

# Aka Tokerau

## Northland Māori Principals' Association

12 November 2009

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Tēnā koe e Ernie

Following on from a Aka Tokerau (Northland Māori Principals' Association) meeting – this letter is to express our extreme concern regarding the introduction of National Standards for schools.

Our organisation represents approximately 40 Māori Principals. We meet once per term, and have worked hard to grow a credible professional organisation over the past 4 years. We have members of our Association who hold executive positions on national Principals' groups, or who are involved at a local level supporting other Principals. We have recently initiated our own Māori Senior Management and Aspiring Principal professional development. Many of our Principals run successful schools and are seen as a professional resource at both a local and national level.

We are concerned that National Standards have continued to be introduced by the Government, despite overwhelming opposition by educators. We feel the consultation that took place prior to the introduction of the standards was inadequate and that the opinions of Principals from our Association were not listened to – despite many of us attending the one 'consultation' meeting.

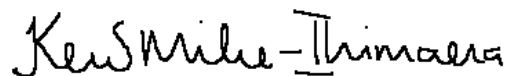
We are unanimously opposed to using these standards in our schools. Many of our members who are Principals in Māori medium educational settings, are watching the introduction of these standards with interest, with little confidence that the Māori medium standards will reflect the needs of their communities any better than these ones do.

National standards put children's needs on the periphery, and prioritises the adult need to compartmentalise education – over what is best for children. National Standards in their current form, are not designed to reflect a Māori world view and will therefore once again, be an 'assessment tool' that marginalises Māori learners within our education system.

Our Association is currently exploring our possible options regarding the implementation of National Standards with our membership. We are not prepared to compromise the exciting direction offered by the implementation of the revised New Curriculum and impending Marautanga o Aotearoa in our school - to have our success 'measured' by a test that has no connection to our schools or localised curriculum.

We wanted to make you aware of our Association's feelings so you can consider our feedback as you gather information from other groups in the country about this issue.

Kia ora ano



Keri Milne-Ihimaera  
President

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