

NZGTТА Presidents Report / April 2012

In such rapidly changing times, and with a great many challenges for both teaching in general as well as the specific areas within Technology education, it would seem to me that we as an association have a very positive part to play in the support of teachers.

More specifically, the alignment process is behind us, the new curriculum is rolling out and we have such a need for teaching support at a time when the Ministry and NZQA seem to be going through a funding crisis. How do we as an association provide the best support for the Technology teachers in the 600+ colleges and intermediates within New Zealand?

Many of our members are feeling overloaded by the increasing demands of delivering the subjects of Technology and Graphics/DVC and I think that we have a chance to communicate more effectively with our teachers in a variety of ways.

- At present the National association is looking into changing the access to the NZGTТА website so that teachers do not have to be financial to get at National GTТА info and join the forums. They will need a school email address to gain access though unless other arrangements are made with the national treasurer, pbrown@jameshargest.school.nz
- T News: Sent via email, no hard copy. Teachers are urged to subscribe to this free email publication. Contact: schools@ipenz.org.nz and ask to be added to the distribution list. Tnews features an update of all the Technology subject associations as well as featured student projects.
- We maintain a vigilant overview of the interests of teachers and students of our subjects and frequently access lines of communication with government associations on behalf of all technology teachers, regardless of whether our concerns are involving Achievement standards, or ITO's. Our executive is made up of actual teachers who come from a diversity of subjects unlike most other teaching associations in NZ.
- Despite the obvious problems with maintaining a complete database of email contacts with technology teachers, we have an extensive network of email contacts throughout most regions of New Zealand. Although there are branch meetings within most regions, there are some areas of the country that are proving to be more difficult to engage with but the Vice presidents are endeavouring to support these groups as well.
- The former TENZ bi annual conferences are being replaced by the TESAC combined technology association conferences with the first being held in early October of 2013. Although there will be some main speakers, it also gives us the opportunity to have some specialist speakers more relevant to our separate knowledge and skills areas. Should you have any particular presenters that you would like to hear, please contact me, kmeyer@otc.school.nz Any potential sponsors names would also be appreciated.

Apart from improving communication with our teaching community, there have obviously been some major changes to the support that comes from government sources this year as well.

- **Christchurch schools:** I have been down twice since the major earthquakes and the feedback from schools is that although many have been promised new classrooms and equipment, very little money has eventuated as yet from the government.
Although obviously these people have been through a great deal, I sense an attitude of wanting to get on with the rebuilding of all that is around them.

- **Ministry Advisors:**
The contracts for providing professional curriculum support by the Ministry were dramatically changed this year. The two providers are now:
A Southland consortium including Otago and Canterbury uni's and Ngai Tahu. They have two advisors for all technology subjects, **Cheryl Pym** and **Neville Meyer's** to cover all the South Island and the lower North Island.

The other provider is Auckland University and employs **Malcolm Howard** for the mid North region and **Lesley Pearce** for Auckland and above.

In my opinion the MoE advisors have all been treated very badly by the Ministry, even Cliff Harwood and Geoff Keith have only just received contracts for this year.

- Glyn McGregor, (Tech Link and Tnews), says we are in for an extremely tight year financially; funding should be there this year; however, there will be little extra available. He will alert us should the GIF funding situation ease up. This is the one which we have used in the past to finance guest speakers.

- A plea from National executive: From those on the executive that write the standards, please read the chief assessors reports. Mostly about assessing the externals.
- Something you are no doubt aware of is the students who are entered in the same standards in different subjects. Always worth checking before it gets too late in the year.
- **Scholarships:** This is an area of major concern and you need to have your say. DVC will still have its own scholarship. Will Technology have only one scholarship though? Strong case from NZGTTA that we have separate scholarships for all of the Knowledge and skills subject areas. Students can sit different scholarships within Science and arts for example, why not in Technology.

- **Alignment of New Zealand Scholarship Performance Standards with the New Zealand Curriculum - Consultation**

The consultation on the draft New Zealand Scholarship Performance Standards has been live since 19 March and closes on **Monday 30 April**.

The documents for each subject have been made available as a downloadable zip file, available from the subject documents pages at <http://surveys.researchnz.com/Scholarship/Documents/index.html>.

If you have not yet accessed the consultation, it is available at <https://surveys.researchnz.com/Scholarship>.

Thank you if you have already completed the survey.

- **National conference in 2013**

There will be no more TENZ conferences, they will now be organised by TESAC, the combined technology associations coalition.

At a recent meeting of TESAC, it has since been agreed that next year's conference will be held in either **Wellington** or **Auckland**. Originally it was to be held in Christchurch, but there are just too many impediments such as lack of functioning venues and limited accommodation etc.

- The ministry is also funding a separate initiative to encourage the development of Maori and Pacifica students. Niall Dinning is now one of these SAF's, student assessment facilitators.
- Techlink has a new communications officer, Hazel Slade. – She will be a key person to contact to feed back to the Universities how Technology as a subject has evolved in Schools.
- Beacon Practice project. There is funding to aim specifically at the Nature and Knowledge strands years 1 – 10 generating classroom teaching resources. This will be an opportunity for creating resources for the Primary education sector as well.
- Cliff is keen to continue the approach of having a 2 day Hui on the 22nd May in Wellington for supporting and communication between the providers of pre service and in service training. Cliff would like to have names of providers of PL that may otherwise go unnoticed within regions. This will be only for the first day of the 2 day event. MoE funding will be very limited and will not cover costs of travel or accommodation. I will be attending this on behalf of our association.

I would ask members to consider possible name changes for NZGTTA so we do not have graphics in the name. This may be necessary to avoid confusion as the last reference to Graphics in the achievement standards is this year. Next year all levels will be under DVC, Design and Visual Communication, standards. Please forward any suggestions to myself or the Secretary, Tricia Winter, at gypseat@yahoo.co.nz

Thank you for all of your efforts, there is certainly a lot going on, and for a voluntary organisation, I believe we accomplish a great deal on behalf of our association. One of the secrets to a strong organisation is effective communication, keep up the great work.

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