

HANDS UP FOR LEARNING!

KIA MAU KI TE WHAKAAKO

NZEI TE RIU ROA
NEW ZEALAND EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTE



26th May 2010
For Use 27th May 2010

PRIMARY TEACHERS AND PRINCIPALS SEEK 4% PAY RISE

Primary school principals and teachers are seeking a 4% pay rise this year and another pegged to inflation next year, saying the government needs to make good its own rhetoric on closing the pay gap with Australia.

The education sector union NZEI Te Riu Roa has lodged claims for both primary teachers and principals with the Ministry of Education. The claims cover a two year period, and would deliver a 4% pay rise from July this year and another increase in July 2011 which would be tied to the Consumer Price Index.

The government has a vision of closing the pay gap with Australia, and acknowledges education is a key investment in our future as a productive and successful society.

Starting salaries for principals in Australia are between 11-20% higher than for New Zealand principals. For teachers, starting salaries are up to NZ\$20,000 higher in Australia, and the gap widens to as much as NZ\$30,000 after five or ten years experience. It's little wonder that New Zealand loses around 600 quality, trained teachers to Australia every year.

NZEI negotiating team leader Frances Guy says it's time for the government to back up its words with action on closing the pay gap and make the investment.

"The quality of an education system depends on the quality of its teachers. New Zealand teachers are sought all over the world because of their knowledge and skills and because we have a world class education system. We risk seeing teachers becoming New Zealand's best export," says Frances Guy.

"We're also very conscious of the impact that the upcoming GST increase will inevitably have on the cost of living," she added

Negotiations between NZEI and the Ministry of Education on both the primary teacher and primary principals pay claims get underway next month.

FOR MORE INFORMATION:
NZEI SPOKESPERSON: Frances Guy
MEDIA CONTACT: Liz Brown