

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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Investing in the future

Actions speak louder than words when it comes to investing in education and the future of Aotearoa New Zealand, writes Chris Abercrombie

Being acting president of PPTA Te Wehengarua has many privileges and a terrific one was being part of the Aotearoa New Zealand delegation to a summit in Washington DC at the end of April.

The International Summit on the Teaching Profession ("ISTP") brings together education ministers, union leaders and other education leaders from OECD nations to discuss education systems, and to review how best to improve quality teaching and learning. For a nation to attend the summit, their education minister must be present. It is the only global event which brings together teacher unions and government Ministers on an equal basis.

Each year, summit organisers produce a report on the state of the profession that is used as a springboard for discussions. This is the first time New Zealand and therefore PPTA, has attended the summit in-person since 2019.

It was great to attend this gathering of representatives from more than 22 countries throughout Europe, Asia, the Americas and the Pacific, and it was especially good spending that time with our Minister of Education and with the President of NZEI. There was a last-minute guest, the First Lady of the United States, Dr Jill Biden. She is a teacher herself and is still teaching so it seemed fitting to have her there.

Meeting fellow unionists from around the world was great and it was equal parts heart-breaking and reassuring to hear that we are facing the same issues, especially around recruitment and retention. It also shows the limited ability that overseas recruitment has in dealing with our staffing crisis.

The summit focused on three themes: elevating and enhancing the teaching profession; educating for global and cultural competence and civic engagement, and leveraging digital technologies to ensure equitable access and enhanced learning for all. At the end of the summit, each country's delegation agreed on three commitments for each of



At the summit: Chris Abercrombie, US Secretary of Education Miguel Cardona, United States First Lady Jill Biden and PPTA Te Wehengarua Māori Vice President Te Aomihia Taua-Glassie

the themes. We committed to raise the profile and status of the teaching profession through positive messaging on the value and impact of teaching in society; to cement the importance of mātauranga Māori in education, curriculum and teaching practice; and empower school communities to find solutions for their digital and connectivity needs. It was a very busy three days of mahi and an amazing experience that I will remember for a long time.

The host of the summit, United States Secretary for Education, Dr Miguel Cardona, in his opening address stated that 'our students are counting on governments and organisations alike to come together and invest in their future.'

Those words resonate particularly for me – and I'm sure for you – as I write this viewpoint in the midst of an increasingly difficult negotiating environment.

Investment in the future must include a well paid, adequately supported secondary teaching workforce able

to provide ākongā with the skills, knowledge and qualifications they need to live their best lives and create the best opportunities for themselves. It must include a specialist teacher in every subject.

Yet, at the time of writing, we have held three full strikes and are set to reject the second formal offer from the government for settlement of our collective agreement.

The Minister of Education has said she is proud of the teacher unions for standing up for education, she shares the same goals as us and she believes we will get there eventually. I sincerely hope, for the sake of our teaching profession and our ākongā, that we get there soon. Actions speak louder than words.

Supporting wāhine Māori leaders

Research into wāhine Maori school leaders is being carried out to find out how they can be better supported

PPTA Te Wehengarua is investigating the numbers and experiences of wāhine Māori in leadership positions in secondary and area schools, to see what kind of support all wāhine Māori need to achieve their leadership hopes and dreams.

Susan Haugh-Leach, PPTA Te Wehengarua advisory officer, says there is currently no research into how many wāhine Māori there are in leadership positions in New Zealand schools. “We know we have wāhine Māori in our secondary and area schools who are fantastic leaders and role models for rangatahi, but we believe they are under-represented. We want to know what support these wāhine need to keep them in these leadership positions, and what wāhine Maori aspiring to be in leadership positions need to be successful. Finding out what support current wāhine Māori leaders have will be extremely helpful.”

The first part of the research is a statistical survey to gather a snapshot of how many wāhine Māori are currently in these leadership positions. All wāhine Māori are invited to take part in the survey. They don’t have to be PPTA members. The survey takes three to five minutes to complete and everyone who completes it can go into a draw to win a \$100 voucher.

The second phase of the research will involve case studies in five schools around New Zealand to gather more in-depth information about the experiences of wāhine Māori in leadership positions.

To enter the survey in English or reo Māori, just scan the QR codes below.

English



Māori



Māori Teachers’ Conference

Registrations are now open for a highlight of the year for kaiako Māori, the Māori Teachers’ Conference

“Whiria te tangata”

(Lighten the load by bringing people together)

An awesome programme full of inspirational speakers, lively workshops, wonderful waiata and a stunning hakari are in store for you at the 28th Māori Teachers’ Conference on Sunday and Monday 2-3 July.

