

1. Reaction to daily “Attendance Portal”

The Waitākere Area Principals agree that the daily collection of attendance data, as opposed to the current weekly reporting to the Ministry of Education, is unlikely to provide new insights that will improve attendance. We believe this additional requirement will not offer tangible benefits or significantly improve attendance at the grassroots level in the West.

2. Attendance Service Providers - How effective are they in your Region?

Between February and May 2024, Attendance West received approx. 680 referrals from the region. Of these, about 400 were Unjustified Absences, (with 80 now resolved). Additionally, there were about 280 referrals for NENS (non-enrolled students), with 80 now resolved. *Māori accounted for 49% of unjustified absences, followed by Pasifika at 27%, Pakeha at 17%, Asian at 3%, and other groups at 2%, with an equal split between males and females. In the non-enrolled category, Māori comprised 38%, Pasifika 23%, Pakeha 22%, Asian 10%, and MEELA (Middle Eastern, Latin American, African) 4%.*

Waitākere Principals agree that within most schools positive changes are being made despite ongoing challenges. The sheer number of referrals being made, however, contributes to inconsistencies due to insufficient staff and high staff turnover within the service itself.

3. What Attendance initiatives are happening in your Region now?

Waitākere Area Principals are actively engaged with their own school attendance initiatives. This is done by employing various contextual strategies such as lunchtime clubs, sports, and activities as well as creative incentives to encourage attendance. Some clusters within the region are working collaboratively on funded projects aimed at supporting families to ensure regular attendance. Importantly, schools are reducing barriers to attendance by fostering strong home-school partnerships and proactively supporting government-funded initiatives such as school lunches. Attendance West provides support with interventions and engaging families with other external agency support.

4. What other support would be helpful?

Waitākere Principals are advocating for increased support in attendance management, emphasising the need for dedicated funding to employ school-specific attendance personnel for a more effective approach. Concerns have been raised about the inadequacy of the current ASA system, urging updates to better serve its purpose. They also stress the importance of ensuring that attendance data is used responsibly and does not lead to stigmatisation of families, alongside addressing transportation barriers.

[Six Principles \(Principles 2&3\)](#)

[Regional MOOT actions for the Six Principles](#) [David Seymour Announcement](#)

[Ministry of Education Attendance Guidelines](#)

From Principal Matters Issue 7, 22 May 2024 Regional President Zoom Korero and Survey

The focus of the inaugural Regional Presidents' Korero was attendance.

Highlights of the korero included the Attendance Service, what works best in different regions, shortcomings, and how the service might be improved. The Presidents linked attendance to the Ka Ora Ka Ako lunches programme and transport subsidies and discussed some innovative ways different regions had lifted attendance. The new requirement for daily attendance data collection was also discussed.

At the conclusion of the Korero, all regional presidents were surveyed on two statements. These are:

1. Attendance support works best when controlled directly by collaborating schools *Yes/No*
2. Collecting daily attendance data will improve school attendance *Yes/No*

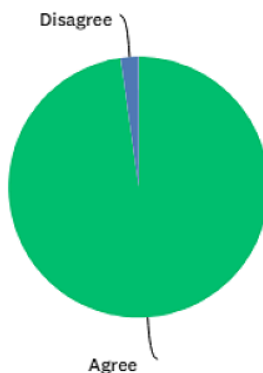
The results of the snap poll:

45 of the 107 Regional Presidents responded to the snap poll. This represents over half of all Principals across the country.

The results are clear in that 97.78% agree that Attendance Support works best when controlled directly by collaborating schools. 82.22% disagreed that collecting daily attendance will improve school Attendance.

Q1 Attendance Support works best when controlled directly by collaborating schools

Answered: 45 Skipped: 0

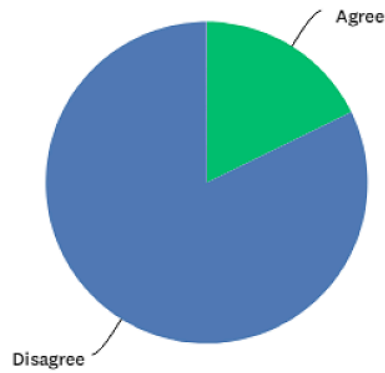


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Agree	97.78%	44
Disagree	2.22%	1
TOTAL		45

Image by: New Zealand Principal's Federation

Q2 Collecting Daily Attendance Data will improve School Attendance

Answered: 45 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Agree	17.78%	8
Disagree	82.22%	37
TOTAL		45

Image by: New Zealand Principal's Federation

And still on attendance, this week's MOE Bulletin announced that the ERO research team will be conducting a review to evaluate the effectiveness of supports and interventions for ākonga who are persistently absent from school.

We welcome this survey which will add to the findings of our regional poll. ERO's research will highlight areas of good practice and demonstrate where there is room for improvement. Please take the time to complete the survey if you receive the link.

With COVID-19 and winter flu, many of you are dealing with staff and student absences. These are justified absences, but I understand you may be concerned about government pressures to maintain high attendance rates. Managing staff-student ratios during this time is challenging, and I acknowledge that it will become more difficult for some of you as winter progresses. Kia kaha.

Use the attendance services and your school non-attendance procedures for unjustified absences, but remain supportive of families that are experiencing genuine challenges. We all know that maintaining strong relationships with our whanau is paramount.

Whāia te iti kahurangi.

Strive for excellence. Embrace learning and evolving, even when it feels challenging.

Ngā Mihi ki a koutou,

Leanne