



SPANZ

SECONDARY PRINCIPALS' ASSOCIATION OF NEW ZEALAND INC.

Secretariat Address

P O Box 99434, Newmarket Auckland
Phone: 09 571 2233 : Fax: 09 571 2244
Email: office@spanz.school.nz

President

Graham Young, Principal, Tauranga Boys' College

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President Comment 13 – Term Dates for 2007

Dear Colleagues

The last term of 2005 saw 2 Gazette notices regarding 2006 term dates. The first, on September 5th, heralded the much awaited announcement that the "tournament" week break in August was to be scrapped. The second, on November 21st, announced "in bold" that the 3 days flexibility (for Teacher Only Days, and an Anniversary Day) "does not allow schools to start the school year early or finish early".

This second announcement came as a great surprise, and caused concern across the country as many Secondary Schools had long before set their dates to start and finish early. It was followed up promptly, after an outcry, with a decision by officials that schools which had already set their dates would be allowed dispensation, but for 2006 only.

We are now left with a question about 2007 dates. From the gazette notices, it seems that no Secondary School may begin prior to 7th February 2007. With the addition of an Anniversary day, and a Teacher Only Day, this leads to a late finish on Tuesday 18th December.

There seem to be very valid reasons both nationally and locally for being able to use the 3 days flexibility prior to February 7th. These reasons include available teaching time for senior students. PPTA made it clear last year that they were not in favour of being able to start early. (Matt Velde emails to members 8/12/06, 9/12/06).

The gazetted term dates for 2007 are :

Term 1	Wednesday 7 February	to	Thursday 5 April (84 half-days)
Term 2	Monday 23 April	to	Friday 29 June (98 half-days)
Term 3	Monday 16 July	to	Friday 21 September (100 half-days)
Term 4	Monday 8 October	to	Thursday 14 December (96 half-days)*

(* or to a day in December which ensures that schools are open for instruction for 380 half-days in 2007)

The SPANZ Executive seeks members' views about this matter. Is this something we should be raising with the Ministry of Education? If so, what reasoning do you have for wishing to use the 3 days flexibility to start prior to February 7th? Or, are you satisfied with the term dates and rules as promulgated on November 21st? A brief response form is attached if you could email back to office@spanz.school.nz or fax to (09) 571 22 44 that would be appreciated.

Graham Young
President