



Secondary Principals Council meeting notes, March 2017

Allan Vester stepping down as chair

The Principals Council met on the 21st and 22nd of March in Wellington. This meeting was the last one that Allan Vester will chair, as he is stepping down from the role before the next meeting. Allan has been an excellent chair and spokesperson for SPC for the last few years, successfully engaging with politicians, policy makers and media to advance public education and building our credibility as ethical leaders who are well informed by practice and evidence.

The potential of NCEA and why it's not being met

The first day of the meeting had a strong focus on NCEA, with a visit from Rose Hipkins (NZCER) to discuss her recent book, NCEA in Context, and Kristine Kilkelly (NZQA Deputy Secretary). The potential for NCEA to better reflect and enable desired learning outcomes and be less of a strait-jacket for the senior school was discussed. Practical issues such as moderation requirements, the impact of University Entrance requirements on course design, and the effect of over-engineered assessment were also covered.

Communities of Learning

The development of Communities of Learning was also a major theme of the first day of the meeting. One of the SPC members has recently had their CoL as the first one approved to have joint leaders – one secondary and one primary principal. It was a challenging process to get to that point. Many of the other members reflected on the slow process of making leadership appointments. There was some discussion about appointments of the WST role. SPC agreed that it would be helpful to have examples of job descriptions of what different types of WSTs could do. There were some concerns raised about how to reconcile appointing 60% of them to permanent roles when the CoL goals could change.

School system funding review

The second day of the meeting had a visit from Damian Edwards, who is leading the work in the MoE on the replacement for decile funding. He discussed the use of administrative data to identify the students who would be used to determine the school profile which would attract extra funding. This would be more fine-grained, accurate and responsive than the current census linked decile. The committee emphasised that part of the challenge is that simply reshuffling the existing quantum of decile funding won't be adequate, and that staffing must be included in funding for disadvantage.

Education Council

Graham Stoop, Lesley Hoskins and Pauline Barnes from the Education Council came to discuss their work-programme, including the move to online interaction with the Council. In future principals will be able to confirm the identity of staff with an online log-in, and there will be much less paperwork associated with certification. The committee raised concerns about the impending charging for police vetting, as well as the ongoing impact of the TER on access to relief teachers.

Other issues covered

SPC agreed to sign up to the International Confederation of Principals and support PPTA principal members to attend their conference.

Teacher supply issues were at the forefront for many principals, with struggles getting staff in many curriculum areas in particular science and technology.

How to promote the work of SPC and demonstrate the value of principals being PPTA members was also discussed.

[Contact your local SPC rep.](#)