what's really working in their schools and how," she said.

The full programme is available at www.trcc.org.nz with travel subsidised places available.

Playing safe

With regular reports of bad spectator behaviour in the media and discussion swirling around sexuality guidelines in schools, *PPTA News* looks into the work going on in the background to make our schools and sports safer for LGBTI (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex) students.

In May this year the first international study on homophobia in sport was released and the results for New Zealand were not good.

Nearly 9500 people took part in the Out on the Fields study with participants including around 25% heterosexual men and women.

The study found high levels of homophobia in New Zealand sport with many young LGB students having their first negative experiences at school. Issues around transgender or intersex students were not addressed in this study but New Zealand schools are identifying issues.

PPTA president Angela Roberts, who spoke about PPTA's work with teachers to make schools safer for LGBTI students at the Education International congress in Ottawa this month, found the results of the report concerning.

"The report covers six developed countries: Canada, the United States, Britain, Ireland, Australia and New Zealand, and we did not come out well on a number of factors," she said.

One of the report's recommendations was to start addressing homophobia early with school sport.

"The first priority is to start early, in schools, with coaches and parents and with spectator behaviour," Roberts said.

Participants in Out on the Fields also recommended national sporting organisations adopt and promote clear anti-homophobia and LGBTI inclusion policies at professional and amateur levels and this work is already beginning to happen.

Concerned about the study's results, Human Rights Commissioner David Rutherford reached out to the CEOs of Netball New Zealand, New Zealand Rugby, New Zealand Rugby League, New Zealand Cricket and New Zealand Football. These organisations manage sports from international level right down to club and school sports.

The commission chose those five national sporting organisations (NSOs) because their Australian equivalents developed and were the first to sign up to an Australian anti-homophobia framework.

Within a matter of days all NSOs had confirmed their support for developing a similar framework.

"The longest it took any of them to respond positively was two business days. In most cases it was a matter of hours," Rutherford said.

Sport New Zealand's CEO Peter McSkimming is also on board working with the NSOs on the details of the anti-homophobia and inclusion framework.

PPTA is very supportive of these efforts and refers to the Out on the Fields study in workshops with teachers.

"There has been international interest in our rainbow taskforce, the anti-homophobia workshops we run in schools and our work to make sure schools are safe places for students and teachers. This fits in perfectly with that work," Roberts said.

Issues identified by Out on the Fields participants included speech, behaviour issues and concerns around changing rooms.

These are also issues that have been picked up in the Ministry of Education's new sexuality education guidelines, which focus on being inclusive and valuing diversity.

"It's not just LGBTI students who worry about changing rooms, it can be a traumatic environment for many students," Roberts said.

"One issue that schools are struggling with is that the property code doesn't usually provide for much privacy in changing rooms and that can be a disincentive to student participation in sport," she said.

The new ministry guidelines outline the importance of recognising sexual diversity and state that schools should

be mindful of diverse student viewpoints.

The ministry consulted with PPTA on the guidelines, with feedback and concerns passed on through the association's rainbow taskforce.

"We are very happy with the outcome," Roberts said.

"The challenge now will lie around schools picking the guidelines up," she said.

The Out on the Fields study can be found at www.outonthefields.com and the sexuality guidelines at www.education.govt.nz.

Rainbow network Facebook page

PPTA's rainbow taskforce has also set up a rainbow Facebook page for members. It contains information about issues for LGBTI teachers, students and the work the taskforce does. You don't have to be LGBTI to join the group, just a member interested in PPTA's work in the area. To provide safety for any member who feels vulnerable in their school the page is a closed group. For access email jalison@ppta.org.nz



You don't have my permission to represent me

To Ms Barbara Ala'alatoa
Education Council of
Aotearoa New Zealand

Dear Barbara and colleagues,

Thank you for your invitation to talk in your letter of 1 July 2015. I have seen myself as a teacher since I was 18 years of age (now coming up 39 years ago) and entering university on a Division U programme. The profession has been good to me, there have been many exciting and challenging opportunities here in New Zealand and overseas. The children I have shared my own learning with have taught me much. It is such a precious privilege that their parents, caregivers and they themselves allow me to work with them exploring our world together. What a treat that there is so much more to still explore. To do so with young minds, with fresh challenges, with colleagues is invigorating and also

keeps me young in thought and often quite humbled by what I gain as others share with me.

