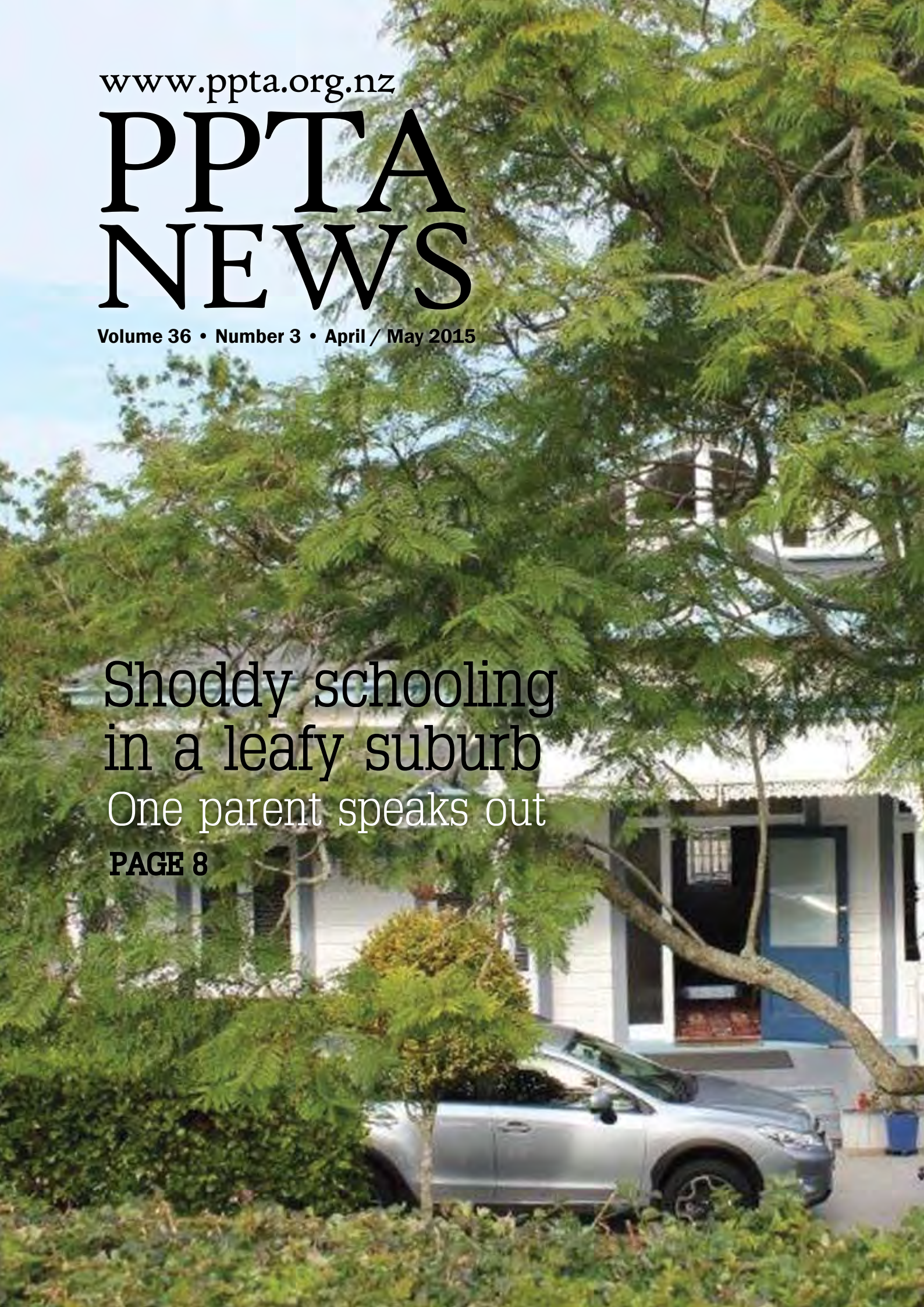


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PPTA NEWS

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Shoddy schooling
in a leafy suburb
One parent speaks out
PAGE 8





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Authorisation bought

One of the problems with Tomorrow's Schools has been that boards of trustees may be bristling with expertise in a range of fields but they don't usually have the inside knowledge needed to filter out unsuitable job applications. This is important because inexperienced, ineffectual or even corrupt leaders can undermine the educational opportunities for a whole cohort of students.

The Investing in Educational Success (IES) initiative begins the process of securing students against this risk by providing more active support for schools with appointment processes.

Meanwhile, in the alternative universe occupied by charter schools, the government is taking a completely different approach. For charter schools, the critical task of choosing the school leadership has been handed over to a panel of well-heeled, political appointees who meet from time to time to make decisions on behalf of schools they would never think of sending their own offspring to.

The members of this group, the Kura Hourua Authorisation Board, have a truly enviable job. They're paid generously by the taxpayer (around \$500 a day) to parcel out vast amounts of public money for which they are completely unaccountable. When they make poor decisions like giving money to a trust to buy a farm in Northland or handing money to individuals who shouldn't be entrusted with either public money or other people's children, there are no consequences for them.

One of the charter schools they approved was so inadequately managed, the Ministry of Education had to step in and run it for most of last year. This was completely at odds with the Act Party's sales pitch for charter schools which claimed that they would be "independent" of the ministry and might just explain why this intervention was kept secret for so long.

The Act Party also claimed charter schools would be closed if they didn't perform, promising this would make them "more accountable". Instead, resources from the Ministry of Education are being diverted to prop up a school that was always going to struggle and wouldn't have been set up if the authorisation board had done due diligence.

The authorisation board may be belatedly learning something that educationalists have long known — that closing a school isn't a sensible response to performance difficulties as it just leaves parents and students stranded without solving any of the problems.

