



President's Comment 17

10th June 2010

Dear Colleagues

Neita Regional Teaching and Leadership Awards May 2010

It was a privilege to attend the above awards in Parliament on the 28th May. It was an occasion where teaching was celebrated as a vocation and a profession. I noted that the common characteristics of the recipients were:

- A genuine interest and love of children;
- A passion for learning and their subjects;
- A commitment to be well prepared for lessons;
- A well developed habit of reflecting on their teaching practice with a view to continuous improvement;
- Setting high expectations of all students irrespective of ethnic or socio-economic background;
- A willingness to get involved in the co-curricular life of students;
- A desire to make a positive difference in the lives of young people.

It was a pleasure to see that the research on 'effective teaching' was being practiced in schools and early childhood centres throughout New Zealand.

Joining the Dots! An Imperative for the Ministry of Education

I am thoroughly enjoying my role as President of SPANZ particularly the opportunity to advocate on some 'meaty issues' affecting Secondary Education and Principalship in the New Zealand.

My overwhelming observation of the Ministry of Education is that they have a number of well intentioned and skilled departments (teams) but they often work in silos with little evidence of anyone joining up the dots.

I have attended, for instance, Reference Groups on Initial Teacher Education, The Technology Curriculum, University Entrance and School Leadership. The terms of reference are often narrow and discussion on how initiatives are to be resourced and staffed are not encouraged.

The MOE's School Leadership Team has a focus on the disposition, personal qualities, preparation and leadership style of the Principal as a key factor in effective school leadership.

There is of course, truth in this, but a more global and over-arching approach is needed which involves a bringing together of the various streams of work within education. We need as one example, a highly competent and effective pool of teachers to lead.

Previous Comments

Comment 16 - 03.06.10

Leaders of Learning Profile, Effective Teaching Profile, Lockdown Procedures, School Leadership, Restricted Entry to Universities.

Comment 15 - 27.05.10

May Budget, Updates - Compliance Costs, Search & Seizure, Initial Teacher Education, Homework, New BOT.

Comment 14 - 20.05.10

Search & Seizure in Schools, ERO Meeting

Comment 13 - 13.05.10

Health & Safety Guidelines, Aspiring Principals' Programme, 2011 Symposium.

Comment 12 - 06.05.10

Initial Teacher Education (ITE), Trade Academics, Principalship Growing a Thick Skin, PA Conference. School Balls.

Contact Us

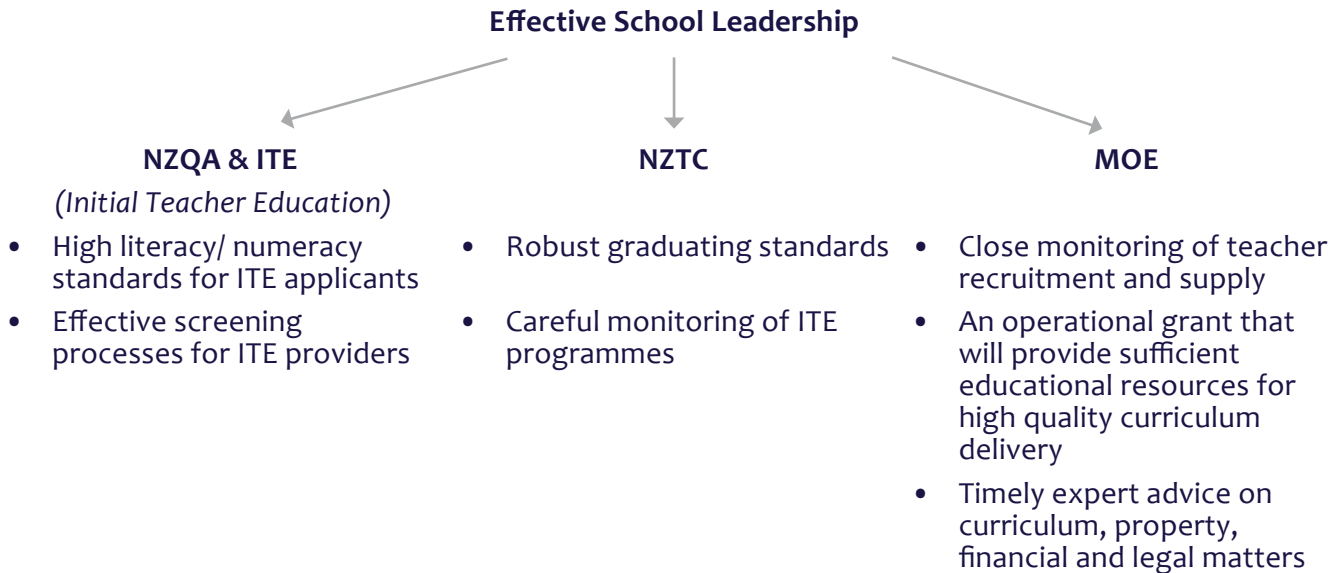
PO Box 11541
Ellerslie Auckland 1542

Phone: 09 571 2233
Fax: 09 571 2244

Email: office@spanz.school.nz
www.spanz.school.nz

School leadership and improved student outcomes cannot be seen as resting entirely on the shoulders of the Principal. Principals are of course, pivotal to a school’s success but there are many extrinsic factors such as the quality control systems on initial teacher education, which either enhance or impede our ability to lead effectively.

The diagram below illustrates how a broader overview might be taken.



The Paradox of Principalship

The Principal is the one whose desk looks like a rubbish collector’s nightmare – but who walks around the school picking up scraps of paper in the yard!?

The Principal is the one whose personal cheque book wont balance, but systematically and meticulously accounts for every cent of student activity fees.

The Principal is the one who holds a couple of university degrees, yet regularly spends a substantial part of each week trying to read graffiti.

School Fire at Keri Keri High School

Our sympathy, prayers and thoughts go out to Elizabeth Forgie, who lost a number of classrooms and computers in a fire like this. This is both devastating for a school community and its Principal.

Kind Regards

Patrick Walsh
President

