



SPANZ

SECONDARY PRINCIPALS' ASSOCIATION OF NEW ZEALAND INC.



7th April 2006

President Comment 9

Dear Colleagues

Reflections on the SPANZ Symposium 2006 in Queenstown.

The keynote speakers Professor Peter Ellyard, Dr Lorna Earl and Dame Geraldine Keegan; Ron Wilkinson (Managing the Media workshops) and Richard Harrison (Legal Issue workshops) all contributed to a highly successful and professional event.

Dame Geraldine Keegan, the Irish practitioner, was inspirational in so much as, if she can do it then so can we! Given the context she works in and the constraints she is under, the way that her students and her teachers are committed to continuous improvement and learning is truly an inspiration.

I appreciated hearing from the Minister of Education that he understands and acknowledges the complexities of the Principal's role and the challenges facing secondary school principals as we strive for continuous improvement and betterment.

In particular I enjoyed the culture that pervaded the hallways and doorways of the Symposium. Whilst there was not always agreement in debate, the collegiality was affirming.

I thank members for the confidence that you have given in re-electing me unopposed as President for the next twelve months. My commitment is to continue to raise the level of debate around issues that affect secondary school principals and to develop mechanisms that look to both inform and be informing, and to do this whilst continuing to promote ethical and professional leadership. As one of the mechanisms for informing, the Tuesday morning session preceding the AGM should prove to be invaluable to the incoming committee. I would therefore like to thank the delegates for their forthright and considered contribution to the debate on "Positioning SPANZ for the Future" and while we may not arrive at an agreed position debating the issues is always preferable to personal, public attack. The outcomes of this session will be collated and available to members. As I acknowledged at conference, there is always a continuum of principals' views on any issues. It is therefore impossible for me to speak with one voice for all principals. Professional principalship is as much about being a participant in debate using rational argument which will sometimes mean having a conflict of opinion, but never confrontation, sarcasm or personal putdowns.

I would like to acknowledge the work of the Executive who organized the event. Elizabeth Forgie as Symposium Convener; Paul Daley who coordinated the daily events and kept us at our tasks; Peter Gall and Richard Thornton who worked with our Keynote speakers and sponsors both prior to and during the Symposium. The Executive all took a role in this Symposium and provided support to the organizing group and to me over the two and a half days in Queenstown. Thank you all.

I am looking forward to the Gala 20th anniversary event already being planned for 2007.

Graham Young President