



PPTA TE WEHENGARUA ANNUAL CONFERENCE 2024

Report to Conference: Initial Teacher Education update



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RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1 That the paper be received.

INTRODUCTION

This report summarises the activity that has been happening within the Initial Teacher Education space at PPTA Te Wehengarua from July 2023 to the end of June 2024.

INITIAL TEACHER EDUCATION TASKFORCE

MEMBER SURVEY AND ISSUES AND ORGANISING (I & O) SEMINAR

This member-led Taskforce first met in 2023 and conducted a survey which elicited key issues in relation to Initial Teacher Education. Delegates at the 2024 I & O seminar subsequently discussed and ranked these according to priority in terms of what they thought PPTA Te Wehengarua should advocate for.

Listed here in order of importance to I and O delegates:

1. the living wage for all teacher trainees for the full period of training;
2. paid placements for all teacher trainees;
3. LATs to have access to mentoring and non-contacts in line with PCTs;
4. training/ PLD for mentors/associate teachers;
5. a greater number of teacher trainee scholarships - and of higher value - than currently;
6. field-based training programmes to provide a minimum number of mentoring hours and funding for schools;
7. practicum experiences which give teacher trainees exposure to a wide range of school environments;
8. publicly funded ITE providers to receive more funding (over private);
9. better curriculum support for BTs who are the only teacher of their subject within a school;
10. consistency in the length and timing of practicums across ITE providers.

In addition, I & O delegates shared the following thoughts:

Initial teacher education should...

- have strong theory and strong practice!
- not have to work as well as study;
- have strong, knowledgeable curriculum experts who are recent practitioners;
- a clear framework indicating assessments and how to resource well;
- include paid for placements, focus on the science of learning, and give critical thinking skills to see through the fads;
- be an absolute national priority this is collectively planned, valued and resourced;
- be effective and financially available!

Field-based Initial Teacher Education should...

- not be a replacement for a structured, supportive, campus-based entry into teaching;
- not be a substitute for fully qualified teachers;
- provide adequate support for beginners.

A beginning teacher needs...

- economic support;
- well trained, and informed mentor to guide them through their practicum;
- to know that they can seek support from a variety of experience best teachers at their kura;
- *manaaki, tautoko*, and treated and supported in a *mana*-uplifting and enhancing way.

A beginning teacher should...

- be paid for the duration of their training;
- not have to live in poverty due to placements.

The most valuable support for a Trainee Teacher is...

- financial support \$\$\$;
- a well-supported mentor teacher who has the time to support them.

The I & O workshop affirmed the direction of the taskforce.

POLICY DEVELOPMENT

The taskforce convened in term two to begin formulating principles to inform PPTA Te Wehengarua policy. These principles would guide our responses to any changes to teacher education programmes, particularly in relation to the in-school teacher education / field-based/ school-based programmes. Notwithstanding the existing requirements from the Teaching Council, PPTA Te Wehengarua believes that these five draft principles should underpin all ITE programmes:

- 1. ACCESS INTO PROGRAMMES: Selection processes**
 - Equity of access into programmes
 - Selection processes need to be open and transparent
 - Funding needs to be available for all suitable candidates, regardless of location
 - There needs to be a vision that will support teacher training in kura Kaupapa Māori settings
 - Te Tiriti partnerships need to be visible /developed
 - All subjects should be valued – hierarchy of subjects needs to be challenged
 - Localised solutions, while potentially meeting a localised need are not necessarily open, transparent, equitable
- 2. CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE PRACTICE FOR THE AOTEAROA NZ CONTEXT**
 - All teacher trainees must uphold the principles of Te Tiriti
 - Culturally responsive practice is important to help reduce inequities
 - Programmes need to speak about systemic racism in New Zealand
 - Reduce deficit theorising

- All student teachers should have some experience of teaching in culturally diverse school and a school with a high equity index¹.
- Understand the cultural diversity their own community (and wider Aotearoa/NZ)
- Ongoing PLD into first two years of teaching

