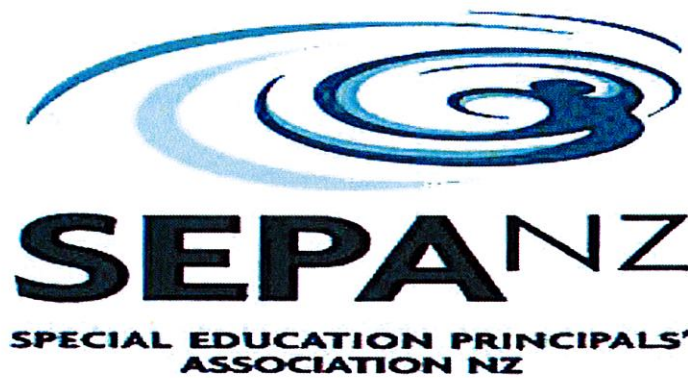


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PRESIDENT'S NEWSLETTER

30th AUGUST 2014

Tēnā koutou katoa

Greetings to you all

As I write this newsletter we are well into term three. No doubt it has been as busy for you as it has been for me. These are interesting times with some significant issues in the education sector in particular the Investing in Educational Success Government Policy, the transfer of Novopay to the government, the debate on Inclusive Education from the perspective of the NZPF and NGOs and the Minister's decision in respect of the Network Review of the Special Schools in the Greater Christchurch Area.

We welcome two new principals to our association. Jane Wells Maitai School in Nelson and Pam King to Wairau Valley Special School Auckland.

SPECIAL SCHOOLS NETWORK REVIEW IN GREATER CHRISTCHURCH.

You will have received a copy of my media release outlining the Minister's decisions and recommendation's in regard to the report she received from the Ministry of Education following a consultation process each school undertook with their communities facilitated by an independent facilitator funded by the Ministry of Education.

The report offered the schools to repair their current school or relocate- co located with a regular school. The Minister agreed to:

- i. That the Ferndale School base school will remain on its site.
- ii. That the Waitaha School base school will remain on its site
- iii. That the Ministry continue to engage with the Board of Allenvale Special School to explore options for relocation and co-location of its base school
- iv. That the Ministry will engage further with all three special schools and potential partner schools about the location and distribution of satellite provision within each proposed catchment areas

- v. That the ministry will delay any discussions about the possible future shared governance of the special schools; and
- vi. That the Ministry will progress discussions with the special schools toward developing enrolment policies and processes that will support geographic catchments, equity of access and parental choice.

MEDIA RELEASE August 2014

THE FUTURE SHAPE OF THE GREATER CHRISTCHURCH SPECIAL SCHOOLS NETWORK.

Following the release of the Minister of Education's recommendations after community consultation on the future shape of the greater Christchurch Special Schools network, SEPAnz President Graeme Daniel said "The Minister of Education's decision to support the views of the school and wider community have been welcomed by Allenvale, Ferndale and Waitaha School communities and by the Special Education Principals Association NZ".

"The decision of Minister Parata supports the Special Education Principals Association's (SEPAnz) advocacy for the right of choice for parents with children who have Special Education Needs and Disabilities (SEND), to have their ORS verified child attend a special school or an attached satellite." Daniel said.

Allenvale School will continue to explore options for co-location and relocation alongside a regular school with Ferndale and Waitaha Schools remaining on their current sites.

All three schools will continue to work with the Ministry of Education to develop a satellite provision that will provide for parent choice within each school's catchment area.

"The decision of the Minister will enable parents to continue to have access to the full continuum of education settings that focus on the quality of education for students with Special Education Needs and Disabilities" Daniel said.

SEPAnz President Graeme Daniel
Ends

SESTA REVIEW 2013 - 2014

Nicky Kaye Associate Minister of Education agreed on fourteen recommendations that are being, or will be, implemented. The remaining four will be further investigated. The Minister did not decline these recommendations but is seeking further information including costs, process and in one case, privacy issues.

Recommendation 3A remains as a high priority for further discussion and for example may be implemented on a needs basis. Some of the four recommendations will require a contractual change and therefore may be subject to timing.

I will continue to assist the Minister and the Ministry of Education in the implementation process over the next year or so.

I believe the changes that will be made and in particular the roles and responsibilities of all parties will lead to an improved service for our families and students. Recommendation 5A will also ensure our schools are consulted in the planning of the procurement process.

The complaints protocol that was implemented last year as developed by the reference group has provided a more robust and outcomes focused approach to issues raised.

Our sector now has representation on the SESTA Review Panel. To date I have been involved in six reviews.

N4L WORKING PARTY

Four representatives across the three regional associations will work with Charles Newton to consider possibilities for our sector in regard to connectivity and resource sharing. The intention is for the working party to shape a project for which funding will be sought to ensure there are no lost opportunities for our schools as N4L rolls out across the country.

QSSP

The Auckland Association for Special School Principals have been discussing the pros and cons of the QSSP Review process. There have been reservations raised nationwide among our members in regard to the QSSP review process and the variability and approach taken by the review teams. Questions have been raised that required addressing. It is intended that the SEPAnz will survey all members who are full fund holders for ORS to seek their views. The survey results will be synthesised and provide a platform for discussions with the Ministry of Education.