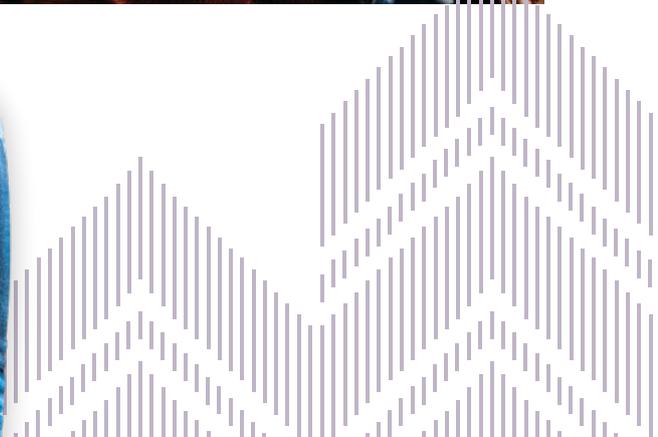
For the first time in a couple of years, the hui is returning to Rotorua, where it will be held at the Sudima Hotel.

“Presentations and workshops will focus on empowering Māori teachers and learners, and ensuring we continue to take time to focus on wellbeing,” says Miriama Barton, PPTA Te Wehengarua Kaihautū Māori.

“As well as a great line-up of keynote speakers sharing their knowledge and vision, the conference will also incorporate practical hands-on focus with workshop sessions and panel discussions.”

Registration and food are free but delegates will need to arrange their own travel and accommodation bookings and seek funding from their Kura or PPTA Te Wehengarua region. Rooms are being held at a discount rate at the Sudima Hotel.

More information is available at ppta.org.nz/events/māori-teachers-conference/





Picking up the pieces

Margaret Symons is determined to restore the house that she has called home for fifty years

Three months after Cyclone Gabrielle wreaked havoc on Aotearoa New Zealand, Margaret Symons still spends every day working in mud.

Before the cyclone flooded her home of 50 years, in Puketapu behind Taradale in Hawke’s Bay, Margaret taught history and home economics at Flaxmere College in Hastings. “I don’t know how people (who were badly affected) can continue their jobs as my brain doesn’t even function right.” Every day at 2am Margaret wakes up with anxiety.

“Anxiety, depression and alcohol abuse are the side effects of floods and there are so many people I talk to who have got at least one – or some have all three – of these conditions.”

Margaret and her husband live near the Tutaekuri river, one of Hawke’s Bays largest. When it burst its banks during the cyclone, the water was above the high windows in their house.

Everything had to be taken out of their home and three months on Margaret is still sorting through ‘stuff’. Looking for something literally takes her days as she has to work through layers of carpet, piled on mud, piled on household items.

“Being a teacher my hard drive, my USB sticks – they’re all stuffed and I’ve lost all of my books, lost all printed resources, photos, anything to do with my life. I’m a historian and I’ve always collected local history because I was going to write a book, but all of those things have gone.”

She says some lovely things have happened since the devastating cyclone, including crews of PPTA Te Wehengarua members who have come to help on strike days. “I think some of them got a bit of a shock realising that you don’t get a lot done in four hours because of the mud.”

Thanks to a PPTA Te Wehengarua grant the caravan that she and her husband live in now has an awning, which gives them an area to cook in and a bit more room. “You can’t have a big row with your husband in a caravan – well you can but one person has to go to one end of the caravan and the other to the other end.”

Margaret is grateful for all the support from PPTA Te Wehengarua. “This has been a wonderful opportunity for me to push PPTA and tell non-members about why it’s good to be part of the union, all the things we have fought for and the fact that you just never know what’s going to happen. Michael (Stevenson, PPTA General Secretary) gave me a couple of T-shirts and I wear them everywhere.”



Margaret Symons in what was a bedroom in her flooded home.

Canterbury reaches out to Hawke’s Bay

Canterbury members have donated generously to their Hawke’s Bay colleagues in their time of need

The devastation that Cyclone Gabrielle wreaked on the Hawke’s Bay region came as the greatest shock to everyone around Aotearoa New Zealand.

One school, Hukarere Girls’ College, where 40 students had to be evacuated in the middle of the night, will never re-open on the current site. Teachers are providing classes both online and at a learning hub at a church in Havelock North.

On a balmy, sunny Sunday afternoon in April, PPTA Te Wehengarua Hawke’s Bay members gathered at a local pub where they hosted members of the Canterbury regional committee who gave them the remainder of the region’s earthquake fund.

“Having gone through natural disasters of our own, we realised the importance of being able to provide monetary support to the worst affected college and also to the Hawke’s Bay province in general,” says PPTA Canterbury regional chair Thomas Newton.

“Many of our regional members have close ties to Hawke’s Bay, so it was a privilege to be able to contribute almost \$24,000 of what remained in our Earthquake Hardship Fund to ensuring that some of the needs of the community will be met in the wake of the devastation caused by Cyclone Gabrielle.

