



President's Comment 39

2nd December 2010

Dear Colleagues

Positive NCEA Exam Season!

Overall the feedback I have received from Principals is that the external NCEA exams have gone well, with no major errors or the exams pitched at the wrong level. We often give brick bats to NZQA for missing the mark but this time round they deserve a pat on the back.

Proposal to Create One Agency For International Education

I have received a letter from Mr Steven Joyce, Minister for Tertiary Education. He has proposed the creation of a new Crown Agency, similar to NZQA, which would have sole responsibility for International Education. I agree with the Minister that it has the potential to provide more efficiencies, improve the status of the Agency internationally and give us greater access to the international student market.

I have advised the Minister that the Secondary School Sector would expect to be represented on the Board governing the new Agency given its importance to secondary education. I will keep you advised of developments.

Absence of Forum for Educational Debate Regrettable!

In a meeting with the Minister of Education last week I raised the issue that with the demise of the Schools Consultative Group there is no real forum for school leaders across the compulsory school sector to meet and engage in meaningful debate. There are critical issues facing the school sector and a number of systemic concerns. Apart from the Minister's direct email as a conduit for communication (which works well) there is no planned or cohesive platform for educational leaders to be consulted on or contribute to debate. This in my view is regrettable and adds to the reactive and ad hoc approach to educational issues in the school sector.

It seems to me the Minister genuinely wants to hear the views of school sector leaders and for them to be more engaged in problem solving rather than simply presenting issues. Unfortunately there is no mechanism where we can collectively do this.

Thank You to SPANZ Secretariat!

SPANZ is a very diverse and complex organisation that delivers an excellent service on a very constrained administrative budget. I would like to extend my thanks to Ros Robson and Jo Christini who undertake all this administrative work on your behalf. It includes our national conference, the PA's conference, SPANZ legal and SPANZ Union, Executive meetings and liaison work with many state and non-governmental organisations. Their work allows SPANZ to be a strong advocate and key player in secondary education.

Previous Comments

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Pike River Disaster, Important Dates for 2011, Secondary School Principals' Collective Negotiations

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Industrial Circus must end!, NZ Teachers Council request for Changes to Teacher Competence and Misconduct.

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ERO Meeting with School Staff without Principal Present, Hints from Executive Officers, Review of RTLB Services

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Leaders' Forum Meeting, Secondary Teachers' Collective Agreement

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Canterbury Colleagues, Secondary Teachers' Industrial Action, The Common Sense Guide to Choosing a Secondary School.

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Time Out Over Summer!

The SPANZ Union Principal survey indicated Principals are working 60-70 hours per week. The summer holidays are for many of us the only opportunity we have for a solid break. You will be less effective and of limited use to your school community if you work through the holidays and begin the school year tired and grumpy. However you enjoy your holidays make sure you take them!

Summer Reading On The Beach!

- *Working and Living In Dubai*
- *A Principal's Story of Escape*
- *A Principal's Guide to Changes In The NCEA*
- *Explained in 234 Easy Steps*
- *Sound Financial Management Of Your School*
- *Transforming Year 9 Students Into Hobbits*
- *How To Lead A Balanced Life As A Principal*
- *Fantasy Section*
- *A Caretaker's Guide To Managing The Principal*
- *Sorry Sold Out!*

This is the last President's Comment for the year. It has been a privilege and honour for me to serve you in this role. On behalf of the Executive I thank you for your support this year. I hope you have a positive end to the term and a fun filled summer break.

Kind regards



Patrick Walsh
President