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Welcome back to the New Year everyone.

A special warm greeting to the new additions and changes within our own principal ranks:

- Tawa Intermediate - Brendon Henderson
- HIBS - Mike Hutchins
- Newlands Intermediate – Angela Lowe
- Tui Glen – Jessica Meates
- Pauatahanui – Bradley Roberts
- West Park - Luis Echegaray
- Kelson - Jude Pemberton
- Tutarimuri – Lisa Malones
- Windley – Rhys McKinley
- St Marys Carterton - Tim Nelson
- St Benedicts (Khandallah) – David Lamont
- St Matthews Collegiate – Kiri Gill
- Ridgway - Kathryn Smith
- Fernridge - Janine Devenport
- Newtown – Mark Brown
- Kahurangi – Kyran Smith
- St Particks College (town) – Neal Swindells

Appointments yet to be made or confirmed following the recent / pending resignation of existing principals:

Bellevue	Paraparaumu	Maranatha
Fernlea	Maidstone Intermediate	
St Patricks Masterton	Kelburn Normal	Tinui

Dealing with underperforming teachers

Increasingly, and particularly evident in 2014, principals are seeking support from GAME Consultancy in the assessing the performance of underperforming staff. In most schools, particularly the large ones, principals are finding that there are teachers who no longer provide their students with quality learning opportunities.

For many years principals have sometimes learnt to tolerate such teachers where it has been difficult for them to categorically prove their incompetence. In cases where they teach subjects traditionally difficult to recruit or if they have not received formal complaints, some of these teachers have been allowed to carry on their teaching, at times oblivious to their own inadequacies. However many principals now believe that the stakes are too high for them to tolerate under-performance.

Requirements on boards to prove incompetency can be very difficult. The pursuit of proof often leads to lengthy programmes, considerable documentation, breakdowns in communication, the exacerbation of underperformance, union intervention and the possibility of litigation. Criteria must be based very clearly on the teacher's Professional

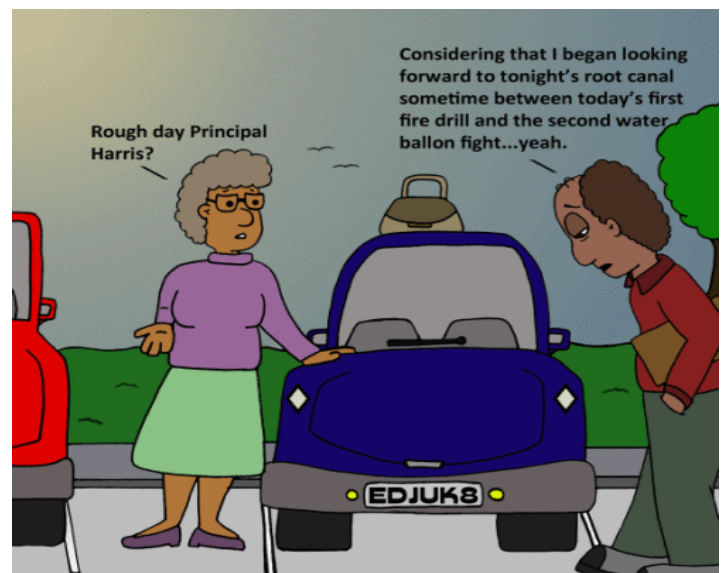
Standards, which are open to interpretation. It can be stressful and consuming for all concerned.

The principal must advise the teacher that competency is in question and identify the specific matters causing concern. The PPTA and NZEI are very clear about the process required. A teacher needs to have:

- Shown a confirmed inability to have met the requirements of the schools accepted teacher appraisal process. These need to have been documented.
- The implementation of a specific 'Support and Guidance Programme' where very goals are negotiated and adequate time, support, inclass-observations and resources are given to achieve these goals. Constructive and positive feedback is required to given throughout the process.
- A formal appraisal is done at the completion of the programme, a report is written and recommendations made. This either leads to an extension of the programme, its cessation or the movement towards formal 'competency'.