“Being able to meet kano ki te kano and kōrero with association members filled us with great hope as Hawke’s Bay begins to rebuild. We witnessed a strong sense of optimism and heard many stories of how hard staff are working to meet the needs of those families that have been dislocated or have lost access to online learning. Moreover, as is always the case, we heard stories of staff who had suffered tremendously and who were still putting their needs of the learning communities first.

“Our thoughts stay firmly with all the educators and the students of Hawke’s Bay as they go through what will be an extensive rebuilding process throughout their region. Kia kaha.”



Members of the Hawke’s Bay region with the cheque given to them by the Canterbury region.



Heart of the community

Te Karaka Area School became the civil defence centre and the hub of the community in the wake of Cyclone Gabrielle

Te Karaka Area School was closed for instruction for 18 school days after Cyclone Gabrielle – not because the school was damaged, but because the community needed it for food and shelter.

Usually the two marae in Te Karaka, a small settlement about 30kms inland from Gisborne, serve as the hubs for the community in emergencies but they were both washed out by the flood.

Principal Renae Savage says she and the teachers were working 14 hour days. “People were living here, showering, eating three meals a day, the school was a safe haven for hundreds of people. We provided welfare for families who had nowhere to go. One hundred and twenty people were living here at one stage. And we were feeding 300 to 400 people a day in the school hall.”

Civil Defence set up its local headquarters there also.

Facilities are modern and spacious at the school, which opened in 2011, replacing the local primary school and Waikohu College.

Although no water got inside, the grounds looked like a war zone, says Renae.

She estimates that about half of the school population – 50 tamariki – have been severely traumatised by the cyclone. “They were in their beds asleep and were suddenly awoken by fire engines and loud hailers telling them to get out of their houses – it was the most severe experience of their lives.”

Seventeen of those 50 students are now displaced or relocated in Gisborne and Renae has been bringing in seven students from Gisborne each day. “Some families have moved three to four times already – fortunately they don’t have much to move because they have lost everything.”

Teacher Kerry N-Garrett says ongoing effects of the cyclone are immersive. “It is all around you. Driving here each day and seeing people’s belongings out on the road and windows and doors flung open as people try to air their homes out – it is heart wrenching.”



Te Karaka Area School PPTA branch chair Mohi Mete and principal Renae Savage outside what was Civil Defence HQ

Renae says trauma was affecting a lot of students before the cyclone. “The cyclone compounded the issues that already exist. Seventy percent of our ākonga do not live with their parents.”

Teachers told *PPTA News* they found a trauma training day, organised by the local Ministry of Education very helpful. Kerry said the younger students had begun meditation and seemed to be getting real benefits from it, while the older students found ‘tapping’ therapy was helping to reduce their anxiety.

About half the school’s eight staff live in Gisborne but those who live locally were affected by the flooding. One teacher, from Hastings, lives in a sleepout attached to her brother’s place and that was destroyed. So was the house she owns in Hastings.

Teacher Henare Tahuri says his family was flooded in. “We couldn’t get out for days but no communications was the hardest thing. We were cut off totally for three days. I’ve been doing renovations so we haven’t had an inside kitchen inside for ages but we were well set up outside for cooking, and we have an outside shower. We needed to get ourselves sorted before we could help others.”

Branch chair and local resident Mohe Mete said when he heard the sirens going and the loud hailers blasting about 5.30am, he thought it was the police

chasing someone. “I was lying in bed saying to myself ‘just pull over now’. But he soon realised it was an evacuation instruction.

“I chucked some clothes in a bag and put some food in a chilly bin and took off. A lot of us piled into a woolshed – we had a generator so we had a barbecue. The parents of one of the kids here started cooking up a storm. We were there for about 20 hours up on the hill. We were evacuated about 5.30am and returned about 4pm.”

He was relieved he did not go to the official Te Karaka evacuation centre in a shed on a hill on the other side of town. “There were about 400 people there and there was no food. After Cyclone Bola (in 1988) the evacuation centre was meant to be upgraded but it didn’t happen.”

When *PPTA News* and field officer and cyclone response coordinator Ahmad Osama visited the school in early April, it was a beautiful blue sky day and there were no visible signs of the flooding. The effects are still felt internally, teachers assured us. Silt dust is affecting people’s respiratory systems. “When it rains, people are anxious, and you are back slopping around in the silt.”



Tokomaru pop up kura

Hoana Forrester's carport became a classroom for isolated Tokomaru Bay ākongā after the cyclone

Tokomaru Bay ākongā couldn't get to school after Cyclone Gabrielle so their kaiako, Hoana Forrester, brought school to them.

For more than six weeks of Term 1 this year, Hoana's large carport at her home was the classroom for about 15 tamaraki and rangatahi each day. They usually attend Tolaga Bay Area School, about 30kms south of Tokomaru Bay.

