



PPTA News

Uniting secondary teachers of Aotearoa



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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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New year, new challenges

PPTA Te Wehengarua members will rise up to meet some significant challenges ahead, writes Chris Abercrombie



As I prepared to write this column, I got to thinking about this time last year and the challenges that were ahead of us. We were planning for the mega strike day in early March – the beginning of the autumn and winter of our discontent.

They were very challenging times on various levels for many members and I am so grateful for the fact that you did what you had to do – often for the greater good.

I am also immensely proud of what we achieved – a decent salary increase and a range of improvements to our working conditions, many of which will help us meet the learning needs of our ākonga.

Twelve months on, we have a whole new set of challenges to face, which I am just as confident we will overcome.

There are two particular issues that are of real concern, and which will be the focus of regional paid union meetings next term. These are Te Tiriti o Waitangi and plans to privatise education via the re-introduction of charter schools.

The coalition Government's position on both of these issues undermines PPTA Te Wehengarua constitutional objectives to affirm and advance Te Tiriti o Waitangi and to advance the cause of education. We cannot stand by in the face of direct threats to those objectives.

PPTA Te Wehengarua began in 1952 as a monocultural organisation. Seventy plus years on, and thanks to our honouring of Te Tiriti, we are not that kind of organisation anymore. In 2024 we are a union which represents 22,000 secondary and area school teachers who are diverse in their culture, ethnicity, gender, religious affiliations and political views, but united in their desire to do the best for the rangatahi of our nation.

PPTA Te Wehengarua is committed to embedding and affirming Te Tiriti through a partnership approach. Our actions over many years have demonstrated this commitment through sharing power, resources and decision-making; building relationships that uphold rangatiratanga; and decision-

making that values both tāngata whenua and tāngata Tiriti world views.

We continue to advocate for the positive changes promised in the NCEA change package, and the curriculum refresh Te Marautanga o Aotearoa, me ēra atu mea e pā ana ki nga kaupapa mātauranga.

The future includes continuing to be an honourable Te Tiriti partner. We are encouraging branches this term to think about how we can continue to affirm and advance te Tiriti o Waitangi as a union.

Another issue that we will be talking about at the paid union meetings is the return of charter schools.

The fact that all the charter schools, bar one, that were established in 2014 have been reintegrated successfully into the state system, demonstrates vividly that there is no need for this status.

There is enough innovation and flexibility in our public education system to cater for all needs, particularly in those schools designated special character.

Charter schools have very little to do with flexibility and innovation and everything to do with eroding our state education system, dismantling our national trained and qualified teaching service and weakening teacher unions – which are two of the largest and strongest unions in Aotearoa New Zealand.

Unlike 2014, this time existing schools will be encouraged to consider converting to charter schools. PPTA Te

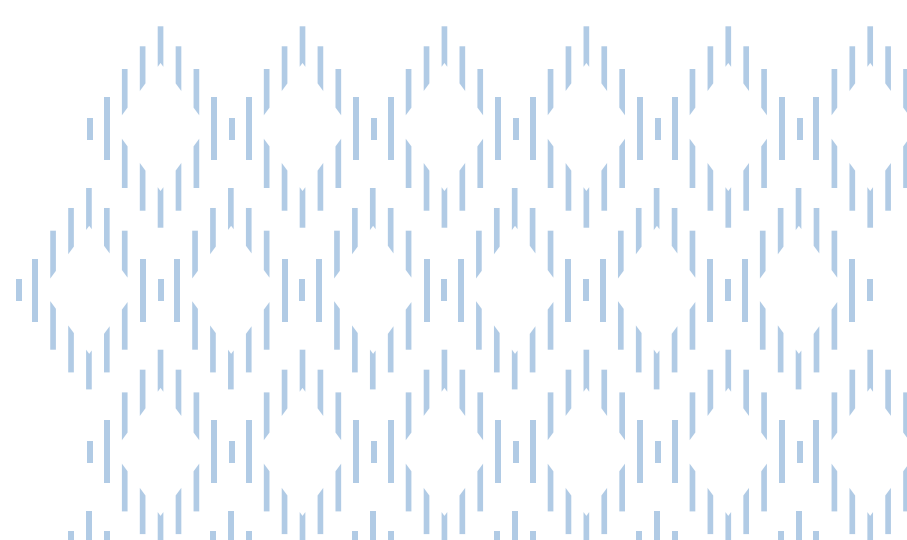
Wehengarua members will be directly involved and adversely affected.

And if this government wins a second term, then running charter schools for profit, like they are in the United States and the United Kingdom, could well become a reality here in Aotearoa New Zealand.

PPTA Te Wehengarua has faced similar challenges before. Back in the 1990s PPTA members ran amazing grassroots campaigns when the National government was bribing individual schools to opt into bulk funding. And in 2016 both teacher unions mounted a very effective campaign, Better Funding, Better Learning, to protect schools from Hekia Parata's bulk funding proposals.

An outstanding feature of the bulk funding campaign in the 1990s was the tangible support that individual branches received from PPTA members around the motu. They knew that those branches were fighting on behalf of all members for the retention of a quality, public education system, a national trained and qualified teaching service, and national collective employment agreements guaranteeing decent pay and working conditions.

We've got this. Teachers united will never be defeated. Kia kaha.





Meet some of your new national executive members

PPTA Te Wehengarua has some new national executive members this year – here are three of them

PPTA Te Wehengarua national executive is the Association’s governing body, made up of members – everyday working secondary teachers – from the 24 regions throughout the motu, and Māori and Pasifika teacher representatives. *PPTA News* introduces three of the new members elected for this year.



Shontelle Helg, Tāmaki Makaurau Auckland southern ward

Ensuring teaching and learning in South Auckland is seen in a positive light and making sure teachers’ voices are heard during the implementation of the new NCEA Level 1 are some of the key issues for PPTA Te Wehengarua members in Tāmaki Makaurau southern ward, says Shontelle.

