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THE FIRST-TIME PRINCIPALS PROGRAMME

He Hōtaka mō ngā Tumuaiki hou

JULY 2006

TENA TATOU KATOA

Warm winter greetings to all of you, especially knowing that some of you have been coping with extreme winter weather in recent weeks. Special greetings to those of you who have recently enrolled in the First-time Principals Programme and we very much look forward to meeting you at the late September residential course.

COURSE ONE EVALUATION COMPLETED

There was a terrific response to the completion of the evaluation questionnaire for Residential Course One. Thank you to the 95% of you who completed the questionnaire. Your responses have since been collated, analysed and reported on by our research assistant Claire Lloyd. You will shortly receive the executive summary of the report and which will include the main recommendations.

As you know, your feedback is important to the Project Team for the on-going development of the First-time Principals Programme. As well, we hope that this feedback process is a useful model for you as a school leader to encourage you to invite feedback, be open about feedback, analyse the feedback received, share feedback patterns with those who provide it and inform them about what you

will do next as a result of their feedback.

The overall course satisfaction rating was high (median of 6 out of a highest possible 7), a pleasing rating given the extreme diversity of needs brought to the programme with your diverse school contexts, sector groups, prior experience and qualifications. An important recommendation is for a reduction in content and a corresponding increase of time to discuss and process new learning in the workshops and networking opportunities at the course. Other trends and recommendations you will be able to read in the evaluation information that you will receive. The Project Team is carefully considering the recommendations for the design and planning of the next residential course.

RESOURCES ON THE WEB

A selection of resources and presentations from Residential Course One will shortly be available for you to access from the First-time Principals Programme website www.firstprincipals.ac.nz These resources are located in a secure password protected area of the site for copyright reasons. You will therefore need your username and password to access these resources.

Unfortunately there have been on-going software problems with updating and placing resources in the site. The good news is that the problems were recently resolved and several resources will become increasingly available for you from now on.

An email will be sent to notify you of when the Residential Course One resources are available.

PLANNING AND REPORTING

A gentle reminder that the excellent Planning and Reporting online module is now available for you to access and use via LeadSpace (on home page see left menu bar Key Collections, click on item First-time Principals Programme). This will be a great resource for you to use in the later part of 2006 when you review your current Annual Plan and develop your 2007 Plan. To help you with this work, in late August a Planning and Reporting activity will be available to encourage you to critique your current planning and reporting documents and processes against the benchmark criteria and examples provided in the module. You will be informed about this activity in the next (August) newsletter.

The second module *Elements of Effective Teaching* by Graeme Aitken is currently being formatted

for the web and is expected to be available in September. You will be informed when it is ready for viewing and use.

FIRST-TIME PRINCIPALS CERTIFICATE

Several stakeholder organisations have given their support and endorsement of the proposed Certificate to acknowledge those principals who complete all of the components of the First-time Principals Programme. The Certificate will have printed on it the names of those organisations and others that discussions are currently being held with. It is planned that the Certificate will be ready to present in July 2007 at Residential Course Three to those of you who will have completed the induction programme.

In the meantime and to qualify for the Certificate, you are encouraged and reminded to complete the three residential courses, all evaluation questionnaires, the Self Assessment of Leading Teaching and Learning (SALTAL), all mentoring programme activities, a Professional Learning Plan and a related portfolio of progress, and the 3 online activities (the first of which will be the Planning & Reporting activity, see above).

COMING SOON...RESIDENTIAL COURSE TWO

You are reminded that the second residential course **Consolidating your Leadership** will be held in Auckland from 9:45am Wednesday 27th September to 3:30pm Friday 29th September. The course programme is currently being finalised and your First-time Principals Advisory Group is being consulted. You can make your option sessions selection on the web in late August and view the complete programme around that time as well. Presenters include Professor John Hattie, Dr Graeme

Aitken and Dr Eileen Piggot-Irvine, several experienced principals, consultants and Ministry of Education personnel. Topics include Evidence-based Leadership, Tackling Tough Issues, Managing Staff Competency, Student Achievement Data Analysis and Enquiry, Prioritising your Priorities, Solving Organisational Problems, Maori Student Achievement Initiatives and many more! Additionally, there will be facilitated workshops, first-time principal poster board displays of developing practice, a LeadSpace/TKI Help Desk, book displays and mentor assistance.

