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 “It’s not where, it’s how”

“Ehara I te wāhi ko te tino take, engari me pēhea”

**SEPAnz Executive:**

**Northern/Auckland: Sally Wilkinson, Blomfield Special School (Secretary)**

**Central: Daniel Price, Arahunga Special School, Whanganui**

**Diane Whyte, Fairhaven Special School (Treasurer)**

**Southern: Bernadette Mulcahy-Bouwman, Van Asch School, Christchurch Margaret Dodds, Waitaha Centre**

**NZEI REP: Barrie Wickens, Tauranga Special School**

**PRESIDENTS NEWSLETTER 06th.December, 2018**

**Kia ora. Tēnā koutou katoa.**

**Dear Colleagues,**

**Another year bites the dust! It commenced with an air of promise, by mid-year initiatives had bogged down somewhat - in part due to the sheer plethora of work to be done, and now at the conclusion of the year a great deal of unfinished aspects (especially related to the Education Act) remain as open projects. Some of which won’t be concluded until after 2021.**

We have all had a busy Term/Year. I recently had the privilege of visiting Waitaha School in Christchurch – Margaret Dodds concludes her Principal-ship at the end of the year. What a joy to be in a such a beautiful centre. Every one of our Young People deserve such surroundings – sadly most of us will not experience such appropriate property during our careers! However, we can aspire to continually improving buildings and surroundings (including purpose built play areas) such as the Children attending Waitaha experience. Well done Margaret and very best wishes for your retirement!

#### **1:** Education Act Update:

**Planning and Reporting Regulations (Charter and Strategic planning set-up)**

I provided you with “chapter and verse” concerning this aspect of the Education Act Update work undertaken by MOE, Wellington in my September newsletter

The basic gist is that The Education Amendment Bill, as introduced, proposes to extend the commencement date of the new strategic planning and reporting framework from 1 January 2019 to 1 January 2020. This change has been proposed to ensure that there is sufficient time to develop the regulations for the new framework, and for schools to successfully implement the new system. Meanwhile continue with your current Strategic and Annual Planning process until advised otherwise!

**Regulations** will set the date for the first strategic plan, annual implementation plans and annual reports under the new framework. And therein lies my first area of discontent! In the draft that I’ve received the word “regulation” is all pervading***.***

***My response has been along the following lines:*** schools in the 21st Century should not still be approached via deficit language – ie: The “regulatory” - approach.

It does not well serve the humanistic, ever-evolving (even organic) character of a 21st Century school. Schools themselves have to morph and evolve into settings that understand how Children engage with learning – this focus on regulation harks back to another era.

Rather approach Reporting and Planning from an assistive stance. MAKE IT SEEM TO BE EASIER FOR Schools/Boards. Planning strategically will happen when people believe that it is the best means of improving outcomes for Children. Not because some organisation says they must do it.

Strategic Planning can be a joy, can be a way to connect with communities because it is meaningful. Educators are in the job generally because they love teaching, no one is in it to cause harm and “needs regulating”. Unless there is a clear, modus operandi that leads directly to better outcomes for Children/Schools, this whole exercise will become a perceived waste of time.

#### **2:** Engagement for Learning:

**Professor Barry Carpenter recently sent a very interesting news clipping about the continuing development of the Engagement Tool/process within the UK. I have attached the article below because Barry will definitely provide more advice about the “new process” when he speaks with us next year. It is simply amazing:**

*Press release*

# *Pioneering new approach to assessing pupils with complex disabilities to be introduced in schools*

*Pupils with multiple and complex needs will be assessed using a new ‘aspects of engagement’ approach. Published 22 November 2018 From:* [*Department for Education*](https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-education)*and*[*The Rt Hon Nick Gibb MP*](https://www.gov.uk/government/people/nick-gibb): *A new approach that will enable primary schools to better assess pupils with the most complex needs will be rolled out across the country from 2020. The statutory assessment will replace P scales 1 to 4 and will be based on the ‘7 aspects of engagement’, an assessment approach that focuses on pupils’ abilities in specific areas like awareness, curiosity and anticipation.*

*This assessment approach will – for the first time – enable every kind of progress made by these pupils to be identified. This addresses a key issue with P scales, which focused on linear progress, which is not always how children with the most complex needs progress. This will help teachers to best tailor their teaching and provision to meet the pupils’ specific needs and to allow them to achieve the best possible outcomes.*

*School Standards Minister Nick Gibb said: This is a significant milestone in our drive to make sure every child – even those with the most complex needs – receives the highest standard of education and care. We have already introduced education health and care plans that are tailored to children. This new approach to assessment will make sure that individual focused approach is replicated in the classroom. Around 7,000 pupils in primary schools have such complex needs that it would be inappropriate to measure their attainment in school according to the national curriculum tests.*

*An in-depth review, led by Diane Rochford, concluded that P scales did not best serve these pupils and recommended an assessment approach that instead focuses on engagement. This was backed by the*[*findings of a pilot*](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/7-aspects-of-engagement-pilot-qualitative-evaluation) *that the DfE ran earlier this year.*

*An expert group, led by Diane Rochford, will now refine the approach based on the findings of the pilot, ready for it to be introduced in all state-funded schools which have pupils not in subject-specific study from 2020.*

*Diane Rochford said:*

*As the executive head of a special school in the Learning in Harmony Trust, I am passionate that we have high aspirations for all of our pupils, regardless of their background.*

*The new aspects of engagement approach will enable a more flexible and personalised assessment to take place for pupils with the most complex needs, allowing all of their achievements and progress to be recognised. It will also help teachers to best tailor their teaching and provision to meet the pupils’ specific need, allowing them to achieve the best possible outcomes. We will now make sure that schools and other stakeholders have the support they need to familiarise themselves with the new assessment approach.*

*A detailed guidance and training package will be developed and provided for stakeholders, including schools, local authorities, Ofsted and parents. This will equip them with the skills and confidence to conduct and understand the assessment in a way that will minimise additional workload burdens, building upon the best practice of schools who are doing it well.*

*The 7 Aspects of Engagement approach was originally developed through a DfE funded project led by Professor Barry Carpenter in 2011. (This project included three schools in New Zealand!)*

**REMINDER: 2019 - Specialist Educators Professional Development Opportunity -Professor Barry Carpenter Saturday 22nd June - Waipuna Hotel and Conference Centre, *58 Waipuna Road, Mt. Wellington, Auckland.***

**Registration forms to be sent out during Term 1, 2018.**

Please place this presentation date among your priority professional development opportunities for 2019!

**Hopefully everyone has planned as many long periods of rest and recuperation for the coming summer holidays as possible!**

**Very best regards,**

**Judith**

***Judith Nel*,**

***SEPANZ President*, *Principal, Parkside School.***