



Waitākere Area Principals Association

— Te Ropu Tumuaki o Waitākere —

WAPA NEWSLETTER

TERM 2 2026

CONNECT • INSPIRE • LEAD

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Strengthened



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Continued



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Network
Growth



Leadership
Connections

“

*The voice of
Waitākere principals
continues to be
heard, respected and
represented.*

”

ADVOCATING • CONNECTING • SUPPORTING

THE VOICE OF WAITĀKERE PRINCIPALS

KIA ORA WAPA WHĀNAU

A Message from Amanda Bennett | President

Term 2 has proved to be a busy term for all. Once again the pressure was on to get audits completed and annual reports submitted. We are keen to hear about your experience of school audits this year. We want to ensure that we have ongoing dialogue in this space. If there are still challenges we want the Auditor General to know. If things have improved from previous year, we should also pass this feedback along.

Term 2 has been both a successful and challenging term for the executive.

As most of you know, last week we made an error in the way we communicated with one of the major partners for many of our schools, Te Kawerau ā Maki. While reaching out was with good intention, our execution fell short, which we deeply regret. We acknowledge that we did not follow our own processes in this instance. We will be doing some deep reflection to ensure this doesn't happen again.

We sincerely apologise for the upset caused and remain committed to serving you and supporting the incredible work you do.

Earlier this term, we had a successful general meeting with guests Ginny Andersen and Carmel Sepuloni. Thank you to everyone who came along. The opportunity to share a Waitākere perspective was valuable. In addition, having time to pause, breathe and connect was excellent.

Coming up in term 3 we have our next general meeting with Hon Minister of Education Erica Stanford attending. Later in term 3, we have our annual leadership day, The Nite, Connect, Inspire, Lead. The theme; take time to pause, connect with colleagues and learn. We are venturing out of Waitākere to explore our city. The morning program consists of two excellent speakers who both bring authentic New Zealand perspectives. The afternoon program consists of an opportunity to explore an activity in Auckland City with colleagues followed by refreshments in town. The leadership day is part of the professional development map so your PLD funding can be used for this. It is the day before ICP starts so we highly recommend you make a week of it and stay in the city. We hope to see you there!

I met recently with Adeline atar due to family commitments she has decided not to continue in term 2. Fortunately, we have recently appointed Rota Carrington to the role. We know he will be a great support for our members.

I meet each term with the Ministry of Education and NZPF. They are keen to hear about what is on top for you. Please email me anything you want me to pass on.

We are interested in what you want to hear about at upcoming general meetings. We will invite speakers that align with your needs. Please let us know what you want to hear about by emailing secretary@wapa.org.nz

THIS TERM WE HAVE:



Advocated for Waitākere schools through engagement and representation.



Raised concerns regarding school transport safety and support for vulnerable learners.



Strengthened the Bilingual & Reo Rua Network.



Appointed an additional Principal Support Person to better support our members.



Continued Ministry of Education and ERO engagement.



Hosted a successful General Meeting, providing opportunities for principals to connect and engage directly with elected representatives.

“
Leading
Together.
Stronger
Together.”

“ The voice of Waitākere principals continues to be heard, respected and represented. ”



Ngā mihi nui,

Amanda Bennett

PRESIDENT

Waitākere Area Principals' Association

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ERO HUI SUMMARY



During Term 2, WAPA representatives met with ERO to seek **greater clarity** around the implementation of the School Improvement Framework and how reviews will operate moving forward.



ERO advised that while the review process is evolving, the intention is that schools will continue to work within a **partnership model** through Te Ara Huarau. ERO confirmed that the School Improvement Framework remains a key component of the process and will continue to be used alongside schools to identify strengths, areas for development, and improvement priorities.



However, principals continue to express concerns that the experience on the ground does not always align with the intended partnership approach. Feedback received from schools suggests there is a **growing perception** that the process is becoming increasingly data-driven, with less emphasis on context, narrative, and the broader story of school improvement.

WAPA will continue to **advocate** for review processes that recognise the unique context of individual schools and support genuine improvement conversations rather than compliance-focused approaches. We encourage principals to continue sharing their experiences so that these perspectives can be raised directly with ERO.



MINISTRY OF EDUCATION UPDATE



WAPA continues to **meet regularly** with Ministry of Education representatives to ensure the experiences and perspectives of Waitākere principals are heard.

Recent discussions have included:



School staffing and entitlement pressures.



