

## President's Comment 12



**Sandy Pasley**  
**SPANZ President**

21 October 2015

Dear Colleagues

Welcome to Term Four.

I trust that you are taking care of yourselves during this very busy term in the school year. As an aside, during the 2015 year 56 positions for Secondary Principals have been advertised in the Education Gazette, and from our records it would appear that this is the highest number of vacancies in one year. The previous highest was 45 in 1994.

### **Government Plan to tackle Childhood Obesity.**

While it is pleasing to read that the Government has a wide-ranging package to tackle childhood obesity I believe it is important for us as Secondary School Principals to convey to Government that Secondary Schools have comprehensive compulsory programmes in both Health and Physical Education for our students and promote to our young people healthy options in all areas of their lives. Sport has to be accessible for our students, sports facilities, equipment and coaching all have to be paid for and for many families the cost of participation makes it difficult to justify in their budgeting. It is hoped that SPANZ will be part of any consultation process the Government puts in place. I welcome your feedback on this or any other matters.

Patrick Walsh who represents you on the Health and Safety Advisory Group has written the following update for your comment. I wish to acknowledge the huge amount of work he has put into this on our behalf. Many thanks Patrick.

### **Further Updates on Health and Safety**

Your SPANZ representative on the Health and Safety Reference Group, Patrick Walsh, has asked the Ministry for further information and advice following consultation with secondary school principals recorded below for your information.

### **Standards for Boiler Management**

Ministry guidance for managing boilers includes a reference link to Worksafe New Zealand's Code of Practice for the design, servicing, maintenance and safe operation of boilers – see <http://www.education.govt.nz/school/property/state-schools/school-facilities/boilers/#maintaining>. We do not refer to any other standards.

### **Guidance on Managing Students with Special And Behavioural Needs**

The guide below examines matching the learning environment and its design with student learning needs, interests and strengths. It also examines student expression, the impact of adult responses and ways to support student self-advocacy and self-regulation. <http://inclusive.tki.org.nz/guides/behaviour-and-learning>

### **Guidance on Extreme Sports Events**

We have also been discussing with the Sector Reference Group that we are creating a fact sheet on EOTC health and safety, and will be applicable for all sports events and other EOTC experiences. Outdoors New

Zealand and the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment will review the fact sheet, updating current EOTC guidance as a part of a wider health and safety programme of work. This will be available to the sector in March 2016

### **Restraint Scenario's Submitted to the Reference Group On 'Seclusion and Restraint'**

The legal, health and safety and educational risks associated with restraint are significant. The following is a sample of 'scenarios' from the secondary sector submitted to the Reference Group for guidance on.

#### *Scenario One*

A group of Year 13 students were playing touch rugby on the back field. The game turned sour when student 'A' began mocking student 'B's mother as a joke. Student 'B' became enraged at the insult and began to seriously assault student 'A'.

A teacher on field duty came upon the assault with other Year 13 students watching. Student 'A' is on the ground and is at risk of serious injury, while student 'B' is so angry he is not listening to anyone, yelling 'you're dead meat'. The teacher is unsure of his ability to intervene to stop the fight or whether to ask the other students to assist. The field is some distance from the office and he is very concerned about his obligation to protect student 'A'.

#### *Scenario Two*

Student 'A', who has known 'anger management' issues was working quietly on his Year 12 Art folio when another student accidentally spilt black ink onto his work. Student 'A' lost the plot, jumping up shouting 'you've f...g ruined it, and proceeded to rip up his board. He then began to attack other Year 12 Art folios.

The teacher recognised he is in an extremely emotional state and not listening to reason. Although there is no physical risk to anyone, the Art folios represent hundreds of hours of work by students and are an essential part of their NCEA assessment, which can't be redone if they are destroyed. The teacher is not sure if restraint is justified in these circumstances or to just remove the other students from the Art room.

#### *Scenario Three*

In a Year 10 Woodwork class, student 'A', who had just been to the toilet, returned to class to find that his nearly finished pencil case had been graffitied on with a large drawing of a penis. Student 'B' laughs at student 'A' discovery and admits he put the graffiti on it. Student 'A' reacts violently to this, picking up a nearby hammer and begins advancing on student 'B', threatening to smash his head in. Student 'B' is backed into a corner with no obvious means of escape and the other students retreat out of student 'A's path. The teacher is anxious to protect student 'B' but is also fearful for his own safety.

#### *Scenario Four*

A student who suffers from Autism has had a confrontation with the Year 11 Dean. When asked to report to the D.P's office, he gives the Dean the fingers, rushes to the school fence and begins climbing. There is a busy motorway on the other side of the fence. The Dean perceives a real threat to the student's safety but knows if he tries to pull him down from the fence, he is likely to be assaulted by the student.

Nāga mihi

Sandy Pasley  
**President**

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