Or, less charitably, there's no intention to ever close a charter school, no matter what it does, because there's too much political investment in the initiative. For example, there's no way the government will subject itself to a debate in the House about its total inability to retrieve the \$600,000 of taxpayer money spent by a private trust on buying a farm.

And it's not just political investment either; charter schools are proving to be a nice little earner for many. As well as the money being paid to the incompetent authorisation board members, the management layer in charter schools is likely to be doing very nicely thank you. American research shows charter schools spend less money on teaching and more on management than public



by Angela Roberts

schools and in England it was recently revealed that the head of a charter school chain was being paid twice the prime minister's salary. Of course, as in New Zealand, this information is hard to come by because even though it is public money, it's not public information.

Fortunately, New Zealand is a small close-knit society and the truth will out. (See pages 8-9 for a brave parent's fight against secrecy in schools)



"Take one the moment you begin to feel accountable."

Ideas generation



Empowering beginning teachers with knowledge and connections was a big part of the inaugural PPTA Network of Establishing Teachers (NETs) conference.

Developed by PPTA's Establishing Teachers Committee and held last month at the Vaughn Centre on Auckland's North Shore, the conference targeted members in their first 10 years of teaching and attracted 50 teachers.

Committee member Alex Le Long said putting the conference together was one of the best organising experiences of her life.

One of the most powerful parts of the conference for her was being able to see teachers catch on to the amount of professional learning and development (PLD) that was actually available to them.

"When I started teaching one of the most empowering things for me was to find that you could do your own professional development, that it's free and that PPTA does these things. To have 50 people all feeling that at the same time is huge," she said.

The conference included presentations by PPTA president Angela Roberts, New Zealand's chief censor Dr Andrew Jack, classroom management expert Margaret Ross, teacher wellbeing expert Ian Vickers and coding expert Mike Walmsley.

North Shore PPTA executive member Austen Pageau also spoke about the role of unionism and the importance of being active in the union.

Lesson plan speed dating went down well with conference-goers, despite initial misgivings of some in the committee, Alex said.

"They thought it would be really naff but once I explained it to them they realised it was really cool. Sometimes you just have to go with me on these things."

A section focussing on technology

in the classroom and the possibilities it provided for collaboration opened participants' eyes, Alex said.

"We saw that not everybody was at the same stage and that we were all learning together."

The conference allowed teachers to network and opened their minds to what was available. "They learned that it's okay to work cross curricular and not just focus on their own departments," Alex said.

While the speakers and panels were very helpful, Alex would like to see even more focus on networking in future conferences.

"I would like to see more of an 'un-conference' format where people can share their ideas and drive it from within rather than it being outside driven."

Alex hoped a follow-up conference could be held as soon as next year.

"Every year the amazing activists we have are passing away or leaving the profession. We need to keep building our up-and-coming activists, showing them how to get involved and play a more active role in the union," she said.

“When I started teaching one of the most empowering things for me was to find that you could do your own professional development.”

Northland PPTA says no to TPPA

On the eve of the Northland by-election, with the political "big guns" in Kerikeri, protesters made their feelings about the Trans Pacific Partnership Agreement (TPPA) loud and clear.

A group of 35 protesters, including PPTA members organised by the association's Northland executive member Graham Sharp, marched through Kerikeri to show their dismay at John Key's proposed signing of the TPPA with the US and various other countries.

Signing the TPPA could have disastrous consequences for education and broader sovereignty changes for New Zealand, making it difficult for future governments to change policies like charter schools or public private partnerships (PPPs) if international companies had invested here, Graham said.

The investor-state dispute settlement (ISDS) provisions of the TPPA grant investors the right to use dispute settlement proceedings against a foreign government.

"If the government abolished charter schools but a large company has money in them you had better believe that the government will be sued under the ISDS," Graham said.

"Charter schools here to stay!? Now that's a scary thought!"

The TPPA was not primarily a trade deal, it was a deal that created a bill of rights for corporates over and above national laws, Graham said.

"From what we know so far, if the negotiations are completed it will become much harder for the New Zealand government to look after our environment, promote health, protect workers and consumers, and promote the public interest."

Most restrictions on foreign investment would be frozen and rolled back even further, Graham said.

"Big overseas companies will be able to sue the New Zealand government for millions in damages in secretive offshore tribunals, claiming that new



PPTA executive member for Northland, Graham Sharp

laws and regulations (for example, a ban on fracking, smoking control laws, or a cap on electricity prices) have seriously undermined the value of their investments.

"Medicines will become more expensive as big pharmaceutical companies gain more influence over PHARMAC, and restrictions are placed on generic medicines.

"Copyright laws will be toughened and more harshly enforced, restricting internet freedom and access to information, costing libraries, schools, and businesses, and stifling innovation.

"Parallel importing will be banned, meaning that New Zealanders, especially the poor, will have to pay far more for all sorts of ordinary products.

"Foreign banks, insurance companies and money traders will gain more powers to challenge laws designed to prevent another financial crisis; and overseas property dealers could contest moves

to burst the property bubble, such as a capital gains tax."

Read more at <http://www.itsourfuture.org.nz/tppas-effects-on/>

The protestors at Kerikeri were fortunate to run into Winston Peters MP for Northland as he was in the final stages of the campaign and asked what he thought of the TPPA.

"Trust me I know what we're going to do here. We'll stop them passing this law," Peters replied.

"It's about foreign corporates suing you as a taxpayer. That's a challenge to this country's democracy which has been going for 167 years.

"It's about our sovereignty and right to make our own laws. It's no longer a trade deal. Worse still how can you pass a judgement on a contract you've never seen," Peters said.