Principal and leadership workload.



Curriculum implementation and support.



Learning support provision and resourcing.



School transport changes and associated safety concerns.



Support available for bilingual, reo rua, and rumaki settings.



The impact of policy changes on schools and communities.



These meetings provide an important opportunity to **raise local concerns**, share practical examples from our schools, and seek clarification on emerging initiatives.



If there are issues you would like WAPA to raise at future meetings, please contact a member of the Executive. Specific examples from schools are particularly valuable in helping us **advocate effectively** on behalf of our members.





Waitākere Area Principals Association

— Te Ropu Tumuaki o Waitākere —



WAPA ADVOCATES FOR SCHOOL TRANSPORT SAFETY REVIEW



This term, **following feedback and discussions** with a number of affected principals and stakeholders across Waitākere, WAPA formally wrote to the Ministry of Education to **raise concerns** regarding the safety and delivery of school transport services, particularly for vulnerable learners accessing the **Specialised School Transport Assistance (SESTA)** service.



The correspondence followed **increasing feedback** from principals and whānau across Waitākere who expressed **concerns about supervision arrangements, communication processes**, and the support available for students with **additional and complex needs** while travelling to and from school.



Recent events have **heightened these concerns** and prompted important questions about how risks are managed, what safeguards are in place for vulnerable learners, and how confidence in the transport system can be strengthened.



In its correspondence, WAPA called for **greater clarity** around current safety measures, supervision requirements, **provider monitoring processes**, and the **Ministry's response** to recent incidents. WAPA also highlighted the **challenging position** schools are often placed in, where principals are expected to respond to community concerns despite having limited influence over transport operations and service delivery.



WAPA has since **received a formal response** from the Ministry of Education outlining a number of **actions that have been taken** and are being considered to strengthen the SESTA service. This information has been **shared with key stakeholders** across our network.



WAPA will **continue to advocate** for vulnerable learners and their whānau by maintaining ongoing engagement with the Ministry and seeking a **comprehensive review** of safety procedures, **greater transparency** around transport operations, and **clear communication** with schools and communities. Ensuring all learners can access education safely and confidently remains a **key priority** for the Association.



Safe journeys. Strong learners. Bright futures.

WAPA | Te Ropu Tumuaki o Waitākere | P O Box 100 | Auckland 1142 | Phone 09 276 1234 | Email info@wapa.org.nz

WELCOME ROTA CARRINGTON

Introducing WAPA's Principal Support Person



THANK YOU ADELINE BLAIR

WAPA would like to acknowledge the significant contribution of Adeline Blair, who has served as our Principal Support Person with professionalism, care, and commitment.

Due to changing whānau circumstances, Adeline has made the decision to step away from the role. We thank her sincerely for the support she has provided to principals across Waitākere and wish her and her whānau all the very best for the future.



Rota Carrington

ROTA'S CONNECTIONS



Mataatua



Whakatōhea



Former West Auckland Principal



Ministry Advisor & Mentor



Principal Support Person



MEET ROTA

"Supporting people to grow, lead and thrive."

Rota Carrington has recently been appointed as WAPA's new Principal Support Person. With **more than 50 years of experience in education**, Rota brings a wealth of knowledge gained through roles as a teacher, principal, Ministry of Education advisor, iwi education leader, mentor, and consultant.

As a former tumuaki of three West Auckland kura, Rota understands both the rewards and challenges of school leadership and is committed to providing a confidential and supportive space for principals to reflect, problem-solve, celebrate successes, and access support when needed.

WHAT SUPPORT CAN ROTA PROVIDE?



- ✓ Confidential professional support
- ✓ Leadership coaching and mentoring
- ✓ Problem-solving and reflection
- ✓ Wellbeing support
- ✓ Celebrating successes
- ✓ Navigating leadership challenges

“

A MESSAGE FROM ROTA

I see this role as an opportunity to give back to the profession and community that has supported me throughout my journey, and I look forward to walking alongside the principals of Waitākere.

”



GET IN TOUCH

Rota Carrington

Principal Support Person – WAPA



022 170 1783



Experienced. Connected. Supportive.

WALKING ALONGSIDE WAITĀKERE PRINCIPALS.



Waitākere Area Principals Association

— Te Ropu Tumuaki o Waitākere —

GENERAL MEETING

Highlights



Thank you to everyone who attended our **Term 2 General Meeting**.