After she gets to grips with what being an executive member is all about, Shontelle wants to focus on making sure intermediate and middle school teachers and learning coaches have a voice. “I also want to make sure South Auckland’s voice is represented and heard.

“Our schools are doing amazing things for our learners, we have such a rich multicultural nature in South Auckland and it’s important to celebrate it.”

Shontelle, who is a Learning Coach at Ormiston Junior College (OJC), has been an active member of PPTA Te Wehengarua throughout her 20 years of teaching. Highlights of her union activism so far include being the youngest recipient of the Guy Allan award for activism and seeing the OJC branch, of which she was chairperson, grow from two to three members, when it started, to more than 60 members when she stepped down.

The best things about PPTA Te Wehengarua are its solidarity and inclusiveness, she says. “When we come together on union matters, the unspoken, shared reason we are all here is for the betterment of those that follow us.”



Shannon-Mae Read, Hutt Valley and Wairarapa

Working with more of the membership, not only activists, is one of Shannon-Mae Read’s goals as an executive member. “A lot of our members don’t have direct access to executive or understand the structure and how the union works.”

Shannon-Mae, Head of Art at Upper Hutt College, has been PPTA’s Hutt Valley Rainbow representative for the last three years, and branch secretary for five years. She is also a member of the Network of Establishing Teachers, having begun teaching only eight years ago.

She says workload is a key issue for members. “The collective agreement settlement was a step forward financially but in terms of conditions, it didn’t make a significant dent in our workload. I think it speaks to bigger issues in the profession as well – it’s why we don’t have as many teachers coming through and why many are leaving.”

For her, the best things about PPTA Te Wehengarua are whakawhanaungatanga and community. “There is no better network of humans who care. I could also add PLD (professional learning and development) and everything I’ve learnt about the profession and workers’ rights – but it is ultimately he tangata, the people.”



Hemi Ferris-Bretherton, Te Huarahi Mana Motuhake

Hemi says his top priority as an executive member is to place kaupapa Māori to the forefront and advocate for his kaiako Māori fraternity.

“My first experience of an executive meeting recently was certainly an eye opener. I had been warned that there are many different standing committees and many HXs (decision making papers) that come before you to speak on.”

Hemi, a teacher of Te Ao Haka at Te Kura o Hirangi, says he is looking forward to working on the executive in ‘a post

settlement phase’ and meeting challenges posed by the new coalition government.

“The issues for kaiako Māori are numerous and include a shortage of resources, realigning the TRM (Te Reo Māori) standards, and schools’ ability to find relievers for teachers wanting to take part in meaningful PLD.”

Hemi says the lack of access to the MITA (Māori Immersion Teachers’ Allowance) has long been a bug bear for many kaiako in mainstream settings. The Community Liaison Allowance trial, part of the new collective agreement, is an attempt to address that. “This is being trialled currently in a number of areas throughout the motu and I’m really hoping that it becomes successful.”



A new kaumātua for PPTA Te Wehengarua

Moeke Paaka brings a wealth of passion and experience to his new role as PPTA Te Wehengarua kaumātua

Moeke Paaka's appointment as kaumātua of PPTA Te Wehengarua is a culmination of more than 30 years of service to the union. Moeke served as a member and convenor of Te Huarahi Māori Motuhake – PPTA's Māori executive – for more than 20 years and was at the forefront in facilitating Te Tiriti-based dialogue and bicultural relationships.

His professional skills as a counsellor has helped union members in many challenging situations. He has always tried to approach people and issues with an open mind and a view towards restoration – a practice he established not long after he started teaching at Motueka High School in the early 1990s.

Also at Motueka, Moeke set up what was probably one of the very first models of co-governance in Aotearoa – a Runanga Maatua or parent support body, which established a partnership with the Board of Trustees. These parents were a part of the decision making process for the education of their children.

"At the time this was profound and exciting for Māori parents. I could see their determination and confidence as we talked.

"I helped them to set some specific educational goals for their kids. We talked and came up with one goal: Māori academic achievement at school. The first thing was to imagine kids staying at school until Year 13 – that became our first goal.

"Dealing with discipline matters was our second goal and attendance was the final goal."

In the mid-1990s a television documentary showcased the schools for its achievements in Māori students' academic outcomes, and attendance and retention rates.

Moeke says his dream and his passion was always to continue to improve Māori academic success. "Success in education controls to a major extent our destiny. For me, education leads to a decent standard of living and pride. It's as simple and as passionate as that."

The Association's kaumātua and whaea are chosen by Te Huarahi to assist and support Association matters and they participate in all aspects of PPTA Te Wehengarua, from conferences and seminars through to regular executive meetings. The kaumātua and whaea are responsible for establishing and maintaining PPTA Te Wehengarua kawa and tikanga.

Kawa is the protocol and etiquette associated with the process of formal gatherings. Kawa does not change and once the kawa is fixed, these processes must be followed to maintain status of the iwi/organisation and safety through awareness.

Tikanga means doing what is right. Tikanga is the process of how kawa is implemented and is adaptable. The adaptability of tikanga is associated with the need for change which is often aligned to internal and external influences and the necessity to uphold manaakitanga.

