



Rangiora High School

Te Kura Tuarua o Rangiora

Newsletter - August 2010

From the Principal



Kia ora koutou katoa, greetings to parents, caregivers and friends of the school.

We are six weeks into Term 3 and things have been frantic for our students and staff alike. With so much going on it never ceases to amaze me how much our students are able to fit in and achieve.

On Tuesday 18 August the school was open to parents and caregivers for the second of our Student Achievement Information Days (SAID). It is pleasing to note that significant numbers of parents took up this opportunity to discuss their children's progress with staff. While it is an extremely long day for staff (8.30am – 8.30pm) they report high levels of satisfaction at the numbers of parents they are able to see and the positive learning environment as a result.



The House competitions continue to challenge our students and congratulations must go to Hillary House who won the Arts On competition on Wednesday 10 August. Arts On continues to be a spectacular event enjoyed by family, staff and student alike.

Congratulations must go to the members of the Girls' A Netball team, the boys in the 1st XV, and the members of the Girls' and Boys' Basketball teams, all of whom have had significant success during the winter season both locally, nationally and internationally.

In the first week of the July school holidays I was fortunate enough to attend the Asia New Zealand Foundation Principals' Study Tour. Ten New Zealand Principals were selected to travel to Singapore to look at the Singaporean education system.



It was fantastic to visit schools and experience the similarities and the differences between our two education systems. I felt intensely proud when a New Zealand teacher and his Singaporean students welcomed us with a traditional powhiri. My experience enabled me to gain a real insight into the challenges that face New Zealand over the next decade with regard to educating our students about the potential Asia offers our country both in business and globally. Our students face some exciting challenges ahead as we engage with Asia.

The senior school are just completing their mid year exams. I am extremely pleased with the commitment and dedication our senior students have displayed during this very important time. My thanks go to our dedicated staff all of whom spend many hours marking and providing feedback to students.

As always I wish to express my huge pride in your children, our students, this school, our staff and our community. As a community we are growing great leaders everyday and we should all be extremely proud of our collective efforts!

Kia kaha, kia toa, kia manawanui.

Peggy Burrows
Principal

Upcoming Events

24 August PPTA Paid Union Meeting
26 August BOT Meeting, 6.30pm
30 August Winter Tournament Week
13 September PTA Meeting, 7.30pm
15 September PTA Quiz Night
16 September Year 11 Social (subject to sales)
17 September Rutherford House Hire-a-Helper
20 September Year 9-10 e-asTTle Testing Week
23 September NZ Blood Service on site
23 September BOT Meeting, 6.30pm
24 September Term 3 ends
11 October Term 4 begins

Acknowledgement

Rangiora High School wishes to sincerely thank...

Worthington Construction, Rangiora

for donating three motors to the our senior auto-motive classes.

Local business support is always very much appreciated.

If your business would like to support Rangiora High School in some way, please contact me on 03 3118888.

Richard Smith
Automotive Teacher



Attendance

Please advise us of your student's absence EVERY day they are absent. This can be done either by phoning the school on 03 311 8888 or by going on to www.school-links.org.nz and clicking on the Absence tab. Students who ring themselves in sick will not be marked absent and an electronic notification will go out to caregivers advising of their absence.

If a student is unwell at school they must come to sick bay, even if they have already contacted you to pick them up. You then know where they are and we will then enter their attendance. If they leave without us knowing they will be marked as truant.

If you are going on holiday a letter must be sent to the Principal, Mrs Peggy Burrows, for her approval. Please advise if this is an overseas or New Zealand holiday.

Please advise the school of any change of physical address, telephone/cellphone or email. If your child is hurt and we need to get in contact with you urgently, we must have these details correct.

School-Links

Please register with School-Links if you have not already done so. With School-Links you can:

- Receive text and email alerts for all general communications such as school closures or in the event of an emergency
- Book parent/teacher interviews online
- Receive text and email alerts if your student has not turned up at school
- Receive newsletters and general notices online
- Notify the school of your student's absence 24/7

Register at www.school-links.org.nz

Any queries, please phone our Attendance Officer, Mrs Leigh Bolton, on 03 311 8888 (extension 2160).

Once registered it is important to regularly check your details are correct by clicking on the My Profile link. Thank you for your support as we seek to continually improve our attendance monitoring processes.



