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## **Principals applaud counsellors in schools**

**Source:** NZ Principals Federation

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"Principals across the motu will be applauding the Government's decision, announced today, to fund 90 counselling staff for 141 primary, intermediate and area schools," said Perry Rush, President of the New Zealand Principals' Federation (NZPF).

Principals have been advocating for counsellors in schools to address the growing mental health and wellbeing issues for young people, which have existed for a long time and made worse by COVID-19.

"NZPF has lobbied for the past two years to establish counsellors in primary schools," said Rush. "To feel comfortable at school and to be successful in their learning, our young people need to build a relationship with a counsellor they can trust and who can help them rebuild confidence to overcome their fears and anxieties," he said.

"I expect that having counsellors in schools will also have an impact on bullying," said Rush. "Our schools have unacceptable rates of bullying both face to face and through social media," he said.

NZPF surveyed principals last year on the extent of behavioural issues and bullying in their schools and reported the findings to Minister of Education, Chris Hipkins and Associate Minister of Education, Jan Tinetti.

"I am delighted that Ministers have listened to our principals and acted on their recommendation for counsellors in primary, intermediate and area schools," he said.

**ENDS**

For further commentary contact NZPF spokesperson Perry Rush

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