Health and safety training

Training courses are on offer now to make your school a safe and healthy environment

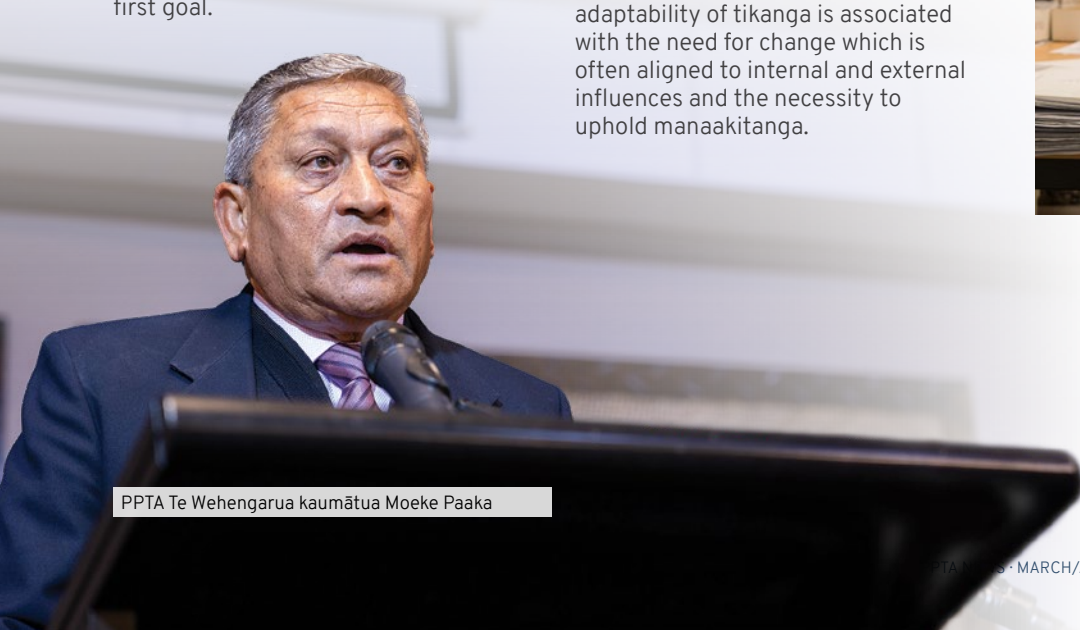
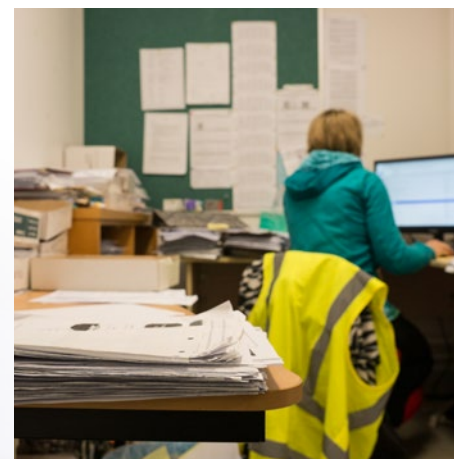
All PPTA Te Wehengarua collective agreements recognise the importance of ensuring good and safe working conditions through health and safety in the workplace.

It is a mutual obligation of the employer and employees to achieve this through a representative, engagement and participative approach, including training.

A range of health and safety training courses for school staff are now available through WorksafeReps. The training is overseen by the Workers' Education Trust, operated through the New Zealand Council of Trade Unions.

A school-specific health and safety trainer can come to your school, or a group of schools. Courses can also be delivered via Zoom. There are also online options for individual health and safety representatives.

If you are a health and safety officer in your branch, you are encouraged to check out the website worksafereps.co.nz and book your course now.



PPTA Te Wehengarua kaumātua Moeke Paaka



Benefits of belonging

Belonging to your subject association is a great way to keep up to date with developments in your subject area and make valuable connections

Ahead of the Subject Associations Forum in April, PPTA News spoke with three subject association leaders about what subject associations do and the benefits of belonging.

Francis Leslie-Ellis, secretary of the NZ Association of Mathematics Teachers, is a deputy principal at Inglewood High School and still teaches Mathematics.

“I love the subject and love writing assessments, I really enjoy presenting the support for NCEA Level 1- we were a pilot school last year so I’ve got all of that background knowledge.”

The NZ Association of Mathematics Teachers (NZAMT), has about 5000 members from the primary, secondary and tertiary sectors.

Key activities each year include writing camps, involving around 35 teachers from all around the motu. In January they meet in Auckland and write internal assessments for all NCEA levels and in April teachers meet in Christchurch to write external assessments.

Sharing expertise and knowledge

“We try to get teachers from all around the country so that expertise and knowledge of the standards can go back to the regions.”

Keeping in touch with the regions, particularly the more remote ones, is an ongoing challenge for subject association, says Francis. Recently, for instance, the Association ran a seminar on the new NCEA Level 1 standards in Gisborne. “That cost us about \$30K once you pay for all the day relief for teachers and travel and accommodation for the presenters.” However the face to face sessions are extremely valuable for sharing knowledge, developments and concerns. Such sessions keep Francis and the Association’s executive in touch with what’s going on across the motu.

The Association is using its Networks of Expertise funding to run as many face to face meetings as possible this term around the new NCEA Level 1. Weekly online support workshops are also being

run by NZAMT. “Our key mantra is to support mathematics teachers.”

Membership fees for NZAMT are based on the size of schools. Small kura or area schools pay a flat rate of \$50 annually and the largest schools pay around \$280. “For that fee, every maths teacher at that school then becomes a member of NZAMT. It’s good value as there are a range of resources that they can access and they get cheaper admission to our conference. We have a conference every two years and members get a discounted registration for that.”

Relievers or other maths teachers who aren’t based at one school can join for \$30 and for that they get the minutes of each monthly NZAMT meeting and discounted registration rates for the conference.

Full membership enables teachers to access resources that are behind a paywall. Francis says the material that is most valuable is kept secure so teachers can be confident that whatever they put in front of students will not be available publicly.

TENZ: Who are we?

Hamish Johnston, a technology teacher at Kaiapoi High School, is the Heamana | Chair of Technology Education New Zealand (TENZ). “TENZ is organised by teachers for teachers and our aim is to enhance the learning and teaching of technology by creating a well informed, well connected, supportive, and sustainable professional community that has a strong voice and provides effective advocacy for technology education.

“We understand the importance of fostering a vibrant community of like-minded individuals passionate about technology education. Every kaiako, no matter the subject, should belong to a subject association. There are many times when we must reach out for specialist support and our kura is not always able to provide it, whether it be resources, professional development, or just advice and support.”