Formal 'competency' is instigated where the principal, possibly without negotiation, stipulates the areas for teacher improvement.

The employment of an outsider to oversee this process has proven to have many benefits for the principal. The consultant is always impartial, can say things to the teacher that would be unwise coming from a principal, may have a greater access to resources, including model teachers, and can be more dispassionate in the approach. The consultant may have a broader knowledge of comparisons to call upon and could have different interpersonal skills and pedagogical knowledge to offer this process. More detailed reports can be written that are richer in evidence and tailored to the requirements of the process.



The National Government's Executive and Change Principals initiative

We have been informed that the Ministry of Education, under the National Government, over the next few years will instigate two programmes involving the appointment of 'super-principals'. These will be known as Executive and Change principals. Executive principals will be appointed, with an additional allowance of about \$40,000 a year, to provide leadership across a community of schools. Change principals would be employed specifically to lift achievement in schools where this was necessary and would be paid an additional \$50,000 a year on top of their salary.

The National government have got it right on two counts. Great leadership does make a significant difference to the quality of teaching in a school. No matter what criteria is used to judge school effectiveness, high performing schools and well led schools do tend to produce students that achieve. Secondly, it seems very obvious that high quality and respected principals should be encouraged to share their expertise in learning institutions beyond their own. If they are prepared to do so, then they need to be compensated appropriately.

Self governance has led to the professional isolation of most schools. Combined with the loss of support services, it is clear that the momentum of school fragmentation will only be exacerbated without an intervention of this kind.

We all know there are some exceptional principals in our midst, most of whom would be well suited such positions. We are aware that there are many among you who are capable of turning around schools and, in doing so, lifting student achievement and engagement. However the question raised is, how can this Ministry's initiative be used to facilitate such improvements?

You see, the main problem in all of this is what constitutes a 'quality' principal in the way that the Ministry could use as a criterion for selection. Might it include the person in our region who has:

- Been able to lead a decile 1a school to two successive 4-5 year ERO reviews
- A Masters of Educational Administration with 1st class honours
- Articulated for us the questions we need to consider in the adoption of contentious Ministry programmes (eg. National Standards)
- Been in the senior manager role of a school for more than 40 years
- Achieved universal popularity among all his school stakeholders
- Raised Taita College from near extinction
- Represented us well over many years on the NZEI Principals Council
- Established great organisational systems in Mana, Kapiti and Naenae Colleges
- Been able to develop an NCEA Level 3 programme that results in more scholarships than all other schools in the region combined
- Been able to raise her contributing school roll to over 700 students

- Consistently lead the same successful school for more than 25 years
- Developed and lead many of his senior management team members into successful principalships

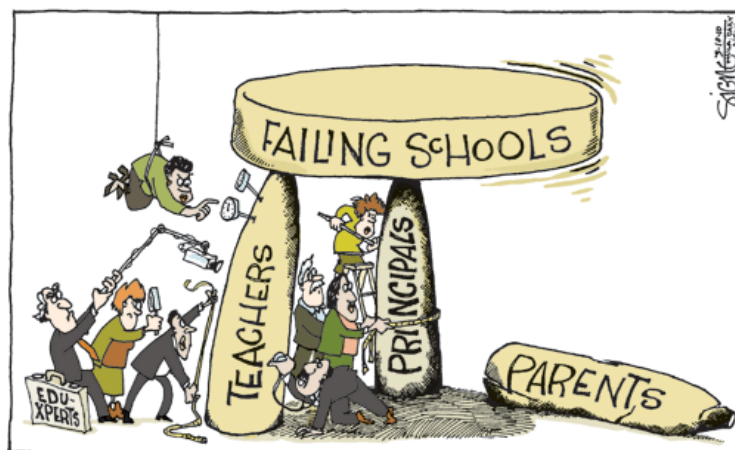
Yes it could be anyone of these people. But equally these 'super-principals' will be found among those of you whose effectiveness is only ever acknowledged within your own close-knit communities. How are you to be 'discovered' by a Ministry appointments panel? Do you even want to be discovered?

