



SPANZ

SECONDARY PRINCIPALS' ASSOCIATION OF NEW ZEALAND INC.

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Dear Colleague

FEEDBACK

Last term principals were very good at informing the Executive by responding to questionnaires. I have devoted this comment to summarising some of your responses.

First Time Principals' Programme Completion Certification

92% of respondents were in favour of the First Time Principals' Programme Completion being certificated. Of the handful who were opposed the main concern was around what is currently a voluntary programme becoming a mandate for all principals, i.e. *you are all probationary principals until you get certification from the First Time Principals' Programme*. 50% of the respondents had experienced the First Time Principals' Programme.

Term Dates 2007

Between those who supported the gazetted dates and those who were opposed to them, there was an equal division. The support was largely in working in with local schools and support for the later start dates were around drawn-out summers, although much of the support was cautious support. The opposition was largely around reduced teaching time for senior students by adding days on at the end of the year, rather than at the beginning of the year. Whilst the responses were equal between support and opposition of the gazetted dates, those opposing were more forceful in expressing their strong opposition. A number of variations to gazetted dates were proposed. Because of all of this, we have taken the matter up with the Minister, particularly as there was a lack of consultation with our organisation over this matter.

Footnote: there is a link between those mandated start dates, callback days and the comments I made earlier in the year and principals will need to work through the issues around callback days.

RTL B

The questionnaire around RTL B's proved to be very informing to Paul Daley who sits on the RTL B Reference Group. One response in particular seemed to capture the thinking of a number of principals ... *"of the proposals listed, please don't give the RTL B's more training. They have spent so much time training, and meeting to discuss students, and to discuss training needs, and to plan discussions about training, or to think about discussions and to reflect on training, that they are like Group Special Education – a highly paid group of well-trained meeting specialists who see fewer and fewer students"*.

School Smart

Whilst this was probably one of the most controversial topics, it had the least responses – 30 compared to 60 or 80 for the others. Once again, of the 30 respondents there was a division of views, although there was a significant majority opposed to parents having online access to School Smart. The division in this case was about what sort of access restrictions needed to be in place. Because of good comments made and feedback given your Executive developed the following policy position:

“That School Smart is designed as a tool for principals and boards. The information provided on the School Smart site is very much raw data and does need some interpretation. It is possible to misinterpret data in its raw form. Nevertheless, there is information on School Smart that could be useful for parents if well explained. As a consequence we would recommend that School Smart information be available to parents and that the best way they can get access to it is through discussion with their local school”.



Graham Young

President

Secondary Principals' Association of New Zealand