3. **STRONG MENTORING**

- the new and beginning teacher needs strong mentoring throughout the ITE programme and for the first 2-5 years of teaching
- a strong mentoring process leads to at least five years in classroom
- selection and support/training for mentor teachers needed.
- Needs to be an accountability mechanism – both in terms of expectations AND remuneration – it is a big job that is not adequately compensated (time / money etc.)
- oversight of teacher mentors - expectations of that person
- different roles of a mentor - as curriculum / subject specialist /pastoral everything else - more than one mentor and who gets the payment??? What if mentor changes part way through – junior/senior subjects
- Toolkit for mentor teachers? Set of explicit expectations (what do ITE Providers currently ask of schools?)

PPTA Te Wehengarua does not agree with the out-sourcing the mahi of ITE providers to teachers

in schools – even with incentivised mentoring such as free enrolment in a masters’ course. NOT paying does not recognise the lived experience of the classroom teacher. We agree to remunerating the teacher appropriately (money and time allowances)

4. **ACADEMIC RIGOUR**

- sound pedagogical content knowledge with strong and meaningful links to theory need to be well articulated in all teacher education programmes
- theory and practice need to be interwoven and not seen or treated as separate entities
- in-school / trades model of teacher education need careful scrutiny. We believe there are risks in the apprenticeship model.

5. **FIT FOR PURPOSE**

- A programme needs to meet the needs of mentors, schools, teacher education students
- It needs to set student teachers up to survive and thrive
- The status role of student teacher needs to be clear – if also a LAT there needs to be a clear agreement – when are they an employee / student? Risks/conflicts of interest need to be identified and managed.
- LATs - What is the role / expectations on student teachers? What is their “purpose” at the school? How can they be effectively mentored and not exploited? Provision within the SCT role?

TEACHING COUNCIL

The Teaching Council has replaced its ITEAG (ITE Advisory Group) with an ITE and Induction Stakeholders Group. They have finished their mahi in the policy design of the approval and MRM (monitoring, review, and moderation) of ITE programmes. They will focus on new policy areas within the ITE space, that includes recognising that the learning journey of a student teacher extends beyond their ITE programme into their two years of induction and mentoring. Several

meetings have taken place in 2024 which have included responses to many of the announcements that have come from the new Minister of Education -many affecting the primary sector (an hour a day; twice-yearly testing; maths action plan – including new entry requirements for primary ITE programmes).

COUNCIL OF DEANS OF EDUCATION

The Council of Deans of Education was established in 2006 and includes representatives from the seven universities with education and teacher education programmes. The group was created to establish ways the universities could take a lead in maintaining and advancing standards in teacher education. PPTA Te Wehengarua has been invited to speak to the Council of Deans on two occasions in the past year. These meetings provide an opportunity to share some of PPTA Te Wehengarua's advocacy work as well as current concerns from members.

Many of our concerns are shared by the Council of Deans – equity issues relating to accessibility of funded in-school teacher education programmes; the importance of Mātauranga Māori /Te AO Māori and te reo Māori to continue to be visible in all ITE programmes; the need to increase support for associate teachers /mentor teachers; entry/exit requirements for ITE programmes; and of course, teacher supply issues. This last topic led to the formation of a steering group on teacher shortage.

STEERING GROUP ON TEACHER SHORTAGE

Victoria University has hosted several meetings of a steering group in 2024 to begin to address teacher shortage. Representatives from NZEI, ERO, TC and Council of Deans, Te Akatea and PPTA Te Wehengarua have been attending.

The purpose of the March meeting was to consider the following: (1) defining the problem of teacher shortage; and (2) Ideas for addressing the problem.

Defining the problem:

- We are at a crisis point with not enough teachers to fill vacancies.
- Teaching is an aging profession.
- Need to address working conditions.
- 70 hour working weeks are common. In (some parts of?) Australia, teachers get 1 day a fortnight to work at home; some senior classes are taught online. Some of these decisions are made at school level.
- Skills of teachers are highly sought after in other professions.
- Prestige has gone from teaching.
- We need dialogue to make progress.
- NZEI is referring to the problem of shortage using acronym of ABC: A for professional autonomy; B for better conditions; C for Compensation.

