



Briefing to the incoming Minister of Education

Invest in school leadership to make a real difference
to our young people.

Strong strategic leaders | thriving tamariki mokopuna

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*Tena koe, nga mihi nui Minister
Congratulations on your election to government and appointment as Minister of Education. You have a vital role in the future of the nation. We look forward to supporting you in your work. Springboard Trust wishes you well and encourages you to focus on supporting our school leaders in driving strong outcomes for all our learners.*

Springboard has worked closely with over 750 principals across the country in developing a strategic approach to leading their schools. Through this network of schools of all shapes and sizes we have established a unique perspective on how to support progressive and forward-thinking school leaders. We bring to the table over 500 active volunteers from the corporate and business community who give their time and expertise to the school sector. Volunteers and school leaders work towards driving a strategic school leadership that impacts our education system. This work has been largely funded by philanthropic investment.

It is clear from the last few months of the election campaign that education is a topic of great interest to New Zealanders. There is a strong desire across the country for improvement, development and change. The education system requires strategic investment and development. Many feel that the system lacks a coherent focus and combined sense of purpose.

Our central premise is that high quality leadership inside schools will be the key factor in helping the system successfully address the current challenges and opportunities. Strong school leaders will drive the schooling system forward. At present school leaders feel that the system is not focused on making their work easier. Furthermore, across the country people of all persuasions are looking for improvement in education. Springboard is focused on powering that improvement.

A high performing education system lies at the heart of a successful country. All young people in New Zealand no matter their location, family background or socio-economic status should be able to get a good education. High quality public education is critical.

Springboard is a trusted partner with Principals.

We can play a significant role in helping you build a trust-based relationship with school Principals, to support your thinking and help bring a sharper focus to the sector.



Dale Bailey
Chief Executive Officer

Springboard Trust
November 2023

Our Impact

What we do and how we do it

WHO WE SERVE

Principals | tumuaki and leaders in school settings across New Zealand.

THE PROBLEM WE ARE SOLVING

Not all students are successful in our education system. Changing this requires strong strategic school leadership. Strategic leadership development is not offered to school leaders in New Zealand - except by Springboard Trust.

WHAT WE OFFER

Springboard Trust brings together leaders from the education, private, public and philanthropic sectors to enrich strategic leadership and create impactful change in schools. Since 2007, we've worked with more than 750 school leaders as we progress our vision.

Our reach



750+

Principals



1,500+

Engagements



13

Regions across New Zealand



550+

Volunteers

Our impact



\$3.10

Social Return on Investment (SROI)



240,000+

Students in schools we have worked with



Independent evaluation from New Zealand Council for Education Research and Impact Lab validates our impact

