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## Welcome back everyone.

I do hope the holidays went well and that you were able to get away with family and friends for at least part of the time. As is always the case, it appears that the weather only really fines up when it knows we are heading back to school.

2012 has been a difficult and demanding year for most of you. Novopay, of which I too have suffered, has held the limelight but there have been many other less publicised challenges. Do you remember some of these or have they simply become a blur?

- Implementing new Ministry reporting requirements
- Managing the scarcity of school funds
- Ensuring the ongoing quality of teaching
- Accepting an increasing reluctance of parents wanting to commit themselves to the role of trustees
- Contorting yourself to inquire into what the community wants of the school
- Dealing with the staffing and financial consequences of roll fluctuations
- Overseeing earthquake strengthening and leaky building projects
- Refining 'reporting to parents' programmes
- Developing innovative ways to implement information technology to 'lessen' workload
- Addressing the uncertainty of technology staffing in Intermediate schools
- Dealing with increasing levels of accountability



*Mr Gwilliam. I don't care how much you interfaced, interacted, coordinated, arranged, or organised last month. Just tell me how many of your students achieved at or above in Reading standards*

Aren't you concerned that much is continuing to be added to what you do but very little is being taken away? One

thing we can be sure of is that this relentless imposition is destined to continue into 2013.

The demands on schools are considerably different to what they were 10 years ago. The answer that schools, the Ministry and the Union seem agreed upon to address increased workload is the provision of 'release time'.... and more release time!

Often we are under the impression that for our school to operate more efficiently we need to remove people (staff and trustees) from their core functions. A consequence of this is that we are now seeing some of our smallest school with walking principals, and even most middle sized schools seem to have non-teaching deputy principals. However it could be that the biggest impact on student learning may not be senior management but teacher release. Although we don't begrudge it, it comes in the form of CRT, PRT, sabbaticals and increased discretionary leave.

If you are beginning to think that some of your students are not seeing much of their teachers, you are probably right. But also consider this. In the last 25 years the length of the school year for primary students has decreased from 396 half days to 384.

To compensate for increased workload the trend in schools has been to move away from teaching ... ironic isn't it? GAME understands this dilemma for principals. Removing quality teachers from classrooms by imposing greater commitments that value management over teaching, can only help to weaken the core function of schools. Part of the answer in keeping teachers teaching, principals leading and trustees governing is to contract out those responsibilities that appear to detract from this.

The **new** GAME website [www.game.school.nz](http://www.game.school.nz) gives you some really interesting and cost effective ways of doing this. Rid yourself of the stuff that you do not need to do and, in doing so, bring some joy back into the work of the board and staff.



I will be visiting many of you over the next few weeks to give you the opportunity to discuss some of the ideas GAME may suggest to make your job easier and your school more effective.

I look forward to catching up!

## So who has been coming and going in our region?

Welcome to the following new permanent principals who began last year or who will start this year.

Adventure	John Wootton
Birchville	Simon Kenny
Boulcott	Greig Mercer
Crofton Downs	Toby Stokes
Greenacres	Shirley Porteous
Hampton Hill	Kelly Scott
Houghton Valley	Raewyn Watson
Johnsonville	Barry Schon
Kapiti	Lou Bray-Burn
Korokoro	Marty Hookham
Linden	Melanie Dean
Martinborough	Craig Nelson
Miramar South / Strathmore Community School	Kuran Smith

Naenae Intermediate	Ariana Tyson
Paraparaumu College	Gregor Fountain
Randwick	Simonne Goodall
Rangikura	Eddie Uluielata
Raroa Intermediate	Christine Brown
South End	Alastair Kay
St Catherines	Mary Curran
St Marys College	Catherine Ryan (begins Term 2)
St Teresa's (Featherston)	Karolina Surynt-Tapiki
St Teresa's (Karori)	Mary-Angela Tombs

These 23 changes in 2013 compare with 26 in 2012.

A breakdown of these show:

- 4 came from outside Wellington
- 4 came from within their own school (were previously DP)
- 8 came from senior management positions in other schools (not principal)
- 9 came from principals positions or were recently in principal positions

NB If you want to know more about where principals generally come from in New Zealand schools, go to:

[nzcer.org.nz/system/files/principal-vacancies-appointments-2011.pdf](http://nzcer.org.nz/system/files/principal-vacancies-appointments-2011.pdf)

Welcome also to those of you acting in the principal positions at the start of this year.



**"Ah, the intoxicating smell of freshly photocopied educational surveys ready to be collated, distributed, and discarded."**

## The Professional Learning Forum

This year GAME is to instigate what is to be called 'Professional Learning Forums' (PLF) for principals throughout the region. It derives its name and the model from the Professional Learning Groups and Quality Learning Circles already evident in many of our schools.

A number of principals have indicated a desire to have professional meetings with colleagues that are not purely social and not constrained by existing cluster groups. They are aware of the "inquiry" requirements outlined in the

Professional Standards and the Registered Teacher Criteria and want to involve themselves in practices that utilise the knowledge and skills of other principals.