Your letter acknowledges that "some" are "unsure of this new council". That seems an understatement. It is wonderful to see the diversity and experience of the council members but that does nothing to reassure me that I am in any way represented by the new council. It is my view that the profession has been explicitly clear that your council cannot be seen as independent when we as registered teachers have no say in council membership. The submissions to select committee and our union voices have been ignored by government and the minister who appointed you all to the new council.

The principle "no taxation without representation" dates back 800 years to the Magna Carta and also to Irish and American grievances that led to conflict

in those nations. Unless this principle is to be part of the new council's voice I have little confidence in your ability to lead our profession. Unless this issue is addressed you do not have my personal permission to represent me as a member of the teaching profession.

I am reassured when you state your agenda will be progressed through working with me. I look forward to one of the key aspects of that agenda being strong representation to Minister Parata and others that the profession wishes to be involved in choosing the members of your council not just being paying serfs under your direction. That I see as the very first issue in elevating the status of our profession and a solution to the uncertainty so many of us feel about the new council.

Ngā mihi,

Allan Harvey, Paraparumu

Have you received your new PPTA membership card?

New Membership Cards for 2015/16 were distributed to branches in mid-June. If you have not received yours please enquire with your branch chair and check your payslip as this could also be due to Novopay's new practices.

If you are still having problems contact PPTA national office at

membercard@ppta.org.nz

with your name and MOE number and we will follow it up. Relievers need to confirm their MOE number and home address.



A good launch not rocket science

On 15 June a veritable who's who of glitterati, twitterati, parents and hard-working PPTA members gathered at the Trades Hall in Auckland's Grey Lynn for the launch of the STCA campaign.



#fair4teachers is #good4students
- it's not rocket science, not even
yr 9 maths
@michaeltarry

"We know the game the government
is playing ... squeeze the blood out
of you, with no catch-up"
@daniel_haines (quoting @David-
CunliffeMP)

I'm stunned that teachers haven't
been on the street before now
@TraceyMartinMP

In the last five years we (teachers)
have had more than a five percent
pay cut in real terms
@AS_Roberts

Tchrs are at the chalk face of
inequality & disadvantage
@DeniseRocheMP

Fantastic to have Amy, a parent
of teens here at #fair4teachers
launch. "Being a tchr is one of the
hardest jobs"
@ThomasHaig



PPTA president Angela Roberts
with Jenny Salesa



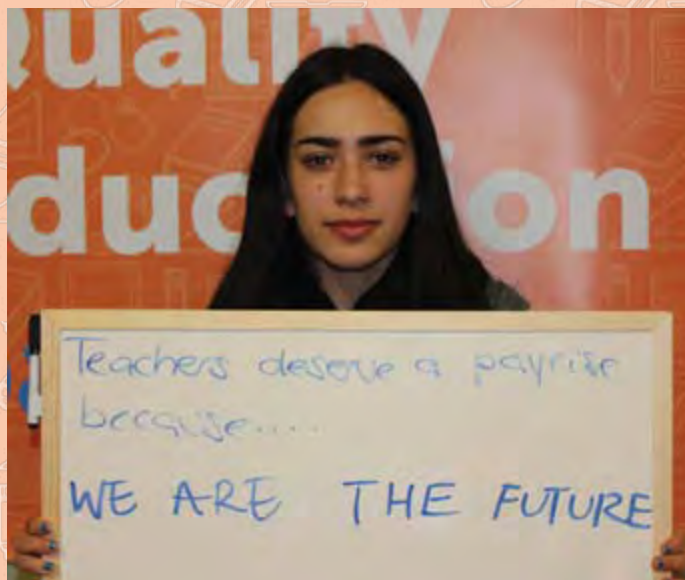
Paul Stevens and local MP David Cunliffe



Margaret Robertson
with Melanie Webber



Kylee Houpapa with Michael Tarry



Presenting
the case

PPTA members take action through inaction

Once again Northland PPTA branches have shown the rest of us what staunch means, says PPTA president Angela Roberts.

