



Briefing Note: Talking points for NZPF Rotorua conference 2 August

To:	Hon Jan Tinetti, Associate Minister of Education		
Date:	20 July 2021	Priority:	Medium
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Purpose of paper

This briefing provides you with talking points and Q&As to support your attendance at the New Zealand Principals' Federation (NZPF) conference on 2 August 2021.

Summary

- You have agreed to attend the 2 August 2021 NZPF Rotorua conference.
- The purpose of the conference is for the sector to come together and share ideas about issues within schools.
- You are speaking at the 10:45am –11:30am slot with Perry Rush.
- You are speaking for 10 minutes, and have a further five minutes to take questions. Talking points and reactive Q&As are included in this briefing note.

Proactive Release

Agree that this Briefing can be released following the event.

Agree / Disagree

Ben O'Meara
Group Manager
Education System Policy
20/07/2021

Hon Jan Tinetti
Associate Minister of Education

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Background

1. You have agreed to attend the NZPF Rotorua conference. The conference runs from 2 August 2021 to 4 August 2021.
2. The conference is held at Bays Trust Forum, Energy Events Centre, Queens Drive, Rotorua.
3. The theme of the conference is 'Power, Passion, Pace; Pai tu Pai hinga! Whakamaua kia tina! This signifies a need to renew, refresh and move ahead after an unusually fragmented year in 2020.
4. The conference features a range of different keynote speakers, accompanied by breakout session workshops and hauora activities.
5. You have been asked to speak on 2 August 2021 in the 10:45am – 11:30am slot with Perry Rush. The opening pōwhiri goes from 9:00am-10:00am, followed by a morning tea up until the time of your speech.
6. You are speaking for 10 minutes, and have a further five minutes to take questions.

Recent engagement with NZPF

Curriculum, Maths, and Literacy

7. The NZPF has welcomed the recent announcement to refresh the national curriculum.
8. The NZPF is in favour of having greater clarity in *The New Zealand Curriculum*, whilst ensuring the ability to localise curriculum remains.
9. Perry Rush has signalled that the NZPF is prepared to shoulder the responsibility of reaching principals who are not yet of the view that curriculum change is necessary.
10. The NZPF made critical public comments recently about the lack of professional learning and development support for schools in maths and science.
11. The NZPF convened a mathematics meeting in partnership with the Ministry in early March to identify the key challenges and issues faced and to discuss solutions. The meeting was solutions focused and NZPF have signalled a desire to continue working together.
12. Discussions such as these are helping to inform the development of our mathematics strategy and the refresh of the Mathematics & Statistics learning area of The New Zealand Curriculum.
13. Mr Rush's views include:
 - a. That the sector needs clarity of what maths to teach, how to teach it, how to assess it, and resources to support this.
 - b. We need strong national leadership in maths to grow local leaders who then lead teaching practise. There needs to be continual feedback loops between all three.
 - c. The sector should be involved in the design of curriculum refresh and strategy.
 - d. We shouldn't rework the entire curriculum, start with what we have that is good, ask what clarity is needed.

14. The Ministry is working to set up an in-person meeting with NZPF to discuss the literacy strategy, and to progress the work in partnership. A date has yet to be agreed.
15. Mr Rush was concerned that academics (Royal Society) are advising the Ministry on the refresh, rather than listening to practitioner voice, but he took an active role with the Ministry to ensure practitioner voice was heard.

Behaviour in schools

16. As you are aware, the NZPF has expressed concerns about reports of increasing incidents of severe behaviour that pose a danger to staff and students, and a lack of support for schools that are directed to enrol students who display these behaviours. In February the NZPF wrote to its members advising them to consider refusing Ministry of Education directions to enrol these children unless they are certain they will get appropriate support.
17. Subsequently the Ministry received over 100 letters from principals about students with behaviour that challenges others, including fighting, hitting, kicking, biting, intimidation, threatening harm, weapons, and damage to property. The most common age groups referred to were 5-year olds and 11-12-year olds.
18. The most common reason stated for student's behaviour was trauma. Principals referenced family and social factors such as family violence, parental mental health, poverty, abuse, neglect, drugs, alcohol, and gang involvement. Most of the letters specifically acknowledged the effect of social issues and society on student behaviour. Some identified specific diagnoses affecting student behaviour.
19. Principals reported that teachers feeling pressure to resolve these situations is resulting in burn out and lack of job satisfaction, with some leaving their roles. They claimed that other students are feeling stressed and unable to learn, and that in some instances, other families have left the school because of the student's behaviour.

Our response to these concerns has been:

20. Budget 2021 provided \$17.7 million over four years to expand the Te Kahu Tōi, Intensive Wraparound Service (TKT/IWS) to support up to 95 additional learners per year with significant wellbeing and behavioural needs that may be challenging to others and who enable support at school, at home and in the community. Expanding TKT/IWS responds to concerns from the education sector about the need for immediate additional support for students with wellbeing and behavioural needs, while work on our broader system level response across the universal, targeted, and individual tiers to promote positive behaviour in schools is completed.
21. The Ministry is working to continuously improve our service offering by reviewing and evaluating existing supports, including the Expanded Behaviour Service, Positive Behaviour for Learning – School Wide (PB4L-SW), and the Early Intervention Service. The Government is also trialling new initiatives (e.g. Te Tupu), investing in new initiatives (e.g. counsellors in schools and self-regulation in early learning services), and working to identify gaps in service provision.
22. We have increased our focus on prevention and early intervention, shifting away from exclusively focusing on responding to challenging behaviours with individual ākonga, and towards more preventative and collaborative culturally enhancing practices.
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