Executive principals need to be selected, not by a panel of Ministry appointees but by the leaders of the schools among which

they will work. If these leaders know each other well, then this could happen. On the other hand, the Change principal is more problematic. No principal in our region has ever been successful in significantly reforming and improving more than one school they have led. The commitment required exhausts even the most diligent, charismatic and energetic practitioner. And even if there was such a person, are the skills of success in one school transferable to another?

It is clear that many people may want to be Change principals. However the Ministry would need to be careful that these leaders don't simply default to a commissioner or relief principal status ... both of which have a very short use-by date.

The government's acknowledgement of the importance of principalship is to be applauded. Even if this initiative is to attract high performing leaders, all will be aware that nothing happens through the sole efforts of an individual. It is great to see something different happening to support underperforming schools, but care must be taken that it does not try to emulate the very limited success that we have seen with other such reactive intervention programmes.



Mid-year versus calendar year appraisals

A few principals around town have seen the merits of the mid-year appraisal cycle for principals (July – June) over the more established calendar year model (February – December). Both have strengths and some draw backs.

The calendar year model means that appraisals can run in concurrence with school budget commitments, annual development target timelines, staff appointments and curriculum initiatives. This allows for direct connections to be made between school imperatives and appraisal goal development. Unfortunately it is often the case that the time given to the principal to develop the agreed goals can become limited, especially if there is a delay in the development of the Performance Agreement. This delay can be caused by various factors including the reappointment of the Board Chair, understanding the changing conditions of the school (eg. new staff) and pressures of Term 1 commitments.

The main positive associated with the mid-year model is that it gives the principal a full 12 months to achieve what needs to be done.

There is no stipulated timeline that a review of the principal's performance must adhere to, only that it be done annually.

Primary Principal's Career Allowance

Just a reminder to you all that your career allowances beckon. The NZEI negotiated Career Allowances came into effect last year with most of you, by the end of this year, being eligible for the 'Leading Principal' status increment of \$9500. Of course this does come with a few strings attached.

What could this mean for principal appraisal in 2014? Principals who were appraised by GAME in 2013 had included in their final appraisal report a recommendation for the career allowance allocation commensurate with their 'Experienced Principal' status (\$6500). Any principal who received this will now be eligible for the next step in 2014. Those boards employing GAME will have this

recommendation included in the final principal appraisal report. If you are uneasy about wanting to ask your board chair for the allowance, or if you feel the trustees are not qualified or disposed towards assessing this salary increment, then the GAME consultancy's appraisal may be suited to you.



2014 Deputy Principal and Assistant / Associate Principal Professional Development Programme (DPAPPD)

This programme is being offered to Deputy and Assistant Principals of primary and secondary schools in the wider Wellington region. Its intention is to develop educational

leadership understanding of the Governance and Management issues affecting schools and to better enable senior leaders to instigate and support development initiatives within their own institutions.

This series of professional workshops is specifically aimed at improving school operations and performance. It is not an induction programme for aspiring principals.

Based on the understanding that much can be gained from the experiences and expertise of colleagues in other schools, the workshops will involve:

- Regular face-to-face meetings
(6 during the year, different school venues, two hour sessions)
- Self selected small groups
(eg. Secondary, low decile, co-educational, Porirua, leadership inexperience, rural, Year 7-13 etc.)
- Facilitation and the provision of professional advice/readings by GAME Consultancy

The themes of the programme include:

- The collation and analysis of student achievement information
- Teacher and Support Staff appraisal models
- Curriculum design
- School self review and Strategic Planning
- The governance and management distinction
- Community engagement (school and parent)

2014 Principal's Professional Learning Forums (PPLFs)

These forums are being offered to our local primary and secondary school principals. Their intentions are to further develop educational leadership understanding through the challenges, support and guidance of colleagues of like mind. School-based initiatives are identified and inquiries are planned and reported. This is professional development programme where its sources of ideas and direction are inspired by the experiences, skills and knowledge of others.

