

Address: 118 Woburn Road  
Lower Hutt

Phone: 045664177  
0275664177

[www.game.school.nz](http://www.game.school.nz)

Director: Bryan Gwilliam B.Ed., M.Ed.Admin. (Hons), Dip.Teach.

Bryan.Gwilliam@game.school.nz

## Principal appointments

Welcome to our new additions this year:

Bellevue Karen Hardie  
Fernlea Tony Field  
Kelburn Normal Andrew McFarlane  
Maidstone Mary O'Regan  
Maraeroa Kathleen O'Hare  
Maranatha Christian Steve Farrand  
Masterton Intermediate Russell Thompson  
Owhiro Bay Tineke Giddy  
Paraparaumu Steven Cauldwell  
Porirua Vanessa Hendry  
St Patricks Masterton Steve Wheeler  
Tinui Mary Kavanagh  
Wainuioru Karen Goodall  
Whareama Darren Kerr

## Outstanding ERO reviews

Congratulations to the following schools which have received 4 – 5 year ERO review reports in 2014:

- Dyer Street
- Wellington College
- Island Bay
- Roseneath
- Hadlow



## Thanks for your feedback

*"I'm so pleased that the Board made the decision to employ your help with this [principal appointment] process"*

Marie Gibson BOT Chair Paraparaumu Beach School

## GAME's foray into specific areas of school Self Review

During the process of principal / teacher appraisal, mentoring, board training and ERO preparation there is always some degree of consultant inquiry into an aspect of school development or practice. However some schools have wanted to go further and in recent

times have increasingly seen the benefits of engaging GAME to evaluate programmes in isolation from other support and assessment work that is being done in the school.

Here are some of the interesting whole school topics that have been examined by GAME, with comprehensive reports being presented to the schools concerned:

### Professional Learning Groups St Orans College

An evaluation of professional learning through the school's recently introduced teacher Inquiry Model based on PLGs

### Pastoral Care Makoura College

An investigation into the nature and quality of Pastoral Care students receive and the determination of the effectiveness of existing practices and systems

### National Standards Douglas Park

The development of a better understanding of the consequences of student achievement as reflected through the National Standards information collated by the school

### Choice Theory Koraunui

An inquiry into the effectiveness of Glasser's "Choice Theory" as a school-adopted approach to enhancing student engagement and achievement

### Inquiry Learning Naenae Intermediate

An examination of the ongoing effectiveness of Inquiry Learning is a dynamic approach to the implementation of an integrated curriculum

### The Quality of Teaching Sacred Heart College

Through the surveying of all students and teachers, opinion was sought as to the extent to which quality teaching practices were taking place across the school

### Overall School Performance Solway Primary

An assessment of the quality and appropriateness of curriculum delivery policies, procedures, practices and school documentation designed to support the implementation of the New Zealand Curriculum

### School Leadership Organisation

#### Northcross Intermediate

With the aim of improving school efficiencies, a reappraisal of the existing management structure, the place of unit holders and the role of administrative support staff

### Schooling Improvement Project' Koraunui

Determining the effectiveness of the "Schooling Improvement Project" literacy initiative through evidence derived from the professional development of teachers, the quality of instruction and the achievement/engagement of students

### Teacher Strengths and Areas for Improvement Maranatha

An evaluation of all current teaching practices across the school based on the 'Professional Standards for Teachers'

### School Management Procedures Makoura

An assessment of the quality and comprehensiveness of school documentation and the creation of a plan to guide governance and management in ongoing self review and policy/procedure development

### Senior Leadership St Pats (Town)

An appraisal of the complimentary roles and effectiveness of the principal, DP and AP as determined by their specific job descriptions

### Co-Principalship Clifton Terrace

An evaluation of the effectiveness of the co-principal-ship model and the development of plan for ongoing co-principalship review

Other areas of consultant inquiry are included as part of the individual Principal Appraisal reports conducted annually. Principals choose areas for development and the success of these are evaluated at the end of each year as part of his/her performance.

These have included:

*National Standards, Special Character, Blended e-Learning, Positive Behaviour for Learning, Year 9 and 10 Assessment, Principal Induction, BYODs, Strategic Planning, Staff Appraisal etc.*



"As it turns out your son isn't looking for attention after all. He's just a jerk."



### "Supporting School Improvement through Effective Principal Appraisal" ERO May 2014

As part of its development of reports on specific topics of national interest, last term ERO presented schools with an assessment of the practices being undertaken to facilitate school improvement through principal appraisal. The following is a summary of this.