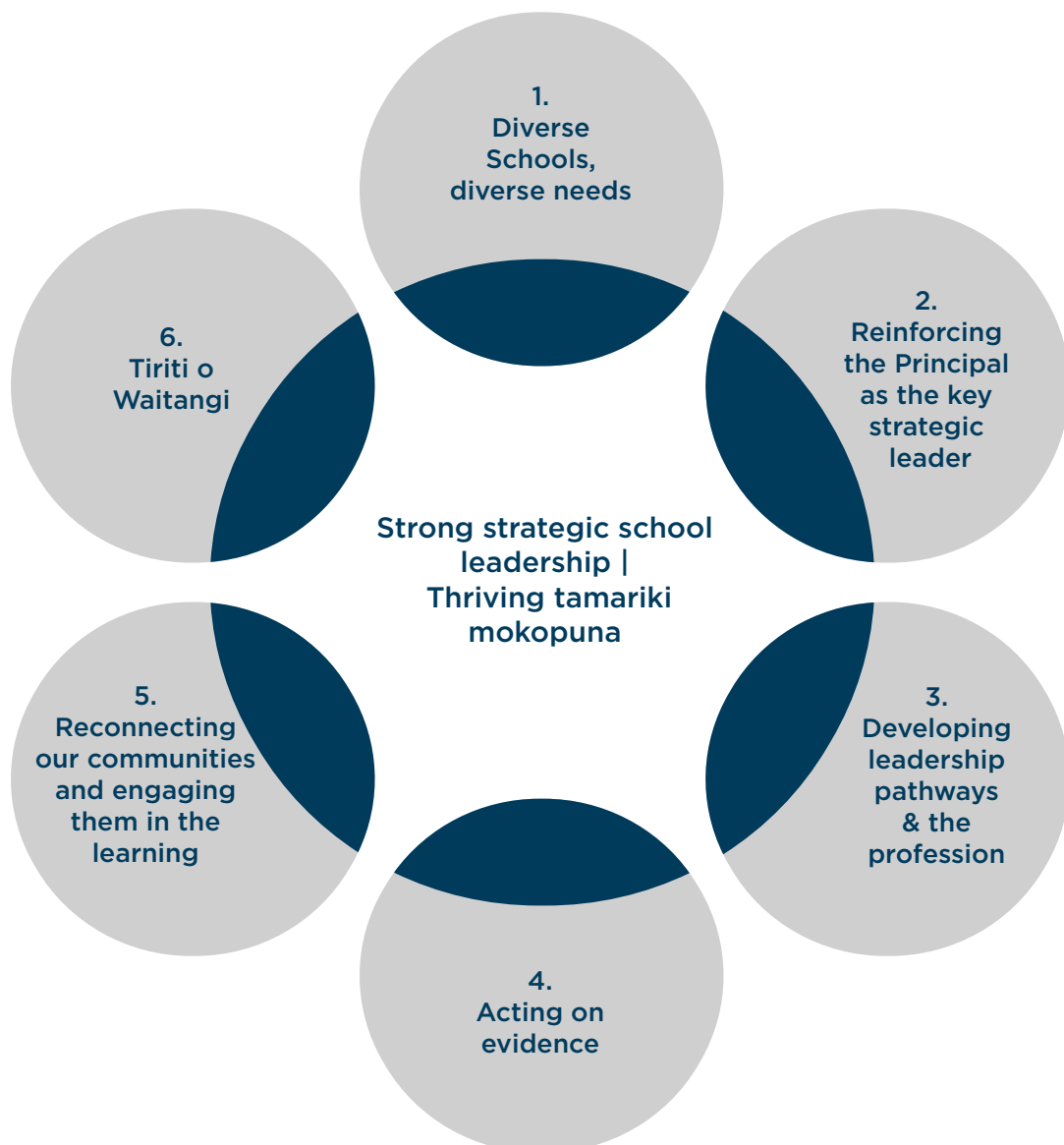
“Working with you on our strategic planning was truly the best professional development I have ever experienced. It has had a profound impact on our school, refining and shaping everything we do..” **Principal participant**

Leadership; critical areas of focus

We believe that there are six important areas for the system to focus on at this time. For many decades New Zealand has had an education system to be proud of.

Unfortunately, there is a lack of alignment with the system on the key ingredients for educational success in New Zealand. There are many things that warrant attention, however if we were to focus on some core strategic levers for change the outcomes could significantly change.

Springboard's view is that these areas of focus will strengthen our response to the critical education challenges. It is through high quality support for leadership that we will make the most important difference.





1: Diverse Schools, diverse needs

One size does not fit all. We have within the 2500 schools in New Zealand an extraordinary range of type and size, serving very different communities. Care needs to be taken to create a policy framework that provides appropriate policy guidelines and constants but allows delivery and strategic decisions to be made locally.

Our schools are directly impacted by economic and social factors and are often at the forefront of social change in the community. They are the key focus of every community in New Zealand. Many aspects of national economic and social conditions have regional and local differences. These challenges complicate the work of schools. Supporting and strengthening school-based decision making is crucial.

It is vital that we resist simple solutions in a complex delivery environment. Not all learners are alike so schools must be increasingly responsive to diversity and be able to find ways to meet these dynamic demands. They need support and investment to achieve that outcome.

A clear line of sight needs to be developed between what schools do and the priorities of the system. We need to expand the conversation to those beyond education as well bringing into the discussion wider interests across our society and economy.



