

## **Information sheet 1: Principal Remuneration**

### **What are the key issues?**

The current pay structure is not fit for purpose to value and pay primary principals fairly. It does not reflect the complexities and demands of leading the diversity of schools that make up the primary sector in Aotearoa New Zealand. The current offer from the Ministry of Education also fails to match the inflation rate. This means that primary and area school principals are effectively being asked to take a pay cut. This is an extra bitter blow after the additional work and responsibility that principals have willingly taken on over the last three years.

Principals' salary is made up of a number of components. Some of these are same for primary and secondary school principals but the design of these better reflects a secondary school model and therefore disadvantages many primary school principals. There are some components that are superior for secondary school principals. This includes recognition of leadership and of career development.

The components are based on roll size, number of teachers, decile (changing to equity index number), the age of children in the school and career stage. Primary and secondary school principals have parity for the first three, but are lagging behind on the other components. This structure advantages secondary school that typically have more smaller teacher to student ratios, larger student rolls and therefore more staff. Principals in smaller schools have the same responsibilities as those in bigger schools and frequently more as there are less other staff to share the work with yet this is not reflected in the pay structure.

Tumuaki of full immersion kura, bi-lingual kura and kura with rumaki units have additional responsibilities that are not well reflected in salary.

Principals in smaller schools also typically have some classroom teaching responsibilities as well as carrying the same level of executive responsibility as principals of larger schools. The realities of working in a small school mean that many principals lack administrative support and take on tasks such as caretaking and transport. This additional work and complexity is not adequately reflected in the salary (or support) available to principals of small schools.

Principals in specialist schools are responsible for leading the high number of staff members needed to support students with additional learning needs. Principals of these schools also have complex roles managing relationships with many external agencies involved in supporting their students. This level of leadership responsibility is not reflected in their salary as the major components of salary are based on roll size and the number of teachers in school rather than the overall size of staff or the complexity of the needs of students on the roll.

The introduction of Kāhui Ako roles also severely impacted on the relativities between principals in small schools and teachers in leadership roles in larger schools. Many first-time principals take a pay cut when they step up to take on the responsibility of leading a small school.

As a result of these issues many principals are choosing to leave the profession. It also difficult for smaller schools to recruit a principal. We need change so that we can attract and retain highly effective principals.

### **What are the solutions?**

NZEI Te Riu Roa principals developed and endorsed a number of claims that address key pay issues:

- A pay increase based on maintaining the value of a principal's salary relative to cost of living increases.
- Include all salary components available to secondary principals in the Unified Pay System (UPS) (clause 5.1.1) for primary principals. The UPS should also include any other form of remuneration provided to secondary principals, but not limited to other payments made under concurrence.
- Introduce a new recognition allowance valued at \$5,000 that will replace existing allowances. These, and any new allowances would be paid and based on negotiating how many of the allowances should be allocated in each context to recognise additional features that a principal is required to lead and manage.
- Address relativity issues for principals of small schools (U1-3). This could be done by determining salary is based on whichever is greatest:
  - 1. the components set out in 5.2.1 of the collective agreement (and as amended by the claims to include more salary components) OR;
  - 2. a formula: the value of step 11 of the teachers unified pay scale +the value of 6 units + 2 principal recognition allowances (currently \$124,000). Any increases negotiated in the teachers' collective agreement would change the ultimate figure derived from this formula

### **Strengthen your advocacy**

- Share information or stories with your MP about how this issue affects you specifically rather than just providing this background information
- Ask your MP to advocate for an improved offer for principals based on the solutions above
- Explain how schools/kura in the electorate would benefit if these issues are addressed
- Take a group of tumuaki colleagues to meet the MP so you can each share how a different aspect of this issue impacts you
- Ask your MP to report back to you about the action they take for you.

## Information sheet 2: Staffing

### What are the key issues?

- There have been many changes in our society and changes to our schools in the past 25 years or so. But staffing in our primary schools has not kept up with the increased need for teachers, support staff and a range of specialist staff needed to ensure all our children are able to reach their full potential.
- The way that staffing is allocated to primary schools — the number of teachers and the support principals get to manage schools — has been pretty much unchanged since it first came in in 1996. Since then, our society has dramatically changed and, along with that, expectations of the education system. But staffing of our primary schools has not changed to address the needs of children and the expectations of parents and society.
- Staffing in primary schools is up to 30% less than in secondary schools.
- Principals and teachers have tried to fix the understaffing issues in our collective agreement negotiations, but without success.
- In 2021, our union, NZEI Te Riu Roa, commissioned an independent review to look at whether current staffing in primary schools enables children to reach their potential and, if it doesn't, what changes are needed to ensure that all children can reach their potential.
- The Pūaotanga review team was made up of education experts. They received over 2600 written submissions from teachers, principals, support staff, parents and whānau, boards of trustees, community groups and academics, and heard from a wide range of groups and individuals in hearings, hui and talanoa.
- The response from submitters was very consistent. Submitters said over and over again: classes are too large, and teachers are unable to give each child the attention they need. There is not enough learning support — teacher aides, specialist teachers and external support.
- After reading and listening to all the submissions, the conclusion of the reviewers was crystal clear: Our primary schools do not have the staffing they need for all children to achieve their potential and children are falling through the cracks.
- These issues are multiplied many times for Māori and a dramatic increase in support for tamariki Māori and te reo is needed. Pasifika children also need much more support, including support for Pasikifa language and culture.
- The Government rolled out learning support co-ordinator staffing to some schools but many missed out further exacerbating issues and inequities
- Release time to support teachers in leadership roles in primary schools and the primary part of area schools is very limited. This means that primary principals have to take on much of the leadership work. Many primary principals still retain a classroom teaching role on top of their leadership role is there is not enough staffing to fully release them.

