

NASDAP Newsletter Term 1 2001

REPORT FROM THE PRESIDENT OF NASDAP

Dear Colleagues

Welcome to 2001. In August this year the second national conference for DPs and APs will be held at Waipuna Lodge. The organisers are hoping that senior managers from a wide variety of schools will attend the conference. All local associations should ensure there is a reasonable representation from their area – even by using local association funds to help subsidise some members who can report back to a later local meeting. NASDAP, through its constitution, is committed to the concept of a biennial national conference. We see it as providing the one opportunity in New Zealand for almost 300 secondary school senior managers to get together professionally and dialogue, network, learn, and support each other. Do make your bookings to Auckland now for the 1-3 August.

At the end of 2000, elections were held for the 10 NASDAP executive representatives.

The following is the executive for 2001-2. Thank you to people for agreeing to take on this role.

Upper, Central and Lower Northland

Roy Fletcher, Otamatea High School

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Auckland (south of Mahurangi to Counties/Manukau)

Julia Scott, Onehunga High School

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Included with this newsletter is an invoice for NASDAP subscriptions for 2001 and a request for the names of the senior managers in your school. Please pay this as soon as possible so that executive can begin to establish the register of members. We would also appreciate early payment so that too much time is not spent following up non paying schools. If you have any queries about NASDAP and the benefits of belonging, please contact your local executive representative or myself as President.

Did you go to the Thinking Conference in Auckland in January? If so, we would really like a brief report for our next newsletter or a stimulating article from this. Please think about this BUT take action. The newsletter needs a range of people contributing to it to give it the relevancy and interest for the members it is serving.

Thank you to Professor John Hattie for giving permission to reprint his article on Good Teaching Practice. This article is stimulating to read and reflect on for yourself and your teaching practices, but read it thinking about yourself as the educational leader in your school – what processes and systems, and support do you need to set in place for your teachers for them to be able to achieve in the way the article indicates?

Finally a reminder about the value of the Auckland Principals' Centre. For those of us in the far north and south of the Bombay Hills it may be difficult to participate in a number of the one day seminars, but for \$75 you can still stay up to date electronically with papers from these and maybe attend the longer workshops. See the NASDAP Term 4 2000 newsletter for more information or contact David Eddy on dj.eddy@auckland.ac.nz. Here at last finally at Auckland is a university funding and supporting programmes and professional development for the senior managers of the schools that provide in the main their clients and fee payers. It makes lots of sense for these research institutions to be working much more closely with schools.

I hope you have had a good first term. All the best for the rest of the year.

Best wishes

Jenny Thomas
NASDAP President

EVER TAUGHT ART?

Well I haven't!! Mind you that does not make me unhappy. As chance would have it, I have kept up with the Bursary Art shenanigans, watched with some amusement as the arty fraternity slugged it out, read the 'Listener', and observed with interest as various Principals' groups have 'got involved'. Clearly a lot of unhappy punters / parents out there who are wondering if schools are playing some monumental game with assessment

But then I thought of the damage it was doing to the rest of us. Here we are, about to embark on the Great Trek of NCEA and we can't get the simple stuff right, - like assessing art! Soon schools will not be able to hide behind someone else's moderation, they are going to be out in the open for all to see. The public scrutiny / level of complaint and appeals are going to be directly related to the decile rating of the school. You know the scenario. Whatsit College (decile 10) have expectant and demanding parents; they will not take lightly to a school assessment of a credit achievement standard in say art, when across the water at Thingy College, (decile 9) such a folio scores a merit.

Thought I should do some reading.

Got hold of the 45 page NZQA publication 'Guidelines for Teachers.' (National Assessment of UB Practical Art) written in Dec 2000. I read the Foreword, written by Mike Steer, and began to think that it was a sensible start because he has considerable street cred out there in the provinces. It quickly went sour. It makes condescending and snide references to where the art qualifications of teachers come from. It observes that 'there has been a tendency for some teachers to focus on *skills*...such as technical competence, the ability to work with line and colour etc, and personal skills such as work habits....' (page 3) Now as a philistine, that had me guessing. Was that supposed to be a good thing or a bad thing? I became intrigued. I read on. Art was clearly a fun subject.