2: Reinforcing the principal as the key strategic leader

With our highly distributed governance and management model the important locus of control in our education system rests with the principal. Sadly, at present many of our principals feel isolated and under-supported. Principals come to the role as experts in education, teaching and learning. However, support for developing their own management and strategic leadership skills is limited. Springboard has sought to drive that development through partnering our school leaders with volunteers from the business and corporate communities.

Both corporate leaders and principals indicate this learning is vital to their success.

The principal is best placed to make the key strategic decisions for the school. They are close to the community and understand best the challenges learners face. At the heart of their work is supporting the growth of teacher efficacy and engagement. They thrive in safe professional spaces where there is support to grow and develop. Our principals need specific and targeted support to meet the current challenges and opportunities.

At the heart of a successful system are effective and capable school leaders. Working closely with principals is an important priority for the incoming government and will yield positive results.



3: Developing leadership pathways & enhance the profession

Recent surveys suggest a crisis in the area of school leadership. A significant number of principals have signaled they are looking to exit the profession altogether and a recent survey of deputy principals in Southland indicated few were interested in applying for the principal roles when they arose. There needs to be investment in a systemic approach for the pathways to leadership.

Emerging and aspiring leaders should be given the opportunity to learn about strategic leadership and given practical experience in strategic leadership. Extra investment is required to manage and drive leadership development. The introduction of more strategic leadership learning opportunities is vital. Springboard's programmes of leadership development are proven developments that allow the growth of experience and improve outcomes for our system.

One of the features of the most successful education systems is that the profession is held in high regard and is seen as a career of choice. Unfortunately, the status of teaching within our community has fallen in recent decades.

It is time to invest in the profession itself. A dedicated focus is needed on strengthening leadership, recruiting new talent and encouraging development at all levels of the profession.



4: Acting on evidence

Many successful approaches in education can be found within schools at the local level. However, the transfer of successful innovation is slow. As a result, the system is slow to develop and take advantage of good initiatives. Springboard is committed to developing better insights into its own work and that of the school leaders we support. We have invested strongly in evaluation including external assessment by the NZ Council for Educational Research (NZCER) and Impact Lab. This research shows investment in leaders within the system can make a difference. Furthermore, we are committed to sharing of insights across the schooling system.

We need to ensure that schools have the appropriate measurement tools to guide their strategic leadership. All schools need sound indicators that guide and support progress. Springboard has been piloting, with over 50 schools across the country, the application of a balanced scorecard methodology. This strategic measurement approach has allowed school leaders to generate better insights into the way they are developing their schools and in communicating this progress to their school, board and community.

All partners in schooling want to see leaders do the best they can. Having a straightforward tool such as a scorecard is a great mechanism to explain that focus. Our pilot has allowed a variety of school leaders the opportunity to lead and drive a focus on improvement. We feel this programme has significant potential for education and would be keen to discuss this with you.

We believe that the transfer of successful innovations and practices across the system can yield important improvements. The strength and weakness of our system of schooling is the distributed decision making, so an emphasis on the transfer of good practices is vital.



5: Reconnecting our communities and engaging them in the learning

One of the outcomes of our response to the pandemic has been a challenge of reduced attendance and student engagement. The disruption to learning has been extensive. A significant number of young learners have disconnected from schools and the cost to their learning has been noted. Providing school leaders with the tools to address attendance and engagement is now critical. They are the point that can be most responsive to community need and aspiration.

In many aspects school is one of the only points of focus for many communities. During the pandemic schools developed new ways of reaching and connecting to their communities that have been most useful. Reinforcing the principal's role in leading with their communities is particularly important at this time. Principals in our recent cohorts have really emphasized the strategic need to work closely with their communities, to bring them back closer to the school and its activities.



6: Tiriti o Waitangi

Schools play an important role in our society. They are places that build and reinforce our key tenets of what makes New Zealand unique. They reinforce our core national values and create community understanding. They support social cohesion and are for many families their key connection to our New Zealand concepts of nationhood.