Along this line, TENZ membership gives teachers access to a diverse collection

of educational materials, lesson plans, and tools designed to engage ākongā and facilitate meaningful learning experiences. And there is school based membership where a school can add as many of their staff as possible as well as free membership for those wanting to find out more.

Professional support and development is important, says Hamish, particularly with changes across the educational landscape. “We continue to explore innovative approaches to teaching and learning, such as one of last year’s Professional Learning and Development (PLD) Day looking at Mātauranga Māori and its effective use in technology.

Diving deep

“Our free monthly PLD webinars are here to support teachers every step of the way. We dive deep into various topics ranging from emerging technologies to pedagogical strategies for effective classroom integration. Led by industry experts and seasoned educators, our webinars provide a platform for continuous learning and professional growth. And the recordings all go on our YouTube for anyone to view for free.”

TENZ also supports educators outside of a school setting. “We are able to draw on the expertise of teachers and the wider community to produce resources on a variety of topics. We have not only collaborated in competitions run by STEM-focused organisations but also nature based charities such as Forest and Bird.”

A highlight for TENZ last year was their Conference last year in Ōtautahi Christchurch, so many passionate educators in one place sharing their practice. Our conferences provide the perfect platform for educators, professionals, and enthusiasts from across the motu to come together, exchange ideas, and collaborate on innovative projects. We had everyone from seasoned veterans to those just starting their journey in technology education, our conference offered



Juliet Kennedy, NZALT President



Sharing ideas



Francis Leslie-Ellis, NZAMT secretary



Hamish Johnston, TENZ Chair

invaluable networking opportunities and learning to propel us forward and keep us up to date.

This year TENZ are looking forward to more exciting things, the TESAC Conference in April, resources, PLD, and joining to support Kohara2Shine where all Wellington schools are invited to join us.

Raising awareness

Helping the education sector and public understand the benefits of learning languages other than English, is a key goal for the NZ Association of Language Teachers, (NZALT) says President, Juliet Kennedy.

“Learning languages builds solid literacy skills - we are teachers of literacy; it is the fundamental bread and butter of what we do, and this is often completely overlooked or not understood by school leaders and people making policy. We would like to see a languages policy in Aotearoa.”

NZALT is run by language teachers and university lecturers. Its support

for language teachers includes: a coordinator who is available all the time to answer queries from teachers; a website with resources, information and news; regional clusters where teachers can share resources, ideas, problems, and work on different pedagogies together.

Juliet says the Association also provides awards that enable teachers to visit other teachers of their language to observe and share ideas, and awards that contribute to post-graduate language teaching and related study.

International conference

NZALT, in conjunction with its Australian counterpart, holds an international conference every two years. It also runs competitions for students, and advocates on behalf of language teachers and language education, collaborating with stakeholders to support ‘big picture issues’ around language teaching.

“Our executive are actively involved in the Curriculum refresh and in setting NCEA assessments and moderation. This year, with our Ministry and NZQA

colleagues we are running moderation days around the country for the new NCEA Level 1 standards.”

NZALT provides a strong support network of colleagues who teach languages. “Learning languages is not valued within our education system and having this support is essential - many language teachers are sole teachers and need colleagues from other schools to support them.”

Juliet says the Networks of Expertise funding has been extremely helpful to NZALT, enabling language teachers to attend more PLD conferences and events.

“This funding allows us to provide many more opportunities for teachers to feel good about what they are doing and advance their knowledge and skills. We would like to have the security of knowing the NEX funding will continue.

“NZALT is a great, positive body of people to belong to – we have a lot of fun and love what we do.”

Charter schools back on the agenda

Protecting public education from charter schools is a top priority for PPTA Te Wehengarua members

The coalition government is currently drawing up legislation to bring charter schools back 'bigger and better than ever' according to ACT leader and Associate Minister of Education (Partnership Schools) David Seymour.

The legislation is still being drawn up, but we can expect to see: school enrolment zones gone; mechanisms to enable any current state school to transition to a 'partnership school'; and the opening of private schools to a larger 'market share' than they can currently capture.

ACT has confirmed to PPTA Te Wehengarua that any former charter school would be invited to return to that status which, along with the conversion of existing schools, would have serious implications for members in these branches.

PPTA Te Wehengarua has a long-standing history of opposition to charter schools and privatisation of Aotearoa New Zealand's public education system.

The last charter school experiment

Introduced through a confidence and supply agreement between ACT New Zealand and the National Party following the 2011 general election, the first charter schools opened in 2014.

We saw they could be run by anyone, they had minimal financial accountability and transparency, were not required to deliver the national curriculum, were not required to employ trained and qualified teachers, and all staff were employed on individual employment agreements.

It was clear that charter schools were detrimental to teacher workload and wellbeing. Union membership was almost non-existent, school staff were isolated and unable to fraternise in any way with PPTA Te Wehengarua members and there were many tales of health and safety compliance issues.

The small number of charter schools established between 2014 and 2017 were never without controversy. From financial mismanagement and fraud to dubious data and falling rolls, the charter school experiment was a failure.



Defeating charter schools

PPTA Te Wehengarua worked hard to defeat charter schools, partly through the well-articulated arguments made by our members in their communities, and through a sustained and strong defence by members throughout the country.

Alliances formed with political parties were also crucial for the end being written on the wall. Te Āpiha and Te Huarahi were at the forefront of this opposition, and there was a not insignificant fight, especially that which was undertaken in Northland.

The 2017 Labour government legislated charter schools out of existence, with the majority eventually transitioned into state-integrated schools.

Innovation already exists

This demonstrates clearly there is already provision for innovative schooling within the public education system: kura kaupapa Māori created under section 155, and designated special character schools created under Section 156 of the Education Act of 1989.

Special character provisions allow for parents and communities to seek the conversion of operating schools or the establishment of new schools – if they can show a desire and/or a need for doing so.

The argument that innovative education can only be provided outside of the 'system' is nonsense.