Page 4 tells me that while other exam prescriptions are comparatively specific, Art remains ...'broad and open textured. This enables candidates to propose and answer their own questions...' Ah ha! So if I were teaching art, I would want some guidance about how that would happen. After that my first port of call would be to find what process / style /approach had proved in the past to be successful. (I mean, wouldn't you do that?) Wrong! Page 18 has a list of '...not so Useful Approaches'. These included the use of the 1999 exhibitions being used by schools to duplicate the style and manner of successful folios. Horrors! It then declares that '.....focusing on submissions from other years as models for success was to be strongly discouraged'. Gosh.

I had to laugh, long and hard. I now see art teachers in a new light. No wonder they look so dishevelled, so ill at ease, so introverted, so thin, so short on the grain! I should start plying our team with stronger drinks on Fridays. They can not win. Gee, my problems of preparing a class for 2000 UB Calculus was chicken feed. Our weeping lasted but days. But then, that was not so funny either, now I come to think on it.

Can not wait for NCEA to happen and all these problems to disappear. Roll on 2002/2003/2004.

Oh yes, get a copy of that book and hang on to it. In fifty years' time it will be a collectors item. In the meantime, enjoy the laughter, it has more laughs in it than a Benny Hill show. That is, if you don't teach art.

John Dunbar
NASDAP Vice-President and SPAC Chairperson

THE PPTA SALARY CLAIM

The detail of this has been well canvassed through the media, PPTA newsletters and the Branch Consultative meetings. The three main factors in the claim are all inter-related:

\$2500 each year for the next three years

Progressively reducing contact teaching hours.

Progressively increasing staff entitlements by 600 per year for the next three years.

All that is clearly understood by teachers and probably parents, but there are complications :

1. What is the fiscal capacity of the government to meet this and other competing demands?

Every public sector group seems to have a legitimate claim.

2. The NZEI have also recently lodged their claim. It seems very distracting to have parallel

claims on at once.

3. The implementation of NCEA is now starting to bite home but it still is an unknown

quantity and therefore hard to claim against something which has not yet happened.

4. Public sympathy is biased against us and in favour of primary teachers. Parity is still a

strong emotive force and we have a real battle to convince the government that the parity

arrangement makes economic nonsense.

And then you say'What about the separate scale for DPs and APs that most of us (DPs and APs) were in favour of?'.... The reality is that this aspect gained very little

support from the rank and file of PPTA members who saw 'Workloads' as the key issue. PPTA took the lead from the members and left our specific claim out in the cold. Next question is what do we do about that! My personal view is that we have a Poor Image amongst our fellow teachers. We are older, we are grumpier, we write timetables that suit ourselves and our private agendas, we have favourites in the relief pool, we have offices, we don't teach - if at all, we do not know what it's like out there on the chalk face, we have stopped coaching teams, we have special car parks close to the front door, we are not HODs who are trying to implement NCEA, and generally we are the subject of moaning, griping, and discontent - after the Principal that is.

Little wonder that our claim for our own scale was not included.

In another issue I will attempt to throw some possible solutions your way. Perhaps in the meantime we can be nice to everyone, invite our loudest staffroom critics to swap jobs for a day - having set up a series of meetings with difficult parents, a false fire alarm, some vandalism of the library computers and a couple of stand downs. Worth a try?

Joh n Dun bar
NASDAP Vice-President and SPAC Chairperson

GOOD TEACHING PRACTICE

Synopsis

Improved student learning is the result of innovation. Innovation is a constant and deliberate attempt to improve the quality of learning by the system, the teacher, and the principal. If we as teachers are to have an impact on learning then we must come to know what our students are thinking so that we can provide more feedback, task information, encourage trial and error, and develop deep understanding and transformations. The teacher needs to be well prepared in their content to know what information is to be taught, and what information can be used as feedback.

SETTING CHALLENGING GOALS

In my last article (see TIP Volume 5:3) the notion of having a "Ruler" to measure the effects of schooling was introduced. The Ruler gave a way of measuring the effects of changes at school and changes to student learning. A measure of Zero meant that there was no change in student achievement, negative (-) a decrease of student achievement, and positive (+) an increase of student achievement. Furthermore, an effect size of 1.0 indicated the advancement of student learning by one year, improving the rate of learning by 50%, or average students receiving the treatment exceeding 84% of those students who did not have the treatment. In other words, changes in learning achievement by students of this size (1.0) would be blatantly obvious and grossly perceptible.