"On one side of Tokomaru Bay, between here and Tolaga Bay, our bridge broke and on the other side there was a huge landslide that totally wiped out the road, so we were absolutely isolated, there was no way to get in or out."

During and immediately after the cyclone, Hoana was immersed in civil defence activities as she and her husband are volunteers.

"When I'd done what I needed to do for civil defence, I started thinking about our kids because we knew it wasn't going to be a quick fix for the road. I had discussions with our principal and deputy principal, I got approval and we went from there.

"We did a lot of journal writing every day and created a routine. It was great at my house. Luckily I've got a big carport so we could put couches in there and had a little library - it was a really cool space."

For the first two weeks, there was no electricity or wifi so ākongā created learning maps, reflected on themselves and set goals. "We tried not to put too much pressure on them, it was important to make sure they were okay and not anxious."

Messages from Māori maramataka, the Māori lunar calendar, were extremely pertinent for discussions with ākongā about what was happening around their environment.

In the fourth week scrap books from the area school were helicoptered in. Hoana wrote learning tasks for each ākongā at the front of the books so they could work through their tasks. "I could then work freestyle and go where I needed to - I was the cleaner, the bus driver, the counsellor, and the cook."



Tokomaru Bay pop up ākongā



Outdoor classroom

Hoana says a very exciting part of the pop up kura was having parents, retirees and others from the local community come and talk about their lives and careers. "It was amazing to have local people, people who ākongā might see every day but they don't see them in that light, they don't know that side of their lives, their career paths, so it was really really neat."

From airline pilots to police officers, everyone was happy to come and talk to the class. "They had the time because they didn't have anywhere to go, no-one could get in or out of Toko."

Having daily connections with parents during this time was also special as when the students are at the area school they usually catch the bus. "They (parents) would enjoy talking about what the kids had learnt that day." Set times for pop up school was 10am to 1pm. "But I'd still be trying to kick them out at 2pm."

There were also activities in the evening sometimes. Hoana's colleague, another secondary teacher, organised a fantastic outdoors programme, including star

gazing and navigation activities. "One evening we gathered at the wharf about 6pm and we were still there until 9pm."

Another colleague, a teacher aide, was awesome with ākongā with special needs.

An interesting aspect Hoana noticed was that some ākongā whose attendance was poor at the area school improved noticeably during the six weeks of pop up school. She suspects it was the whānau vibe of the pop up school. "The kids were aged from 7 to 16 and were at all levels but everyone was in there together and felt safe."

Hoana says she is extremely grateful to the Tolaga Bay Area School leadership team who allowed her to set up the temporary kura. "We have two primary schools in Tokomaru Bay and they could have easily said we had to set up a space within one of those schools but that wouldn't have worked for us. Having three staff out put a lot of pressure on the other teachers at Tolaga Bay, they were just so happy when we came back."



Keeping well digitally

Parents and teachers need to be role models for children and young people’s digital wellness

How can we help young people with this technology that is so amazing in so many ways but also distracting? That was a question posed by Professor Pasi Sahlberg to participants at the PPTA Te Wehengarua conference in April.

“We need to show young people how to manage the distraction and exercise self-control. Rather than a blanket ban on devices, we need to understand the nature of this challenge and help parents and schools to help young people deal with this challenge.”

Professor Sahlberg, currently Professor of Educational Leadership at the University of Melbourne, said a comprehensive research project in Australia found that almost 70 percent of teachers believed that opportunities to facilitate inquiry-based learning were enhanced by digital technology. At the same time, 78 percent of teachers say that over the last three to five years students’ ability to focus on educational tasks has decreased, 78 percent have noticed a decrease in student empathy and 60 percent have noted declining levels of physical activity.

The study also found that Australian classrooms are becoming increasingly complex places to teach and learn. Over the last three to five years, the proportion of students with emotional challenges had increased by 94 percent, students with social challenges had risen 93 percent, behavioural problems had increased by 93 percent and the number of students with cognitive challenges had increased by 84 percent.

Banning devices was not the answer. “Sweden and France, for example, were some of the first places to ban phones yet it resulted in very little difference in learning results.”

The real digital divide is not between children who have access to the internet and those who don’t. It’s between children whose parents know that they have to restrict screen time and those whose parents have been sold a bill of goods by schools and politicians that more screens are a key to success. The



Professor Pasi Sahlberg

new digital divide leaves many children on their own with digital devices.

Professor Sahlberg’s advice to teachers was to avoid simple solutions to this complex challenge. “Talk about the benefits and risks of digital lifestyles, set digital wellness as a common goal, be a role model for good life. Place limits, not bans.”

Teachers, parents and caregivers needed to set the same rules for themselves around devices as their students.

“Use the best evidence available, find healthy digital habits and set simple first steps.”

He acknowledged dealing with the challenges of device use was not easy. “But you have to do something because this thing is only going to get worse before it gets better.”

