



Waitākere Area Principals Association

Te Rōpū Tumuaki o Waitākere

**Term 1 2026**

## **WAPA EXECUTIVE**

As we finish up Term 1, our focus remains firmly on collective action and advocacy across our Waitākere kura. We encourage you to continue sharing your perspectives and raising matters that are important to your schools and communities. Your voice helps shape the direction of our work as an association.

We also encourage members to stay engaged through hui, communications, and any surveys shared during the year. The strength of WAPA comes from hearing directly from our tumuaki, so that we can represent the priorities of our region clearly and confidently.

Thank you to everyone who attended our recent AGM. Your ongoing commitment to collaboration across our network continues to strengthen leadership across Waitākere.

As always, please connect with your cluster representatives or any member of the executive if there are issues, ideas, or areas where WAPA can support collective advocacy.

Ngā mihi nui  
WAPA Executive Team

Amanda Bennet - President - Rutherford Primary School  
Jonnie Back - Vice President - Matipo School  
Ngaria Stehenson - Immediate Past President - Woodlands Park School  
Rob Taylor - Treasurer- Colwill School  
Michael Fletcher - South West Cluster - Chaucer School  
Lloyd Evans - Te Atatu Executive Representative - Te Atatu Intermediate  
Blair Giles - Henderson Cluster - Summerland School  
Andrea Thomas - Kelston Cluster - Titirangi Primary School  
Faye Hauwai - Learning Network  
Ruth Dalgario - Secretary

Whāia te iti kahurangi ki te tūohu koe me he maunga teitei

“Seek the treasure you value most dearly; if you bow your head, let it be to a lofty mountain.”



[www.wapa.org.nz](http://www.wapa.org.nz)



09 835 0912



[president@wapa.org.nz](mailto:president@wapa.org.nz) | [secretary@wapa.org.nz](mailto:secretary@wapa.org.nz)



### INTRODUCING THE INCOMING PRESIDENT

*Tēnā koutou ngā tumuaki o Waitākere*

*Ko Amanda Bennett toku ingoa. He uri ahau nō Whakatōhea. I whakatupuria ahau ki Te Atatū. Kei Kumeū ahau e noho ana. Ko au te tumuaki mō te kura tuatahi o Rutherford.*

This is my 27 year in education. All of that time has been in West Auckland. Prior to joining the teaching profession, I worked in the private sector and local government. Since coming to education I have taught across all levels, served on boards of trustees at all levels from pre-school to secondary along with a variety clubs. It is my privilege to take on this role and to work alongside an exceptional executive to support tumuaki of Waitakere in what is a challenging time in education.

### INTRODUCING THE INCOMING VICE PRESIDENT

Tēnā koutou ngā tumuaki o Waitākere

Ko Jonnie Black tōku ingoa. He uri ahau nō Ngāpuhi. Ko au te Tumuaiki o Matipo Road School in Te Atatū. I have worked in education since 2014, previously teaching and leading in schools across South and Central Auckland before moving into the principalship at Matipo School. I am passionate about working collaboratively with principals across the rohe, strengthening our collective voice as school leaders, and supporting initiatives that build leadership capability and strong outcomes for our learners and communities.

It is a privilege to contribute to the work of WAPA and to support tumuaki across Waitākere during a time of significant change in education.



### HAVE YOUR SAY ON THE RECENT ERO CHANGES

In light of the recent announcements regarding changes from the Education Review Office (ERO), we are inviting WAPA members to share their perspectives and any concerns. Some initial feedback has already come through; however, to date we have received only 13 responses to the survey.



For WAPA to respond collectively and advocate on your behalf, it is important that we hear from a majority of our membership. Your voice strengthens our ability to represent the interests of principals across our rohe and ensures any response reflects the views of our sector.

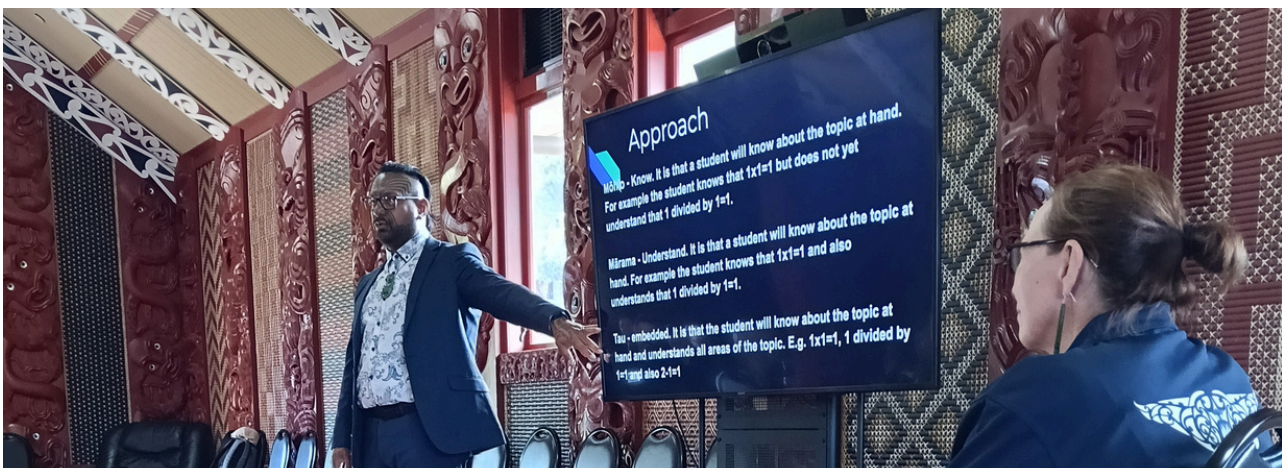
Your whakaaro will help guide how WAPA represents the interests of our members.