Five observations underlie the successful attainment of increased student attainment.

Innovation is a theme in most enhanced effects.

The most powerful single moderator that enhances achievement is feedback.

The setting of appropriate, specific and challenging goals.

It is what some teachers do that makes the difference.

The introduction of most teaching and school influences merely impacts on the probability of the presence of feedback and challenging goals.

Achievement is enhanced by the degree teachers and students set challenging, rather than “do your best” goals, relative to the student’s current competencies. Goal setting in this sense has six characteristics.

Goals direct attention to relevant tasks, or outcomes.

Goals energize task performance.

Goals motivate individuals to persist in their activities through time.

Goals convey normative information by suggesting or specifying what level of performance

the student could be expected to attain.

Goals have dramatic effects on the development of self-efficacy, which in turn affects the

choice of difficulty of goals.

Feedback without goal setting is less effective, and goal setting without feedback is

ineffective.

A combination of goal setting plus feedback is most effective. The greater the challenge the higher the probability of the student seeking, receiving, and assimilating feedback information.

The scenario is that effective teachers set challenging goals and then structure situations so that students can reach these goals. If teachers can encourage students to share commitment to these challenging goals, and if they provide much feedback, then goals are more likely to be attained.

A good example is the effectiveness of Outward Bound programmes to enhance self-esteem. Of the many self-esteem programmes, one of the most effective are the Outward Bound programmes (Hattie, 1992). In these programmes a common feature is the setting of seemingly very difficult goals (e.g. abseiling), and then structuring the environment so that students can attain these goals, while providing much informative

feedback. Further, the instructors remove many of the possibly irrelevant tasks so that students focus on these challenging goals.

TEACHERS MAKE A DIFFERENCE

It is teachers that make the difference (see the Table of Effects below). It is clear that structural and social influences are minor, and what the student brings in terms of achievement and disposition to learn are powerful. Teaching process are paramount, and the teacher methods are important. These observations lead to the conclusion that, yes teachers make the difference, - but only teachers who teach in certain ways.

Too many teachers compare what they are doing with them not being there; they compare their methods with not using that method; whereas teachers need to be more informed evaluators/consumers of teaching methods. Like their students they must set challenging goals, seek feedback on the effectiveness of their teaching, and constantly be attentive to improvement and innovating the methods which optimize feedback and meeting challenging goals.

Table of Teacher Effects

Teacher Process Influence Effect Size

Reinforcement	1.13
Instructional quality	1.00
Remediation feedback	.65
Challenge of Goals	.52

Teacher Methods

Direct instruction	.82
Class environment	.56
Peer tutoring	.50
Mastery learning	.50
Homework	.43
Teacher Style	.42
Questioning	.41
Advance organisers	.37
Simulation and games	.34

Computer-assisted instruction	.31
Instructional media	.30
Testing	.30
Programmed instruction	.18
Audio-visual aids	.16
Individualisation	.14
Behavioural objectives	.12
Team teaching	.06

Student Influences

Students prior cognitive ability	1.04
Students disposition to learn	.61
Affective attributes of students	.24
Physical attributes of students	.21

Home Influences

Home factors	.67
Parent involvement	.46

Social Influences

Peer	.38
Television	-.12

School Policy Influences

Aims and policy of the school	.24
Ability grouping	.18
Finances/money	.12
Physical attributes of the school	-.05
Retention	-.15

SEEING LEARNING THROUGH THE EYES OF STUDENTS

So far the prescriptions for influencing student learning are clear: dollops of feedback, specific and challenging goals, and a constant attention to asking, “how am I going”?

However, there is at least one complicating factor.

The inherent nature of learning is that there is a gap between the feedback and the attainment of goals. There are three possible ways for students to reduce this gap.

Students can increase their effort, although the evidence that more time in the class or more

time studying increases learning is not convincing.

Students can abandon the standards, and they are doing this in droves. We are successfully

alienating so many students from our schools, particularly high schools, as we promulgate the

merits of our subject cramming and chauvinism, while the students look to their older peers

who are successful in their eyes without that cramming. We say students must have this

knowledge about English when most of the adult population does not need it; we say

students must have this advanced math when their fellow teachers in non-maths subjects do

not have it and are successful. Students become not engaged, and do not wish to have their

reputations based on attaining our social conformists goals of high school-based achievement.