Through encouraging the transition to designated special character or creating collaborative school sites, or 'schools within schools', our system can provide equitable access to education that allows every ākonga to thrive. This includes our neurodiverse learners, those students who are currently referred to 'alternative education', and teen parents.

Regional workshops

This year PPTA Te Wehengarua is running workshops around the motu, empowering members to protect public education from the threat posed by charter schools. Check out the PPTA Te Wehengarua website for details of a workshop near you.

Branches and regions will also be able to access a charter schools toolkit, which will be available after the legislation is published later this year. The toolkit is designed to help individual branches whose school boards are considering converting to a charter school. The toolkit will have sample letters for the principal and board, talking points for community, whānau, rangatahi, a branch meeting guide and more. You can register for the toolkit via the advertisement on p9 of this *PPTA News*.

If you have any questions about the workshops or toolkit please email public.education@ppta.org.nz



Stand up for public education

Register now for a toolkit to help you have conversations with your school community about the need to protect public education from the threat of charter schools

While we wait for the charter schools legislation to be drafted, PPTA Te Wehengarua is developing and holding workshops around the motu to both educate and engage with members around what the future might hold.

We do not want to see the for-profit sector enter the Aotearoa New Zealand school system.

Our position is that the public education system, while not perfect, is the best way to ensure an equitable future for all ākonga. Within the current system there is enough capacity for innovation and localised curriculum.

The 2023 PPTA Te Wehengarua conference paper, Charter Schools and Privatisation, includes good discussion on the PPTA stance regarding charter schools. This can be accessed through our website: ppta.org.nz → *past events* → *annual conference 2023*

Keep an eye out in the Collective News, an electronic newsletter sent to all branches regularly, if you are interested in attending a workshop later in the year.

We are also developing a toolkit for branches whose school leadership is considering converting to a charter school. Use the QR code to register your interest in this toolkit.

**STANDING FOR
PUBLIC EDUCATION**

PPTA
Te Wehengarua

Scan here to register for a PPTA toolkit to support you when having conversations in your school community about Charter Schools.



Farewell, field officers

Since the last PPTA News, three PPTA Te Wehengarua field officers have left the service

David Fowlie, Tāmaki-Makaurau

A former PPTA Wehengarua branch and regional activist, David Fowlie became an Auckland-based field officer in 2005.

“Having been an active member was helpful in my transition to my role as field officer and the support of my field officer colleagues and manager (Deputy General Secretary Membership) were also critical in helping me move smoothly into an advocate role.”

David, a former Geography, Economics and Social Studies teacher, says the highlights of his field officer role included advocating for members, helping deliver the Mahi Tika courses and supporting the regional committees.

One of the most significant times for him as a field officer was the COVID-19 pandemic. “The resilience of our members was tested and the issues COVID presented in the workplace increased members’ needs for assistance from their field officers.”

He believes the challenges ahead for the field service will be managing the ongoing needs of members in the workplace. “There will be a need for more support of PPTA Te Wehengarua branch and regional structures in an environment of significant funding pressures, Te Tiriti o Waitangi tensions and charter schools.

“Past attempts to undermine public education and the conditions of our members has been met with a strong resolve and determination from the Association. It will be no different this time.”

David says he will miss his collegial friendships and being an advocate for members but is looking forward to retirement and spending more time with his family.



David Fowlie with members at the 2023 NETs conference

Ahmad Osama, Wellington and Marlborough

Ahmad joined the PPTA Te Wehengarua field service in 2020, after being an active member in Taranaki and Wellington. Since attending his first establishing teachers’ conference in 2015, he attended and participated actively in regional and national PPTA Te Wehengarua events for the next five years. Ahmad also played a key role in the Wellington region’s activities and campaigns that connected directly with the public, including regular community stalls.

Adele Towgood, PPTA Te Wehengarua Deputy General Secretary Membership, says while the Association is sad to see Ahmad go, she knows he has gained a lot of experience and knowledge that will serve him well in his new role with Fire and Emergency NZ.

“Ahmad brought a quiet sense of confidence and a reassuring tone to the work that he did with members. There are many emails from members recognising the efforts that Ahmad made to ensure that they were treated with respect and given every chance to have their voices heard.

“His Palmerston North field service colleagues benefited from his thoughtful approach, and he perhaps holds the title for tidiest office in the field service. He was a great organiser of field service dinners and became noted for his suits for all occasions.

“Ahmad also stepped up during his time with us to support members in a time of crisis with Cyclone Gabrielle and held the ship steady acting for me in early 2023, which included ensuring a successful Issues and Organising Seminar took place.”

Another significant contribution from Ahmad was the successful updating and modernising of the PPTA’s education programme Mahi Tika.

“We wish Ahmad all the best with his new adventures and given that his new office is not too far from ours in Wellington we hope that he feels welcome to drop by anytime and keeps PPTA Te Wehengarua close to his heart.”



Ahmad Osama

Thank you, Roger

Former PPTA Te Wehengarua president and field officer, Roger Tobin, has retired after more than 35 years of service

Roger Tobin's message to new teachers considering joining PPTA Te Wehengarua is simple; "Join the team."

"Teaching is a team job. You're often on your own in a classroom with a couple of dozen teenagers who might rather be somewhere else, but you can do your job because of your colleagues, because the whole school works together to create a positive learning environment that you make use of in your own classroom.

"PPTA is the team for teachers as a whole and if we want to improve pay and conditions – it's got to be through PPTA. If we want to fight off lunatic ideas it has to be PPTA. You cannot do it on your own. So join the team."

Roger joined the PPTA Te Wehengarua team more than 35 years ago. "I couldn't imagine NOT joining the union. Family, family politics, my involvement in student association politics, all of that made it inconceivable that you wouldn't join a union - because they were there for you."

He progressed through the union, becoming a branch chair then Otago regional chair, national executive member, junior vice president and president. As president, he led secondary teachers' historic claim for a 21% pay increase in the mid-1990s and was at the forefront of staunch battles against salaries bulk funding.

