



EDUCATION COUNCIL
NEW ZEALAND | Matatū Aotearoa

Teachers' Survey Summary

Earlier this year we asked for your views on how we can best support our profession. We asked for comment on three key areas:

- professional learning and development
- initial teacher education
- and leadership.

We also asked for your ideas on how we can specifically support and represent you as a teacher and the wider profession.

Around 1,200 people completed the survey.

The following points provide an overview of key themes and recommendations and outline how we will progress and develop on this exercise.

This survey is the first step towards developing a programme of engagement and dialogue with you.

The Findings

On advocacy

Respondents identified workload, lack of resourcing, a general lack of support and the resulting combined pressure as factors creating major challenges facing our profession.

They wanted the Council to play a stronger advocacy role: championing the teaching profession. They wanted us to provide strong, independent representation and leadership with vision. They wanted us to encourage a collaborative and supportive culture, and to be strong advocates for our profession.

Respondents wanted us to build closer relationships and greater trust.

We are taking this on board. Our strategic plan specifically identifies championing our profession as a key focus area and we will develop a programme of activities designed to support this goal.

We will continue to raise public awareness of issues facing the profession so the public understands and supports the positions our profession takes. We will encourage informed discussion through a variety of ways.

On Initial Teacher Education (ITE)

Respondents felt current graduates were significantly underprepared for the practical reality of a classroom setting. They want higher entry criteria in place alongside a greater focus on practical experience.

They wanted mentoring to be a more prominent component of ITE. They saw this as an area where we could add value introducing stronger processes and criteria for selecting mentors.

We agree. This is, and will continue to be, a priority area for us. We are working with our sector partners to plan how we will prepare for the future of learning together. We need to reconceive how we support the ongoing development of the teaching profession to respond to the demands of a rapidly changing world.

On Professional Learning and Development (PLD)

Respondents identified PLD as a priority area for us. They saw current professional development as too general and they wanted more practically focused training that relates more closely to their day-to-day teaching.

Respondents wanted more training opportunities which allow them to interact with teachers outside their direct circle of peers. They wanted to be able to select specific modules and to incorporate e-learning possibilities to relieve time pressures. They wanted their employers to take equal responsibility for supporting PLD by making funding and time available.

We are growing our capacity in PLD. We have recently introduced an Appraisal of Principals Professional Learning programme and will look at other ways we can offer targeted relevant professional development. We are working closely with the Ministry of Education and the profession to ensure the new design of centrally funded PLD will lift the quality of teaching.

On Leadership Development

Respondents wanted more opportunities for mid-level leaders. They saw current leadership training as catering mostly for principals. They felt those in leadership roles can lose touch with classroom realities and should be required to regularly spend time in a classroom setting. This would refresh their understanding of current

issues and challenges in teaching, and allow leaders to pass on their expertise to the colleagues in an authentic way.

Respondents identified funding, time and access to relevant training as the main barriers to developing systems wide leadership capability. They wanted us to play a more prominent role in removing these barriers.

Our Centre of Leadership Excellence for Leaders in Communities of Learning will be first step towards building system-wide leadership capability. Our Leadership Forum, and a series of leadership fora across the country are the first phase in a programme of work we expect to develop towards growing leadership capacity and capability.

On experiencing the Education Council

Respondents said their experience of us could be stressful. They perceived us as bureaucratic and inefficient, although they commended individual staff members. Apart from the registration process they didn't know that much about us.

However, those respondents with experience of our professional development programmes were impressed with their quality.

We are making good progress towards taking our registration online. A new secure online solution will cut down on double handling and allow you to renew your full practising certificate through your unique identifier. It will be intuitive with prompts and additional tips and will not allow you to make mistakes. We hope to offer this solution to renewing and issuing provisional practising certificates but have started first with the largest category of certification.

We are working hard to help grow understanding of our role in supporting you. We are developing a programme of engagement to make sure we are out meeting with teachers, leaders and the sector. Dr Graham Stoop our chief executive, and Lesley Hoskin, our deputy chief executive, are actively seeking out opportunities to meet and listen to your concerns.

Our strategic plan – the plan which sets out our goals and objectives- has been informed by this feedback. We have added a specific goal – championing the profession, and we will develop a programme of activities to support this.

On opportunities for improving the profession

Training was seen as the single most important opportunity for raising the standard of our profession. There was a strong perception that industry bodies focus on identifying the small group of poor performers at the expense of recognising the professionalism, dedication and commitment of the rest.

Respondents were also concerned they were increasingly being required to take on roles outside the teaching mandate- roles parents ought to assume.

We will continue to advocate publicly on behalf of our profession. We are a public service organisation and it is our duty to keep the public informed about the issues facing teaching. We will encourage informed public discussion by ensuring your voice is represented through the media, social media, via our website and other ways. We will seek opportunities to represent you through conferences, presentations and speeches.

On continuing the conversation...

As indicated, we view this as the start of what we hope will become an ongoing dialogue with our profession. We are still developing our work programme for the coming year but it will be influenced by the many suggestions provided.