Central to our way of life in Aotearoa New Zealand is understanding the place of tangata whenua and the Treaty of Waitangi. Principals and school leaders are important developers of national understanding in this area.

Māori pathways to success require a bicultural understanding within all schools. Māori success as Māori is fundamental to the success of our nation.

Too many of our young people are not being fully supported to achieve. We need to ensure good pathways exist for all learners to achieve success. Furthermore, a strong commitment to enacting the Treaty is central to the success of our public education system. Māori must be actively engaged in the education system for our schools to be successful. This engagement must be at all levels of the system, most importantly at the school and community level.

Often school leaders have faced challenges in enacting this role. Support must be given to school leaders to ensure that role is met.

Conclusion

Springboard Trust is a leader in the development of school leadership. It is our demonstrated experience that effective and strategic leadership can drive significant improvement and alignment across the system.

Springboard Trust has a strong record of delivery in the education sector. Investing with not for profits brings high level results at reasonable cost. We are able to respond quickly and effectively. What we do resonates with school leaders.

Investment in the third sector creates effective and positive results. Furthermore, the commitment of our volunteers brings a contribution that is up to date, focused and unique in the New Zealand education system. We believe that further support of the third sector would drive positive and affirming change across the education system.

We would welcome the opportunity to discuss these matters with you and can convene at short notice a cross section of principals representing the variety within the system and who are graduates of our Strategic Leadership for Principals Programme (SLPP) programme.

If there was one strategic thing to lift our system forward it would be to invest in leadership.

Springboard Trust

Springboard Trust is an impact organisation working within the education sector. We transform schools together by developing individuals' and teams' strategic leadership, bringing together leaders from the education, private, public and philanthropic sectors to facilitate insightful learning and embed impactful change. We focus on working with state and integrated primary, intermediate and secondary schools.

The reason we do this is simple: we believe that effective strategic leadership transforms schools, which ultimately improves student outcomes.

Underpinning this work is our unique cross-sector model which gives principals the building blocks of strategic leadership, providing them with a diverse toolkit of resources to effectively lead their school and create the conditions that enable students to thrive.

New Zealand teachers and principals typically struggle to gain access to professional learning and development or unique insights from outside their own sector. Springboard Trust aims to break down these barriers and facilitate a unique platform that encourages cross-sector thinking, learning and collaboration.

The cross-sector model gives school leaders access to tailored expertise, trusted coaching relationships and a network of support that is essential to strong leadership in education.

This comes from our expansive network of skilled volunteers, a combination of expert individuals and senior leaders in our partner organisations. Our board is made up of four educators and four business leaders and provides strong strategic focus.

Springboard Trust is a registered charity and receives the majority of its funding through philanthropy.

The Trust has been operating for 17 years and has supported 750 school leaders develop their strategic leadership. It has 500 volunteers supporting its work from the business and corporate world. Together volunteers and school leaders create new strategic plans for leading their schools forward.

Springboard Trust



Dale Bailey
CEO

Dale has worked in numerous role that influence his passion for the lives of young New Zealanders,

holding responsibility for learners across the nation. He began his career as a teacher of geography and social studies in Palmerston North, before working as a Review Officer (and later Deputy Chief Review Office Northern) at the Education Review Office (ERO).

He has since worked as Counties-Manukau Regional Manager and Northern Manager at Careers New Zealand, leading the redevelopment of careers education and support for schools. More recently, Dale joined the Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa as Director of Collections Research and Learning. In the last year Dale has been undertaking work as a consultant for his own company.

Dale is keenly interested in promoting high quality education and life long learning across Aotearoa New Zealand.



Ian Narev
Chairman of the Board

Ian is the Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer of SEEK Limited, a market leader in online

employment marketplaces in Australasia, South-East Asia and Latin America. Prior to joining SEEK in 2019 he was the Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer of Commonwealth Bank of Australia, and before that a partner of McKinsey & Company.

He is a co-founder of Springboard, and has worked closely with school principals each year since Springboard's inception. He is also the Chair of New Zealand Rugby Commercial Limited, the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation, and former Chair of the Sydney Theatre Company and the Advisory Board of the Gonski Institute of Education at UNSW.



