



SPANZ

SECONDARY PRINCIPALS' ASSOCIATION OF NEW ZEALAND INC.

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President
Peter Gall
Papatoetoe High School

Thursday, 25 October 2007

President's Comment 30

Dear Colleagues

Education outside the Classroom (EOTC)

John Rodgers has Executive responsibility for Education Outside the Classroom and has compiled this report for members. He would welcome your email feedback gloriar@mbc.school.nz.

The Ministry of Education has been formulating a position on EOTC. It has identified that EOTC provides authentic contexts for student learning and has been a unique and successful feature of education in New Zealand schools for over a hundred years.

EOTC has been shown to be an effective learning and teaching approach that has the potential to enhance student learning and raise student achievement.

EOTC provides an educational, not just a recreational, component for outdoor recreation pursuits used in school programmes. It has a number of beneficial potential outcomes for NZ society including a fit and healthy population that makes the most of outdoor recreational opportunities, understands the cultural context of the environment and cares for and looks after it. It also helps to increase awareness of sustainable practices that are transferable to life.

In order to support the development of EOTC it is important that co-ordinated opportunities to train, qualify and revalidate outdoor leaders (whether teachers, volunteers or vocational) are encouraged. It is also important that coherent pathways to the outdoors as a career are developed. It is important that we support the Outdoor Leader Qualifications Alignment Project which is designed to achieve this. EOTC needs to be safe yet kept manageable. It is also important that we remember the educational value of adventure – risk is positive not just negative.

We need to continue to provide opportunities for young people to be exposed to basic outdoor skills so they can progress in the outdoor activities they choose. At the same time, achieve the benefits of a healthy community engaging in outdoor recreation opportunities. It is important that the Ministry of Education help schools to find straightforward ways to judge the value of outdoor recreation pursuits. This way, they can make the benefits explicit in material aimed at parents.

There is also a need to improve equity of funding between sport and outdoor recreation. There is a case to be made to increase the resources available to the outdoor recreation sector to a similar level as sport, especially for initiatives that support youth participation in outdoor recreation and EOTC.

The United Kingdom has published an EOTC manifesto which supports such activities as important and valuable aspects of a thorough education.

There is a challenge for us to build connections to diverse groups so outdoor recreation opportunities are accessible to all, and to provide culturally responsive EOTC learning contexts for all students so Māori students and students of other ethnicities can flourish and achieve alongside their peers.

There is sound research and considerable anecdotal support for the contribution that EOTC makes to the engagement of students. It is pleasing to see it getting such positive support from the advisory group under the very capable leadership of Cathye Haddock.

NZ Curriculum

There is an update on the New Zealand Curriculum on the SPANZ Website www.spanz.school.nz

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Peter Gall". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'P' and a long, sweeping underline.

Peter Gall
President