They have been put to the test again this time by one of the teacher education providers who had expected local teachers to provide practicum experience for a teacher education student employed in a charter school.

Despite pressure from the provider and the Ministry of Education, PPTA members held firm to their annual conference decision that members should not offer professional support to charter schools.

"PPTA members have democratically determined they will not put their professional and intellectual capital in the service of secretive, profiteering and politically motivated charter schools," Roberts said.

"There are other options – private schools and other charter schools. Why wasn't the student being stationed at Terenga Parāoa's sister charter school in Whangaruru?" she said.

Former Northland regional chair and PPTA's newest field officer Adele Towgood was in the thick of the debate and says she is proud of the determination shown by the region's members.

"It was impressive to see members demonstrate their level of commitment to the concept of public education for the public good. It was also a statement of support for each other as teachers, professionals and wider community members."

"The strength of the union in Northland is based on this unity and the collective sense of what is fair, equitable for both teachers and students, and therefore good for education," she said.

"We have seen at first-hand, the disruption, corruption and division that charter schools bring to school communities."

Roberts expressed surprise at the amount of attention and resources being funnelled into just one teacher education student by the Ministry of Education.

"Up and down the country teacher education providers struggle to find placements for teacher education students because secondary teachers are so busy they can't always take them.

I am not aware of the ministry ever doing anything to help the institutions struggling with this problem, but when a charter school is affected they are in boots and all," she said.

At the same time, the Ministry of Education was very hands-off when it came to providing support for the beleaguered public schools in Whangarei, Roberts said.

"I understand they are not only suffering roll drops and job losses as the result of having two extra schools

dropped in to the city, but are also picking up students from the charter schools, minus the funding," she said.

"If the ministry could address the issues around public schooling in Whangarei with the same responsiveness and energy it reserves for charter schools, imagine how much better off all New Zealand students would be?"

NOTE: PPTA understands the teacher education student at the centre of this debate is now undertaking his practicum in a private school.



Conspicuous by their silence

Friday 12 June was the National Day of Silence, a day of action in which students across New Zealand vow to take a form of silence to call attention to the silencing effect of homophobic, biphobic and transphobic bullying, name-calling and harassment in schools.

While a range of schools across New Zealand had "gone quiet" to mark the day since 2007, this was the first year for Newlands College in Wellington.

The school has made significant progress recently after the Queer Straight Alliance club disassembled with its student leaders moving on in 2012. Now it has a diversity group with an increasing number of students accessing it through the teachers involved and the guidance counsellor. The group offers support for students who identify as homosexual, bisexual, transgender, or are questioning



Sticking to their vow: Newlands College students use black tape for emphasis.

their sexuality.

The Day of Silence grew from the increasing number of students who are comfortable with being "out" at school and the day was promoted in the week prior during an assembly presentation. It was outstanding to see the numbers that

got out in support of the cause with over a third of the school participating.

Across the country similar success stories were experienced with over 30 schools officially registered.

The day was organised by InsideOUT, a national organisation working to make Aotearoa safer for young people of diverse sexualities and genders.

The Day of Silence is a wonderful event to signpost the need to stop homophobic, biphobic and transphobic bullying. However, the work is ongoing and it is important that conversations continue to promote diversity and

acceptance.

For more information visit InsideOUT or google PPTA's guidelines "Affirming diversity of sexualities and gender identities in the school community".

Jerome Cargill

PPTA rainbow taskforce

Awesome initiative for teen wellness

Live More Awesome is an Auckland based charity on a mission to improve the mental wellness of young people around the country.

Its current initiative is focused on improving gratitude and reducing depression in teens through the use of Gratitude Journals.

