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“It’s not where, it’s how”  
“Ehara I te wāhi ko te tino take, engari me pēhea”

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## PRESIDENTS NEWSLETTER

Term One, 2016

Tēnā koutou katoa

Greetings to you all.

The Education Sector has been a very busy one thus far this year. Reviews such as – Education Act, Vulnerable Children’s Act, Special Education Update – have generated a flurry of activity! The Ministry of Education has delegated many work-streams specifically to address such reviews. It is affirming to know that SEPANz representation has been included in the majority of the MOE’s responses to legislative change.

### **Special Education Up-Date meetings –**

The Minister’s foreword to the Update brochure explains the impetus for the update. Many of you will have attended your regional “feedback forum”. As president of SEPANz I was given a “map” demonstrating projects set up by MOESE – however regional forums have presented the same information. The majority of the projects concern transition processes as children move along the Schooling pathway. Hopefully our expertise in the area of transition will be sought and included in the various projects.

### **Communities of Learning:**

I understand that at least six Special Schools have already joined a C.O.L. and more are in the process. Although we had mooted the possibility of “Special School C.O.Ls.” the model did not fit the intent. It makes good sense for each Special School to consider joining a “local C.O.L.” even though we interact with many schools due to our Satellites and Outreach Services. We have a great deal to offer to a Community – which is precisely why the Minister urged us to join a C.O.L. There is no “blue-print” for this initiative as yet which makes it exciting! It is an opportunity for at least some of us to try some creative collaboration. The Minister has made it clear that at least for the first two years, resourcing for such “creativity” will only be available through the C.O.L. initiatives.

### **Health & Safety Sector Reference Group:**

The MOE responded quickly to the impetus of the Vulnerable Children’s Act. As a result of some “pressure cooker” workshops you will have received a professional, comprehensive

package. Understanding our responsibilities, ensuring policy and process is in place and implementing it within our settings is imperative.

The revised *EOTC Guidelines 2016 - Bringing the Curriculum Alive* are now available online for download on the [TKI website](#). The focus for the review was to ensure the guidelines were compliant with:

- The Health and Safety at Work Act 2015
- The Vulnerable Children Act 2014
- The Health and Safety at Work (Adventure Activities) Regulations 2016.

These guidelines support the New Zealand Curriculum and Te Marautanga o Aotearoa and align with and complement the newly released [health and safety practical guide for boards of trustees and school leaders](#).

### **New process for Reporting Progress and Achievements for Students working within one curriculum level for an extended period of time:**

As a group we have long discussed the tension created by reporting against the National Standards when the majority of our young people will work within levels one and two for all of their schooling. Sally Jackson, MOE Wellington, is the coordinator for this work-stream. Several working parties have been convened. Currently the developed process is with NZCER for review and feedback. Ultimately this process will be pivotal as we forge relationships within C.O.L's. The final process of necessity will be fairly generic – to suit all schools with enrolled Students with ORS. Many of us may choose to continue to gather data using our own processes as well as addressing the “new” means of reporting nationally.

### **Restraint & Seclusion Workshops (not real name!!)**

Nationally and across all sectors some Children are being secluded from learning opportunities due to behavioural or other reasons. This is deemed unacceptable. Likewise incidents of Children/young people being restrained using various techniques has caused concern. This working party was convened to address both matters. I have been impressed by the calibre of participants and the concepts discussed, and then refined into a resource that will be available on line. Ultimately, as always, individuals must be responsible for their own actions. This resource will be readily available when completed and will advise people on Best Practice. First phase of implementation (over May/June) is targeted at a sample of schools across the country. In effect a “road testing” phase that ensures that the guidelines work for schools. This phase provides the opportunity for further refinement of the guidelines and support material based on the feedback provided from schools.

### **Ministerial Cross Sector forum:**

Hon Hekia Parata convened the day. She spoke knowledgeably and with passion! The day consisted of high level workshops – each one introduced by the MOE Leader– as follows:

Updating the Education Act – Ellen MacGregor-Reid. I questioned whether the S9 and S10 process were part of the Education Act review – Ellen had not heard of them. The Minister

answered and advised that if SEPANZ wanted to submit about those two Sections we were welcome to.

