

Chronic under resourcing of primary school principals. The facts.

► Fact 1 – Government was told to improve conditions for principals.

The Tomorrow's Schools Review told government in 2019 that more needed to be done to develop and support leaders. They said the role of principals/tumuaki is extremely demanding, and principals/tumuaki can find themselves spending too much time and energy on matters not directly related to the core business of teaching and learning.

"Our principals/tumuaki generally enjoy their work, and like the freedom they have to make decisions, but they often struggle with the size and complexity of their workload. They work long hours and have high stress levels."



► Fact 2 – Primary school staffing entitlements are 30% lower than secondary.

The Review also clearly showed how similarly sized primary and secondary schools don't receive the same staffing entitlements. They challenged the current model which assumes that the staffing, and particularly the staffing for educational leadership, required in primary schools is considerably less than that required in a similarly sized secondary schools. They recommended change.

"The disparity in entitlement between secondary and primary schools ... might be based on an historical judgement that a secondary school is a more complex organisation than a primary school (regardless of its size) and therefore needs more leadership resource. ... We believe the disparity is unwarranted."

► Fact 3 – Primary school principal wellbeing is suffering.

Since 2016 Deakin University have analysed New Zealand primary principal health and wellbeing. Over 72% of primary leaders work more than 50 hours per week during term time and 16% work more than 60 hours per week. There has been a significant increase in the frequency with which leaders experience more work than they can manage. The two major sources of stress at work 'sheer quantity of work' and 'lack of time to focus on teaching and learning'.



► Fact 4 – There is a roadmap to fix this.

Pūaotanga (2021) – the NZEI commissioned independent review into primary school staffing sets out a plan to improve the situation for principals. The report recommended schools receive increased management staffing entitlement comprising guaranteed minimum professional leadership staffing, an increased weighting for roll-generated management staffing, and an additional weighting for roll-generated management staffing based on specific equity criteria. It recommended an increase to administration support for principals, and financial and business management support. *Pūaotanga* made other recommendations in areas like teaching and learning support, Māori and Pacific education also.