The TPPA was an issue all New Zealanders needed to be aware of and stand united to oppose, Graham said.

Holding back the iHunch

The use of laptops, tablets and smartphones by teachers and students alike is an entrenched part of modern schools. But it's coming at a musculoskeletal price says Dunedin-based physiotherapist Steve August.



At any one time, one in six of us suffer acute pain in the upper back, neck, or headache arising from the fixed stoop more of us are assuming as we increase our use of the latest portable digital wizardry.*

"I call it the 'iHunch'," says Steve, who attributes the condition to the fact that, unlike the tried-and-true desktop, the newer lap and tablet varieties can't be adjusted ergonomically.

"There are well-established rules for setting up desktop computers – screen at eye level, keyboard at elbow level and so on," he says. "But they all go out the window with the new small devices because you can't separate their screens from their keyboards. You have to bend more to use them, and the load on the neck goes up dramatically."

While Steve welcomes the educational benefits of bringing new varieties of technology into the classroom, he believes the iHunch could become a serious health issue if not addressed – especially for those with growing spines.

"This isn't so much a problem in active children who are exercising and playing physically. It's the ones who are spending out-of-school hours stooped over texting, playing computer games and social networking who are effectively growing spines like trees in a high wind."

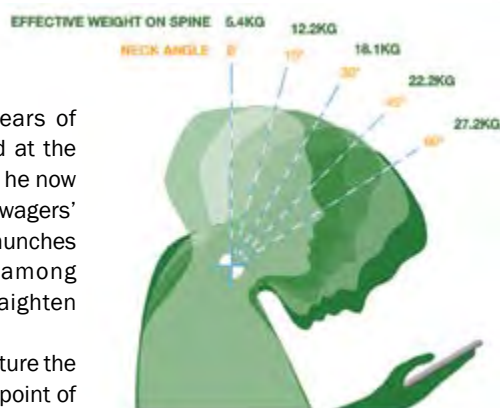
Steve says that after 30 years of practise he's becoming alarmed at the increasing number of teenagers he now sees with what are effectively dowagers' humps (kyphosis) – fixed flexion hunches in the upper back common among the elderly that they can't straighten themselves.

"In someone with perfect posture the earlobe sits vertically above the point of the shoulder. You can now spot teens where the back of the head sits further forward than the front of the chest. Just observe your students (or colleagues) side on – it's not subtle."

Technically, hunching requires the muscles down the back of the neck to work many times harder, just to hold the head up. So they strain, then scar as part of the repair of that strain, then shorten because of the scarring. The muscles around the front of the neck work less and weaken, so the chin pokes out. This hunched, poked-chin posture compresses every joint in the neck, and sooner or later some will lock acutely, causing neck pain, referred pain and headache.

To raise awareness of the issue, Steve offers a website – www.bodystance.co.nz – with helpful spinal self-care information and videos.

"The good news is you can treat and counter the iHunch effectively," he



says. "What works best is a collection of approaches: simple strengthening and stretching exercises, easy-to-follow posture and home massage for the tight, scarred muscles."

As part of the solution he has also developed the "Backpod", an award-winning hi-tech fulcrum which uses upper body weight to gently stretch out a tightened, hunched spine.

"The young spines of nearly all school students won't have tightened enough to need strong leverage such as the Backpod provides – unlike most adult spines. But all students should know how to look after themselves. It's as basic as knowing about brushing your teeth."

* *BMC Musculoskeletal Disorders*: Patience N Erick and Derek R Smith, 17 Nov 2011: 'A systematic review of musculoskeletal disorders among school teachers'.

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Material sought for Robin Duff biography

Waikato regional chair Jo Belgrave is working with oral historian Jane Ferrier and human rights activist Martin Oelderink on a biography of former PPTA president Robin Duff – she would love to have your contributions.

"I have been setting up preliminary oral history interviews with some of the key people in Robin's life."

"I would appreciate any material or photographs PPTA members might be able to supply. All sources will be acknowledged. It will not be a dry narrative. Robin was a man of the people and believed knowledge should be accessible to all. He would appreciate the inclusion of all those things he held dearest: the joy of teaching and learning, nurturing and mentoring, and a bloody good feed at the end of it all!"

You can contact Jo at jo.belgrave@gmail.com, 021 257 8586 or PO Box 259, Waikato Mail Centre, Hamilton 3240.

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pinkshirtday.org.nz



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The charade behind the facade



The charter school legislation is designed to maintain secrecy, but parents like Joanne and Wati Chaplow are working hard for the truth to come out.

Serious parental concerns voiced to the minister of education and the charter school authorisation board about Mt Hobson Middle School did not stop its principal, Alwyn Poole from having a charter school approved.

When Joanne Chaplow withdrew her 12 year old son from Mt Hobson Middle School (the private school run by Poole) the boy was so stressed he had begun scratching his head until it was covered in sores. After his withdrawal from the school over concerns about class

size, workload, governance and name calling by the school's principal she was horrified to discover that Poole had been shortlisted to run one of the government's controversial charter schools.

Joanne approached the school, the Ministry of Education (MoE) and the Education Review Office (ERO) with concerns about Poole's behaviour particularly when it came to calling the students names.

"I have witnessed the name calling myself of one of the Year 9 children. I cannot recall his name but he appears to have some form of mild intellectual disability and I witnessed Mr Poole say to him 'be quiet over there you retard, I never asked you to speak'. The students who have a particular condition or affliction are ridiculed the most," she said.

She heard back from ERO immediately but received no response from the MoE.

When Poole was shortlisted to establish a charter school she wrote to the minister again.