Please make your travel arrangements now

It is important that you read the attached *Guidelines for Travel* document and you make flight reservations as soon as possible. As the course is being held in the school holidays it is expected that flights could shortly become heavily booked.

If making flight arrangements, please allow 20 minutes to travel from the airport to the hotel on arrival and for departure 45 minutes for travel to the airport and check in time when selecting your flights.

Please make your accommodation arrangements now

The hotel venue for the residential course in Auckland is the Centra Auckland Airport Hotel. **It is important that you read the attached *Accommodation Request Form* and fax your completed form not later than Friday 25th August.**

Please direct all travel and accommodation queries to Kelly Stuart (Project Coordinator) k.stuart@auckland.ac.nz

Arriving the Prior evening

Consideration will be given to remotely located participants to arrive the evening prior (Tuesday 26th September) if travel arrangements necessitate this. Please contact Kelly Stuart (Project Coordinator) to request this PRIOR to making your travel arrangements and to discuss your proposed arrangements. Thank you.

Unable to attend the course?

Please remember that if you are unable to attend the residential course it is important that you inform Kelly Stuart (Project Coordinator) with your reason not later than 25th August. This is an important procedure, otherwise you could incur the cost of the accommodation and meals arranged on your behalf. A participant who is unable to attend the course for an acceptable reason will have the opportunity to attend the equivalent course in September 2007.

MENTORING, SHADOWING & PLG'S

Unless you have only recently enrolled in the First-time Principals Programme, the current mentoring activity is Shadowing. Please contact your mentor if your arrangements for Shadowing have not yet been made. If you have recently enrolled in the programme, you should have heard from your mentor and discussed arrangements for their first school-based visit (1 day) to your school. Please direct any mentoring queries to Margaret Palmer (Associate Director) m.palmer@auckland.ac.nz

Later in August you will receive information about the next mentoring activity, which is the Professional Learning Group (PLG). This is a small group discussion facilitated by a mentor where each group member brings a current issue to share with and

receive feedback from the group to help make progress with each issue. Your mentor will contact you this term to arrange the PLG.

A PROFESSIONAL REMINDER TO ALL OF US

Please remember to respect that when someone takes the time and consideration to contact you by email or phone it is courtesy to respond as soon as possible. Building relationships is a two way matter. No response can lead to frustration and even rejection by the other person and is unhelpful to building quality relationships.

WEB LEADERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

You are encouraged to participate in the PEN online conference **Leaders of Learning-leading change** from Monday 14th August to Friday 25th August. Dialogues will focus on making change and sustaining change, and there will be a special page of recommended leading change resources. As well, in PEN on the NPO page for first-time principals is a discussion forum on work-life balance **Good Principals Go Home Early**.

NEXT SCHOOL LEADERSHIP CENTRE SEMINAR

The University of Auckland School Leadership Centre has two seminars coming up in the next weeks:

Gifted & Talented Education: what you need to know
(Thursday 10th August, Auckland)

Time Management for School Leaders: presenter Robyn Pearce
(Monday 4th September)

For further information please contact the Centre via Ann Moore telephone (09)6238959 or email ann.moore@auckland.ac.nz

LEADERS AS READERS

Yes, it is difficult to find time for professional reading! However, as a leader of learning it is important that you read professional material so that you are well informed to lead and influence teaching and learning.

Recently published and an impressive book is Michael Fullan's *Leadership Sustainability: Systems Thinkers in Action* (2005, Corwin Press: California). For school improvement initiatives to endure over time, Fullan argues that leaders need to be systems thinkers. He believes that sustainable change is strongly connected to sustainable systems, both within the school and the external organisations connected to the work of schools. To achieve this, leadership needs to be committed to change at all levels, be able to build and participate in networks, promote professional learning groups across the school, foster and experience the conditions for 'deep learning' so that schools can respond successfully to the many expectations they now face. This is an inspirational and clearly written book. At only 104 pages it should be a possible read for busy principals and it will be well worth your effort.

Best wishes for a successful and enjoyable term. You will receive the next newsletter in late August.

Ka kite ano

David Eddy, Margaret Palmer & the First-time Principals Programme team