Please take a moment to share your thoughts here:

<https://forms.gle/dYN828vM4NQLnNTB8>

We appreciate you taking the time to contribute to this kōrero and encourage you to have your say.

Ngā mihi



## **ATTENDANCE - HEADS UP**



Recently there have been significant changes to the requirements of schools around attendance monitoring. Notably;

- Schools are required to have a stepped attendance plan which is displayed on their websites.
- Schools are required to take action for tamariki who have been absent 5, 10, or 20 days according to their plan,
- Schools must record the action taken and the date the action is taken in their SMS.
- WAPA is currently seeking clarity on what checks will be carried out and the type of feedback principals can expect.

## **SCHOOL AUDITS - YOUR FEEDBACK IS BEING HEARD**

Last year, Waitākere Area Principals' Association (WAPA) provided feedback to the Office of the Auditor-General regarding the annual school audit process, particularly around timeliness, workload, and the growing compliance demands on kura.

Recent member feedback continues to highlight similar concerns. While 77.5% of audits were completed on time, overall satisfaction averaged 3.35 out of 5, with 15% of principals reporting they were very dissatisfied. The key themes raised included

- late completion of audits
- poor communication from auditors
- excessive and repetitive document requests
- limited alignment with the realities of school operations
- increased leadership workload
- rising audit costs without a noticeable improvement in quality

As an association, WAPA recognises that audits are an important accountability mechanism. However, they must also be practical, proportionate, and responsive to the day-to-day context of schools.

We are hopeful that this year's round of audits has started positively across our kura, and we encourage members to continue sharing their experiences, suggestions, and feedback. This helps ensure we can maintain informed conversations and ongoing liaison with the Ministry of Education about how audit processes can be better aligned with school realities.

Your collective voice strengthens this advocacy, and we appreciate the insights you continue to share with the WAPA executive.





## **CHARMAINE MUNRO**

I am proud to have served in the Waitakere Area for many years. At the heart of my leadership – first as a teacher and then as a principal has always been about the child on the seat. This commitment has shaped my journey as a Principal, RTLB convenor for many years, former President of WAPA and long serving member of the WAPA Exec.

In this Principal Support role, I bring a wealth of knowledge, along with a genuine passion and empathy for what can be a lonely career as a Principal.

I am a strong believer in the power of good process. When this is in place, the leadership journey becomes more manageable and purposeful. I see this role as being both a careful listener and an encourager. I look forward to continuing to serve in this capacity in 2026.

## **PRINCIPAL WELLBEING ADVISORS**

Tēnā koutou, tēnā koutou, tēnā koutou katoa

Ko Joseph taku pāpā

Ko Rosa taku māmā

Ko Kevin taku hoa tāne

Ko Heather raua ko Natasha aku tamāhine

Ko Hazel raua ko Esther aku mokopuna

Nō Hingapoa ahau

Ko Adeline Blair taku ingoa

My name is Adeline Blair and I was born, educated and trained as a primary school teacher in Singapore. My husband and I made Aotearoa/New Zealand home in 1993. I started teaching at Kelston Boys' High School in 1996 and over the years, I held leadership roles as Adult and Community Education Co-ordinator, Head of Department, Head of Faculty, and Deputy Principal, before my appointment as Tumuaki in 2018. My husband, Kevin and I have two daughters; one who is a social worker and the other, a paediatric oncology nurse. I am also blessed to have two beautiful granddaughters. Whānau means a lot to me and that drives a lot of how I lead. I am honoured to be appointed to the Principal Support role with WAPA and I look forward to meeting you.

## **ADELINE BLAIR**



## TĀMAKI HERENGA TANGATA LEADERSHIP ADVISERS

A welcome and reminder that we have two Leadership Advisers supporting us this year, Jeff Johnstone and Simon Lamb, with John Robinson returning to his school. We are keen to continue strengthening this dual-support role to assist the leadership of Principals | Tumuaki and your Aspiring Leaders.

Jeff Johnstone brings a wealth of knowledge and experience from 40 years in education, including 25 years in senior leadership roles across schools and the wider sector. Jeff joins us after serving as principal of Sherwood School and is looking forward to connecting with and supporting principals across our region.

Simon Lamb is supporting principals across the North Shore and West Auckland areas. He has 25 years' experience in senior leadership, including 12 years as Principal of Takapuna Grammar School and 10 years as Headmaster of King's College. Simon has also contributed to sector leadership through his work with the University of Auckland's Onsite Training Programme and remains committed to strengthening high-quality teaching and learning practice across schools.