Continuing the theme of digital technology challenges, another speaker, Professor Welby Ings, told conference participants the internet was the world’s most amazing library surrounded by the world’s most toxic rubbish heap. “Technology is not the problem, it’s the human beings using it.”

Critical discernment was crucial in a world of misinformation and disinformation. “Rabbit holes are a



Professor Welby Ings

trip to hell, they are places where people don’t make decisions that keep themselves and others safe, they create anxiety around things that don’t matter.

“How do we as teachers equip people to survive with the sophisticated levels of persuasion swirling around them? The gift that we give through education is the freedom to think.

“Teaching is a human activity where you need to spend time with individuals to see how they think. Many individuals’ thinking and intelligence are not enhanced by assessment systems. Some people have the most beautiful intellects but they operate in dimensions that are not measured by assessment systems.”

Professor Ings said he could not write or read until he was 15. “I was terrorised by testing. Our job as teachers is to make a world where people who learn differently and at a different rate, flourish.”

Other speakers at the conference included the Minister of Education Hon. Jan Tinetti, Dr Rose Hipkins, chief researcher at the NZ Council for Educational Research, psychologist and consultant Dr Paul Wood, and journalist and author Jehan Casinader.

Presentations from the conference are available at ppta.org.nz





Seeding grant blooms magnificently

A grant from HealthCarePlus has paid off in multiple ways for students at Westland High School, writes HOD Language and PPTA Te Wehengarua national executive member, Michael Waller

A successful application to the Grant for Good scheme, enabled our school to literally plant the seeds of an idea that had been growing in my mind metaphorically for years.

The West Coast has an issue with school attendance, like the whole of the country. Historically as the rugby coach at my school I have felt I had some positive effect, motivating students to be at school and in class to be in the team. However, for three years now we have not had a 1XV and thus I've felt my capacity to influence positive attendance has been minimal.

We are a small school with an even smaller budget. New initiatives are exciting but almost impossible to get off the ground because of funding. So my idea of running a new class for those most at risk of failing, those most at risk of not gaining their NCEA, seemed just a pipe dream.

Until HealthCarePlus came along. And with the support of my senior leadership, in particular the DP in charge of pastoral care in the school, Peter Brailsford, we got to work planning an active, project-based learning class where the kids had more of a say in the direction of the class than the teacher, where ownership of the 'what' and 'how' was solely in the hands of the students. They set up a business where the profits would be split three ways: a third savings (for next year's projects); a third to a charity of their choosing; and a third to support them on a class trip in Term 4. While doing this project, they will be providing natural evidence of their skills in reading, researching, writing, speaking and bartering, which will form their literacy portfolios.

At the end of last year I asked a few students who had opted to do the course in 2023 what they wanted to do and for some reason they said chillies and honey. So in December I planted their seeds and come February they were ready to look after them, researching how to get rid of the dreaded white fly, organising shifts to water them, leaning on students with experience in gardening to lead the way.

Eventually we harvested some chillies and dried them, giving the students the opportunity to work out how to turn a profit. They opted to have a chilli oil competition where everyone created their own recipe and everyone brought in their own oil made at home. Through trial and error we found our favourite oil. It has to be said the chilli flakes on chocolate ice cream went down pretty well too but with winter approaching they opted for the chilli oil. Next they found glass suppliers and organised to hire an industrial kitchen to make the chilli oil and batch it up ready for sale.

None of this would have been available if it was not for the funding and support of HealthCarePlus. But what came next impressed me the most. The kids did the research on the bees and came back to me (as I was just about to click 'buy now' on 15 bee suites) telling me that it would be the wrong season, that they were worried about bee diseases and their inexperience with dealing with that. A maturity which blew me away. Instead, they asked, 'could we open a coffee shop?'. I was thrown but they put the business plan together and said with the investment that they were going to commit to hives and suites and equipment, they could instead learn to be baristas which would be a guaranteed job for them on the weekends if they got qualified.

As the 'how' and 'what' were theirs I called John at HealthCarePlus apologising that I needed to change from bee suites to coffee machines. He could not have been more supportive. So, just like that, Term 2 is rolling round and we now have a coffee machine of industrial standards ready for them to learn on and start selling their hot drinks to staff, visitors, and at sporting fixtures on the weekend.

The magic of project-based learning is that the students own their own journey and it has been amazing to see.

The data is only a term deep but with attendance being the initial performance indicator it is great to see that overall

the students' attendance is up 13% in the project-based learning class when compared with their overall school attendance. Even more excitingly, so far Māori attendance is up by 23% when compared with overall school attendance.

As a rugby coach I'm used to running trainings on number 8 wire. A ball and myself. Similarly with teaching, everything is on a budget, even down to staples in the photocopier. This course could not have run without the help and assistance of HealthCarePlus. This course needed someone to believe in it and invest in me and my students. I cannot recommend highly enough taking an afternoon to put an application together.

