

# Investing in Educational Success...

## Principal Recruitment Allowance Guide for Schools and Kura



### Principal Recruitment Allowance

The Principal Recruitment Allowance (allowance) is available to boards and principals that meet the relevant eligibility criteria. Boards with significant challenges may apply to the Ministry of Education (Ministry) for approval to offer the allowance to attract a highly effective principal to a permanent principal vacancy. The appointee is expected to provide the leadership needed to improve a school's student achievement.

A school does not need to be part of a Community of Schools to be able to access the allowance. The board and principal must, however, each meet a range of separate eligibility criteria (see below).

Private (independent) schools and partnership schools/kura hourua and their principals are not eligible for this allowance.

The Secretary for Education (Secretary) may grant approval, to an eligible board of trustees (board), to pay an eligible principal the allowance of \$50,000 per annum for a fixed period of three years. That approval may be subject to conditions. The allowance is in addition to the other remuneration paid by the employing board. With the Secretary's prior approval, the allowance may be paid for a maximum of two further fixed periods of up to two years each. Other terms and conditions applicable to appointees who meet the principal eligibility criteria for this allowance are set out in the relevant collective agreement.

### Process for seeking payment of the allowance

#### 1. ASSESS SCHOOL

- The board submits an expression of interest to the Secretary
- The Secretary assesses the school against the school eligibility criteria and notifies board of the decision (including if approved) any conditions of approval
- The Ministry and the board identify any particular skills the board wants the independent adviser, assigned to assist the board with appointing a suitable principal, to have; for example fluency in te reo Māori
- Ministry notifies the National Panel of Independent Advisers (National Panel) that an independent adviser is needed
- The National Panel assigns an independent adviser to assist the board
- Note: During this phase a review of the range of other appropriate support available to the board will be undertaken by the Ministry.

#### 2. ASSESS CANDIDATE

- The board and independent adviser agree how and when candidates will be assessed against principal eligibility criteria and the board starts the usual principal recruitment process (including advertising) the fact that the allowance may be available to an applicant who meets the principal eligibility criteria
- The board specifies the expected scope and size of the role including the particular challenges associated with it
- The independent adviser assesses and affirms to the board whether or not candidate(s) meet the principal eligibility criteria for receipt of the allowance
- The board appoints a principal
- The board may appoint a principal who does not meet the principal eligibility criteria but in that case the allowance will not be paid
- If the appointee meets the principal eligibility criteria the board notifies the Secretary to trigger the allowance payment process
- The board and principal negotiate a performance agreement which will include the school's goals and objectives for change
- Within three months of the appointment the Ministry, board, principal and relevant stakeholders meet to discuss other support options.

#### 3. REVIEW CANDIDATE

- The board appraises principal and conducts a self-review as per normal planning cycle
- Prior to the end of each fixed period of the allowance the independent adviser from the National Panel assesses the principal's progress in meeting the agreed goals and targets for change, and whether or not the principal still meets the eligibility criteria, and provides a quality assurance check of the board's self-review process
- The board may request the Secretary's approval to renew the allowance for a further period of up to two years (provided that it is not renewed more than twice). The request must include affirmation that the principal and the school continue to meet the eligibility criteria
- The Secretary considers the board's request for renewal of the allowance using Ministry information, board self-review documents and advice from the independent adviser
- The Secretary notifies decision and, if approved, any conditions to the board.

It should be noted that:

- a. the board must seek, through an expression of interest, the Secretary's approval to:
  - offer the allowance before it advertises the relevant principal vacancy or
  - renew the allowance for a further fixed period of up to two years (maximum of two renewals).
- b. the board, with support from the Ministry and other relevant parties will estimate the size and scope of the challenge to ensure that potential applicants are aware of the expectations for the role
- c. the Secretary will assess the school against the school eligibility criteria and decide whether to approve the board offering the allowance or renewing the allowance for a further fixed period of up to two years (subject to the maximum of two renewals)
- d. the Secretary may, on granting approval, make the approval subject to such conditions (such as a change plan in the school charter and/or annual plan) as (s)he considers appropriate
- e. if approval is given, an independent adviser from the National Panel will work with the board to assess candidates against the separate eligibility criteria for principals
- f. if the Secretary is notified by the board and the independent adviser that the principal appointed to the vacancy meets the principal eligibility criteria the Ministry will initiate payment of the allowance
- g. a principal who does not meet the principal eligibility criteria for the allowance can still be employed by the board but will not receive the allowance
- h. a principal who has been appointed to a principal vacancy but who has been assessed as not meeting the principal eligibility criteria for the allowance cannot subsequently receive the allowance while holding that position.

