

HANDS UP FOR LEARNING!

KIA MAU KI TE WHAKAAKO

NZEI · TE RIU ROA
NEW ZEALAND EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTE



6th September 2010
For immediate release

SCHOOL AND ECE STAFF MUST HEED QUAKE ZONE ADVICE

The education sector union NZEI Te Riu Roa says school and early childhood staff must listen to advice and keep away from quake-affected buildings and classrooms.

All schools and early childhood centres in the Christchurch, Waimakariri and Selwyn districts are closed until at least Wednesday. Every school and centre in the civil defence zone is being structurally assessed.

NZEI is fielding a number of calls from concerned principals and teachers with many being asked to go into their schools and centres to inspect the damage. Others simply want to go and have a look at their buildings and classrooms for themselves.

NZEI President Frances Nelson says “Civil Defence and the Education Ministry are rightfully taking the most cautious approach and assessors are trying to get around schools and centres as quickly as possible. The message is this is a blanket ban and no one should be at their school or centre or be instructed to go into a situation where there are clear health and safety hazards.”

The closure decision will be reviewed tomorrow and the Ministry is developing a process for schools and early childhood centres to follow in order for them to reopen. All schools and centres should be patient and monitor updates and advice from the Ministry of Education through its website - www.minedu.govt.nz

Frances Nelson says “our thoughts are with everyone affected by this earthquake. The extent of the damage to many schools and early childhood facilities is only just being realised and no one should put themselves or others at risk until the all clear is given.

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

NZEI SPOKESPERSON: National President Frances Nelson 0272542255

MEDIA CONTACT: Liz Brown 04-3822703(w) or 0272683291