- There is a need for a workforce strategy.
- Teacher supply is a complex process.
- NZ Initiative report has been damaging for ITE.
- Need to look at innovative ways to educate young people- what do our communities want?
- Perhaps change times of school day (10am-4pm?) as in example of iwi-based bilingual school.
- Need a bigger conversation from government, not just solutions to fix part of a bigger problem.
- Need to ask the big questions: e.g. What should children's experience of education be in Aotearoa? What does it mean to be a teacher? No-one has job-sized the teacher's job- what one does is not known.
- What are the practical barriers to becoming a teacher? Expense of undertaking teacher preparation.
- Need mentors at school for beginning teachers – they help greatly and need more support.
- Need people around who are models and can “fix” the lived experience of being a teacher.
- Teacher supply is not unique to our country- it is a global issue.
- Teacher shortage is in good company with other careers- currently an “uncool” career; there have been some generational shifts in its status
- Will the future of teaching be international? (as in importing teachers). If we do nothing, this is the likely scenario. Note: Fiji complaining that NZ is taking their teachers. Cost c. \$10,000 to bring a teacher over to NZ
- The co-curricular aspects of being a teacher – How are these aspects valued?

Addressing the problem:

- Agreement to working together in a solution-focused manner.
- Unions are not just about working conditions.
- Have a 10-point plan.
- A coalition of the willing to come together – let's state what we want and take that forward.
- Suggestion that we need a systemic approach with different components covering research (e.g. finding out what our communities want), actions (e.g. how to reduce the expense for teacher education students) and policy (e.g. workforce strategy).

Points from Open Discussion at the June meeting:

1. Concern about who is looking out for our children
2. Concern that most teachers want to leave within 5 years: we are burning them out
3. Need to increase diversity of teaching workforce
4. Charter schools remove the requirement to have trained teachers
5. Teacher shortage needs a whole-of-system approach vs piecemeal
6. What is meant by “being a teacher” in our contemporary context?

Agreement was reached to hold a two-day Teacher Supply Summit with the goal of moving to a creative space of solutions about what can be done and make recommendations on teacher supply

- Day 1 would be used to lay out different perspectives
- Day 2: Solutions

GOVERNMENT INITIAL TEACHER EDUCATION POLICY

The Minister has made it clear from our first meeting that she has a keen interest in “fixing” ITE and we know that she is particularly keen on the school-based ITE model.

The following is part of the government’s current quarterly plan:

28. Take action to strengthen teacher training, including refocusing Professional Learning and Development for teachers on numeracy, literacy and assessment.

ITE was also highlighted in the Minister’s recent announcement on her new Education priorities.

Improved teacher training: Developing the workforce of the future, including leadership development pathways.

In interviews, both the Minister of Education and the Prime Minister have talked about introducing incentives for teachers to train, and we have recently been asked to provide comment on bonding schemes. The Minister has helpfully clarified that performance pay is not in the mix.

The first work programme to achieve the new education priorities was due to be released the week this paper was being written so it is possible that we have more information about this priority by the time of this Executive meeting. Otherwise, we can expect to see a budget announcement on it.

FINAL THOUGHTS

At the recent International Summit on the Teaching Profession (ISTP) in Singapore, the New Zealand delegates (the Minister of Education, PPTA Te Wehengarua, NZEI) committed to working together to strengthen the provision of ITE to address barriers to the attraction and retention of teachers. PPTA Te Wehengarua will be holding the Minister to account if she looks like she is ignoring this commitment to work together.

Treating teachers as professionals with a unique body of knowledge and set of skills is critical when considering the recruitment, preparation and retention of teachers in Aotearoa New Zealand. Constant investigation of the teaching profession undervalues and undermines those who are highly qualified dedicated practitioners with high levels of expertise and experience. The five draft principles that PPTA Te Wehengarua will be advocating to underpin all ITE programmes, along with the actions that come out of the Teacher Supply Summit will feed into the PPTA Te Wehengarua current policy on Initial Teacher Education.