"I feel there is a sense of urgency over this matter now ... There is a group of concerned current and past parents of Mt Hobson Middle School who would be extremely disappointed if Mr Poole's application was successful, given that there are serious misgivings about the way in which Mt Hobson Middle School is being managed.

"I realise and accept that there is not the same level of accountability in private schools as compared to state schools ... however, if Mr Poole was successful in his application and, after establishing a partnership school, went on to manage it in a similar manner, I would have serious concerns for the outcomes of the children attending the school," she told the minister.

I witnessed Mr Poole say to him 'be quiet over there you retard, I never asked you to speak'."



Joanne Chaplow

After repeated attempts at contacting the MoE she was informed her emails had been passed on to the Kura Hourua Authorisation Board and were taken into account when recommendations were being made to the minister of education. She was later informed Poole had been successful in his charter school application (South Auckland Middle School) but that he was granted a “scaled back” version of what he had applied for.

This news was a blow for Joanne.

“I felt like I had failed. I failed to get this into the public arena and I failed to stop Mr Poole in his bid to establish charter schools.”

PPTA President Angela Roberts was appalled to discover the authorisation board had been made aware of these concerns but approved South Auckland Middle School anyway.

“Where is the accountability? This group is paid generously by the taxpayer yet when they make poor decisions there are no consequences,” she said. (See viewpoint page 3)

“If this is what has been going on with private funding, what will they do with access to public money?”

Joanne had a number of serious concerns including the “inordinate amount of work” involved in school projects, many of which required a significant level of parental input. This work caused her son to become extremely anxious.

“He has never had an issue with anxiety about school work up until late last year. Anxiety can have terrible outcomes

“Where is the accountability? This group (the charter school authorisation board) is paid generously by the taxpayer yet when they make poor decisions there are no consequences.”

for young people,” she told Poole.

Joanne believed Poole also did not have any tolerance for those students who found physical education challenging. “One example of this – the students are made

to run from the school on Remuera Road along the streets around the perimeter of Mt Hobson. Those students who were slower on this particular day were made to run twice around Mt Hobson. When they arrived back, morning tea had just finished and they were not allowed to have their morning tea, instead they were made to go straight to the next class,” she said.

Some children at Mount Hobson Middle School were vulnerable, Joanne said.

“There are children on the autistic spectrum, children with intellectual disabilities and children with learning disabilities.”

Because of this and Poole’s pitch for a charter school, she felt the need to speak out.

Joanne also shared her concern about the school’s lack of governance. When Joanne’s son was there, the school was owned by Mt Hobson Middle School Limited – with the Villa Education Trust as 100% shareholder. Companies Office records show that Mt Hobson Middle School Limited has had a name change and is now Middle School West Auckland Limited (directors Alwyn and Karen Poole) and is still wholly owned by the Villa Education Trust (the same trust that runs the South Auckland Middle School charter school).

“One would have thought that there should be separation in the ownership structure between Mt Hobson Middle School as a private school and the Pooles’ charter schools, particularly because the charter schools are funded from the

public purse and the other via private funds. The lack of transparency and accountability is a huge worry,” she said.

There is no board of trustees or other body that assumes a governance role, Joanne said.

“I am not aware of how or who conducts the performance reviews of Mr Poole as the academic manager/principal. One assumes he is required by the MoE to have performance reviews. If not, then is he not accountable to anyone?”

Since her son’s removal, Joanne has received calls from a number of concerned parents who have subsequently also removed their children from the school. In many cases, after the withdrawal they received phone calls from Poole criticising the new school the child was being sent to, she said.

“It is only when you talk to other parents that you realise you share very similar experiences.”

Introducing... the board

The Kura Hourua Authorisation Board is chaired by former ACT Party president Catherine Isaac. Members are former PricewaterhouseCoopers chair John Shewan, Cognition Education chief executive Terence Bates, Whitireia Polytechnic dean Dr Margaret Southwick, kohanga reo founder Dame Iritana Tawhiwhirangi, former Te Runanga o Ngai Tahu CEO Tahu Potiki and former Auckland Grammar School headmaster John Morris.

Dealing with the discrete material of racism

Nanotech

By Denis Wright

MAKARO PRESS, 2015

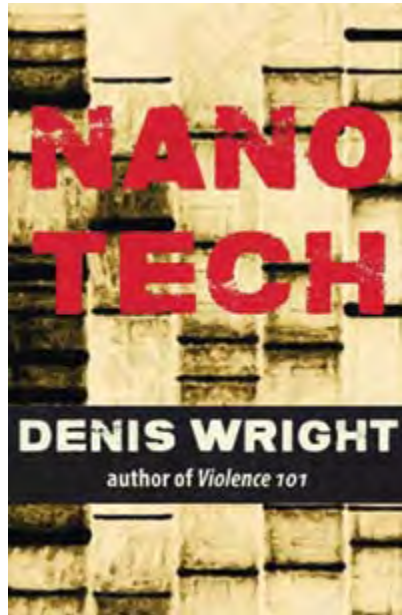
Review by Martin Henry

Denis has written young adult fiction before. *Violence 101* went down well at Wainuiomata High School as he has an ear for adolescent speak and a commitment to fast moving plots. *Nanotech* is no exception.

The set-up is a club called the Science and Technology Ethics Committee or STEC for short, made up of year 12 and 13 students going on a jaunt to Auckland to listen to a Nobel Prize winning genetic disease specialist. The club is run by Bernie, the teacher all students secretly want. She's irreverent, beautiful, prepared to break a few of the rules and totally committed to her subject – if not to an institutional approach to learning.

