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Charter Schools Unnecessary Option Say Principals

Source: NZ Principals Federation

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Whetu Cormick, President of the New Zealand Principals' Federation (NZPF), says, 'There is no need to have a special category of charter schools, in New Zealand.'

'New Zealand has more than enough schooling options to cover everything we need,' he said.

The latest suggestion that a Treaty Claim be launched to keep the controversial schools going because Māori are doing better under the charter school system, surprised Cormick on a recent Newshub Nation broadcast.

Cormick suggested that charter schools had not been open long enough to show any sustainable gains for Māori and no research had been undertaken to provide evidence of the claim. He did not believe that a Treaty Claim would have substance and would likely be rejected.

'If any charter school is doing well for Māori or any other students, there is the option to negotiate with the Minister to keep that school open as a designated character school or private school or state integrated school,' he said.

Minister of Education, Chris Hipkins, has been clear in his handling of charter schools that he will be negotiating with each school individually.

'Mainstream schools are very aware of the need to lift achievement for Māori and Pacific Island students,' said Cormick.

'There are now a number of excellent initiatives being implemented in many public schools to address the issues that have led to Māori and Pacific Island students disengaging from learning. One of these is the Māori Achievement Collaborations, a professional learning and development model for school principals, provided through the Māori Principals' Association, Te Akatea. The programme is now operating in over one hundred and fifty schools, influencing tens of thousands of young people, and University of Auckland research shows this programme is having a positive impact on Māori students' engagement and achievement,' said Cormick.

'These are the kinds of initiatives we need to support our Māori tamariki so that every school can be a great school,' said Cormick.

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