

President's Comment 25



Sandy Pasley
SPANZ President

25 August 2016

Dear Colleagues

Surprise, surprise yet another innovation bomb lands on the compulsory education sector. In a world crying out for stability and thoughtful governance it is indeed perplexing to be confronted with yet one more 'borrowed' idea on educating the young people of New Zealand. Cool it is not! Our students need the best and brightest teachers (flesh and blood) people with them as they traverse the complex world they live in. They do not need, nor should they have, a choice to "school or not to school". School for a number of our students is a place where they learn not just the curriculum, but so many other life skills essential for their survival in the world beyond the school gate. Such things as, but not limited to, values, being a team player, leadership, collegiality, discipline, and boundaries. School is a place for students to shine in whatever area, and a safe place to develop mind, body and spirit.

Research abounds about the value of quality teaching, leadership and governance. Where is the research and validation of Communities of Online Learning or for that matter Communities of Learning? Who is evaluating these models? Where were the trials?

In the past SPANZ has been able to have input into policy affecting the schooling sector and then work with government organisations on the implementation of policy. However, this is not now the case. Policy is announced by media release; consultation is not with those who are at the coal face. The future of our country is dependent on the students in our schools today and their learning has to be as a result of well-proven, researched and validated innovations; not something that may or may not be working in another country. "It takes a whole village to raise a child". It appears that the Government now intend swapping the village for a 35-pixel monitor and a voice recording.

It is a great shame when a professional Association such as SPANZ, with a long history of working with Government and Government agencies, is forced into reacting to changes in the education landscape in this way when the gate to meaningful dialogue has not been as open as it has been in the past.

Flying in the face of all this are the new ERO indicators to help students achieve (see attached media release from Minister Parata).

School Boards of Trustees

Update to the Education Act proposes that Principals and Staff Trustees may lose their vote. You have the opportunity to comment against this by 31 August. I encourage you to submit your concerns via this link. I have attached the Ministry Paper Updates on the Act – Boards Roles and Responsibilities

<http://www.education.govt.nz/assets/Documents/Ministry/consultations/Updated-CSF-A3-BoTs-web.pdf>

Funding Review

As previously advised I represent the Association on the funding review advisory group. My paper to be presented to the August meeting is attached. Time lines in regard to the Funding Review presented to the Advisory Group are-

Final meeting of the Advisory Group is 26th August and a series of 40 regional meetings end on 29th August.

Between September and December, the Funding Review feedback and directions of change will be considered by Cabinet.

2017 ongoing discussion dependant on whether any changes are agreed to progress by Cabinet

2018-2020 – if any changes are progressed, fully implemented by 2020

On a positive note

Alternative Education

The next Ministry Leaders' Bulletin will have details of the Alternative Education changes covering the next two years.

Vulnerable Children's Act 2014

This link will take you to some essential information

<http://www.education.govt.nz/school/running-a-school/vulnerable-children-act-2014-requirements-for-schools-and-kura/>

Food Act for Schools

This link - <https://www.mpi.govt.nz> will take you to the Ministry of Primary Industries website where there is a number of helpful resources.

Youth Guarantee – FindMyPath

(when doing a google search – no spaces between the words gets you there).

A mapping tool for students

<http://youthguarantee.net.nz/resources/mapping-tool/FindMyPath>

NZ Police

Twice recently we have been asked by NZ Police to circulate photos of children they are trying to locate and identify. Recently I received an email thanking SPANZ and the membership for assisting them with their request.

COL Survey

Recently you will have received a survey on participation rates for Communities of Learning. Thank you for responding so promptly. When the responses are collated I will email them out to you.

Nga mihi

Sandy Pasley

President

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