She assembles a rag tag bunch of bossy, quiet, opinionated and clever students for a road trip to remember. Bernie manages to con their way into the event in a way which, while not being completely ethical, was effective nonetheless. We go on to get a good look at Bernie's ethics as the plot unravels.

To jump a few pages the group end up in the wrong place at the wrong



time and are kidnapped by the New Aryan Brotherhood along with the Nobel winning pathologist – who the sinister brotherhood wants to teach them how to develop a disease that can wipe out all African Americans. Teaching in fact is a recurrent theme, with the students teaching each other, Bernie teaching everyone and the students finally teaching Bernie.

The student characters are interesting, with the protagonist Joe

famously silent for most of the book. His mate Toke, a Māori fella who knows how to handle himself and combines physical presence with a keen scientific and philosophical intellect, is a joy to know. There are also complex characters we only get glimpses of, like Eva the radical feminist, who beguiles and seethes, yet has the courage to stand up to the racists when it really counts. Moira who's bossy and a bit annoying, but good hearted and up for the fight too.

Wright manages to get us to care about his characters. There is an inevitable date, and I won't reveal who, but it is sensitively handled, and within the ethical positioning of the book. The biggest debate is the one about racism as an idea and the individuals who spout it. While most of the baddies are exactly that, there is still enough humanity about the writing to consider the implications of seeing a racist as a human being too.

The book doesn't pull its punches on the odious nature of racism and accepts that kids and teachers have complex stories that are not always what they appear to be. While it isn't a book that gives us answers, it takes us on a roller-coaster ride and provides a lot of thematic meat for students to get their teeth into.

Suitable for years 9 to 11.

Lessons in print

Having just published a second novel for young adults, PPTA member Denis Wright talks about beating boredom and breaking the rules.

Denis teaches English and Journalism at Wellington High and is a year level dean. He has taught since 1978 and been a PPTA member all the while.

"PPTA is a vital union that needs all of our support. I think it's one of the strongest and most viable unions in the country," he said.

Denis's first foray into young adult fiction was in 2006 when an idea for a character "kept whispering in my ear."



Denis Wright

This was the genesis of '*Violence 101*' a book that would end up being taught in English classes throughout the country and win him the 2009 New Zealand Post Best First Book award.

His second book *Nanotech* was published this year. It's a 'wrong place, wrong time' thriller

dealing with themes of racism, betrayal and molecular biology.

Denis said the trick to writing for a teenage audience, and particularly boys, was to know when they get bored.

"It's about showing rather than telling, dealing with serious issues in a light, fast, action-packed manner."

Denis' advice to teachers interested in writing is to be persistent.

"I broke all the rules of how to get published. I sent my work directly to the main publishers. I did not have an agent," he said.

"Don't be put off by the gap between sending something off and getting a reply and don't be afraid of being a squeaky wheel. If you hang back you won't get published," he said.

Denis is continuing to write with a few books lined up already, including a sequel to *Violence 101*.

Offering vocal support

For many teachers developing a sore throat, hoarseness or a raspy voice may be more serious than just another symptom of a winter lurgy. The detrimental effects of straining our voices on a daily basis are again becoming an endemic health and safety issue. But why? And who can help?

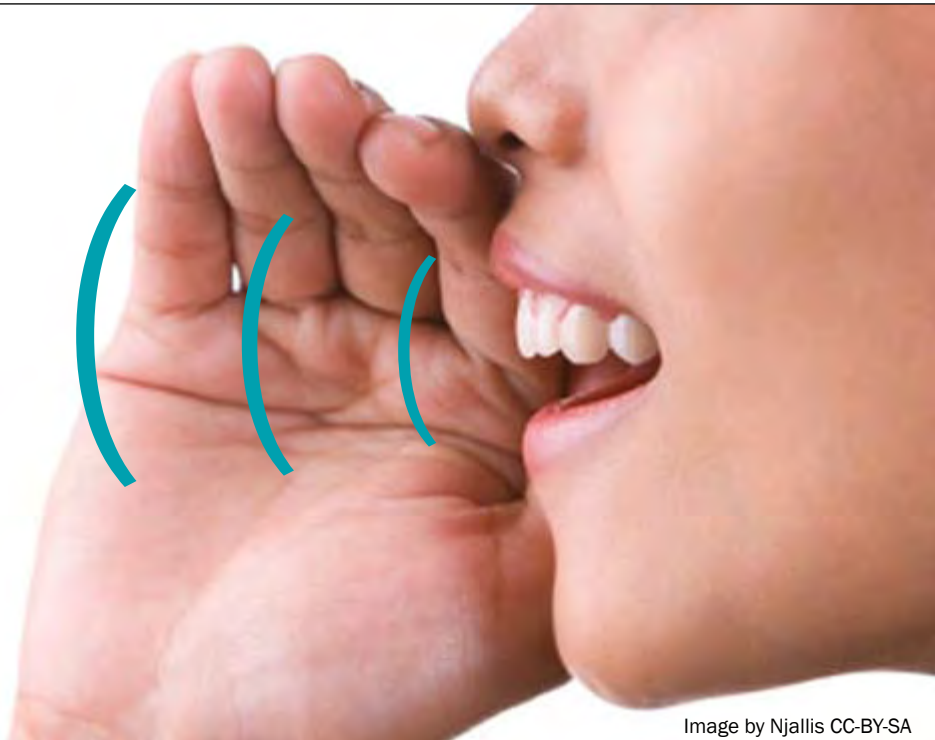


Image by Njallis CC-BY-SA

A recent study by speech science researchers at the University of Auckland's Department of Psychology, in which 1879 PPTA and NZEI members were interviewed, discovered that 1081 of respondents reported having suffered voice related health issues at some time in their careers. Of that number, 52% said they'd experienced mild to very mild problems, 36.5% said they'd experienced mild problems and 10.9% said they'd suffered severe or very severe problems.*

Speech New Zealand, a charitable trust that's been specialising in the provision of voice development, care and maintenance since 1964, says that in recent years it has noticed a steady increase in the number of experienced teachers requesting help and advice after struggling at work with voice problems.

