

**Open Letter to Parents**  
**of Reporoa Primary School Students**  
**02.08.2018**



**REPOROA PRIMARY SCHOOL WILL BE CLOSED ON  
WEDNESDAY 15TH AUGUST TO SUPPORT TEACHING STAFF IN  
THEIR STRIKE ACTION.  
THERE WILL BE NO STAFF AT SCHOOL TO LOOK AFTER  
STUDENTS.**

Dear Parents and Caregivers,

On 15th August, teaching staff of Reporoa Primary School will be involved in industrial action (striking). This letter is to help shed some light on why the teaching profession is moved to action, and why they need your help and support.

Firstly, this is not solely about pay but, about the quality of education that your child receives.

There is a crisis occurring in Education. We have teachers leaving the profession in droves; a large percentage of our workforce about to retire, lessening numbers of people entering training and graduates leaving the job in the first 5 years of teaching.

- **Significant numbers of teachers are leaving in the first 5 years of teaching**
- **40% of teachers are due to retire in the next 10 years**
- **40% less teachers are being trained!**

**What exactly is this 'crisis' the profession is concerned about?**

1. **There are less and less people applying for jobs.** Some schools are getting NO applicants.
2. **Finding a classroom teacher is hard but, finding a reliever is even harder!**
3. **The problem is not just a Primary school issue** – our secondary schools are struggling too.
4. **Lack of support for learning needs** – it is a huge battle to get any support for children with learning needs. The teachers struggle to cater for the growing amount of learning needs in their classrooms.
5. **Small Schools suffer more acutely under current pay and funding deals.** Senior Leaders and particularly Principals of small schools are paid less than senior leaders in larger schools even though the principal role is MUCH larger and involves greater accountability. The lack of funding for small schools means that sometimes only one adult is on site with students. This creates concerns around Health and Safety and how to manage in an emergency.

## SO, why is this 'crisis' such a big deal?

1. **INTERRUPTION OF EDUCATION** - There is a whole generation and cohort of students who are getting short-changed in their education through inconsistency of teachers and lack of support.
2. **INTERRUPTION OF LEADERSHIP** - Where schools can, they use senior leaders to take classes or be the 'reliever'. However, this 'solution' is not sustainable. They then must add another working day to the end of that day to do their job.

### **The flow on effects from this crisis are huge.**

- **Teachers are coming into work when they are sick** because they are trying to save their colleagues the stress of a split class or their students not having a teacher.
- Some **schools are having to double classes** – this is not sustainable.
- Leadership/Principals have increasing levels of burn-out, stress and increased workloads.
- Teachers are leaving the profession in droves for stress and financial reasons. When they leave, they are not being replaced by the 'next wave of teachers'. **There is no 'next wave'**.
- Most importantly – it is **our students, the next generation, that are being impacted** on right now by this crisis. It is only because schools are being creative that things are 'sort of' ticking along. It is a Band-Aid at best and that Band-Aid has run out of stickiness!

The last time we went on strike as a profession was in the 90s. We do not like causing disruption to our students and their families but things must change.

The Reporoa Primary Board of Trustees believe that teachers and support staff in all schools need support to make sure their claim is heard and validated by the current Ministry of Education. Schools and staff are simply not sustainable in their current form. Whilst we apologise for the inconvenience of having to arrange alternative child care for the day we hope that you will join us in supporting our valuable and hardworking staff.

From

The Reporoa Primary School Board of Trustees  
and teaching staff.