#### Workforce Supply and Quality – Lisa Rogers

There is no evidence that schools are experiencing genuine staffing supply problems. Replacing the aging Principal and Senior Leader population (which makes up more than 60% of all School Leaders) is however a problem. Apparently, “young people – middle leaders” are not interested in the stress involved with school leadership (for the pay offered)!

Special Education UpDate – Katrina Casey –generally a regurgitation of information many of us were aware of – transition processes between Early Childhood sector and School and being “run by” RTL&B and MOE-SE. They have yet to adequately involve special schools.

Community of Learning (COL’s) – Katrina Casey and Lisa Rogers. Generally there has been quite a good up-take of schools expressing interest in joining such communities. A representative of all BOT’s from each COL will be part of the COL leadership team.

#### **SEPANZ Executive meeting 14<sup>th</sup> – 15<sup>th</sup> March;**

A convivial and successful meeting – hopefully we will all continue to work together to enhance positive outcomes for all special schools. Please continue to connect with your executive member and don’t hesitate to contact me if you think I can assist.

Dates have been set for the remaining three SEPANZ Executive meetings to be held this year.

#### **NZPF Moot:**

I attended the MOOT – “The Purpose Of Education”. The Minister opened the ceremonies with her usual strong address – which is inspirational for some and challenging for others!

The main speaker was Prof Andy Hargreaves (Boston University) – for many years Andy has been a world wide leader/thinker in Education and conducts multiple research projects to test theories and practices. British Schools will look at becoming Academies backed by business. He urged folk to carefully consider their “Core business” – what is our purpose, who is our community? Connect the future to the past – always.

Uplift our young people by uplifting our staff!

#### **Click**

CLICK Special ED NZ- this web site was collaboratively designed and set up by many of our special schools and facilitated by Julie King. The mechanism became too cumbersome to continue so it has been closed down. Assets have been devolved to SEPANZ.

Another host site is being established. The Key Competency Pathway tool will initially continue to be managed by Julie King until the Executive meets in June to discuss what other options might be available.

Sincere thanks go to the members of the Trust team, those Principals who have long supported the project and to school co-ordinators who worked with Julie. Julie galvanised many Special School Folk and her energy and willingness to work with us all is acknowledged and appreciated. A special thank you is extended to Diane Hankins, Principal, Sommerville School. Without Diane's dedication to the whole concept of Click special ed the project would have long ago disintegrated. Diane was pivotal to the establishment and on-going existence of Click – thank you Diane, your dedicated support is greatly appreciated.

**SEPAAnz Conferences for the future:**

It was agreed at the executive meeting that SEPAAnz hold a **Principal's Moot annually**, that the Annual Meeting take place at this, that the ASB's annual sponsorship of \$4000 to SEPAAnz be used to support this moot and that, if we accept Click Special Ed Trust funding offer, that this be used to support a speaker at the Moot and that the current cycle of conferences be disbanded and that, notwithstanding this, that the linkage with ASEPA conferences will be maintained.

**The executive have set the 23<sup>rd</sup>, 24<sup>th</sup> 25<sup>th</sup> November as the dates for the 2016 SEPAAnz MOOT.**

**THE VENUE is the Grand Chancellor – James Cook Hotel in Wellington**

It is proposed that the executive will conduct its meeting at approximately 1pm on the 23<sup>rd</sup> November in preparation for the SEPAAnz Annual Meeting on the following day. By holding the event in Wellington we hope to involve important sector representatives and hopefully the Minister. Should you have suggestions for speakers – of relevance to our work – kindly contact your executive member/s. **Suggested agenda SEPAAnz Moot** is as follows:

**Thursday 24 November:**

9am till 5.00pm (Conference room)

Morning Tea/Standing Lunch/Afternoon Tea provided.

Annual Meeting in the morning. Followed by focus speakers in the afternoon.

Buffet dinner in the Hotel (included in registration).

**Friday 25<sup>th</sup> November:**

9.00am till 5.00pm focus topics/question speaker/s

Morning Tea/Standing Lunch.

**We hope that everyone will diarise this Moot as it is very important for us to meet together as a sector group and to share information.**

Wishing everyone a successful year ahead.

Kind regards to All.

Judith