The trust's spokesperson, Bill Carpenter, says symptoms frequently include throat pain, hoarseness, losing one's voice altogether and trouble swallowing or breathing – especially in conjunction with ear pain, coughing or choking when swallowing, and laryngitis.

"We notice that teachers who have to operate outside their normal vocal range tend to suffer greater issues," he says.

"Especially those having to compete

against outside environments, shouting over wind and rain, or working outside in the cold before transferring indoors without acclimatising their voices."

Bill says female teachers aged between 51 and 60 are the most vulnerable for voice related issues, but there is no major difference between male and female teachers in the severity of their problems.

"Overall we believe that the secondary teacher figure for voice problems is at around 30%."

Bill suspects the upward trend of teachers experiencing voice problems may be due in part to voice care components of teacher training being dropped.

"Previously, Auckland teachers college had a permanent position with one of our teachers who took students through courses on voice production, care and protection. With the demise of these classes we are now seeing this issue again on the increase and becoming a health and safety issue."

Bill advises that the first course of action for any teacher suffering voice issues is obviously medical.

"A general rule of thumb would be: first rest the voice then, if symptoms persist, follow this up by seeking medical

treatment and then seek voice therapy."

He says Speech NZ helps assist teachers understanding of what their vocal range is and correct breathing techniques.

"We show them how to properly modulate their voices and control their pitch, volume and projection among other things."

Getting help

If you'd like advice about a voice related health issue or any other assistance, contact Speech NZ via www.speechnz.co.nz or at its Wellington office on 04 498 9660 to find a local secretary for the region in which you live. Speech NZ have teachers based the length and breadth of the country all of whom have a wealth of knowledge and experience in voice and voice control.

Bill says prices vary depending on things such as, what is being taught, the duration of the course and the number of attendees.

"Prices however are not excessive and as a charitable trust we understand only too well the cost versus value argument," he says.

*Leão SHS, Oates, J. M., Purdy, S. C., Scott, D., & Morton, R. P. (2015). *Voice Problems in New Zealand Teachers: A National Survey*. *Journal of Voice*, Early Online.

Members snub exclusive club

PPTA members have given their strongest indication yet that they want nothing to do with the undemocratic Educanz nominations and appointments process.

In a recent membership-wide ballot, 94.9% of those who participated voted in favour of a motion to not accept nomination or appointment to the Educanz council nor participate in the body's consultation processes.

"Effectively, the ballot result means anyone who puts their name forward for nomination or accepts an appointment won't be in a position to claim to speak for secondary teachers," PPTA president Angela Roberts said.

"Members of Educanz must understand that they will serve the minister and the government of the day – not the teaching profession."

Last year PPTA's annual conference voted to empower its executive to develop a range of responses to the Education Amendment Bill (no.2) which aims to replace the New Zealand Teachers Council with a government appointed body.

“The Educanz model as it stands allows the minister to hand-pick an exclusive club.”

These included giving PPTA's executive the power to determine the extent to which the association would co-operate with the new body and putting proposals for actions against the new council to a teacher vote.

Since the new council ignores the democratic voice of teachers, PPTA executive has proposed teachers stop paying for it and instead seek a clause in the collective agreement requiring the government to fund the council as well as running it, Roberts said.

"We note that the Ministry of Education pays for the professional fees of legal and psychological services employees as part of their collective agreement. We are asking no less."



"The Educanz model as it stands allows the minister to hand-pick an exclusive club. By stripping away the professional voice of teachers and not allowing us to elect our own representatives to our own professional body, Educanz will struggle for credibility," she said.

The minister's response to critics has been that Educanz elections were unnecessary because the 'skill set' of those on the new council would be transparent and that she would appoint people who met it.

"The minister decides what is valued in that 'skill set' and gets to decide who meets it. No messy elections and contest of ideas, just the 'best people for the job', Roberts said.

"We cannot allow this gradual erosion of democracy and public accountability," she said.

"Even corporate boards of publicly listed companies are elected by shareholders – and if teachers aren't 'shareholders' in the regulation and status of the profession, I don't know who is."

PPTA Members!

Login to stay in the loop

Now bargaining for the Secondary Teachers Collective Agreement is almost underway it's time to make sure you have your log in sorted for the members' only site of the PPTA website.

All that's needed is your Username, which is your MoE number and the default password for most members is the first two letters of your first name plus the first two letters of your surname plus 01 (zero 1) - so Ettie Rout's password is etro01. This will get you started - after that you can change it to any password you like.

If you have problems, email webadmin@ppta.org.nz.