Students can change the standard by setting lower goals in achievement at school, accepting

far below their capabilities as satisfactory. More often these drop out effects occur because

students reject or re-interpret the feedback information. It is this latter reaction that has so

driven my recent research programme. Students too often have conceptions of learning

inbred by years of shallow, fact-pushing, routine-ised teachers who pride themselves on

presenting the very best content, teaching from the front, sitting tests, prodding students by

external cues such as exams, and valuing themselves in terms of successful imparting

knowledge usually via teaching models akin to drops into empty vessels. Students, however,

are not inert recipients and build strategies to deal with this daily grind of the knowledge

dump.

Achievement is enhanced to the degree that students develop self-strategies: to seek and receive feedback to verify rather than enhance their sense of achievement efficacy. Although I have spent many years exploring self-concept, this is NOT what I am talking about. We have demonstrated there is a very low relationship between self-concept and achievement (less than 4% of the variance), hence asking casual questions is misplaced. We know much about the multi-dimensionality of self-concept, and the age and gender effects but this has rarely helped us in our understanding of learning. More recently I have moved towards asking about the relation between learning processes and self-strategies and conceptions of learning. I do wish to emphasize that the self-strategies that students have directly leads to enhanced or decreased performance AND their conceptions of learning they have can lead them to (mis-)interpret the often excellent teaching they receive.

GUIDING STUDENT LEARNING

There are two major self-strategies that students used when learning:

Self status quo strategies:

the wish to be viewed as one believes one is ; and,

to do whatever it takes to preserve this concept of self by adopting strategies that maximise

positive or minimise negative self-evaluations.

Self testing strategies:

The seeking of confirmation and/or disconfirmation about conceptions of self by adopting hypothesis-confirming strategies that allow for the best opportunities for self-expression.

Recognising the ways students learn provides strong guidance as to the ways teachers ought to teach. It is not so simple that we can match the use of these strategies with high and low self-esteem, as all individuals prefer self-verification but low self-esteem students have a greater tendency to use self-enhancing strategies. Feedback is powerful, but the self-strategies that students develop can alter the interpretation and consequences of this feedback. Students self-enhance by biasing information and by selecting information that provides affirmation of their prior beliefs. Providing feedback to students is not enough – as the ways and manner in which individuals interpret your information is the key to developing positive and valuable concepts of self.

As has been demonstrated by many researchers, including my own, this is where cultural factors have a major mediating effect in the teaching-learning process. We have undertaken these studies in Australia, Hong Kong, Japan, the USA and with tertiary, secondary, primary students, and more recently with groups of males and groups of female juvenile delinquents and teenage prisoners. Understanding their conceptions of learning and the self-strategies they have, and how they use these to enhance their reputations is most powerful.

NINE MAJOR LEARNING STRATEGIES

We have been working with nine major strategies to explain how individuals can bias, select and retain information that affect their self-concepts. The self-learning strategies have a major influence on how students learn, how they set challenging goals, how they accept feedback, and their subsequently learning outcomes.

Self-handicapping provides a handicap that can be used as an explanation or to maintain beliefs, and accounting for success or failure that is inconsistent with prior beliefs. Example: a student could claim he or she scored 100% on an examination because the items were too easy rather than because of ability or effort in learning; or scored lower because of the excellent television programme they watched instead of studying.

Self-handicapping occurs when:

students have high uncertainty about their competencies;

there is high salience of an evaluative task;

in public rather than private performance situations;

there is an abnormal investment in the question of self-worth; and,

the students believe that the handicap will be viewed by others as a legitimate reason for

potential failure.

It is used by both high and low self-esteem individuals; high self-esteem people to enhance success, low self-esteem people to protect themselves against the threat of failure.

Discounting whereby feedback is “dismissed” as being information that is not valuable, accurate, or worthwhile for the individual. Example: when a teacher tells a student that he or she is doing a great job, and the student’s reaction is to discount this by claimed “she always says that”, “she’s only trying to make me feel good,” or “it’s only because it is neat, not correct.”