Think of how many times in a science class the kids have come up with a line of inquiry which could have been investigated had it not been for budgetary constraints. Or you want to upskill as a teacher but the school can't afford to send you on the PD? HealthCarePlus is a lifeline for us in these situations.

Yeah you can run a class with a board marker and your own energy, but just think about what you could do if you had HealthCarePlus in your corner supporting you financially and with a mentor to improve outcomes, not just for the students but your sense of satisfaction too.

The next application round for HealthCarePlus Grants for Good opens on 3 July. <https://info.healthcareplus.org.nz/grants-for-good>



The final product



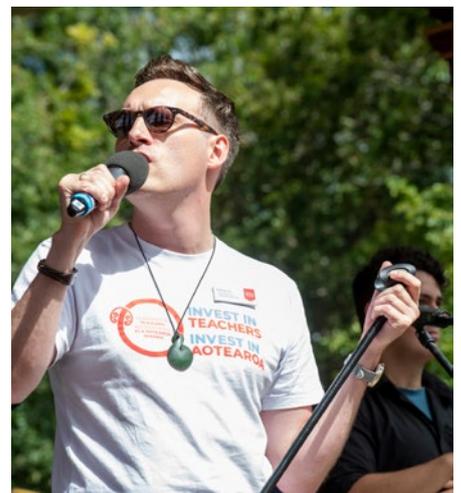
Checking the chilli



Anyone for a chilli sandwich?

Making our voices heard

PPTA Te Wehengarua members have held three strikes this year, taking to the streets in all kinds of weather to raise awareness of the issues at the heart of the collective agreement negotiations. Here are some images of members' amazing efforts around the motu





Thoughts from the Teaching Council rep

An update for PPTA Te Wehengarua members from Mike Connor, secondary teachers' representative on the Teaching Council

First off, those kindly folk who voted me onto the Teaching Council (TC), thanks a lot. You owe me, I know where you live and I will find you!

I've been on the TC governing board for some nine months. It has taken me a while to get used to the machinations and expectations of governance, what we are supposed to poke our beaks into and what we are not. I have quite a few issues with much of what goes on, and debates can get a little heated. But I will always try to go hard on a significant issue, but soft on the person. And to that I can honestly say that I find every member of the TC board well intentioned and likeable, each pretty awesome in their own respective fields.

The crew of 100 plus workers, in the office next to where we meet once every month, from what I have seen, are capable, hard-working, well managed and go into bat for teachers - often over and above the call of duty. It is a friendly, pleasant and industrious environment with not one Dwight Shrute in sight.

Everyone on the TC board is very aware of the mantra that comes out from teachers in all three sectors: What do they do? I see no value at all for my money. Who are they? They need to stay in their own lane. What the hell are they doing working on things the Ministry or someone else should do? I don't want to pay for that stuff etc. In short they are aware that teachers have no real connection with the TC in head, heart or soul.

Most of the people I have spoken to on the board do not want teachers to pay fees, most of the people I have spoken to who work for the TC do not want teachers to pay fees. I believe, quite strongly, that the government should pay the fees and nothing has deviated me from that line of thought. I can appreciate what our \$450 or so is mostly used for, but I do not appreciate paying for something that the government has mandated. In the past, a school was given the option of paying for a teacher's fees and most schools did. Why did this stop and why is it not permanently re-instated? Better still, no fees full stop.



Mike Connor

The "independence" of the TC line of talk, which can be used by the government or TC when it suits them, strikes me as nonsense. The ultimate buck stops with the government. End of.

According to the TC, it has sped up the pace of registrations and the outcomes of complaints. Statistically this appears true, anecdotally less so. There is still a huge disconnect between what the TC says it does well and what teachers think. There is also a bit of a disconnect between some of the disciplinary decisions made and what teachers might think of those cases. The process does involve teachers (about 30 or so who sit on the various conduct advisory committees (CAC) when issues arise - usually a CAC of three or so discuss the issue). From here, if the teachers think it is a serious issue they refer it up to the disputes tribunal, which has lawyers and a teacher.

The TC has initiated the Rauhuia Leadership programme. This is not paid for by us, it is paid for by an annual grant of \$500,000 from the government. The TC is at pains to point out that it is not professional learning and development (PLD). The PLD component will be supplied by providers - i.e. commercial interests. So ultimately Rauhuia will

lead to PLD. This is often where things break down depending on the quality of the provision and the length of time of the PLD. Many see a commercialised PLD as simply a profit-making venture of negligible long-term use that will drag things out and add limited value to teachers and the school. Others may see benefit.

So at this stage, I'm still immersing myself with the ins and outs of Wellington bureaucracy and trying to sift through the greywacke to find the flecks of gold. I try to speak on behalf of all teachers, early childhood, primary and secondary as we all, ultimately, rely on each other and we all appreciate the skills and heart we bring to an increasingly tough job. But I definitely have secondary teachers and the PPTA at the forefront of my thinking when I assess important issues. A kind of, "how will it benefit us, the teachers, and how will it improve our lot?"