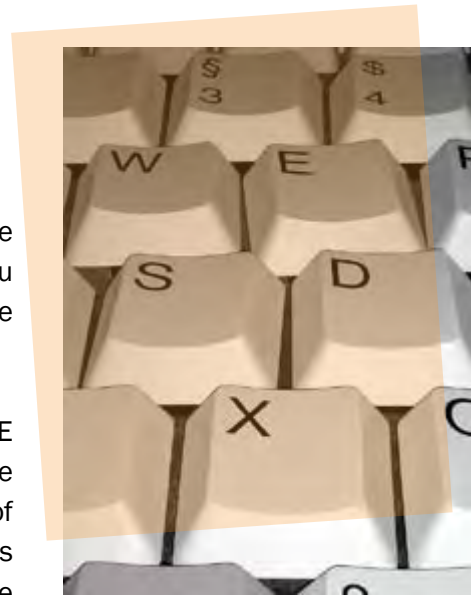


Image by Tastatur CC-BY-SA

PPTA

Workload survey and focus groups

A reminder that PPTA members are invited to complete an online survey about their workload at:

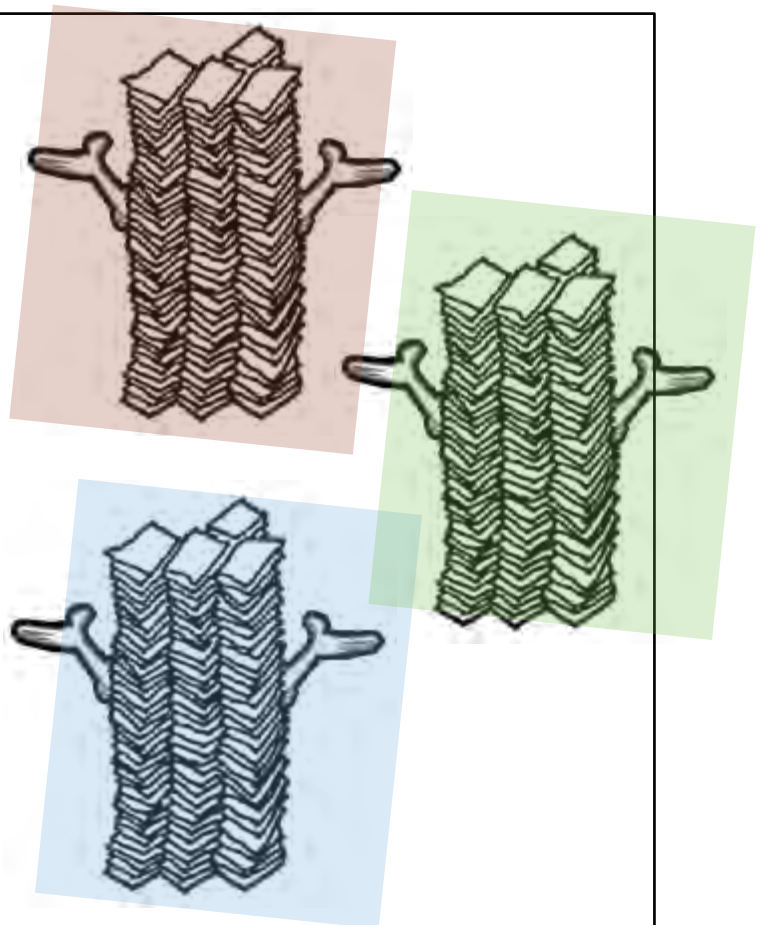
www.surveymonkey.com/s/PPTA_Teachers_Work_survey_2015

One survey can be completed per computer, so you are encouraged to use your personal device rather than one of the school's network of devices.

Branch focus groups also sought

PPTA is also looking for branches to volunteer as focus groups to investigate their work issues in more depth.

Branch chairs can contact Rob Willetts rwilletts@ppta.org.nz for a facilitators' kit to assist.



PPTA

Out in the field

Call back days: a couple of cases

Information and advice from PPTA's intrepid field officers.

Duties when schools are not open for instruction are commonly known as call back days.

A secondary teacher may be required to undertake up to 10 of these a year – up to five for professional development and up to another five for school administration, preparation and coordinating departmental activities and community and whānau liaison.

The rules are set out in clause 5.4 of the Secondary Teachers' Collective Agreement (STCA) and in clauses 4.7.2 – 4.7.4 in the Area School Teachers' Collective Agreement (ASTCA).

When managing the requirements of call back days, the employer must endeavour to be reasonable in their expectations and take into account the teacher's own initiatives in undertaking such work.

Teachers are entitled to be reimbursed for any actual and reasonable costs involved, due to attendance at call back days.

Case Studies

1. All the teachers at Kiwi College were told they would be required to attend a one-day professional development

session about peer coaching and appraisal in the upcoming school holidays. Barry didn't want to because he attended what he believed was a similar course during the previous school holidays. He had planned to take a family holiday at the time of the course, and had already informed the principal that was his intention.

The principal said Barry was required to attend because it was a full teaching staff activity, and Barry would be able to provide valuable input because of the course he attended previously.

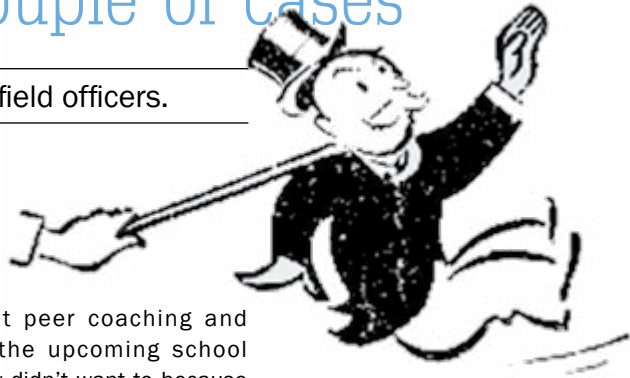
After a discussion with the PPTA branch chair, the principal agreed Barry had undertaken the earlier course of his own volition, and given reasonable notice about his planned family holiday, so didn't need to attend the professional development in the coming holidays.

It was also negotiated that Barry would run a session about what he had learned, at a staff meeting at the end of term.

2. At Magpie College staff were required to attend both a senior and junior parent teacher evening in week six of term one.