## School eligibility criteria

To be eligible to offer the allowance a school is required to have a current principal vacancy and must meet a range of the following criteria as assessed by the Secretary in order to be eligible to offer the allowance:

- significant underachievement, particularly for those students most at risk of underachieving (Māori students, Pasifika students, students with special education needs and students from low socio-economic families)
- student achievement is well below the average achievement for 'like' schools and evidence over time shows that there has been little or no improvement.
- Education Review Office reports indicate a one to two year review, often with repeated review office visits
- a history of statutory interventions (progress is minimal or not sustained such that the identified issues that created the original need for a statutory intervention remain)
- serious problems with student/staff safety and/or well-being
- there has been high principal turnover with, for example, two or three principals within the past five years
- significant financial issues which have put the school at financial risk
- extraordinary circumstances; for example, the school has had significant problems and negative public attention which has led to the loss of the principal, undermined the confidence and culture of the school and distracted the school from a focus on its key educational purpose. This criterion may be sufficient on its own to justify the allowance.

*Note: the term 'student achievement' is understood to mean "valued outcomes as set out in The New Zealand Curriculum and/or Te Marautangā o Aotearoa and/or Te Aho Matua o ngā Kura Kaupapa Māori o Aotearoa and/or Te Piko o to Mahuri including student achievement" to ensure there is a broad understanding of evidence of student progress and achievement.*

The Secretary will determine if a school meets the school eligibility criteria for the allowance on the basis of information from the school and a number of other sources including:

- information the Ministry already holds
- information from other organisations such as the Education Review Office, the New Zealand School Trustees Association, Te Rūnanga Nui o Ngā Kura Kaupapa Māori o Aotearoa or Ngā Kura a Iwi o Aotearoa (as appropriate)
- publicly available information
- other sources suggested by the board seeking the approval such as other schools, community groups or sector organisations (as appropriate).

## Secretary's assessment of the school(s) against school eligibility criteria

The Secretary will prioritise the allocation of the allowance to the school(s) assessed as having the most significant needs. The following are factors that are relevant to the Secretary's assessment of a school against the school eligibility criteria:

- **educational performance of the school's students** – including such matters as inadequate curriculum management, absence of adequate policies and processes for student assessment, staffing issues that may influence student performance, persistently low student achievement in relation to comparable schools, and low achievement of particular groups within the school
- **student welfare** – including inadequate policies and practices to ensure student welfare, health and safety, persistently high truancy rates, and high suspension, exclusion and expulsion rates
- **operation of a school** – including such factors as problems with financial management, personnel management and/or asset management, inadequate planning, policy setting and reporting to parents, poor community relationships, and failure to comply with legislation.

## Notification of the Secretary's decision

Boards that submit an expression of interest in offering the allowance will be notified of the Secretary's decision on the school's eligibility as soon as practicable. Boards which are approved to offer the allowance will also be notified whether or not the Secretary's approval is subject to any conditions and, if so, the nature of those conditions.

The Ministry will then provide guidance on:

- matters to consider when advertising the vacancy
- how to identify any particular skills a board wants in the independent adviser relevant to the local context
- how the board can work effectively with the independent adviser
- how to apply to the Ministry for the allowance to be paid to the principal.

If a board does not meet the school eligibility criteria for the allowance the Ministry will contact the school and, if the board wishes, the New Zealand School Trustees Association (NZSTA), Te Rūnanga Nui o Ngā Kura Kaupapa Māori o Aotearoa or Ngā Kura a Iwi o Aotearoa to discuss whether other support options may be available to the board.

## Key features of the allowance

Applicants for a principal vacancy advertised by a board which has the Secretary's approval to offer the allowance to eligible principals should be made aware:

- the initial offering of the allowance attaches to a vacancy for a permanent principal
- the initial period of the allowance is for three years
- the Secretary's approval to pay the allowance (or renewed allowance) may be subject to conditions
- the allowance is \$50,000 per annum is on top of other remuneration paid by the employing board
- the board may request the Secretary's approval to renew the allowance for a further period of up to two years (provided that it is not renewed more than twice). The request must include affirmation that the principal and the school continue to meet the eligibility criteria
- the Secretary considers the board's request for renewal of the allowance using Ministry information, board self-review documents and advice from the independent adviser
- the allowance will end when the principal ceases to be employed as a principal at the school; or when the fixed period of the allowance ends, regardless of whether the principal remains at the school.