### What are the solutions?

Implement the recommendations from the Pūaotanga review and act on the issues highlighted and recommendations put forward as part of the Government's own review of *Tomorrow's Schools*.

For principals key staffing improvements that would make an immediate difference include:

- Ensuring that the sum of all entitlement teacher staffing elements for all schools is equivalent to at least 2 Full Time Teacher Equivalent (FTE) (up from 1.3).
- Increased the amount of management time provided to schools to enable teaching principals in U2 schools to be fully released.

- Introduce additional entitlement management staffing for the first 3 years of a beginning principal's employment. This is intended to provide support/flexibility for beginning principals to undertake professional development and develop in the role and/or for a mentor to be appointed to support the first time principal.
- Change management support. When the Government or one of its ministries or agencies, introduce policy or legislative change, (such as a pay equity settlement, or major curriculum change) provide additional FTTE staffing and funding so that staff can be released to undertake change work or external expertise can be accessed to support change work.
- Genuine parity with secondary schools regarding, curriculum, management, base guidance entitlements in similar sized schools/kura.<sup>1</sup> This will ensure that principals/tumuaki have appropriate time to carry out their role.<sup>2</sup> Improve the resourcing for support staff so that the full cost is met, including the steps introduced through pay equity settlements.
- Continuing the rollout of learning support co-ordinators to all schools

#### **Strengthen your advocacy**

- Share information or stories with your MP about how this issue affects you specifically rather than just providing this background information
- Ask your MP to advocate for an improved staffing for primary schools and primary aged tamariki in area schools
- Explain how schools/kura in the electorate would benefit if these issues are addressed
- Take a group of tumuaki colleagues to meet the MP so you can each share how a different aspect of this issue impacts you
- Ask your MP to let the Minister of Education know that we urgently need to improve staffing for primary aged students.
- Ask your MP to report back to you about the action they take for you.

## **Information sheet 3: Wellbeing**

### **What is the issue?**

The role of principal is demanding. This is both in terms of the sheer volume of work, as well as the emotional labour required to be an effective leader. Primary schools do not receive enough staffing to meet the needs and aspirations of tamariki. This puts strain on principals and this is leading to physical and mental health issues and burnout.

Since 2016, NZEI and the Educator Health and Wellbeing research group at Deakin University have worked in partnership to deliver the New Zealand Primary Principal Occupational Health, Safety and Wellbeing Survey. The survey provides a national picture of the work environments, working conditions, work experiences and health and wellbeing of the primary school leaders in New Zealand. Unfortunately the survey showed strong and consistent trends over the whole time it was conducted.

The information below is a summary of key information from the 2021 survey.

#### Working hours

- Over 72% of primary leaders work more than 50 hours per week during term time and 16% work more than 60 hours per week.

#### Demands at Work

- Primary leaders report that four out of five job demands have increased over the last year. There has been a significant increase in the frequency with which leaders experience more work than they can manage.

#### Workload

- This year, leaders reported work pace was at its highest level since the survey began.

#### Job resources

- Since last year, there has been a decline in some key job resources.

#### Job satisfaction

- Leaders job satisfaction has slightly decreased over the last year.

#### Health and wellbeing

- Leaders reported levels of burnout are high, but slightly lower than last year.

#### Sources of Stress

- The two major sources of stress at work 'sheer quantity of work' and 'lack of time to focus on teaching and learning' have slightly increased over the last year

### **What is the solutions**

- Principals need access to effective support and time to recharge their batteries.
- We have put forward claims to improve access to sabbaticals for all principals.
- We are also seeking dedicated funding to be available for principals to access support for professional wellbeing through things such as mentoring and supervision.

### **Strengthen your advocacy**

- Share information or stories with your MP about how this issue affects you specifically rather than just providing this background information

## **whakamana tamariki tumeke tumuaki**

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- Ask your MP to advocate for an improved hauora support for principals/tumuaki
- Explain how schools/kura in the electorate would benefit if these issues are addressed
- Take a group of tumuaki colleagues to meet the MP so you can each share how a different aspect of this issue impacts you
- Ask your MP to report back to you about the action they take for you.