



Principals Promise to Keep Politicians Accountable for Education Policy

Source: NZ Principals Federation

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"Education drives our country's future prosperity," says Leanne Otene, President of the New Zealand Principals' Federation, "and we cannot afford to get education policy wrong this general election," she said.

To help get education policy right, the NZPF has released a set of principles to apply to all education policy.

Principle 1: Equitable Public Education

A thriving public education system must uphold the principles of Te Tiriti o Waitangi, reflecting the nation's commitment to honoring its founding document. This principle emphasizes biculturalism and the importance of creating an education system that respects the unique cultural heritage of New Zealand's Māori people.

Principle 2: Collaboration and Constructive Relationships

Positive, collaborative, and constructive working relationships between the education sector, Tangata Whenua (Māori people), and the government are fundamental to effective policy implementation. Such collaboration fosters inclusivity, transparency, and trust in decision-making.

Principle 3: Equitable Resourcing

To bridge educational disparities, state and state-integrated schools, Kura Kaupapa Māori, and Kura a Iwi must receive fair, equitable, and adequate resourcing. This ensures that every student has an opportunity to succeed, regardless of their background or location.

Principle 4: Lifelong Competencies

The education system must equip students with lifelong competencies and skills to navigate a rapidly changing world. Education goes beyond standardized tests; it must foster critical thinking, adaptability, problem-solving, and creativity.

Principle 5: Local Governance

Local communities and Boards of Trustees should govern and manage New Zealand schools. Empowering these communities ensures that education remains responsive to regional needs, fostering accountability and ownership among stakeholders.

Principle 6: High-Quality, Inclusive Education

Every New Zealander has the right to a high-quality, relevant, inclusive, and culturally appropriate education system. This principle centers on the student's experience, emphasizing comprehensive and empowering education.

As a professional group, school principals agree that these six principles must guide all future education policy for New Zealand's education system to reach the pinnacle of excellence and equity.

"NZPF will be carefully scrutinizing the Government's education policies, against our agreed six principles, once the election result is known," said Otene. "We will be relentless in making sure that education policy is based on integrity, on equity and fairness and that our professional experience, knowledge and understanding of the learning process is heard in every decision-making forum," she said.

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