## Principal eligibility criteria

Where the Secretary has approved a board offering the allowance, a principal seeking appointment to the relevant permanent principal role must meet the principal eligibility criteria. Candidates will be notified by the board when in the recruitment process (and how) they will be assessed against those criteria.

*Note: In exceptional circumstances a candidate who is not a principal but who has current senior management experience and meets a range of the other principal eligibility criteria may be approved by the Secretary to receive the allowance.*

The National Panel has been established to assess candidates against the principal eligibility criteria. Panel members (independent advisers) will be selected to assist boards during the appointment process based on their relevant experience; understanding of teacher leadership; professional learning and appraisal and successful proven practice lifting outcomes for children and young people. All should understand the importance of language, culture and identity; and some may also be fluent in Te Reo to enable them to work in immersion settings, for example, kura.

In addition to the usual requirements for appointment to a principal's position, applicants for the principal vacancy for which the allowance may be offered must meet a range of the following criteria:

- can provide evidence of successful performance reviews as a principal
- has had experience working with diverse learners and demonstrates a commitment in his/her current school to ensuring a culturally responsive environment
- has had experience in 'turning around' a challenging school. This would include evidence of a number of the following:
  - significantly raising student achievement
  - changing community perceptions, such as evidenced by stabilising the school roll
  - moving a school from an Education Review Office one-to-two year review to at least a three-year review
  - improving the school's finances (or maintaining a sound financial base over time)
  - working with the board to move the school out of statutory intervention
  - change has been embedded or sustained in a challenging school (if appropriate)

and (in their current school):

- student achievement shows evidence of accelerated progress and/or better student achievement outcomes when compared with 'like' schools
- recognised as working positively with current staff and board to set, communicate and monitor learning goals and targets
- Education Review Office report indicates at least a three-year review
- there are no identified significant financial issues
- is able to demonstrate experience in aligning resources (staffing and financial) to priority goals and targets
- has worked to ensure there is an orderly environment both in and outside the classrooms and there is no evidence of serious problems with student safety
- there is no evidence of serious problems with staff welfare and safety
- has worked to ensure there is a constructive and collaborative work environment
- can provide evidence (possibly from a 360 degree appraisal or referees reports) of personal characteristics including:
  - being respected by their profession
  - being an effective communicator
  - having strong engagement with their school community
  - the ability to build relational trust as evidenced by having positive professional relationships with current staff and board members
  - the ability to nurture talent, especially with senior leadership team
- has been involved in recent professional learning and development alongside staff members at current school
- is capable of encouraging succession to keep the changes sustainable.

When a candidate is unable to provide evidence they meet particular criteria they will need to demonstrate evidence of equivalent experience to those criteria.

## Assessment by independent adviser

The independent adviser will:

- affirm to the board and the Ministry whether the candidate(s) for the principal vacancy have met or, where renewal is being considered, continue to meet the principal eligibility criteria
- provide independent, impartial, high quality and evidence-based input and advice during a board's election and appointment process
- support capability building in role selection by modelling and articulating best practice in the assessment and evaluation of applications against the principal eligibility criteria.

The board is responsible for advising the candidate of the outcome of the independent adviser's assessment of the candidate against the principal eligibility criteria. To initiate payment of the allowance the board, with affirmation from the independent adviser, notifies the Ministry when the principal vacancy is filled by a candidate who is eligible for the allowance.

## Expectations on those receiving the allowance

The employing board and the principal receiving the allowance will reach a performance agreement in the normal manner. As well as the general expectations specified below, the agreed objectives will reflect the specific needs of the school and be appropriate to the challenges faced and agreed term of the allowance. For example, agreed goals may reflect agreed change management as well as ongoing objectives and capability building at the school. In general these principals will be expected to:

- work with the board to develop plans, goals and targets for the School Charter, particularly the strategic overview and annual plan. These will include but are not limited to:
  - setting student achievement targets
  - developing wider school improvement targets which will assist in meeting achievement targets
  - building critical relationships to better understand the school from the viewpoint of the students, staff, community, iwi and other key stakeholders
  - a planned process of self-review to identify the key issues that are impacting on student achievement and well-being
  - the development of plans and actions informed by the self-review process and which may be included within the school's charter and systems
  - progress towards recommendations set by the Education Review Office if applicable
- continue to meet the appropriate allowance criteria
- work alongside any statutory appointee (if applicable) to reduce the identified risk to the school.