I'll stop now because "ahakoa he iti, he pounamu." I wish you all the best for the winter term and if you feel like a bit of a pick-me-up then just think of curriculum refresh.

Yours in the educational soup
Mike Connor



Establishing teachers converge on Christchurch

This year's gathering of establishing teachers was filled to the brim with inspiring speakers and stimulating workshops

About 200 establishing teachers and overseas trained teachers headed to Ōtautahi Christchurch at the end of April for this year's Network of Establishing Teachers hui.

Particular highlights this year included a delegation from Queensland, a visit to Ao Tahwiti Unlimited, a special character school in Christchurch, a shining example of a state-funded school that can be innovative and sit outside the mainstream. Delegates also enjoyed a timely and practical session on protest action, and a panel discussion with central government Members of Parliament.





PPTA's 20,000th member

Courtney Hayes is the official 20,000th member of PPTA Te Wehengarua

PPTA Te Wehengarua welcomed our 20,000th member, Courtney Hayes, this year.

Courtney is a first year Mathematics teacher at Gisborne Girls' High School, her alma mater.

She admits it's a little strange teaching at the school she used to attend – her last year there as a student was 2017. "It feels weird having all the teachers that taught me when I was at school now being my colleagues and realising that now I'm the one in charge of the students."

Courtney says she was inspired to become a teacher so she could be a positive influence for students – she still



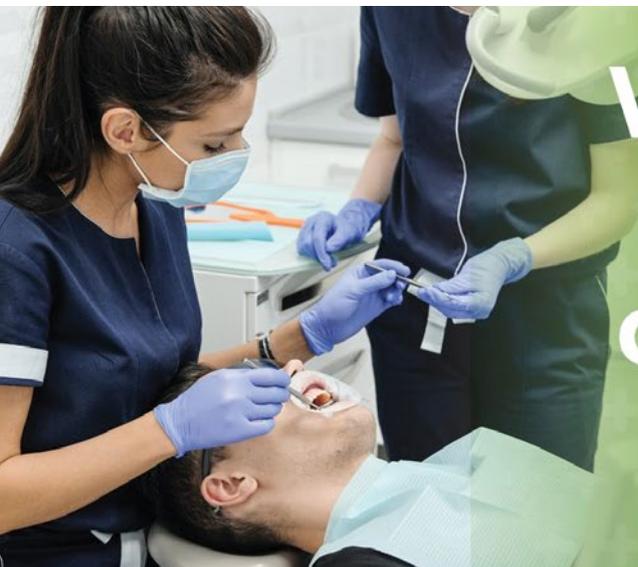
PPTA Te Wehengarua acting president, Chris Abercrombie, congratulates Courtney on being the 20,000th member

remembers what support she needed when she was at school and wants to be someone who can give such support.

She was motivated to join PPTA Te Wehengarua from hearing so many people talk about it. "And I want to have a say in my future career."

The first few months of her new career have been "messy", with weather events and industrial action. I think the most enjoyable thing has been seeing students learning things because of me. Seeing someone finally understand something they are confused with is really rewarding.

"The most challenging thing for me is actually switching off, I am still learning how to leave work at work and not dwell on those hard days or moments that are challenging me. I can't believe how exhausted I am at the end of a week and how many opportunities I have been offered to be a part of already."



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World Pride and Diversity in Education conference

A Diversity in Education conference, part of the first southern hemisphere World Pride event in Sydney this year, provided a wonderful opportunity to share approaches and progress, writes PPTA Te Wehengarua member Jerome Cargill

The first southern hemisphere World Pride was held in Sydney earlier this year, which included a Diversity in Education Conference hosted by the Australian Education Union (AEU) and the NSW Teachers Federation, with support from Education International.

Representatives from the USA, Scotland, France, Germany, Samoa and Australia gathered to create awareness and to build community. The conference made space to share the gains and challenges facing LGBTQ+ workers within schools.

The diverse international perspectives created a remarkable opportunity to share approaches and progress. The opening keynote from Hilario Benzon from the National Education Association (NEA) in the USA pitched the journey towards equality as “a journey towards freedom, liberation, and joy with no exceptions”.

Benzon highlighted some significant challenges in the USA. The NEA is currently tracking more than 300 Republican sponsored anti-LGBTQ+ bills, including curriculum censorship and “don’t say gay” laws. Florida has already passed one such “don’t say gay” bill, which “prohibit[s] classroom discussion about sexual orientation or gender identity” in classrooms up until grade 3, when the students are 8 or 9 years old. Benzon argues these bills are intended as attacks, with the aim of creating moral panic and activating the republicans’ base.