After working as deputy principal at Logan Park High School and experiencing some health issues, Roger joined PPTA Te Wehengarua field service in the Dunedin office in 2014.

Branch visits are an integral part of a field officer's work and something Roger loves. "Teachers have common issues and that's been enormously refreshing and uplifting, seeing the strength that teachers have. And they have to be strong otherwise the job would squash them.

"When you're teaching you're making things better, you're educating young people and and it's that sort of public service core in a sense. Underneath everything else is the idea that you're doing this job – you still want to be paid

properly – but you are there to serve other people, in this case, the students.

"Teachers are wonderful and they're fantastic people. I've loved getting to meet them in all sorts of different circumstances – their work, their solidarity and collectivism. Teaching is one of the old fashioned jobs where you're caring about people. And teachers care – if you don't care you can't function as a teacher."

Looking back over his more than three decades of belonging to PPTA Te Wehengarua, Roger says one of the highlights was a Role of the Branch conference that PPTA ran in 1989. "It was a big conference with hundreds of branch delegates there and it helped solidify our organisation and our motivation through the 90s and everything we were going to be up against. It was a great organising and educating device."

Roger is sorry that PPTA Te Wehengarua is now having to prepare again to go into battle against a similar kind of privatisation agenda. "State provided education has been a brilliant success in New Zealand. Overwhelmingly, New Zealanders are well educated and secondary schools do a great job.

"The ideological fanaticism behind charter schools is shocking in its stupidity – who could possibly think that stealing an idea from the USA was going to help schools in New Zealand? Their health system, their education system, almost everything is a disaster - why would you want to copy it?"

As well as defending education from privatisation, Roger says the union movement as a whole in Aotearoa New Zealand needs to try to rebuild society, particularly care and respect for workers.

"We have to rebuild the old world, in a sense, pre-Tomorrow's Schools, where the Universal Declaration of Human Rights was honoured by governments, where housing for all was

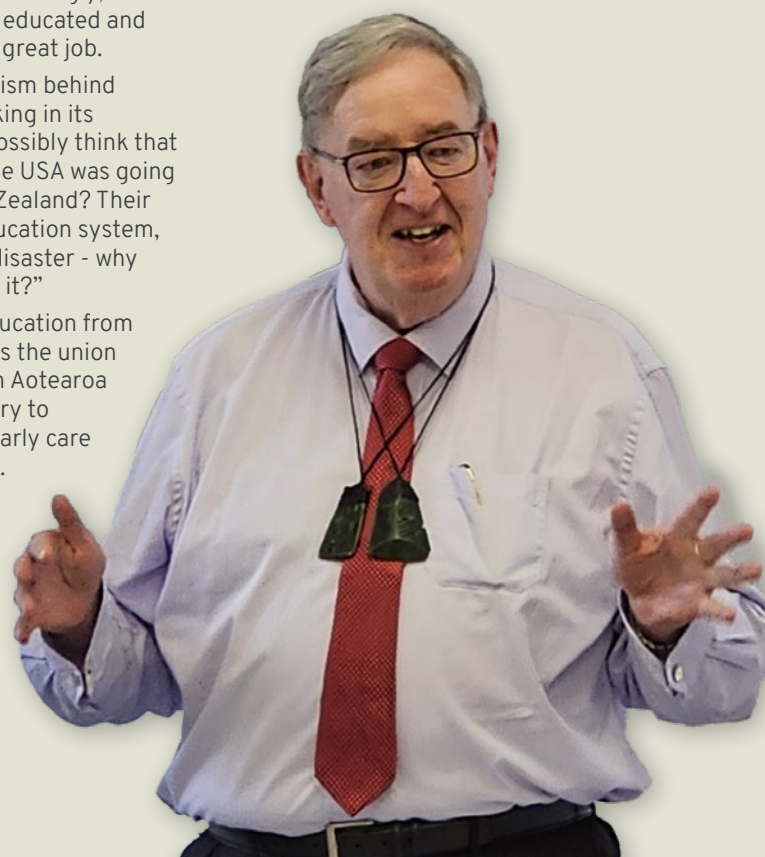
important, where there were proper pay rates for workers, and good conditions of work - all of that sort of stuff that Rogernomics threw that out. I'm not going to forgive them for that. Never forget, never forgive."

He says one of the major challenges for PPTA Te Wehengarua in the future is to ensure teachers are much better paid.

"If salaries had kept pace with inflation the top of the base scale would now be \$110K. The government, whether it's Labour or National, doesn't want to pay teachers properly.

"PPTA is by a very long margin the best union in the country. And its struggles over the last 40 years have helped save public education which has been of enormous benefit to students, their parents and teachers. Without PPTA, governments would have smashed public education by now so it's a marvellous union and I wish it all the best."

And PPTA Te Wehengarua wishes you all the best, Roger, for a long and happy retirement.



Making sure we are safe online

PPTA Te Wehengarua has joined a coalition to improve online safety in Aotearoa New Zealand

Online hate, harassment, abuse, violence. The spread of dangerous disinformation online. Non-consensual sharing of intimate images. Privacy breaches and scams. Sextortion.

These are just a few of the online harms that teachers have either experienced or your students and school community have been subject to..

We see the damage this is doing. It plays out daily in our schools, through news reports, independent research and what we experience ourselves - self-harm and suicide content; online abuse and messages; harassment and violence. The complaint systems on online platforms are weak or non-existent and harmful content is actively shared and promoted.

It is for this reason that PPTA Te Wehengarua has joined the Online Safety Coalition. The purpose of the Online Safety Coalition is to raise awareness about online safety and the problems with harmful content, abuse, and harassment online, especially against women and children, with a view to strengthening NZ laws and changing the behaviour of bad actors and bad platforms.