As part of the agreed objectives, review and evaluation processes of the implementation will be established within the school to inform ongoing development. Objective review and evaluation will include, but not be limited to:

- progress against the agreed school goals and targets
- tracking of student engagement and achievement information
- staff turnover
- staff morale
- reports that show progress from the Education Review Office when a principal with the allowance has been in place for three years, and
- the financial status of the school.

Within the first three months of the appointment commencing the Ministry, board, principal and relevant stakeholders will meet to discuss what support options may be appropriate for the school.

The board will, on an annual basis, appraise the principal and undertake a self-review and evaluation process against its agreed objectives. Three-to-six months prior to the expiry of the fixed period of the allowance the board will use its annual self reviews and principal appraisals to consider whether to seek approval from the Secretary to extend the allowance for a further fixed period.

## Secretary's approval to offer the allowance for a further fixed period

Where a board wishes to seek approval from the Secretary to renew the allowance for a further fixed period (subject to the maximum of two renewals), the board's application must:

- include affirmation that the principal and the school continue to meet the eligibility criteria; and
- provide, in support of the application, evidence about progress against agreed performance criteria. In the context of the allowance this may include assessment against a change plan in the school charter and/or annual plan.

The Secretary considers the board's request for renewal of the allowance using Ministry information, board self-review documents and advice from the independent adviser.

If approved, the board must comply with any conditions imposed by the Secretary.

## Process of review for a board

Three-to-six months prior to the expiry of the initial three-year fixed period or subsequent renewal of the allowance the board will use its annual self reviews and principal appraisals to consider whether to seek approval from the Secretary to renew the allowance for a further fixed period.

As part of the same review an independent adviser from the National Panel will assess:

- the principal's role in progressing/meeting the agreed goals and targets for change
- whether the principal is still meeting the allowance expectations including the eligibility criteria, and
- provide a quality assurance check of the board's self-review process.

The board submits an application to the Secretary seeking approval to continue offering the allowance for a further fixed term of up to two years (subject to the maximum of two renewals). The application in renewing the allowance will include affirmation from the independent adviser whether or not the principal continues to meet the principal eligibility criteria and providing feedback of the board's self-review.

The Secretary will consider the request and determine if the allowance should be renewed based on Ministry information, the board self-review documents and advice from the independent adviser. The Secretary will consider the progress against the presenting issues at the time the allowance was approved, including the need to embed and sustain changes achieved in the school. Evidence of the following factors may be relevant:

- a. clear goals and effective relationships established
- b. change process and plan established, supports in place
- c. improved school climate and culture
- d. change effectively implemented
- e. mitigation of identified risks to school
- f. Education Review Office review cycle interval increases
- g. more effective governance, leadership and management
- h. change approach/review integrated into normal practice; strategic capability improves
- i. joining/greater participation in Community of Schools
- j. capability to sustain effective change management
- k. staff turnover stabilising
- l. classroom practice transformed
- m. significant, sustained shifts in student achievement.

The allowance will not be renewed where:

- the independent adviser has affirmed that the principal no longer meets the eligibility criteria, and/or
- successive principal performance reviews are inadequate and/or
- there is not significant progress towards the agreed goals and targets including progress in a – m above, and/ or
- the principal and board agreed prior to the commencement of the appointment that the required changes could be achieved within three years.

The Secretary will notify the decision to the board.

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## Where to get further information about the allowance

Further information about the allowance and the processes outlined above may be obtained from the local Ministry office.

Before submitting an expression of interest, boards may wish to consult with the Education Review Office, New Zealand School Trustees Association, Te Rūnanga Nui o Ngā Kura Kaupapa Māori o Aotearoa, Ngā Kura a Iwi o Aotearoa, students' parents, local community, sector groups – such as New Zealand Educational Institute Te Riu Roa, New Zealand Post Primary Teachers' Association/Te Wehengārua, Te Akatea New Zealand Māori Principals Association, Pasifika Principals' Association.

Boards should get specific recruitment advice from the New Zealand School Trustees Association see [www.nzsta.org.nz](http://www.nzsta.org.nz).

Information about other support available to a board can be obtained from the Ministry's website ([www.minedu.govt.nz](http://www.minedu.govt.nz)), or by talking to the school's Ministry Senior Adviser or NZSTA.