In contrast, Andrene Bamford & Selma Augestad from the Educational Institute of Scotland (EIS) shared considerable recent progress. In 2021, Scotland made history by being the first country in the world to embed LGBT inclusive education across the school curriculum. This was the result of sustained, organised, collective action by individuals, activists, community groups, organisations and trade unions across Scotland including EIS.

Bamford and Augestad presented on the challenges that Scotland has previously faced similar to the USA. Section 28, of the UK Local Government



Act, established under Thatcher in 1986 required teachers to “not intentionally promote homosexuality”. The vagueness around the word “promote” had a silencing impact on teachers and students. The damage was widespread, making schools unsafe places for sexuality and gender diversity. EIS was key to this campaign to overturn Section 28 which was eventually repealed in 2000 as one of the first pieces of legislation enacted by the new Scottish Parliament.

In both the USA and Scotland, the important role of teacher unions in supporting inclusive policy and practice for LGBTQ+ teachers and students was emphasised.

Representatives from the PPTA, Kirsty Farrant, Ben Mills and Jerome Cargill, shared their work as part of the Rainbow Taskforce in workshops during the conference. They shared the history of the Rainbow Taskforce including the success of the “Safer Schools for All” workshops which have been delivered in more than 150 schools since they began in 2012.

These workshops highlight data which demonstrates the higher risk of our LGBTQ+ rangatahi in areas such as bullying and well-being. During the conference, equivalent statistics were encountered from other countries. Correna Haythorpe, from the Australian Education Union, made an important point about how we read these numbers: “These are not statistics in a report; these are the lived experiences of young people in our schools”.



Individual employment agreements

If there is no settlement of the collective agreements by 1 July 2023 all teachers will move to individual employment agreements – what you need to know

The Secondary Teachers' Collective Agreement (STCA) and Area School Teachers' Collective Agreement (ASTCA) both expired on 30 June 2022, but they continue to be in force for a further 12 months, because there is provision in the Employment Relations Act that allows this.

On 1 July 2023 the STCA and ASTCA will no longer be in force.

What this means for you

On 1 July 2023 you will be deemed to move to an individual employment agreement (IEA) with the same terms and conditions of employment as before. You do not have to do anything or sign anything.

Being on a deemed IEA does not affect your PPTA Te Wehengarua membership.

You are still covered by the union and your field officers will continue to enforce the terms and conditions of your agreement.

The Ministry of Education should prepare an IEA for new employees to sign, which confirms the terms and conditions of the expired collective agreement. Existing employees do not need to sign these.

In the unlikely event that the Ministry of Education or a school board prepares an IEA with different terms and conditions, you should refuse to sign it and contact your field officer. The Executive would seek a mandate from members for actions in response.

IEAs can be divisive in schools, so this is a good time to remind non-members that they should join PPTA Te Wehengarua.

If you take a new job

When signing your letter of appointment, you should write that you are accepting the job under the terms and conditions of the 2019 -22 STCA or ASTCA and any collective agreement which replaces it.

Effect on industrial action

The shift to individual employment agreements will have no impact on industrial action. Section 83 of the Employment Relations Act allows you to strike if it relates to bargaining for a new collective agreement.

Further advice and support

Paid union meetings are being planned for 28 June where this issue will be discussed again with all members covered by the ASTCA and STCA.



Micro-credentials – Secondary Teacher Career Pathways

The PPTA Te Wehengarua Learning and Development Centre, in partnership with Te Herenga Waka Victoria University of Wellington, is developing and running professional learning courses aimed at supporting schools to build capability across the sector in the form of micro-credentials.

Micro-credentials are short courses that allow students to acquire industry-relevant skills and customise career development.

Our micro-credentials are delivered using a blended format, with components including:

- A dedicated online learning portal with access to readings, videos and self-reflection resources
- Facilitated webinar sessions to explore each topic in depth
- A one-day face-to-face hui

The content has been co-designed by subject matter experts using practical skills and knowledge that can be applied and assessed within a professional context.

Each course will be delivered as a 50 hour (5 point) micro-credential, over one school term. The learning has been designed to be recognised in a way that is valuable and can be leveraged to progress future professional learning.

The narrow focus of a micro-credential course makes it an ideal addition to your study commitments.

For more information, check out ppta.org.nz/pld-fund/micro-credential/





Preparing for a big year

PPTA Te Wehengarua regional representatives met in Te Whanganui-a-Tara Wellington earlier this year to prepare for a busy industrial and political year

PPTA delegates from around the motu descended on the dearly loved Brentwood Hotel for the Issues and Organising conference - a day of training for regional roles followed by a day exploring professional, industrial and political issues.

Participants left after the two days in no doubt about the challenges ahead, including escalating industrial action to support increasingly difficult collective agreement negotiations and the need to have teachers' voices heard in this year's general election.

Bring it on!



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.



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