MINISTRY OF EDUCATION/NZSTA/ SEPAnz Initiative

The executive met with representatives from the Ministry of Education and NZSTA to explore the idea of developing resources/exempla's of assessment practices from the special school sector. It is likely that these exempla's will focus on the charter and student achievement targets. It is noted that there is some great practices in regard to curriculum and assessment that identifies positive learning outcomes of our students, achievements that need to be acknowledged and valued by the Ministry and others. It is likely that there will be workshops facilitated by the NZSTA and the Ministry of Education to progress this initiative. It is intended that this initiative will be undertaken in 2015 however the NZSTA will draft a project proposal for discussion among our sector in the first instance. The project and all costs associated with it will be funded by the NZSTA.

INVESTING IN EDUCATIONAL SUCCESS (IES)

The executive met with Sarah Borell Manager IWS to discuss the IES Policy. The Ministry are seeking expressions of interest from Communities of Schools. At this point in time the NZEI are not progressing discussions with the Ministry and have stated that as the majority of schools have voted not to engage, that no schools/clusters of schools, should express an interest. If there are communities of schools that do express an interest, there will be challenges in seeking resources to facilitate a project and to employ a project leader. Sarah was confident that to express and

interest is simply the beginning of a process that will take time. The Ministry of Education is considering other ways to engage with communities of schools who do express an interest.

OUTREACH SERVICE

James Le Marquand, Judith Nel and I met National Office Personnel to discuss the outreach service and the anomalies that are apparent. Discussions were positive with the management unit parity with RTLBs being resolved and rectified within the following week. There was a general agreement that as the service had matured it was timely to consider a review. The issues around principal remuneration and the Outreach Service require negotiation with the NZEI. Initial discussions have occurred with the NZEI in that principals need to have recognition for staffing /students on the Outreach Service and in regard to the large number of support/specialist staff our schools employ. Further discussions will be held with the NZEI Principals Counsel by the delegated SEPAnz Executive representative.

CLICKSPECIALEd

The executive continues its partnership with ClickSpecialEd and acknowledges the leadership provided by Diane Hankins, principal of Sommerville School and the Trust that supports ClickSpecialEd. I would encourage all schools to take up professional development that is offered by Julie King coordinator of ClickSpecialEd. I also acknowledge all the schools that contribute in various ways to maintain the viability of ClickSpecialEd.

SATELLITE PROVISION

Thank you to of you who responded to my request for the costs that are requested from your host schools. These have been collated onto a spreadsheet and identify great variances between the schools. My understanding the Variation to the Property Occupancy Document (POD) will ameliorate some of these variances. There appears to be a need for the Ministry of Education to consider a standard payment schedule agreement between our schools and the host schools nationally. I will undertake further discussions with the national office.

NZPF PLANNED HUI ON SPECIAL EDUCATION

I have been invited by Phil Harding to attend a planning meeting for this hui. When the invitation was extended, I noted with some concern it was co-signed by Trish Grant of the IHC. I expressed my concerns to Phil Harding in that the IHC, in cohorts with the Inclusive Education Action Group (IEAG), have actively promoted the closure of special schools. The first meeting of this group (including NZPF, NZEI, IHC, IEAG, CCS Disability Action,) are seeking; action for real change, action similar to PB4L, a stronger voice, changes to government resources, policy and practice, changes to deficit language, school attitude change, leadership accountability, reduce barriers such as National Standards, all children having a fair allocation of resources, not taking from one group to support another and a set of principles and an agenda of actions.

My role in this group will be to actively advocate for parent choice and the valuing of our sector.

SEPAAnz believes that inclusion is about the common enterprise of learning rather than where a student learns. Parents have the right to choose for their child who has a special learning need, the full continuum of educational settings including a special school or attached satellite. Parents need to be given an opportunity to make informed choices without any overt or subtle bias toward one particular educational setting and without an emphasis on a crude interpretation of inclusion.

MINISTER'S CROSS SECTOR FORUM

I continue to attend these forums that focus on raising student achievement. I am also a member of the *Priority Learners/Vulnerable Children* work stream. I ensure that our sector is kept in the minds of the participants of these respective groups.

RELATIONSHIPS

I continue on your behalf to maintain strong relationships with the Minister of Education and the National Office of the Ministry of Education. Our sector certainly has the respect of Minister Parata, Minister Kaye and senior personnel within the ministry and does seek our views on issues that have an impact on students with special education needs and disabilities.

ANNUAL MEETING

Our constitution states *The Annual Meeting of the SEPAAnz shall be held during the annual conference. If that conference is not held, or a quorum not met, by December 15th of that year.*

A remit has been circulated to members; *The Annual Meeting of the SEPAAnz shall be held at a date determined by the executive by December 15th of that year.*

You will receive a circular from the secretary outlining the Principals Moot that will be held in Wellington on the 28th November. It appears unlikely that we will have a quorum at the NZPF Conference in Invercargill in September. The quorum is short of one member. Your executive considers that a day in the final term of each year for our principals to meet together in Wellington and to invite key people from the government and the Ministry of Education to this moot would be of great value. The SEPAAnz would subsidise the day. The secretary is inviting expressions of interest. Please respond as soon as possible to enable the executive to invite key speakers as early as possible.

I wish you well for the final weeks of term three and will catch up with those of you who are attending the NZPF Conference in Invercargill later this month.



Graeme H Daniel