Social comparison whereby low self-esteem individuals constantly monitor other peers’ behaviour for cues and attributions to explain/enhance their conceptions of self. They compare themselves with others, and social comparison sets standards or frames of reference. Example: Students often compare themselves to those less able than themselves, and often attempt to present themselves as more confident to impress others.

Less challenging goals whereby students set less challenging goals and thus ensure more success and confirmation about their learning.

Setting performance rather than task goals. Students who set performance goals are more concerned with gaining favourable judgements of their competence, whereas students who set task goals are more concerned with increasing their competence on the task. We should be more interested in the nature, complexity and outcomes of tasks, and not the act of performing the task.

Self-monitoring whereby students actively plan, enact and guide their behavioural choices in social situations through the process of self-monitoring.

Confirming negative cultural stereotypes whereby students absorb negative societal stereotype about their group’s intellectual ability and competence. Steele (1992; Steele & Aronson, 1995: 797), for example, has argued that whenever African American students particularly males perform an explicitly scholastic or intellectual task, they face the threat of confirming or being judged by a negative societal stereotype about their group's intellectual ability and competence. Such a reputation influences the academic functioning of these students, particularly during standardised testing. He claimed that this reputation "may have the further effect of pressuring these students to protectively disidentify with achievement in school", such that school achievement is neither a basis of self-evaluation nor a personal identity. There are various effects of this cultural reputation (such as spending more time answering fewer test items) that can undermine motivation, effort, and self-efficacy.

Seeking no negative information. Although all students prefer favourable feedback some have adverse stress reactions to negative feedback – hence try to avoid seeking negative information altogether and seek only positive information.

EXCELLENT TEACHERS

The self learning strategies elaborated above, explain how individuals can bias, select and retain information that affect their self concepts and they have major influences on how students learn, how they set challenging goals, how they accept feedback, and their subsequent learning outcomes. The point is that a teacher may be providing a remarkable amount of feedback but this does not mean that this student is receiving the feedback. Excellent teaching requires teachers setting challenging goals and providing feedback, and students setting challenging goals, and seeking, biasing and interpreting information and accepting feedback. Oh, not so easy eh! If only it was one-way!

The implications of these findings have much to say to teacher education. Teachers need to be well prepared in their content to know WHAT information is to be taught, and WHAT information can be used as feedback. Furthermore, if they have deeper understandings of their content they increase the probability they can set challenging goals and provide feedback.

More important teachers need to understand that the variations in individual students manner of receiving, transforming and being disposed to this information is considered in the act of teaching. This, I believe, requires that teachers care about their students, know where they are coming from, and overly attend the issue of whether their students are learning. The mantra is: I know, I do, and I care.

A PROPOSAL

We have a model of teaching which assumes that experience is sufficient, we pride well run quiet classrooms, we pride mimicking, listening, and regurgitating information. I have argued extensively elsewhere that New Zealand needs a National Board for Professional Teaching Standards.

I propose the development of an Australian Board for Professional Education Standards, (ABPES) that parallels the USA National Board (NBPTS) to advance the excellence of the teaching profession. The mission would be to:

Establish high and rigorous standards for what accomplished teachers and principals should

know and be able to do;

Operate a national voluntary system to assess and certify teachers and principals who meet

these standards; and,

To advance related education reforms for the purpose of improving student learning in

Australasian schools.

Such a board exists in the USA and I am still involved in projects relating to the National Board. A major imperative why we must identify, reward, and promote

excellent teachers in a fair, credible and dependable manner is that they are most likely to provide the voting public the confidence in a national system of public schooling. National testing, braying by parents and politicians about low quality and more accountability, and the highlighting of the minimally competent reinforces those 80% of NZers who typically argue that the quality of public schooling in NZ is awful; whereas the identification of excellence reinforces those 80% of NZers who believe that the quality of their child's teacher is great. We must promote excellence.

Professor *John*
Professor of Education, University of Auckland, New Zealand

Hattie

Thank you to John for permission to reprint this article.

IMPLEMENTATION OF NCEA IN SCHOOLS

A crash guide for managers.

Trust you attended one of the Implementation Meetings held by NZQA in February at a venue near you. Running parallel to the Teacher Development Workshops (Jumbo Days) are the School Development Workshops for managers, which have attempted to throw on the pathway that leads us onwards and fearlessly to full implementation.

