



Media Release

**7 August 2004
Attention: Education and
Political reporters
For Immediate Release**

Student teachers meet to discuss future of Colleges and plan campaign against student debt

Student teacher representatives from Colleges of Education are in Wellington to plan a campaign against teachers' student debt and discuss the future of teacher education in New Zealand.

"Student teachers are forced into massive student loan debts and find it impossible to balance paid work, study and the demands of attending full-time teaching placements," said Giarne Clarke, Primary Teacher Trainee and Vice President of the Christchurch College of Education Students' Association.

"The government needs to recognise the important role of teachers in New Zealand by reducing our fees, introducing a living allowance for all students," said Clarke.

The meeting is also discussing the College of Education mergers planned in Wellington and Auckland and the future of teacher education in New Zealand.

"Students in teacher education are calling on the government to ensure that mergers of colleges of education and universities only happen when it's in the best interests of students and the New Zealand compulsory education system," said Fleur Fitzsimons, Co-President of the New Zealand University Students' Association.

"Students will not tolerate mergers if they lead to fee increases for students or compromises in teacher quality."

For further information contact:
Fleur Fitzsimons
NZUSA Co-President
Phone 04 498 2500
Mobile Phone 0274 86 86 77