



STANLEY BAY SCHOOL

3 August 2018

Dear Parents/Caregivers

NZEI Teacher Strike Action – 15 August 2018

The NZEI has advised the Stanley Bay Board of Trustees that the Principal and teachers at our school will be taking strike action on Wednesday 15 August.

In support of the teachers stance, and because, without them, there is no one to run the school safely, the Board of Trustees has decided to close the school for that day. We therefore wish to advise that the school will be closed on Wednesday 15 August.

We have not made this decision lightly and we appreciate that it could put you under pressure to find childcare. However we believe that the benefits of supporting teachers in their fight for proper resourcing of your child's education is worth it.

If you require childcare Kelly Club will be operating. Please contact - Nicky on 022 368 2897 or stanleybay@kellyclub.co.nz to make a booking.

I attach a letter prepared on behalf of New Zealand teachers which contains more information about the reasons for the strike action.

Yours sincerely

Rachel Keane
On behalf of Stanley Bay Board of Trustees

Dear Parents / Caregivers

On Wednesday 15 August, your child's teacher is likely to be involved in industrial action. This letter is to help shed some light on why the teaching professional is moved to action and why they need your help and support.

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

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

We are calling this the 40% problem;

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

The crisis is most serious in Auckland. The issue in Auckland is confounded by the huge number of teachers who are leaving the city to seek refuge in other parts of the country where their wage will go further.

When we take this aspect into account along with the 40% problem, Auckland is hemorrhaging teachers.

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

- There are less and less people applying for jobs. In many cases in Auckland, schools are getting NO applicants.
- Finding a classroom teacher is hard, but finding a relief teacher is even harder.
- The problem is not just a Primary school issue – our secondary schools are struggling, and for them they have the additional headache of finding specialists, especially in areas where people can make more money in the corporate world as opposed to being a 'teacher'. Our Early Childhood sector is also struggling to find staff.

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

There are a number of reasons and unintended consequences that arise because of the teacher shortage, and the public should be concerned.

IT is an '*INTERUPTUS*' Issue. In Auckland it is particularly dire, but the impact is beginning to be felt across the country.

1. *EDUCATION INTERUPTUS* - There is a whole generation and cohort of students who are getting shortchanged in their education. They are facing an inconsistent education because in some cases they are having a series of part time teachers or there is no teacher to be found so classes get split.

Ask yourself this – if a student has spent a significant amount of their education with a series of inexperienced teachers, year after year, or a new teacher each week/term because a school cannot replace the teacher, what happens to their education? What happens to the relationships they need? What happens if the only teacher they have is one that would not perhaps make it under ideal circumstances, but because a school is desperate to have a live, breathing human in front of students that is what they get?

2. CLASSROOM INTERRUPTUS – how many times have parents gone to drop their child off in the morning only to find that the class is split between other classes due to not being able to find someone to teach the class.

Ask yourself this: What does this do to the students, being split up and routines disrupted? What does this do to the class that has to cater for the additional students, and what does it do to the teachers that have to add another 5 or 10 students into their class? How conducive to teaching and learning is that?

3. LEADERSHIP INTERRUPTUS – Where schools can, they use senior leaders to take classes or be the ‘reliever’. However this ‘solution’ is not sustainable. They then have to add another working day to the end of that day in order to do the things they would have been doing instead. Sometimes schools will put one of their senior leaders into a class full time. To do this means loading up the rest of the senior leaders who were already juggling big work loads. At best it is a temporary solution and an ineffective one at that.

Ask yourself this: What does this do to workloads? How does this help retain staff? Why would anyone enter leadership in these conditions?

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.
- Teachers, who live in Auckland are leaving the city/town in droves looking for a chance to buy a house and make their wage go further. 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.

Teachers and leaders have had enough. Every time one of our profession leaves the rest of the teachers have to pick up the slack and let us be clear, there is no slack left and most of the goodwill that was in the profession has gone.

Please understand this is not just about pay and it is not just about Auckland – it’s much deeper than that. This teacher shortage is serious – if we do not do something about making it affordable to teach in our cities, attractive to want to be a teacher, and do something about ensuring our teachers and leaders have the time to manage the workload – then your child, your neighbours child, the child you see walking into your local school or the child about to leave school that you employ to work in your business or alongside you – they are the ones that are going to be shortchanged.

Show your support to our teachers.

From

The Teaching Profession