Billie-Jean Potaka-Ayton
Board Member

Billie-Jean Potaka Ayton is Principal at Kaiti School in Te Tairāwhiti. She has been principal there for 11 years and has brought the school from a 10 year trend of roll decline with a roll in 2009 of 130 to a roll of 380. Kaiti School is a decile 1 kura that caters for years 1-8 students in Bilingual and Mainstream education pathways. Her leadership style comes from her grandparents who were instrumental in her early life and education. Billie-Jean was part of the first cohort of Principals in Te Tairāwhiti to work with Springboard Trust in 2016.

Billie-Jean was a recipient of the Woolf Fisher 2019 fellowship award. Her travel included visiting schools in Hawaii and Los Angeles and a week programme at Harvard University on leadership.



Dan Huggins
Board Member

Dan is the Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer of the Bank of New Zealand (BNZ) and first connected with Springboard Trust as a volunteer Capacity Partner in our inaugural Strategic Leadership for Principals Programme cohort in 2007.

He has 20 years' experience across a range of industries, including Banking, Retail, and Manufacturing. Prior to BNZ, Dan was at the Commonwealth Bank of Australia (CBA), in Sydney, where he held the role of Executive General Manager of Home Buying and was accountable for CBA's home lending portfolio. Dan has also held roles at Fonterra, ASB and McKinsey & Company.



Frances Nelson

Board Member

Frances has 40 years' experience as an educator and is an experienced principal having led six different primary schools that vary in decile range in Auckland and Northland. Frances served as an executive member of the NZEI Te Riu Roa for 12 years and then as president for three years. She is the Immediate Past President of the Auckland Primary Principals' Association, a member of the New Zealand Council for Educational Research board and a Justice of the Peace. Frances participated in the Strategic Leadership for Principals' Programme in 2011.



Dr Laurie Thew

Board Member

Dr Laurie Thew is a recently retired Principal of Manurewa Central School. Laurie was on our first 2007 SLPP cohort.

With 43 years in education, he is well respected and informs the board of much of the 'coal-face', research and leadership developments in education. He has served on a number of local, regional and national educational advisory groups and has been recognised by the New Zealand Principals' Federation, the New Zealand Educational Institute and the Auckland Primary Principals Association. He was made a member of the New Zealand Order of Merit for Services to Education in 2004 and joined Springboard Trust's board in 2009.



Liz O'Neil

Board Member

Liz is currently Chief Financial Officer (CFO) - Pacific at Amatil NZ.

A qualified chartered accountant (CAANZ) with 20+ years' experience in senior finance & commercial roles across large New Zealand companies including Lion, Telecom (Spark) & Fonterra, Liz first became involved with Springboard Trust in 2008 as a capacity partner.

In 2011 she became an engagement manager for Alumni Services working closely with Homai School to embed their strategic goals. Co-opted onto the Board since 2012, she was appointed as a full Trustee in July 2014 and provides strategic support for Springboard Trust's finances. Liz is also a member of the Board of Trustees for Baradene College.



Malcolm Crotty

Board Member

Malcolm is a Partner at Russell McVeagh.

He is a qualified lawyer with over 22 years' experience. A former Trustee of Knox Trust Board Malcolm has been involved with Springboard Trust since its inception and was appointed to the board in 2005. He deals with all matters legal and has spent several years working alongside management, developing the documentation supporting our innovative capacity building frameworks.



Stan Whata

Board Member

Stan is the current principal of Koru School in Mangere, Auckland. His 25 years of principalship have seen him lead schools in Tokomaru Bay, Dargaville and Auckland. Each of these communities have their own special character which have shaped and modeled Stan's leadership experience.

Stan has served the wider principal network in executive roles across a number of principal associations and as Lead Principal of his local Kāhui Ako. Additionally, he has passionately supported the growth and development of his peers through principal appraisal, mentoring, coaching and facilitation. Stan is a current Board Member of both One Tree Hill College and Auckland Girls' Grammar School.