Free to schools the journals take five minutes to fill out and are backed by sound research, Live More Awesome co-founder Jimi Hunt said.

The process is ridiculously simple:

1. Contact them and they'll send you as many Gratitude Journals as you would like.
2. Once a week dedicate five minutes of class time to allow students to write five things they are grateful for in their journals.
3. Watch wonderful things happen in the minds of the young people involved!

"Research has shown that increasing gratitude in young people has positive effects on their levels of depression, life satisfaction, happiness,



A still from an online clip in which Jimi Hunt offers a "philosophical bent" about dealing with disappointment.

hope and sense of meaning with these positive benefits still apparent four years later.

"These are qualities we would love to see instilled in all young New Zealanders for years to come – hence our mission to get Gratitude Journals into every school in New Zealand by the

end of 2015," Hunt said.

If you're a parent, teacher, PTA member, student or principal and would like to be a part of this amazing movement then please email gratitude@livemoreawesome.com.

More information can be found at www.livemoreawesome.com.



Real benefits, real support

Did you know you have your own health, life and disability insurance available through PPTA?

EBS, the Education Benevolent Society, provides PPTA members with discounts and products not generally available to the public, together with access to dedicated financial advisers who can tailor a plan to your own specific needs.

EBS and education unions have a

unique partnership that exists solely for the benefit of education sector workers and their whānau.

If the worst does happen EBS can support you with; a lump sum payment under EBS trauma cover, monthly income replacement towards mortgage costs with EBS mortgage protection, reimburse-

ment of surgical and treatment costs under EBS hospital plan and day to day healthcare including surgical excess and other reimbursements under EBS standard plan.

Check out health tips and their great deals at www.ebs.org.nz, call 0800 800 441 or see their latest special offer below.




Special health insurance offer

For the next three months EBS has a very special offer available to PPTA members – **hospital insurance at discounted rates** including cover for all qualifying pre-existing medical conditions after three years continuous cover.

This rare offer, that is unlikely to be repeated, closes on 30 September.

Phone EBS on 0800 268 3763 or visit www.ebs.org.nz.

Does your school have any spare used laptops?

Tailulu College, an urban church-based secondary school with around 400 students from form 1–7 in Nuku'alofa, Tonga, has just acquired a new database.

In order to maintain and manage their school data, they need laptops (with wireless capability) so staff can maintain attendance, achievement, and extra curricular data.

Resources in Tonga are often limited, so if you no longer need "obsolete" laptops, pcs or whiteboards, Tailulu College would certainly make use of such resources.

If you have any of these items to donate contact Doug Clark at PPTA national office dclark@ppta.org.nz.



Tailulu College, Nuku'alofa, Tonga

Teach in Thailand

A unique opportunity for TESL teachers

Are you a qualified TESL teacher with a taste for adventure and a desire to experience Thailand's rich culture and natural beauty first-hand?

Each year the Royal Thai Embassy in Wellington sponsors four New Zealand TESL teachers to teach English to primary or secondary students in a province of Thailand for three months from mid November to mid February.

**To find out more contact:
Royal Thai Embassy, Wellington**

**p. 04 496 2900 | f. 04 496 2914 | e. admin02@thaiembassynz.org.nz
www.thaiembassy.org/wellington**



Out in the field

Dealing with stress

Information and advice from PPTA's intrepid field officers.

Suffering from high blood pressure, anxiety, insomnia, tearfulness, burn-out and irritability?

All too frequently we come across teachers in crisis – dedicated professionals who are struggling with increased workloads, large classes, new assessments, difficult students, uncertain tenure, financial pressures, and strained work relationships.

Irrespective of whether all the 'stressors' originate in the workplace, the physical, cognitive, emotional and behavioural symptoms of stress can have a real impact on our ability to work.

Workplace stress must not be left unmanaged as it often leads to poor health, high turnover, extensive absenteeism, bullying and low morale.

Like any other hazard, workplace stress should be identified, eliminated, and/or minimised. Schools must provide

a safe and healthy work environment for their staff and engage proactively to support individuals showing signs of distress.