2001 is not going to be the year for the faint hearted. Several major projects need planning now.

1. Policy Development.. This may simply be a restatement of current school practice, but

NZQA has a long but useful checklist of issues ranging from appeals, authenticity, and

attendance to misconduct, missed assessments and monitoring staff compliance. A decent

sized job for two or three people.

2. Communications. With parents pupils, staff and NZQA. A bottomless pit I venture to

suggest.

3. NZQA Circular 00 / 103 S is worthy of a second look and some reflection. The IT

implications will be considerable for some schools and will require specific and dedicated

resourcing.

4. Course Structure Year 11 2002. Managers should be seeking information now from

HODs about possible variations and additions to current year 11 programmes. Timetablers,

(bless them all) would love to know sooner rather than later. Does your Course Handbook

for Pupils need some major editing? What about the mix of Unit Standards alongside

Achievement Standards?

5. Current Form Four. They will need quite extensive exposure to the NCEA culture and its

detailed expectations. We know many fourth formers will feign ignorance, but we do them a

disservice if we do not ram home the details.

6. Staff. Three groups need to be on board.

a). Teachers of year 11 in 2002. Check their state of readiness and confidence. Work on

them.

b). HODs who are the key players in this. Get them help if they need it.

c). Managers who can lead, cajole and drive the participants to make it happen.

My reservations about NCEA, I shall keep private. However, three areas bother me and hopefully you. The first regards the IT software resourcing. Yes '.....NZQA has called tenders for software.....' we are told. Will it work? Who in the school will make it run? How many\$? I am nervous about the vagueness and even about the 'solid' assurances we are receiving.

The second is the matter of Appeals. It occurred to me sitting quietly at the last Jumbo day, that the raging discussions over the variation in assessment, particularly between merit and excellence, were the foretaste of coming brawls. If we can not agree amongst ourselves or even with the head moderator, then, is there not a case for pupils and parents to have sufficient grounds to question our judgement on the day of reckoning? Rumour has it that the higher your decile, the greater the number and intensity of appeals.. Frankly, can not see me spending my time earnestly scrutinising with parents, the finer points of Felicity's assessment task. Finally, this grade point average thing! I'm sure Pinochet would approve.

Yes sir! They tell us that NCEA is going to be ‘..professionally empowering ‘. Probably, we are going to better practitioners and possibly better people for this great and noble challenge. My wife incidentally, is not holding her breath.

And finally, if in doubt, or lonely or downcast , ring 0800 NCEA HELP

John Dunbar
NASDAP Vice-President and SPAC Chairperson

ONEHUNGA HIGH SCHOOL LITERACY PROGRAMME

A School Wide Initiative

Origins of Programme

There was anecdotal evidence that many students across subject areas could not cope with the reading components of their courses. In 1999 the evidence was clearly supported by PAT results. Comparisons were made with the same cohort who sat the 1998 and 1999 PATs. There was a slight improvement in Reading Comprehension. However, when the results were analysed by ethnicity, only Pakeha/European students had improved. Maori, Pacific Island and Asian students had actually made negative gains. This data, together with the anecdotal evidence, confirmed the need for a literacy programme.

The Head of English, Irene Anderson researched the teaching of literacy at secondary level and discovered several components which made a good literacy programme:

It needed to be school wide.

The programme should be long term.

Supported by professional development.

Reading skills, vocabulary and meta cognition strategies were the important elements.

Skills should be taught explicitly.

Reading Advisor from Auckland College of Education, Helen Nicholls, generously provided a programme which addressed these aspects.

Structure Of Programme

It is based on three strategies: vocabulary, reading skills and meta cognition strategies. Each of these is contained in a ‘building block’. There are eight building blocks. Departments are allotted a building block so that all teachers are not using the

same vocabulary/reading/meta cognition strategy at the same time. The building blocks rotate every half term.

Each teacher is issued with a literacy folder which contains the building blocks.

The commitment at Onehunga High School is that every teacher uses their stipulated building block at least once in a five week period with each of their junior classes. They may use it more than once and with senior classes if they wish. Sometimes the stipulated building block is not suitable for that subject area. In this case the department should select one they've used previously which does suit instead. Departments are encouraged to build literacy resources together to minimise workload issued.