We were privileged to welcome **Hon. Ginny Andersen** and **Hon. Carmel Sepuloni**, who both shared their perspectives on the current educational and political landscape.



The discussion provided principals with an opportunity to **raise issues** impacting schools across Waitākere, including learning support, attendance, workforce pressures, school transport, and the increasing complexity of student and whānau needs.

The conversation was **open, honest, and constructive**, with both guests taking the time to listen to the experiences of school leaders.



WAPA appreciates the willingness of our elected representatives to engage directly with principals and hear firsthand about the realities facing schools and communities. Opportunities such as these ensure the **voice of Waitākere principals** continues to be heard at both local and national levels.



We thank Ginny and Carmel for their time and contribution and look forward to continuing these important conversations in the future.

Strong leaders. Connected communities. Better outcomes for all.



www.wapa.org.nz



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president@wapa.org.nz



secretary@wapa.org.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."

GENERAL MEETING

Join us for our August General Meeting



FRIDAY
21 AUGUST 2026
1:00pm – 2:30pm



LEARNING NETWORK NZ
214 Universal Drive
Henderson



Tea, coffee and
light refreshments
provided



SPECIAL GUEST
HON ERICA STANFORD
MINISTER OF EDUCATION

An opportunity for Waitākere principals to engage directly with the Minister through an open Q&A session focused on the issues that matter most to our schools, staff, students and communities.



Q&A FORMAT

Your questions will be collated into several questions and provided to the Minister ahead of time.

If time allows, there will be an opportunity for questions from the floor.



WELLBEING MATTERS

This hui has been intentionally scheduled to conclude at 2:30pm, allowing principals the opportunity to finish early and head into the weekend with some well-deserved time for themselves and their whānau.



SCAN TO RSVP

or use the link:

<https://forms.gle/6HvFtio2bQUyjm5f9>



RSVP BY FRIDAY 14 AUGUST

Please complete the RSVP form by Friday 14 August for catering and planning purposes.



www.wapa.org.nz



09 835 0912



president@wapa.org.nz

secretary@wapa.org.nz

SECRET//NOFORN//AS

LEADERSHIP DAY 2026

CONNECT • INSPIRE • LEAD



DATE

Tuesday
15 September 2026



VENUE

Covert Theatre
Ponsonby



TIME

9.30am to
3.00pm

KEYNOTE SPEAKERS



**Jemarl
Paerata**



**Jason
Thompson**

PER DELEGATE
\$300



Morning tea,
lunch, tea &
coffee provided



AFTERNOON

Choose your experience

- ✓ Auckland Museum Experience
- ✓ Auckland Art Gallery Experience
- ✓ Posh Indoor Mini Golf
- ✓ Auckland Domain Garden Walk
- ✓ East Day Spa (Max 10 people)



4.30PM

ICE BAR DOWNTOWN
A fun, cool experience
to end the day.



Listed on the PLD Map –
use your PLD funding
Make a week of it –
stay for the ICP conference



PARKING LIMITED

We encourage carpooling
or public transport.



Register Now!

Scan the QR code
or use the link below
to register today.

forms.gle/UgbkMsHkcTF5fW2W6



MORNING TEA, LUNCH, TEA & COFFEE INCLUDED

THANK YOU TO OUR GOLD SPONSORS



CrestClean



Sebel Education Furniture



sKids



Schooled Limited
West Auckland



Team Turf



DATE
Tuesday
15 September 2026



VENUE
Covert Theatre
Ponsonby



TIME
9.30am to
3.00pm



Waitākere Area Principals Association

— Te Ropu Tumuaki o Waitākere —

THANK YOU TO OUR SPONSORS



Supporting
Waitākere Principals,
Schools and
Communities

Your partnership makes a difference. Together, we support strong leadership and better outcomes for tamariki, staff and whānau across Waitākere.



GOLD SPONSORS



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West Auckland



Team Turf



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ASB



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Power Technology



Eduform Education Architects



Footsteps



SUPPORT PARTNERS



Learning Network NZ



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OUR SPONSORS HELP SUPPORT:



Professional Learning



General Meetings



Leadership Day



Principal Support Services



School Advocacy



Regional Representation

“ Strong partnerships help us create stronger outcomes for principals, schools, staff, tamariki and whānau. ”



Together We Lead. Together We Grow.

NGĀ MIHI NUI TO ALL OF OUR SPONSORS AND SUPPORT PARTNERS.