One of the first priority policies for the coalition is to build cross-party support

in Parliament for legislation that requires more transparency and accountability of technology companies. These companies are profiting from the spread of harmful content that is being shared and amplified through their services, and they are failing to act on content that is abusive and breaches their terms and conditions.

To make sure they are accountable, New Zealand also needs the creation of an effective independent regulator to protect women and other at-risk groups from online abuse and harm. This would include, for example, holding these companies to account for ensuring their products and services are safe (e.g. risk assessments and proactive duties to act on illegal and harmful content online, and having accessible, responsive and effective complaints systems). This is the type of legislation that the UK, Australia and the EU have - and New Zealand needs.

The Online Safety Coalition is calling on the Government to build on the great work that the Department of Internal Affairs (DIA), Classification Office and Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet (DPMC) have already started, and urgently pass meaningful legislation to protect New Zealanders online.

We need legislation that ensures transparency and accountability of Big Tech platforms so that:

- **Safety is first - ensuring that their products and services, with risk assessments, independent auditing and safety duties are completed before products go to the market.**
- **There is a responsive complaints system so abusive messages received or harmful content seen are easy to report to the company, and there is proactive communication with the person who made the complaint and consequences for the user responsible.**
- **Companies are transparent about what content their algorithms are recommending, what advertisements are being shared and how rules are enforced.**
- **Platforms are accountable to an independent media regulator - a body that is arm's length from the government and independent of Big Tech.**

Watch this space for further updates and activities you can be involved in.



Pasifika Fono 10-11 July 2024

Keep the dates free for the 2024 Pasifika Fono

Talofa!
Mālō e lelei!
Bula!
Namaste!
Kia orana!
Fakalofa lahi atu!
Mālo ni!
Fakatalofa atu!

Block out your calendar now for the PPTA Te Wehengarua Pasifika Fono, in Tāmaki Makaurau Auckland on Wednesday and Thursday 10 & 11 July. You can be assured of two days full of inspiration, invigoration and fun! Check the PPTA Te Wehengarua website over the next few weeks for more information and registration details. See you there!

Honouring te Tiriti

PPTA Te Wehengarua kaihautū Māori engaged kanohi kitea (face to face) with iwi leaders, politicians and other unionists at recent hui at Tūrangawaewae, Rātana and Waitangi

A national hui at Tūrangawaewae marae on 20 January saw record numbers attend, including Miriama Barton, PPTA Te Wehengarua kaihautū Māori. Eleven thousand people were in attendance, united in the face of actions by the coalition government, including its proposed Treaty Principles Bill.

“This momentous occasion happened across a single day,” says Miriama. “Kīngi Tuheitia Pōtatau Te Wherowhero VII called in December 2023 for this meeting to embed and solidify Te Mana Māori Motuhake, and unite in Te Kotahitanga. Those in attendance were part of a declaration of solidarity.”

One of the highlights was the Rangatahi panel who answered questions about what Kotahitanga meant to them.

Te Atamihi Whanga-Papa, rangatahi and Ngā Manu Kōrero winner 2022 and 2023, spoke about her perspective of Kotahitanga - a combination and alignment of skill sets that has laid the foundation for us all. Rangatahi need to make sure to learn these skills: to be present at your marae as well as on the national stage, be adept in the dining room of your marae and the corporate boardrooms of the nation, speak on the paepae as well as at international forums across the globe, be decision makers. Miriama says Te Atamihi encouraged rangatahi to learn these skills, to align within the Māori and western world, and open a wonder of opportunity.

Rātana

On 24 January Angela O’Donnell-King, PPTA Te Wehengarua kaihautū Māori, was present as politicians arrived at the home of Tahupōtiki Wiremu Rātana, just south of Whanganui, widely known as Rātana Pā.

Tahupōtiki Wiremu Rātana was born in 1873, became a healer, turned his farm into a refuge and established his own church- Te Hāhi Rātana for his many followers- ngā Mōrehu. His followers sought refuge, dispossessed from the effects of colonisation.

One hundred years ago, in 1924, Rātana took a group to London to meet with King



Record numbers of people attended Waitangi Day celebrations this year

George V and present a petition signed by thousands seeking a redress to the many land confiscations and breaches to Te Tiriti o Waitangi. The New Zealand government stopped that meeting from taking place.

“Once again, Māori are faced with government interference to fully realising the right to tino rangatiratanga promised within Te Tiriti o Waitangi,” says Angela. “Not surprisingly, the coalition’s anti-Māori rhetoric has united Māori to come together and fight for what is right. For nearly 200 years, Māori have fought to have the promises within Te Tiriti o Waitangi realised.”

Waitangi

Both kaihautū Māori say the Waitangi celebrations on 5 – 6 February did not disappoint. They witnessed politicians from National, ACT and NZ First speak to the whakaminenga (gathering) on the eve of Waitangi Day. “The day was memorable, Winston (Peters) causing drama, Ngāpuhi wāhine ruling from behind and Shane Jones delivering a whaikōrero that elaborated his

connectedness to Ngā Puhī. The kōrero heard throughout the day was the uniting of Māori in Kotahitanga.

“Waitangi Day on the paepae was in total contrast to the day before. Karakia and commemoration was the focus of the day beginning with the dawn ceremony. Waitangi Day on the Waitangi grounds is a day of everyone coming together.”

Both kaihautū look forward to exploring further the opportunities that hui like these give PPTA Te Wehengarua to connect with the public and increase engagement in Māori medium settings.



Kaihautū Māori Miriama Barton, left, and Angela O’Donnell-King, right, with Te Pāti Māori co-leader Debbie Ngarewa-Packer, centre, at Waitangi

Red Unions arrive in Aotearoa

A 'union' with links to the Australian Liberal and National parties has begun touting for business in schools in Aotearoa New Zealand

Described by Australian media as a 'set of fake unions', a group known as Red Unions has begun advertising heavily on social media and are trying to get into secondary schools in Aotearoa New Zealand to tout for business.