Aim Of Literacy Programme

That students can competently use printed and written information to achieve their goals and continue learning.
from Literacy in New Zealand Schools : Reading (ERO 1997)

Professional Development

A British study¹ found that subject teachers were interested in teaching literacy skills but they lacked confidence.

1 M Reed, A Webster, M Beveridge, "A Conceptual Basis for a Literacy Curriculum" 11

Children Learning To Read – International concerns Vol 1 (1995) : 161-179

Professional development was an important component in the introduction of our literacy programme. For a term, Irene Anderson conducted regular professional development sessions of one hour each. We focussed on one building block each session and she would use the English Department to model the strategy, then divide the teachers up and get them to practise it. It seemed wise to conduct the professional development "in-house" as this reinforced the local ownership of the literacy programme rather than something which was imposed from outside.

Irene used material from different departments during these sessions. We did a three level reading guide using a Science article, a vocabulary exercise matching terms and definitions with Maths etc. This was designed to make every department aware of the value and relevance of literacy strategies in relation to their subject area. During this term of professional development, teachers were encouraged to practise the strategy they had just learnt with their junior classes.

A vital component of the whole programme, including professional development, was the support given to the programme by the Principal and Deputy Principals, who also participated in the professional development. Literacy was made a school wide goal in 2000 and this has continued in 2001. After the initial concentration of professional development in literacy, we are now having "refresher doses" about once a term. This

is to capture new teachers, recapture the experienced ones and maybe enthuse one or two of the hardened cynics.

Monitoring

A Literacy Committee has been established with a representative from most major departments. This Committee meets monthly to report back successes, problems etc. It also serves as a gauge of teacher attitude to the programme. In Term 3 last year the committee felt the teachers needed a break from literacy and so during Term 4 it wasn't actively promoted. The aim of this kind of flexibility is to ensure teachers remain positive and energised about the literacy programme.

PAT results will be used to evaluate the effectiveness of the literacy programme. It is acknowledged that as the programme is long term it may take another year before gains are clearly evident.

Because the focus has been to keep teachers positive, accountability has been problematic. However, the appraisal system includes a requirement which demonstrates that school wide goals are being addressed. This compels teachers to support the school wide goals, including the literacy programme and provide evidence that they have done so.

Julia Scott, Onehunga High School

REPORTS FROM REGIONAL DP/AP GROUPS

From the Hawkes Bay DAPA Group

The next meeting is on Wednesday 21st March. The guest speaker will be Mr Grant Lander (the Headmaster at Lindisfarne College). The topic is "Being Positive".
Bruce Smith, Napier Boys' High School

From the Taranaki DP and AP Association

The Taranaki DPs/APs participated in a professional Development Day on Thursday 8 March at the Plymouth Hotel in New Plymouth.

The object of the day was to outline the "real world" in Taranaki in terms of adolescents and what situations they face in their lives.

Chris Wetzel, Co-ordinator of ADRACARE gave an informative talk "As It Is" focussing on parenting in Taranaki and the community services work of the New Plymouth Seventh Day Adventist Church.

Craig McKenzie and Gerard Dolan, Child & Adolescent Mental Health Team, Taranaki Base Hospital outlined the signs and symptoms of Drug and Alcohol Abuse and Adolescent Mental Health and gave a presentation on an excellent web site for adolescent youth trippin.co.nz

We concluded the day with a general business forum. Brett Sloan (Spotswood College) was elected as Secretary for 2001 and again the Chair for the year is the delightful Maggie Garnham (Sacred Heart Girls College) and the Treasurer Bruce Bayly (NPBHS).

At this point in time, the Taranaki group are considering holding a regional conference in the year 2002. Watch this space! An enjoyable and professional day was had by all.

Our next regional meeting is planned for Term 2, possibly in Hawera.

Brett Sloan, Spotswood College

From the Manawatu DP and AP Association

We've had our Term 1 meeting at which most schools from the Manawatu District were represented. Our speaker was Trevor Weir, Liaison Officer for Massey University, who spoke interestingly on the future direction for Massey, its new courses and its drive to recruit more undergraduates. We also congratulated Harre Romana, Deputy Principal of Rangitikei College, on his appointment as Principal of Flaxmere College in Hastings. Harre takes up his position at the start of Term 2.

