



Getting Our Boards (more) on Board

Why is Boards of Trustees' support important?

Boards are the way the community is represented in the governance of a school. Getting our boards involved in supporting the campaign is part of building strong active community support. The Government will feel more pressure to act if they know that our boards and communities strongly support our campaign.

Many boards and communities have already expressed support for the campaign and indicated that they want to do more. This resource is intended to support boards to get more involved.

How can we get our board actively involved?

There are 3 key things we can do to encourage boards to get involved:

- **Be personal and specific.** Set up a group of teachers and the principal who can talk to the board about the campaign. Focus on how the issues are affecting the staff, the children and the school. Provide a compelling reason for the board to get involved.
- **Have clear information.** Be prepared to explain the issues of the campaign and how they have affected the school (eg: low applicant numbers for jobs, difficulty getting relievers, long delays accessing support for children with additional learning needs.) There is an information sheet with this resource that you can give them as an overview of the national picture.
- **Ask them to undertake specific actions.** There are some suggestions to get you started below.

Much like teaching, pre-planning and preparation is key. Ask for a slot on the next board meeting agenda. Identify which members are available to attend and arrange to meet together beforehand to plan what you are going to say and what you will ask to the board to do. You may also want to send them some information about the campaign ahead of the meeting, to help them prepare.

Be ready to make the most of the 'teachable moment.' Be prepared to run with a suggestion the board puts forward! Don't forget to follow up after the board meeting, thanking them for their time and commitment. It is also good to let them know how the campaign is progressing and to invite them to relevant events.

What sort of things could our board do to be actively supportive?

Boards can play a key role in strengthening community support and creating political pressure. Talk to the board about things they can do that would achieve these objectives. Here are a few ideas:

- Adopt a formal position of supporting the campaign, or specific aspects of it. Make this information public in school newsletters, websites and other communications.
- Talk with local MPs about why they support the campaign and how the issues are affecting the school. Ask the MPs to support them as the employer of teachers and principals and as the governors of children's education.
- Let teachers and the principal in the school/kura know that the Board is supportive of the campaign and of members engaging in campaign action.
- Attend campaigns events such as marches and rallies.

Link up with other boards to build solidarity. They can connect through this private Facebook group.

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/1939253092830601/>



Kua Tae Te Wā Campaign Overview for Boards

'*Kua tae te wā-the time has come*' sums up how primary teachers and principals feel about the need for Government to make meaningful investment in education to address deep seated issues. For years we have been experiencing difficulties getting enough teachers into our schools. Growing workloads and diminishing support for children with additional learning needs are compromising the quality of teaching and learning.

Government Position

We have welcomed initiatives announced by the government in the areas of learning support and teacher recruitment. However these have been insufficient to deal with the longstanding, underlying issues. We are yet to see anything that makes the day-to-day work of existing teachers and principals manageable and ensure that teaching remains a sustainable profession. This is having a direct impact on children's learning as class sizes grow, specialist support becomes increasingly stretched and schools struggle to fill vacancies.

Our Issues

There are four main issues we're focusing on:

- the crisis in education, including teacher and principal recruitment and retention issues
- time and workload and lack of support for children with additional learning needs
- issues with salary and relativities
- career development

So far NZEI Te Riu Roa teacher and principal members have rejected 4 offers because they didn't do enough to address these issues. We have clearly defined the issues and provided evidence about how they are affecting schools, children, teachers and principals. We have suggested solutions, but the government has refused to offer enough to address these. <https://campaigns.nzei.org.nz/time/campaign-negotiation-and-claims/>

Pay Parity for Primary Teachers and Principals

An additional issue that has emerged is that the government is now refusing to maintain pay parity for primary teachers with other teachers in the state sector. This means that right now primary teachers are earning, on average, 2.5% less than their colleagues in other schools who have the same qualifications and experiences. This sends a worrying message about how primary education is valued.

Choices

We are clear that this is about choices. Education has been significantly underfunded for years. This has led to significant drops in the number of people entering into teacher training. Record numbers of teachers are leaving the profession and schools are struggling to find sufficient teachers. The Government recently announced a \$2.5 billion surplus. The money is clearly available. It's time to invest in our children. What will you do to support our call for the government to invest more in teachers and principals to support quality education?

- Formally support the Kua Tae te Wā campaign, or specific aspects of it. Make your support public.
- Meet with your local MPs to explain your support and outline how the issues are affecting your school. Ask the MPs to raise the issues in caucus and with the Ministers.
- Let your teachers and the principal know that you are supportive of the campaign and of them engaging in campaign action.
- Attend campaign events such as marches and rallies.
- Link up with other boards to build solidarity. You can connect through this private Facebook group

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