



ALBANY PRIMARY SCHOOL

Dear Parents and caregivers

We greatly appreciate the community support that we have already received following the decision by teachers and principals to strike on Wednesday 29th May. The Board for Trustees acknowledge the inconvenience to parents, however are fully behind our staff in this decision due to continued frustrations regarding ongoing issues in our current education sector.

For the first time, both primary and secondary teachers are striking together because the crisis in education hits us all very hard and we need the Government to understand how serious it is. This joint strike action is unprecedented from both teacher unions (NZEI and PPTA).

Schools are grappling with the fallout of a 40% nosedive in the number of people training to be teachers between 2010 and 2016, even while the population grew by 400,000. While the situation improved a little last year and the Government has announced an urgent \$95m package to recruit teachers, this is not sufficient to address the crisis. Schools struggle daily to find enough teachers to meet their relief teachers' needs and this will worsen as winter approaches. There is also a desperate need for more support for children with additional learning needs.

The fact is that teaching is no longer considered an attractive profession due to long-term under-funding of the education sector. A significant pay jolt is part of the solution, alongside significant improvement to our heavy workloads. Otherwise, our schools will end up with larger class sizes and more teachers leaving.

In regards to school also closing on Friday 31st May, we advise that our Whānau ki te Ako (community of learning) schools had prebooked the date of our conference last year. We understand the strike day now falls in the same week, and apologise for any additional inconvenience this causes. Unfortunately, there is no flexibility with changing this date as many of our presenters are scheduled a year in advance, due to additional demands from schools all over New Zealand.

We thank you for your continued support.

Maree Bathurst
Principal

Rick Pierce
Chairperson, Board of Trustees