Jacky Wall, Tararua College

OVERSEAS TRIP

My wife and I spent five months overseas recently visiting a wide range of countries including Hong Kong, Britain, Scotland, Ireland, Wales, France, Netherlands, Belgium, Austria, Germany, Switzerland, Spain, Italy, Norway, Sweden, Denmark, Canada and the USA. Included in our itinerary were visits to a number of schools. While in Stockholm, we spent a morning at Danderyds Gymnasium.

Sweden

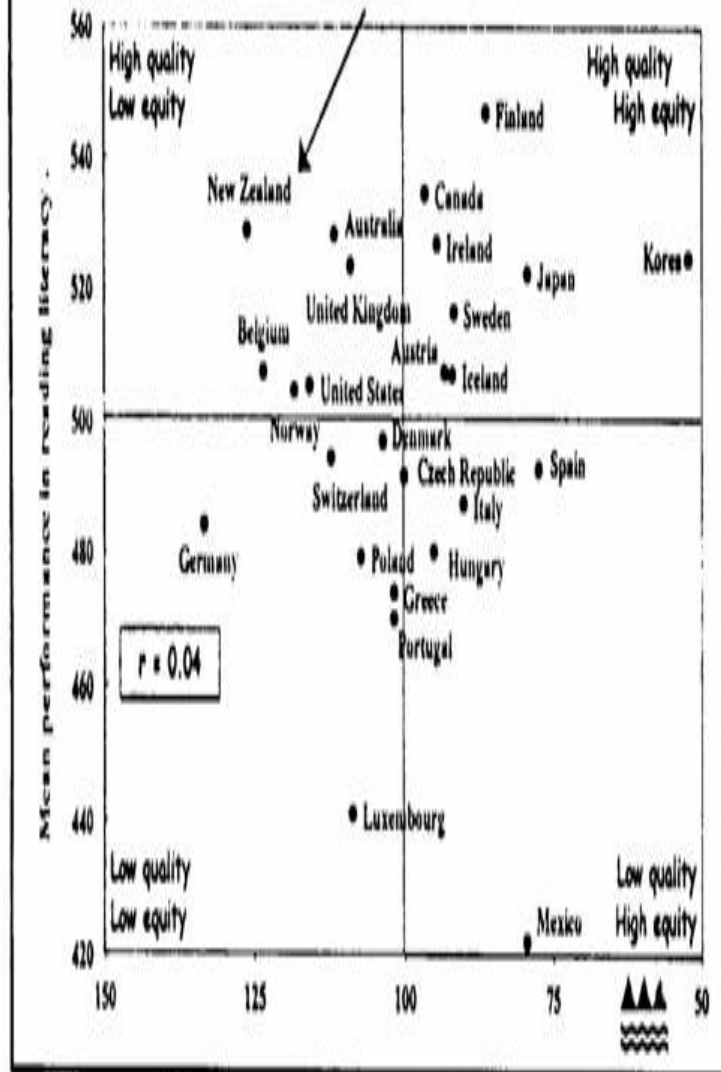
We were amazed by Danderyds Gymnasium, particularly in relation to the relaxed form of education being offered. Most lessons appeared to be project based with no normative assessments required for the 16-19 year olds at the school. These projects will include a trip to the West Indies for two groups in 2001 on a schooner that the school has recently purchased. Several staff will be on the schooner for three months during school time on full pay from September 2001! See photo on back cover.

We enjoyed a free lunch at the cafeteria, as do all students each day – and there are NO school fees! (Although 50% taxation is a bit tough!)

The school of 1700 students has wonderful facilities, including computers scattered all around the campus for student use. A totally different view of education to NZ! There is a general curriculum but teachers are quite autonomous as to what they cover. A bit different to teaching reluctant junior students a tightly defined curriculum!

Allan Webb
NASDAP Executive member for Central North Island

Overall Performance - New Zealand's High Average and Large Variance



WANTED

Articles, ideas, reports, pictures, names of colleagues with interesting experiences or views for our Term 1 2001 newsletter. We are also interested in featuring senior management points of view – how about sending us your viewpoint on relevant issue?

Please send them to :

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