HILLARY

HEAD OF HOUSE Mr N Moyle

DEAN OF HOUSE Mr A Cotter

Hillary House has continued to achieve great success this term. Our recent achievements mean we are now in second place on the House points table.

Our Arts On team of Hayley Fisher (12HMG), Caitlin Willis (12HMG), Leleisha Buchanan (10HVV), Rosemary Stephen (13HMC) and Carenn Nakanishi (13HMC) secured first place with their design.

We have had great results in Junior Winterfest with our boys' football team taking first place.

We would also like to acknowledge the achievement of Jed Williams (13HHK) and Alex Kennedy (13HMC) in reaching 100 games for the school's first XV.

Earlier in the term some students and teachers celebrated the birthday of Sir Edmund Hillary (born 20 July 1919) with a winter climb of Mt Bealey in the Arthur's Pass National Park. The students who completed the climb were Rebecca Peterson, Kathryn de Hamel, Sam Hawkins, Charlie Stephen, and Oliver Bersani. They were accompanied by Mr Smith, Mr Van Voorst, Mr Moyle.

You can read more about the 2010 Hillary House climb elsewhere in this newsletter.



LYDIARD

HEAD OF HOUSE Mr D Palmer

DEAN OF HOUSE Mrs P Graham

This has been a busy term and the Student Executive has done a fantastic job of organising the teams for WinterFest sports. Our results have been mixed, but our efforts have been unflagging.

A team of six students lead by Brooke Mchardy and Nicole Ross-Smith gave up their revision time on SAID day to build the Lydiard House entry based on a Chinese Dragon. The junior members of the team did an amazing job making the tiger face and displaying it on the night. This is a great opportunity to see the talents of students who sometimes go unnoticed.

Junior public speaking is next. Two students get the opportunity to hopefully win the competition and lift us from the lowly position we find ourselves in - languishing at the bottom of the table.

Later this term senior members of Lydiard House will be helping select the 2011 junior executive. These students will assist the current junior executive at the end of the year so that they are confident in their roles in 2011.

Finally, Lydiard House was invited to send a staff member to meet the new Guide Dog puppies in Auckland. The whole staff contributed towards the cost of sending Pam Bernards, the ex-Head of Lydiard House, to Auckland for the day to attend this event. We hope she has a fantastic trip.





MANSFIELD

HEAD OF HOUSE Mrs M Stephenson

DEAN OF HOUSE Mr A Drayton

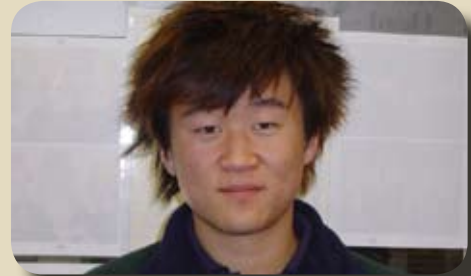


John Lee is one of two Mansfield House Captains. He has been a tremendous role model this year – giving his all for the House in the best Mansfield spirit. He has been involved in everything that a senior student can be involved in for his House: the 48 Hour Film Festival, the Senior Boys' Volleyball team, the Senior Debating team, House Choir, the Mansfield Fundraiser on Open Night, Senior Boys' Football, Arts On, as well as helping other exec members to organise Big Day Out and Sports Day. John responded to these questions:

Why did you decide to apply for Mansfield Exec? I'm always up for a challenge and wanted to finish my last year at school with as much involvement as I could. I've admired the House Exec team in Mansfield since Year 9 and have always wanted to have that role and be part of that team.

What have you enjoyed being involved in, in your exec role? I've tried being involved in as many House events as I could. Probably the best and the coolest thing that I've been involved in this year was the organising of House Big Day Out and Sports Day. It was frantic trying to get every activity and student together, but when it all fell into place it turned out to be really exciting.

What would you like to do when you leave Rangiora High? I'm planning to go to University next year and so I'm trying to get the best out of both worlds from school life and social life. Outside school I like to spend my time hanging out with mates, but in saying that, I do like to leave time for homework, exercise, work and more homework.