Similarly, as employees, we need to act in good faith by being responsive and communicative and notifying our employer if we are experiencing stress.

PPTA encourages schools to subscribe to the Employee Assistance Program (EAP) as part of their Health and Safety strategy. This programme gives staff (and their family members) access to a limited number of hours of free confidential counselling and advice each year through face-to-face, telephone, or online counselling.

EAP registered practitioners have provided invaluable assistance to members throughout the country – helping to work through relationship breakdowns, alcohol or drug issues,

workplace bullying, family concerns, depression, financial problems, career direction and personal trauma.

What can your branch do to ensure that you have access to this support? Firstly, check with your employer to see if your school subscribes to EAP or a similar counselling programme.

If they do, make sure that there are posters up in the staffroom and invite a representative to come and explain their services at a staff meeting. If your school doesn't subscribe, discuss the strategies your employer has in place to minimize workplace stress at your next branch meeting and consider lobbying the principal or board to give staff access to an external counselling service.

For more information about EAP go to www.eapservices.co.nz or contact your local PPTA field office.

Northland activist appointed field officer

Classroom teaching, representing Northland central as PPTA regional chair and battling encroaching charter schools is just some of the preparation Adele Towgood has had for her new job as PPTA field officer.

Adele will be providing advice and support for branches and individual members in the Wellington and Wairarapa region.

A Social Studies, senior History and Sociology teacher at Kamo High School, Adele has held positions as branch chair, regional secretary and regional chair. She has presented branch officer training, helped organise Issues and Organising seminars and acted as observer at PPTA executive meetings.

"I hope to be able to take this experience and use it in my new role to motivate members to get involved in their union and create better working environments for their colleagues and their students," she said.

Adele is looking forward to taking up the challenge of working out in the field.

"I'm excited about the opportunity to support members and promote the professional side of teaching," she said.



Adele Towgood – new PPTA field officer based in Palmerston North

IN THE NEWS



Hekia Parata MP retweeted

We need teaching not to be a 5th or 6th or 7th choice. Well said @hekiaparata. No permanent pay cut wld help #fair4teachers #good4students

#Fair4teachers – even Hekia’s on board!

A PPTA advisory officer was pleasantly surprised when education minister Hekia Parata retweeted his response to her comments on teaching being a first choice profession. The tweet included the #fair4teachers #good4students STCA campaign hashtags – an endorsement we will happily accept.

The dangers of labelling students

A *Listener* article on bullying talks about a British government programme that was ‘the epitome of good intentions gone wrong’. Teachers were asked to flag teenage girls at the risk of pregnancy and the boys most likely to get them pregnant and put them together for

youth clubs and activities. “Obviously, there’s consequences ... Girls met boys, the teen pregnancy rate rose, the government copped a lot of flack.” The plus side was the programme was evaluated properly and axed before it could do much harm.

Turning Family First inside out

Morally conservative Family First learned a lesson in renewing domain names after releasing a transphobic report to

schools. In response Hamish Spencer, who had snapped up the “familyfirst.co.nz” URL when its subscription expired, redirected it to the fundraising page of InsideOUT, a group trying to make schools safer and more supportive for queer and gender diverse youth. Many visitors intending to visit Family First’s “.org.nz” website found their way to InsideOUT which received a jump in donations of more than \$600 in one day alone.

Chalkdust: a look into PPTA’s past

A series looking at education through the eyes of the PPTA Journal. This month we travel back to 1955.

Beginnings

1955 saw PPTA’s Journal and Newsletter publications merged into one – the beginnings of the *PPTA News* you have in your hands today.

“After much deliberation the Editorial Committee has sought and been granted the power to produce an experimental publication of a journal of at least eight pages, incorporating the newsletter, which will appear on the first of each month.”

Emotions have no place in writing

It appears emotive writing was frowned upon in 1955, as is evident in this letter to the editor about a review of the film *Seekers*.