Mary's husband was a shift worker who was rostered on nights at that time so on each occasion Mary hired a babysitter to mind her children. She paid the babysitter who signed to say that she had received \$XX in payment. Mary then presented this document to the school for repayment, but office staff advised her she was not eligible for reimbursement of such expenses. Mary spoke with the PPTA branch woman's representative and together they discussed the issue with the principal.

Having shown the relevant clause, STCA 5.4.3/ASTCA 4.7.4 to the principal it was agreed childcare was an "actual and reasonable cost" and Mary would be reimbursed.



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Taking the free market to extremes

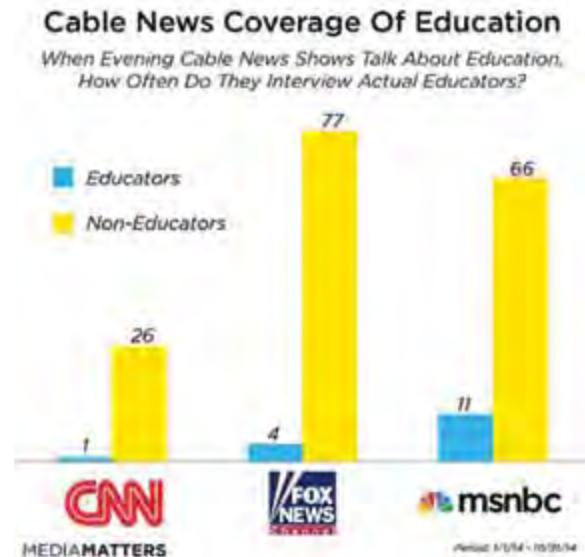
According to ACT's *Free Press* newsletter leader David Seymour returned a gift box of Easter eggs in high dudgeon announcing that he could not be bought with chocolate. We note however that selling is a different story. The same newsletter regularly signs off with Seymour's desire to profit from bodily fluids. "Freedom is not free" it reads "if it were legal ACT Leader David Seymour would sell blood to fundraise for ACT. All you need is a credit card". It doesn't specify whose blood he would sell.

A lesson in picking your audience

When Willie Jackson's son attempted to recruit people to promote his dad's charter school he probably should have researched his audience. PPTA's Komiti Pasifika was bemused by a request on its Facebook page for people to work for \$18 an hour with some "peeps" informing people in Mangere about Jackson's new Kura. "Recruiting some tamariki!" as the post says. Considering PPTA members' boycott of the schools and that many KP members would be adversely affected if one opened in their area we suspect his efforts were wasted.

I know heaps about education, I've been to school!

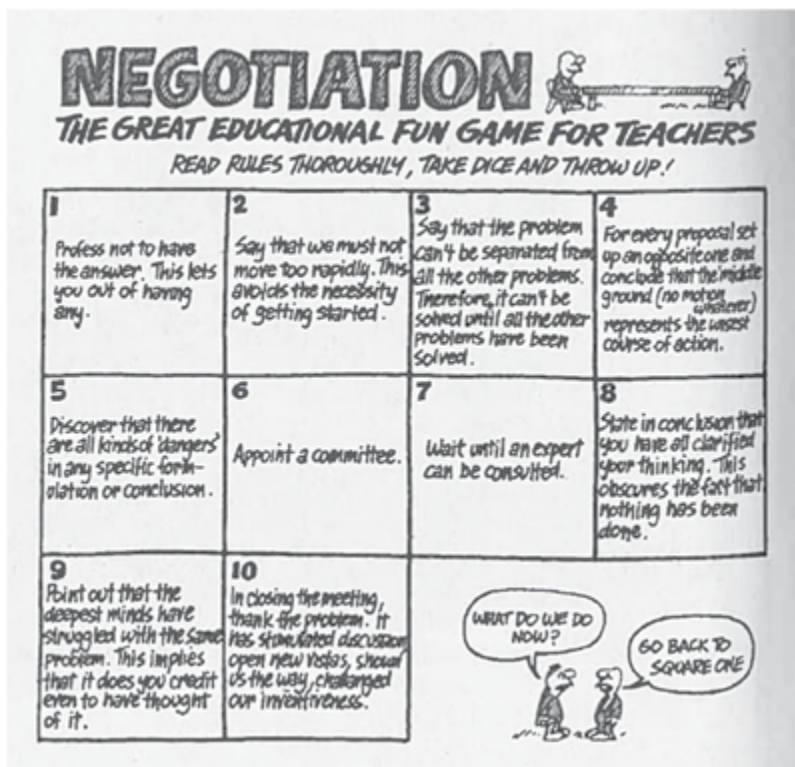
We've long suspected this was true of some education commentators. Let's just hope New Zealand's statistics aren't quite so depressing.



Chalkdust: a look into PPTA's past

A series looking at education through the eyes of the PPTA Journal. This month we travel back to 1976.

The negotiations game



It appears that in 1976 collective agreement negotiations were not going well. We certainly hope the Negotiation Game goes more smoothly in 2015.

Grim with good intentions

This was one of the winners of the P.E.N Young Writers Incentive Awards published in the PPTA Journal. *If I took everyone's skin off them, And boiled it in a big saucepan, And allowed it to mix to ONE colour, Then give the skin back to everyone, I wonder what they would do, Would they change their minds about: Black, Red, Yellow, White, Brown?*

Daphne S. Leach, Hagley High School

Canning the cane

The debate was still raging over whether corporal punishment should be condoned in schools. An annual conference resolution investigating a ban and comments made by then president Mr G Warner that it was the equivalent to assaulting a child met with several angry letters to the editor.

"And what viable alternatives have been established? By no means will everyone accept that a three day cooling off suspension is a viable alternative!" read one. It is certainly good to know there are plenty "viable alternatives" nowadays.



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