Each forum is specifically aimed at improving principal's existing school operations and performance. It is not a training programme for beginning principals.

With the understanding that relevant learning is often best gained from an inquiry based approach utilising collegial expertise, the forums will involve:

- Regular face-to-face meetings
(6 during the year, different school venues, two hour sessions)
- Open and robust discussion and debate
- Self selected small groups
(eg. Secondary, low decile, co-educational, Porirua, leadership inexperience, rural, Year 7-13 etc.)
- Facilitation and the provision of professional advice/readings by GAME Consultancy

The programme includes:

- The identification of an area of inquiry (sometimes based on Charter goals)
- The collation and recording of research findings
- A presentation to colleagues

This 'inquiry' approach meets the requirements of registration

An appraisal model suited to small school principals

Small schools are not necessarily in the financial position or interested in employing an external appraiser (mentor / support person / adviser) each year. Outlined below is a schedule, developed initially for Clifton Terrace School, that may be useful for you to consider as you and your board plan out your long term principal appraisal requirements.

Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
Appraisal: External consultant (Summative and Formative)	Appraisal: Board chair (Summative)	Appraisal: Board chair (Formative)
A Performance Agreement is agreed to and signed by the Board chair annually		
Performance Agreement: Equal focus given to management, leadership and teaching goals	Performance Agreement: Stronger focus on management and leadership goals	Performance Agreement: Stronger focus on teaching goals
This review is an extensive and comprehensive review of all the management, leadership and teaching responsibilities of the principal. It requires: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draft Performance Agreement developed by the consultant • Six discussions with the consultant during the year • Classroom observations undertaken and planning reviewed with individual written reports made and feedback given against the relevant teaching components • Community survey developed and collated based on the Professional Standards for Principals • Interviews of a wide range of stakeholders, including some students • Detailed written report to trustees at the last board meeting of the year 	This review focuses on the management and leadership role of the principals with a lesser importance placed on teaching. It requires: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monthly meetings between the board chair and principals (meetings may be more frequent by agreement) • Interviews by the board chair with all teaching staff and office manager • Informal visit/s by board chair to see classrooms in action • Written report from the board chair to trustees, presented at the last board meeting of the year 	This review places greatest importance on appraising the quality of teaching with a lesser importance placed on management and leadership responsibilities. It requires: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A collaborative endeavour by all teachers • An inquiry-based approach to professional development, monitored by the board chair • Frequent ongoing professional discussions among teachers based on formal classroom observations, periodically involving the board chair • Informal regular contacts between the board chair and the principals where issues of management / leadership are discussed. • Written report from the board chair to trustees, presented at the last board meeting of the year
In-committee appraisal feedback by board chair to the board at the end of the year		

Finnbar James Clancy
My first and only grandchild!



Hey principals,
I am looking forward to seeing what you are going to provide for me and my mates in a few years to make us lifelong learners into the 22nd century?

Just a few nice emails received recently thank you:

"Thanks for the whole appraisal programme this year - I've really enjoyed the opportunity to discuss day to day and strategic principalship. Having to write down and discuss in more detail what I've been doing this year has helped me reflect on the effectiveness (or not) of things we are attempting to do and it also helps in looking forward to where we are going..... Your feed forward and feed back around ERO was really helpful and appreciated as well". Neil Worboys, Wainuiomata School

"..... gosh you worked hard on your last visit. As discussed, would very much like to carry out the developments around teacher inquiry we discussed, are there other principals doing the same thing, maybe we could start a PLC group as part of the development? Can we make some time and dates for next year?" Jonathon Tredray, Northcross Intermediate

"Thanks for this – I too, have appreciated working with you this year, and believe that our chats (with you as a sounding board) have been a very important part of my own growth and also my sanity! I also thank you for the work you did regarding evaluating a specific staff member, and will recommended your services to any other Principals who find themselves in a similar situation". Kevin Carter, Rongotai College