“Sir, — H.W.G.’s ‘criticism’ of ‘The Seekers’, is not characterised by the sound and reasoned statement one would have expected from a reader of

your ‘Journal,’ but was rather a good example of the emotive writing against which Form III teachers in our school rave when they find it among their pupils.”

An audience with the PM

Back in the 1950s the prime minister personally took interest in teacher salary negotiations
“STOP PRESS!

The President has received a letter dated 15th March from the Prime Minister, stating his willingness to meet a combined deputation of P.P.T.A. and N.Z.E.I. to discuss “certain matters relating to teachers’ salaries.”

Wrestling with recruitment

“It would be generally accepted that the best recruiting agent was a contented teaching body. Recently, however, for various reasons, our profession has been in a state of unrest. Success in our present

salary negotiations would do a great deal to remove the discontent, and perhaps in the future the teacher will be able to paint a brighter picture of his profession to the inquiring seventeen-year-old.”

A delegate’s dairy (annual conference)

First day:

Bulging with unaccustomed heavy hotel meal, arrive at usual place, greet old pals, introduced to new ones; think with satisfaction how Z is getting thin on top, how Y shows a certain thickening round the waistline ... Delightful speech by Minister of Education – a fairy web of delicate nothingness. If we get a bob, I’m a Dutchman.

Space Age

“Children have been stealing globular lampshades from subways in England for use as space helmets” – *News and Notes*

Law out of order

Deliberately delayed papers released to PPTA under the Official information Act show the Policing (Cost Recovery) Amendment Bill was uniformly opposed by a number of government departments including Child Youth and Family Services, the New Zealand Teachers Council and the Ministry of Education.

Despite assurances from officials, it appears that the minister of police, Anne Tolley, delayed releasing the papers until after PPTA had made an oral submission on the bill, public lawyer Eva Hartshorn-Sanders said.

“Presumably, the intention was to stop PPTA referencing this advice in its submission to the select committee.”

The Ombudsman has recently judged that this delay was unlawful.

“Unfortunately there are no consequences for such undemocratic behaviour,” Hartshorn-Sanders said.

The bill empowers police to move to user-pays starting by charging for police vetting. Once it becomes law, it will impose a further charge on teachers which they will have to pay as part of their practising certificate fees.

We all agree police vetting is an important service that helps ensure that people working with children are safe, but this policy will mean schools and charities will be reluctant to proactively get a police vet for volunteers or workers where they are not legally required to do so,” Roberts said.

“It will impose new costs on schools that are already stretched — low decile schools and communities are likely to be the worst affected. Imposing a charge for a police vet will do nothing to help keep kids safe,” she said.

Despite the strong opposition to this bill, the government-controlled Law and Order Select Committee reported it back to parliament with very few changes.

“The absence of transparency about where these user-pay charges will fall next is a matter of great concern,” Roberts said.

It was clear the policy would cost the government more money by setting up a bureaucracy to transfer costs to other government departments and front-line workers, like teachers, she said.

“The government appears to have found a new way to charge teachers for doing their job. On top of the open cheque book for EDUCANZ to charge teachers fees, we now have police looking at charging both direct and indirect costs for what is surely a core function of the state.”

“Unfortunately there are no consequences for such undemocratic behaviour,”

During PPTA's oral submission on the bill, president Angela Roberts advised the law and order select committee that the policy would have a negative impact on vulnerable children and communities.

“It's a simple matter of economics.



PPTA MEMBERSHIP ALERT



Please check your next payslip

The new payroll system formally known as Novopay still has a major glitch.

It's inclined to drop your PPTA membership if you move or change jobs.

If you're a PPTA member and your payslip is **not** showing a subscription deduction, you'll need to email the people at **membership@ppta.org.nz** immediately and they'll fix the problem.



Annual Conference 2015

YOUR VOICE, YOUR VOTE, YOUR UNION

It's not too far, far away before the PPTA team in your region will be selecting delegates. Let Your Branch Chair know you're interested. Keep watching

www.ppta.org.nz for details ...

