



SECONDARY PRINCIPALS' ASSOCIATION OF NEW ZEALAND INC.

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President's Comment 7

Dear Colleagues

Two reports on work resulting from the Operations Grant Review (2006) have now been released and are available on the Ministry's website. These reports are *Review of Schools' Operational Funding – Non-Teaching Staff Workforce*, which was completed in October 2007, and *Pilot Survey of School Finances* (June 2008). Both reports have been confidential to the respective Ministers and have been subjected to several Official Information Act requests from media sources for their release over the past year.

There are no surprises in these reports – the main ideas confirm the arguments that sector group representations, individual principals and principal associations have been saying for some time. We are well aware that the non-teaching workforce in our schools has grown in number and complexity of their roles and that in secondary schools in particular we have to pay well to get the level of expertise required. Some sector groups favour a degree of centralisation for funding support staff but I believe that we (secondary schools) have moved too far down a devolved pathway to return to any sort of centralised system. The variation in roles and structures in secondary schools is vast and what we need is recognition and acceptance from government that our staffing levels are essential and economically deployed but underfunded.

Several of you would have been involved in the Polson-Higgs survey of school finances. The survey results closely correlate with the findings of the Operations Grant Review and the ERO report on schools resourcing. Whilst there is an argument for the need for some schools to improve their financial management practices, the other key messages relating to cost pressures and reliance on locally raised funds simply have to be acted on if our state schooling system is to maintain its current high international status.

Where to from here? We have been told not to expect 'new' money because of the current economic system and so that leaves only an option of putting the scalpel blade to some existing programmes that are of questionable value and redirecting that resource to schools.

The reports can be accessed via the following links:

[Non-Teaching Staff Workforce](#) and [Pilot Survey of School Finances](#).

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Peter Gall". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Peter Gall
SPANZ President