Against these findings and recommendations, *GAME now evaluates its own performance:*

The following features were evident in schools where the principal's appraisal was improvement focused:

- Appraisal goals were linked to the school's strategic goals and annual plan. *GAME always considers these*
- Goals were linked to outcomes for students, including priority learners, and evidence about student learning was used as an indicator of progress and the achievement of a goal. *As student achievement results are often analysed outside of the timeframe of the appraisal, GAME notes in the Performance Agreement that, although they form part of the agreement their success is better determined by the board*
- Development goals were focused on increasing the capability of school leaders and teachers. *This is the major component of the GAME Performance Agreement template*
- Accountability goals were related to leading and managing the school and improving the quality of teaching. *GAME always refers to this by the inclusion of the Professional Standards for Principals in the Performance Agreement template*
- Goals were clear, specific and challenging. *GAME recommends that principals and boards include very few goals. However each of those agreed to have clear indicators of success, professional development opportunities and a timeline*
- Appraisal was against the professional standards and Registered Teacher Criteria, including the principal's teaching where appropriate. *GAME does not include reference to the RTC unless specifically requested for a teaching principal.*
- Professional development and support was identified for the principal as the professional leader. *GAME makes reference to this, and in the case of formative rather than summative appraisal this professional development is often facilitated by the consultant*
- Feedback was sought from a range of stakeholders including staff, parents, students and trustees. *GAME uses the information from surveys, documentation review and interviews extensively. All relevant stakeholders are involved*
- Useful feedback was provided by the appraiser along with next steps for further development *GAME gives the principal ongoing oral feedback*

*throughout the year and final report include recommendations and next steps where necessary*

- The board received a report about progress towards, and the achievement of, goals. *GAME reports are comprehensive (2500 – 3500 words), focussed on the Performance Agreement and always presented the board chair before the last BOT meeting of the year.*

Although most board chairs felt confident about appraising the principal and believed the process for appraising their principal was effective, over half used an external appraiser for part or all of the appraisal process. This was usually to undertake the professional component of the appraisal. These people were often respected education professionals or consultants who were suitably qualified and experienced, and had credibility.

The NZSTA Guidelines state that while an external consultant may do the 'hands on' appraisal, the responsibility and final judgements still lay with the board. *GAME knows that this is case but in the final report also makes recommendations to the board regarding such areas as salary increments and the process for further appraisal*

The NZSTA Guidelines suggest that the external appraiser should work with the board to decide on the goals and then to report back to the board. *GAME almost always works directly with the principal in the initial stage of developing goals for the Performance Agreement. These are then agreed to between the principal and the chair after which modifications are sometimes made and the Agreement ratified*

The NZSTA states that external appraisers brought in to assist the board should be contracted for a clearly identified need (e.g. objective view or to supplement the skills and knowledge of the board), and the board should provide terms of reference, goals or objectives, and a documented process to follow. *GAME is always contracted for a specific time and purpose. This is almost always determined by the principal after discussion with the board and is stated in a written proposal developed prior to the process by the consultant. Never have there been Terms of References established*

If a board has decided to use an external appraiser, NZSTA recommends that the board:

- selects a consultant who demonstrates their knowledge of good practice and is able to assist the principal on the formative aspect of their appraisal
- works with the consultant to gain knowledge and expertise in appraisal
- receives a written report on the appraisal information and results

- receives advice on how to address areas needing development and the most appropriate source of assistance
  - asks questions to ensure they understand the findings.
- GAME understands that in almost every case the board chair and the consultant do these things*

NZSTA discourages the practice of neighbouring principals appraising each other, as it is difficult to maintain objectivity.

ERO found appraisal was **effective** when the external appraiser:

- followed a rigorous process
- gathered feedback from stakeholders
- provided challenging suggestions for improvement
- asked probing questions to stimulate the principal's thinking.

*GAME believes it does these things*

ERO Found that appraisal was **weak** where:

- a lack of objectivity was evident as they were close colleagues of the principal or had been used for many years
- conflict of interest arose when principals appraised each other reciprocally
- goals were expressed in general terms and had no links to school or department goals
- the appraiser lacked relevant professional knowledge or expertise
- no indication was evident of how success would be measured or who would be consulted in the gathering of evidence.
- information was gathered but not evaluated or used to inform next steps
- the quality and usefulness of feedback was poor
- no next steps were identified for leadership to improve teaching, day-to-day management or the principal's teaching.

*With the exception of the first bullet point, GAME believes its appraisal processes do not include any of these characteristics. However there is a danger felt by some trustees that using GAME year after year (and this is done in many schools) may not necessarily lead to an objective form of appraisal. When this is the case the appraisal ceases or if the principal still requests the consultant to work with him/her then the role changes from appraiser to mentor/coach. GAME believes that all trustees must have confidence in and respect for the process*

Over one-third of the boards selected the external contractors because they were known to the principal and almost one-third reported that the contractor was already known to the board. *The recommendation to*

*employ GAME for the principal appraisal process is almost always initiated by the principal*

The cost to the board for the principal's appraisal ranged from no cost except time to \$5,000, with a median of \$1,800. The appraisal review impacted on the principal's remuneration in one-quarter of secondary and six percent of primary schools. *GAME usually charges between \$1500 and \$2600 depending on school size and the type of appraisal. All final appraisal reports for both primary and secondary principals have salary recommendations where these are appropriate although GAME is unsure as to what influence this has on principals actual remuneration*

Processes for reporting on the principal's appraisal varied from school to school. Often a summary was provided for the chair and usually, but not always, the board received a summary of the principal's appraisal in the in-committee part of a board meeting. Some boards received the full report. Some boards were only informed that the process had occurred, while others received reports about progress towards the goals. In some schools the trustees had an opportunity to discuss the report. *GAME recommends that the final report goes, in its entirety, to all trustees where an in-committee session at the next board meeting is held without the principal. Where the content of report may require further explanation the consultant will present the report in person at the in-committee session*