In addition, Phil Gordon has joined the Ministry of Education as Tumuaki Māori Leadership Adviser. Phil brings over 30 years' experience in education, including 23 years as a principal at Horeke Primary, Kaikohe Intermediate, and Kelston Intermediate. He is deeply committed to supporting positive outcomes for Māori learners and strengthening relationships between Tangata Whenua and Tangata Tiriti, and looks forward to working alongside tumuaki across Tāmaki and Tai Tokerau.



Jeff Johnstone  
jeff.johnstone@education.govt.nz



Phil Gordon  
phil.gordon@education.gov



Simon Lamb  
simon.lamb@education.govt.nz

Whāia te iti kahurangi ki te tūohu koe me he maunga teitei  
“Seek the treasure you value most dearly; if you bow your head, let it be to a lofty mountain.”



### WEST AUCKLAND COMMUNITY HIGHLIGHT: A LIVING ECOSYSTEM OF LEARNING AT HOANI WAITITI MARAE

On Thursday, 19 March, Waitākere RTLB Cluster 5 hosted a powerful and transformative Learning Support Network Hui at Hoani Waititi Marae in Glen Eden.

The day served as a vibrant example of the "great things" happening in our West Auckland educational community, bringing together educators to explore learning support through a Te Ao Māori lens.

The hui commenced with a formal pōwhiri, this set the scene for the days proceedings and speakers. The invitation had gone out to West Auckland schools and the response didn't disappoint. Spaces filled up quickly. The invitation was open to all leadership in West Auckland schools as well as learning support staff and kaiako from bil-lingual | te whānau classes. The hui was opened and closed by cluster manager Eng Leong Lim and Pouwhirinaki Horiana Clarke.

Rev Dr. Te Hira Paenga opened the keynote sessions by reflecting on Hoani Waititi as a "living ecosystem" grounded in Kaupapa Māori, highlighting the intergenerational resurgence of tikanga and marae life and sharing the fascinating journey of Hoani Waititi Kura and the early Rangatira who shaped the kura's path to the highly successful kura we see today.

The professional learning continued with high-impact presentations from local leaders:

- Amanda Bennett and Matua Jeff Ruha shared the success of Te Pā o Te Kōtuku at Rutherford Primary, an academic strategy specifically designed to nurture students and recognise identity as integral to success. This project and its development was covered as well as the future direction of this kaupapa.
- Dr. Cherie Taylor-Patel offered reflections on how a Te Ao Māori World View supports student success within an English-medium Enviroschool setting. She spoke passionately about the importance of partnerships, community and nurturing identity at a policy\strategic level as being vital to ākonga success.
- Matua Hone Reddell concluded the speaker series by introducing Kahu Pepeke, a sustainable program aimed at uplifting students with learning needs through a Te Aho Matua lens. This was a beautiful finish that highlighted a practical programme developed with RTLB support but run by Matua Hone and the Kura.

Beyond the formal presentations, the event fostered deep community networking during a shared kai in the wharekai, allowing West Auckland educators to connect, share strategies, and strengthen their collective support for our tamariki.

The team at Waitakere RTLB thank all participants and speakers for making this first hui on the marae such a inspiring and successful event.





**Ginny Anderson**

Join us for our Term 2, Week 6 for a General Meeting featuring special guests Ginny Anderson and Carmel Sepuloni.

All Waitākere tumuaki are warmly encouraged to attend.

Further details and location will be confirmed shortly.

# General Meeting

**Monday 25 May  
1pm – 3pm**

**Carmel Sepuloni**



## **WEST AUCKLAND BILINGUAL & REO RUA LEADERS' NETWORK**



### **Term 2 Hui**

**WHAKAWHANAUNGATANGA &  
STRATEGIC CLARITY**

**Glen Eden Primary School  
Wednesday 6th May  
9:30am – 11:30am**

Do you lead or support a reo rua or bilingual pathway in your kura?

This network is for tumuaki, kaiārahi, and leaders working in bilingual and reo rua settings who want to:

- connect with others doing similar mahi
- strengthen pathways for tamariki
- support kaiako working in bilingual contexts
- share challenges, successes, and practical strategies
- stay informed in a changing education landscape

Together we can strengthen bilingual education across West Auckland.

Nau mai, haere mai. We look forward to seeing you there.



## PROUDLY SUPPORTED BY OUR GOLD SPONSORS

Supporting leadership across Waitākere kura

**Crest  
Clean**

HEALTHY  
CLEAN  
WORKPLACES



**teamturf**  
SPORT PLAY HOME

**sebel**

**SCHOOLED**

We are proud to partner with these organisations whose support strengthens leadership across our kura and communities.

WAPA welcomes the support of partners who are committed to strengthening leadership and education across our region. Sponsorship helps us connect principals, grow professional learning opportunities, and support initiatives that benefit our schools and communities. We acknowledge and promote our sponsors as valued contributors to this important mahi.

If you're interested in partnering with WAPA, we'd love to hear from you.

Whāia te iti kahurangi ki te tūohu koe me he maunga teitei

“Seek the treasure you value most dearly; if you bow your head, let it be to a lofty mountain.”

