

Just the Job – Series 6, 2011 - Information Sheet – TeachNZ, Ministry of Education

Job title:

Primary School Principal

Job Description:

A primary school principal is responsible for the management of the staff and the school. They ensure that their teachers have the skills, support and training to deliver the curriculum to their students. They also manage the administration, upkeep and finances of the school.

It's important that a school principal builds positive relationships with their students, their families and the community to ensure the school's curriculum is responsive to the community's identified values and aspirations.

This is a leadership role where you have the opportunity to be innovative, responsive and influential in running an organisation.

Qualifications required

You need to first study and successfully complete a teacher education qualification – which is generally a 3-4 year bachelor degree in teaching or a one-year Graduate Diploma of Teaching after completing a bachelor degree in another subject or area. You'll then need to gain several years experience as a registered teacher before you apply for a principal role.

To enter a Bachelor of Education study programme you'll need a tertiary entrance qualification. Generally university entrance (NCEA Level 3) is required, but entry requirements vary so check with your teacher education provider.

To enter a Graduate Diploma of Teaching you will need to already hold a bachelor degree and it is best to check with your teacher education provider directly on the specific requirements for this qualification as they vary for Primary and Secondary teaching.

Training or experience in management or education administration would also be an advantage if you're interested in becoming a principal.

Registration:

You must also attain formal teacher registration from the NZ Teacher's Council. The teacher registration process is the same for primary and secondary and you have to meet same teaching standards i.e. you do your teacher education qualification followed by provisional registration before you get your full registration. Generally this registration process takes two years full-time working as a teacher.

Training costs

If you study full-time toward your teacher education qualification, your fees for a year will range from \$3,700 – \$6,300* plus text books, other materials and expenses. Teaching qualifications vary in duration between one year full time (for post-Graduate students), to up to four years full time. Contact your teacher education provider for specific information about costs.

*As at 2011, this is subject to change.

Career path

You need to become a teacher first, before you can be a principal. Several years experience as a fully registered teacher would be required before you could become a principal. Good leadership skills are a must. Training or experience in management or education administration would also be an advantage.

Salary range

Teachers are offered attractive salary packages, compatible with their qualifications, and competitive with that of graduates in other fields. The pay structure also recognises and accommodates teachers who take on additional responsibilities.

Primary teachers pay rates are competitive. From 1 December 2010, the starting salary for a primary school teacher with a Bachelor's teaching degree is \$45,568. Assuming satisfactory performance, teachers progress up to a maximum rate of \$67,413 after seven years' service. Schools can also allocate one or more 'units' to teachers in management positions or to those with extra responsibilities. Each unit is worth \$4,000 and is paid on top of a teacher's base salary. Higher qualifications, such as a subject or specialist degree held in addition to a teaching qualification, lead to higher starting levels and enable progression to the top of the primary teachers' salary scale, \$70,877.

Other careers this profession could lead to

You could:

- teach trainee teachers in tertiary institutions or teach in organisations at other levels across the community
- work in curriculum development, research or education policy with the Ministry of Education, or other local and central government agencies
- move into advisory roles such as school support or education review officer, advising teachers and schools
- work in professional development roles introducing the latest from research to existing teachers
- work in a management role in a public or private sector organisation.

How to increase the chances of successfully entering this industry

- Several years of teaching experience as a fully registered teacher.
- Good leadership skills.
- Training in management or education administration.

Other places to source information about this job

www.TeachNZ.govt.nz (TeachNZ offer scholarships to people studying to become teachers.

Conditions apply)

www.minedu.govt.nz

www.careerservices.govt.nz

www.educationalleaders.govt.nz

www.teacherscouncil.govt.nz

Also talking to current and recent student teachers and experienced teachers can be a great help in deciding whether teaching is for you.

Other relevant points

- Teaching is a profession in which you can work throughout your life, move in and out of, and travel nationally and internationally.
- Teaching as a career is a desirable lifestyle option with a range of value-added benefits – holidays, variety and autonomy.
- TeachNZ offers a number of scholarships to people who want to train as early childhood teachers: www.TeachNZ.govt.nz.

As a Principal:

- you'll have the opportunity to lead a dynamic community of learners, and provide opportunities for family and whānau to be part of the learning
- develop skills, knowledge and expertise in operating a school that are transferrable to operating a business
- develop skills knowledge and expertise in property, financial and personnel management
- develop skills in management planning, strategic, annual and action plans to enact long-term plans
- develop strong interpersonal skills to be able to relate to and work collaboratively with a variety of individuals, students, families, community other professionals and experts in their fields
- contribute to making a positive difference to students, families and community, such as preserving students' language, culture and identity.