## Appointing a principal? ... the GAME plan

As many of you will know, GAME has been quite involved in the appointment of principals during 2012. Feedback on the process used and responses to the applications pack have been very favourable:

*"I must say, that I am impressed with your appointment process".* Greg Wilson, Principal Mayfield School

*"One other thing; I really like the process you use for principal appointments. I wish that others would use such a simple and logical process that cuts out so much of the fluff!"* Tim Nelson, Deputy Principal, Lakeview School

Of the 5 schools requesting GAME's support (ie. Kapiti, Naenae Intermediate, Randwick, Adventure and Korokoro) the number of applicants for each position ranged between 15 and 25. The "Principal vacancies and appointments 2009–10" (NZCER report) suggest that this number compares very well with national trends. So what is the secret?

### The plan (about a 4 week process)

Each of the schools followed a similar plan with the consultant overseeing the process and informing the board chair weekly of progress. It is important to stress that the consultant only presented the board with information and had no influence over any decision.

1. Advertise the position in the Education Gazette, noting that the first stage of the appointment is an expression of interest (one page)
2. Email all primary school principals in the Wellington, Kapiti, Horowhenua and Wairarapa regions seeking suggested names of applicants.
3. Make personal contact with possible candidates encouraging their application.
4. Provide all applicants with an 'expression of interest' appointment package made up of school information.
5. 'Full application' documentation is developed by the consultant and, by email, ratified / amended by trustees
6. Expressions of interest close with the consultant
7. Board meeting held to discuss applicants for whom 'full application' is required.
8. 'Full application' applicants are notified by the consultant and requirements of application sent.
9. Interview questions developed by the consultant and, by email, ratified / amended by trustees.
10. Full Applications close. Written summary of information provided to trustees and ranking of applicants made by the consultant
11. Board meeting held to short list applicants
12. Referees contacted by consultant. Report written for trustees.
13. Interviews held involving all trustees. Consultant has advisory role.
14. Successful applicant notified by chairman

## Pre-ERO audit of school documentation

The stakes are high for all schools when it comes to the impending arrival of ERO. As you know much of the work of GAME comes from the support it gives to schools as they lead into, progress through and address the findings of ERO reviews.

Last year our region saw only 3 schools assessed by ERO as worthy of 4-5 year ERO return dates (two of these schools had worked extensively with GAME)

Increasingly schools are interested in wanting to ensure that they have all their paperwork in place well before ERO's arrival. To this end GAME has been used to scrutinise the plans, policies, procedures and programmes that constitute the legal requirements for school operations as well as the documentation to support 'best practice' processes.

Some months before any review, a day is set aside where the consultant, in the same way that ERO does, spends time appraising the quality and thoroughness of the school's paperwork. Principals see this exercise involving a 'second set of eyes' as a useful way to identify the strengths and areas for further development well before the actual event. With time on hand they are better able to understand what needs to be done and what they may wish to celebrate.

When it comes to ERO, preparation is everything.

## Appraisal of the senior management team

Many principals who have experienced the success of GAME's principal appraisal programme are now considering the benefits this may have in the assessment of the SMTs.



Schools have differing needs when it comes to evaluating the effectiveness of leadership teams against the Professional Standards. Some principals may have concerns with the performance of individuals and see the usefulness of an outsider as providing a more impartial and detached appraisal. Most, however, simply see the benefit of occasionally using someone other than themselves. Often principals are very close to their leadership team and appraisals may not be as robust as they might be.

Whether it be evaluating a single individual, a group of individuals or the senior management team as a collective, from time to time it is useful for all concerned to delegate this to the services of a consultant.

## Teachers as Inquirers

This Newsletter has previously discussed the way that Teachers as Inquirers could be implemented into your school. If you are still looking for ideas as to how this might take place, or wanting to confirm the successes you are having, you will be interested in the recent report sent to schools by ERO.

[www.ero.govt.nz/National-Reports/Teaching-as-Inquiry-Responding-to-Learners-July-2012](http://www.ero.govt.nz/National-Reports/Teaching-as-Inquiry-Responding-to-Learners-July-2012)

## Unsure of the status of Registered Teachers Criteria versus the Professional Standards?

The Ministry has come up with some clarification:

### What are the Registered Teacher Criteria (RTC)?

The RTC are the revised standards set by the New Zealand Teachers Council for teacher registration, and replace the Satisfactory Teacher Dimensions (STDs) from 2011.1

### What are the Interim Professional Standards (IPS)?

The IPS are the standards for pay progression in your collective agreement. They are entitled 'Interim' as when they were first developed, it was agreed that at a future time, the professional standards would be reviewed.

### Why isn't there just one set of standards?

While both the RTC and the IPS aim to define what it means to be a quality teacher in New Zealand, they have different purposes and reflect different perspectives.

### What are the differences between the RTC and the IPS?

#### Registered Teacher Criteria

- standards for teacher registration
- assessed/attested every three years (more for PRTs)
- one generic set for all teachers
- in the Teachers Council control
- must be met for full registration as a teacher
- broader and aspirational

#### Interim Professional Standards

- standards for pay progression
- assessed/attested each year
- three sets: beginning, fully registered, experienced
- in the teachers' agreement, voted by those covered
- must be met to allow progression to next salary step
- narrower and competency-based



What do you think she's thinking?