

NewsFirst | 08

THE FIRST-TIME PRINCIPALS PROGRAMME

He Hōtaka mō ngā Tumuaki hou

2008

TENA TATOU KATOA

WELCOME TO THE 2008 FIRST-TIME PRINCIPALS PROGRAMME

Thank you for your recent enrolment in the First-time Principals Programme. Congratulations on your Principal appointment and for participating in the First-time Principals Programme.

The First-time Principals Programme is designed to guide, support and challenge you by enhancing your knowledge, skills and understanding to effectively lead teaching and learning in your school. You will be encouraged to identify your professional learning goals and be a self directed learner, with the support of your mentor, the residential courses and online learning opportunities.

The First-time Principals Programme (FTPP) Project Team at The University of Auckland and the mentors look forward to working collaboratively with you. As much as is possible your individual learning needs and goals will be responded to, as well as the key school leadership practices and priorities that all new principals need to know about.

INTRODUCING THE PROJECT TEAM

Based in the Faculty of Education at The University of Auckland (Epsom Campus) and working in partnership with the Ministry of Education, the team is:

John Locke, Director; **Professor Viviane Robinson**, Academic Director; **David Eddy**, Executive Director Educational Leadership; Associate Director- to be appointed; **Kelly Stuart**, Project Coordinator; **Linda Oliver**, Project Assistant; **Dr Constance Chai**, Research Fellow; **Dr Deidre Le Fevre**, Research Associate

FIRST-TIME PRINCIPALS PROGRAMME SUPPORT MATERIAL

We will be posting to you in the new year, detailed information on the First-time Principals Programme (FTPP). This will be in the form of printed content and labelled dividers. Please place these in a ring binder or lever arch file dedicated for the FTPP. Over the next eighteen months these dividers will enable you to collect and keep track of the material linked to the main components of the programme.

A great deal of our contact with you will be via the internet. It will make your job easier if you use the same divider headings for the digital folders used to store and categorise information linked to the programme.

During the next eighteen months you will be developing a portfolio of evidence about your Principalship. It will be helpful to gather digital portfolio items in a dedicated folder by using hyperlinks.

EMAIL INFORMATION

Please carefully read programme information emailed to you as this is the main way that we will

communicate with you. We aim to keep you well informed on a monthly basis through NewsFirst08 newsletters. Please note that copies of all NewsFirst08 can be viewed on our First-time Principals Programme website (under 2008 Cohort). Please click here to view these <http://www.firstprincipals.ac.nz/latestNews.htm>

WEBSITE

Comprehensive information is available on The First-time Principals Programme website www.firstprincipals.ac.nz The website includes the Self Assessment of Leading Teaching and Learning (SALTAL) questionnaire, residential course presentations (after each course) and other useful resources.

SALTAL QUESTIONNAIRE

You are required to complete this online questionnaire **before** your mentor's first visit. It is accessed in the FTPP website under the 'Research' heading button on the blue left hand toolbar. Please click on this link <http://www.firstprincipals.ac.nz/SALTAL.htm> Your username is your email address and the password is the same one you chose when you initially enrolled. If you need a reminder of your username or password, please contact Kelly Stuart (Project Coordinator) k.stuart@auckland.ac.nz or telephone (09)3737599 ext 83095 for assistance.

When you have completed this questionnaire online, press the submit button. This will produce an automated email of your SALTAL

responses sent to your email address and will enable you to retain a copy for yourself. You should then forward a copy to your mentor.

It is important that you keep a printed copy of your SALTAL responses in your blue folder under the "Research" heading.

RESIDENTIAL COURSE ONE

Residential Course One *Starting Your Leadership* will be held in Auckland from **Tuesday 22nd April to Thursday 24th April 2008 (3 days)**. You will be sent detailed information about the course and arrangements (travel, accommodation, etc) well in advance. Dates of the second residential course are **Wednesday 1st October to Thursday 2nd October 2008 (2 days)** in Auckland. At this stage, please note the course dates in your diary.

MENTORS

Each first-time principal is assigned a mentor who has been appointed from a rigorous selection process. They are all highly experienced school principals and trained in mentoring at The University of Auckland.

You will be informed once a mentor has been assigned to you and they will contact you promptly. This will begin the process of building a mentoring relationship and your use of their expertise. Your mentor will arrange the first mentoring activity (School Based Visit One) with you and meet you at your school. Should you have mentor related enquiries or concerns, please contact the Associate Director telephone (09)3737599 ext 85870. As well as regular email/telephone contact with your mentor, the mentoring activities include School Based Visits, a Professional Learning Group (PLG) and mentor support at residential courses.

SCHOOL BASED VISIT ONE

Your mentor will first visit you at your school. In preparation for this visit, please ensure that you have:

- A private, quiet and uninterrupted space to meet and talk in.

- Identify a list of immediate issues that you wish to confidentially discuss with your mentor.
- Completed prior to the visit the online SALTAL (Self Assessment of Leading Teaching & Learning) questionnaire; emailed a copy to your mentor and have a copy available for discussion.
- Your SALTAL responses will identify the areas you feel that you need to further develop. These are your professional learning goals. You will work with your mentor to craft these goals into a Professional Learning Plan. At the conclusion of the visit, you and your mentor will each need a hard or electronic copy of your Professional Learning Plan.

Your mentor will be available to you via phone, internet (email, Skype) and personal visits. **You should never hesitate to contact your mentor when you feel that you need their assistance.** If the situation is urgent and your mentor cannot be reached, please contact either John Locke (09)3737599 ext 82929 or the Associate Director (09)3737599 ext 85870.

ONLINE LEARNING

The online dimension of the programme is increasing in significance. The mentoring programme includes the use of email and Skype. Resource materials can be downloaded from the secure section of the FTTP website. Online modules provide interactive learning opportunities. They are designed to build your professional capability and can be accessed from First-time Principals Online (FTPO). This is a learning community devoted to first-time principals and sits in the PEN (Principals E Network) section of LeadSpace www.leadspace.govt.nz.

Online help is available through your local LeadSpace Facilitators <http://www.leadspace.govt.nz/contact.php#lf>

NATIONAL CERTIFICATE

National Certificate for First-time Principals Programme Completion is endorsed by all major stakeholder organisations. The certificate is a record of your personal

commitment to professional learning. It confirms completion of

- the two residential courses;
- all the mentoring programme activities, including a Professional Learning Plan supported by a portfolio of evidence
- SALTAL on enrolment and all programme evaluation questionnaires
- all online modules

POSTGRADUATE QUALIFICATIONS

Participants in the First-time Principals Programme in 2008 have the option of enrolling in one or two postgraduate courses in the Faculty of Education at the University of Auckland. The two courses are *Undertaking Research for School Improvement* and *Educational Leadership*. Each course is available either face-to-face or online. On confirmation of enrolment, participants will receive further information about these study options. The two courses are closely aligned to the curriculum and activities of the First-time Principals Programme.

RESEARCH

During your participation in the First-time Principals Programme you will from time to time receive evaluation questionnaires to complete. Your participation in this process is much appreciated as it is vital for the ongoing development of the programme.

NEWSFIRST08

Our next communication with you will be via the monthly newsletter NewsFirst08 emailed to all participants. In the meantime, please do not hesitate to contact us if you need any assistance. We wish you well in your new position as a first-time principal. You now hold one of the most exciting jobs in the world.

Warm Regards,
Noho ora mai. Naku noa

John Locke (Director) & the First-time Principals Programme Project Team