Lawrence Mikkelsen, PPTA Te Wehengarua national executive member for Tāmaki Makaurau Auckland eastern ward, reported to the February executive meeting that a group of 'unions', known collectively as Red Unions, were launched in Australia by a former Liberal Party industrial relations chairperson. They gained prominence in 2021 in their opposition to Australian COVID-19 mitigation policies in the education and health sectors.

Australian Council of Trade Unions secretary Sally McManus has described the Red Unions as 'fake unions run by LNP (Liberal-National coalition) members and their associates, set up to try and divide working people'.

Lawrence said that in the wake of vaccine mandates being introduced by the Labour-led government in 2021 and the occupation of Parliament grounds in 2022, these Australian unions set up affiliates in New Zealand. "They have targeted disaffected teachers, nurses, and doctors. They are allied with astroturf anti-mandate and anti-vaccination campaigns like "Doctors Standing Up for Science" and "Teachers Standing Up for Science" both groups which took the Crown to court over the legality of mandates.

"Mandates may be over, but nonetheless these unions are advertising heavily on social media under the names TPANZ (Teachers' Professional Association of New Zealand), NPANZ (Nurses' Professional Association of New Zealand) and NZMPS (New Zealand Medical Professionals Society). All of these unions share the same secretary, and their physical address is a safe deposit box in Parnell, Auckland."

Chris Abercrombie, PPTA Te Wehengarua president, refuted the unions' suggestions that PPTA Te Wehengarua was affiliated to political parties and led by union officials. "One of our major strengths is the fact that we are not affiliated to any political party, and we have a more than 70-year proud tradition of being an organisation led incredibly strongly by our members."

Information for branches, including discussion points that members can use if TPANZ representatives visit their school, will be available on the PPTA Te Wehengarua website soon.



Lawrence Mikkelsen

Community liaison trial set to begin

A trial of community liaison roles will take place in six regions later this year

Several schools in six regions around the motu are taking part in a community liaison role trial this year.

Regions taking part are Tairāwhiti, Tai Tokerau, Wellington, Otago, Waikato, and Bay of Plenty.

Teachers taking part in the trial will be involved in community and whānau liaison and activities and cultural engagement. Each teacher taking up a community liaison role will be entitled to a time allowance of 0.04 FTTE (one hour per week non-contact time) and a salary payment of \$1,000 per annum. These allowances will be funded in addition to the general school staffing and allowances. An individual may take on more than one allowance.

The trial will include an evidence-based evaluation against measurable objectives.

PPTA Te Wehengarua advisory officer, Rob Willetts, says the essential work identified as part of the community liaison role is currently undertaken in all schools but is generally unrecognised in terms of time and remuneration. "This unaddressed workload contributes to difficulties in recruiting and retaining kaiako Māori and Pacific teachers.

"The 2022 claim for the roles to be available in all secondary schools was unsuccessful but we believe that the trial will demonstrate the value of recognising this work and give mana to the work and to those who undertake it through the provision of time and salary."

He said the trial would provide information on the amount of work members undertake in these areas and it would develop an evidence base to show how important it is for ākonga and kaiako.

"We believe the outcome of the trial will support the future expansion of the role across all schools."

The trial will run until 2026.



The trial will support Māori and Pasifika students



Getting things right at the start

It's important to get clarity about your new role before you accept an offer as it can be tricky to resolve issues later

At this time of year teachers are often starting jobs at a new school. This can throw up a host of questions around things like hours of work, job descriptions and, if the role is fixed term, the length of the appointment.

When you apply for a position in a new school it is important you are clear on exactly what the position is that you are being offered before you accept it. It is important to get things in writing at the outset because once you have accepted an offer it can be tricky to resolve issues later.

Letters of appointment

When you start a new job, you must receive a letter of appointment outlining the details of that role. It must tell you when you start, the hours of work (or full-time teaching equivalent if the position is part-time) and the curriculum areas you will be teaching. It is good if the letter is specific when it comes to responsibilities too.

If the position is fixed term, then section 66 of the Employment Relations Act 2000 applies. The reason for the fixed term nature of the position must be clearly stated in writing. The reason must be a "genuine reason based on reasonable grounds".

Case Studies

Sam applied for a position that had been advertised in the Education Gazette as a permanent position. They went to the interview, which went well, and the school told them that they would be in touch. When Sam received the offer of appointment from the school, they noticed that the letter stated that the position was fixed term rather than permanent. The letter said that Sam could get advice before accepting so they contacted their field officer.

The field officer approached the school and queried why the advertised position and the offer of appointment were different. The principal apologised saying they had advertised several positions in that faculty and Sam had been sent



the wrong letter. The principal agreed to amend the letter to say that Sam's position was indeed permanent.

Moana applied for a position that was advertised as permanent part-time. They had other commitments that meant a full-time position was not going to work but they knew that a permanent part-time position would enable them to move more quickly to progress up the scale, so they were keen to accept the position once it was offered.

When Moana got the letter of appointment, they realised the attached timetable was vastly different from what had been outlined at the interview. The proposed timetable meant they would be working every day for a 0.5 position. During the interview Moana had made it quite clear that they simply could not work every day, which is what made the 0.5FTE position attractive.

Moana contacted the field officer who queried the proposed timetable with the school. The school was keen to appoint Moana, therefore was amenable to changing the timetable

to make it possible for them to accept the job.

In these case studies both teachers had received the letter of appointment in writing, which they read carefully and sought advice about before accepting the job offers. Remember, the devil is always in the details; make sure you get agreements in writing and, if in doubt, seek advice from your field officer.

Leaving teaching? Please fill in our survey

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

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

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

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

PPTA Membership Alert

Have your details changed?

Changed schools? New email address? New phone number? Let us know! We have important information to share but can only get it to you if we know how to find you. If your contact details have changed, please let us know.

You can update your details online!

All you need to do is visit ppta.org.nz, and look for the log-in button at the top right of the page. Once logged in, you will be taken to the membership 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.

Have any PPTA membership questions?

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

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