NGATA

HEAD OF HOUSE Mr R Winson

DEAN OF HOUSE Mrs V Wilkins



Term 3 has seen a change in staff for Ngata and I write to you as the new Head of Ngata House rather than Dean. Our new Dean, Mrs Wilkins, has proved to be a great new addition and it's been great to see lots of students making use of her skills and knowledge as a careers teacher when making decisions about their 2011 options.

As ever we are focussed on excellence. Our 'Arts On' team did a fine job gaining us 10 valuable points and the senior Netball and Football teams have achieved success in WinterFest taking out the Netball competition from last year's winners, Sheppard House, in a thrilling 23 – 26 game. Mrs Wilkins lost her voice! Many thanks to our hard-working Ngata Executive for their hard work, organising the teams and helping me with the running of WinterFest. Here you see them, minus the fantastic Holly and Hamish. Our fate in the House Competition now rests with the junior classes who are preparing for the Junior Public Speaking competition. I know we'll be highly competitive.

It is always nice to see past Ngata students excel. Thomas Smith left us from Year 13 earlier this year, with a fine academic record, to join the New Zealand Defence Force. He is loving the hard weeks of basic training. Courtney Hamblin was our 2009 House Captain. Her selection to the U19 NZ Basketball Team earlier this year was the result of years of hard work. Courtney has also just recently won a basketball scholarship to study in the USA, a huge accomplishment. Well done.





RUTHERFORD

HEAD OF HOUSE Mrs S Reed

DEAN OF HOUSE Mr M Williams

Rutherford has had an exciting start to term again - it's been a busy one with most getting involved with the spirit that makes Rangiora High School a great place to work, learn and have fun. Emma Dickson has done an amazing job helping organise and raise \$6000 for World Vision. She helped students get on board to support this worth while cause. Well done Emma. The annual Foodbank appeal netted about 1000 items of non perishable goods which were collected by the local Salvation Army. Arts On which occurred on 11 August was an exciting prospect for our great team of girls (3 juniors and 3 seniors) along with our creative and valued Su Jeffcott who can make a piece of drift wood a work of art! They were a formidable team, coming a brilliant second place, giving us some very valuable house points. WinterFest has started well with the Football and Netball teams braving the winter weather to do their best. We have had three wins to date. Keep at it team – you can do it. Junior Public speaking is next for the term with Year 9-10 getting geared up for the competition. They will have a week to plan their speech once the 'themes' are released to all the Houses. Hot on the heels of this event is the 'infamous' Hire-a-Helper which is Rutherford's main charity event. We raise funds for Waimakariri/Ashley Lifeboat Trust. This is a fun event with Mr Fahey taking the reins as MC. We appreciate all the student and staff input to these events. Without their willingness to help, these events wouldn't be half the fun they are. In the mean time the seniors are completing exams. We wish all the Rutherfordians the very best. Keep trying your best - remember you never know what is achievable until you try!



SHEPPARD

HEAD OF HOUSE Ms A Hay

DEAN OF HOUSE Mr K Anderson

Once again, the annual Arts On competition has been a very exciting event. The Sheppard House team of Marnie Block, Ricki-Lee Devlin-Cairns, Kate Robertson, Alex Svoboda, Brittany McCracken and Kate McLintock willingly gave their time to create a truly magnificent entry for our House. Our thanks must also go to Ms Winsome Brown and Ms Charlotte Davis who had oversight for our team.

The House section always creates strong competition among the Houses. The theme for the House section this year was 'to create a Chinese Lantern style puppet' with a House theme. On SAID day, each House was given materials which ranged from various fabrics through to polythene pipe and fencing wire. They had the day to design and create their puppet without any assistance from adults. H Block became a hive of activity and creativity with students producing some really amazing creations. The next evening was filled with high anxiety and anticipation, as all of the groups gathered to add the final touches (and carry out minor repairs) to their puppet and to prepare for the pre-judging. This year Sheppard House was placed fourth.

Thanks to all of the families of Sheppard students who donated items for the recent Foodbank appeal. Sheppard House donated a total of 246 items, winning the Foodbank trophy for the second year in succession. Your generosity will be greatly appreciated by many people in our local community.



Hillary House Climb

On Saturday 24 July five students and three teachers met at school at 7.00am, drove to Arthurs Pass and began a climb of Mt Bealey to celebrate Sir Edmund Hillary's birthday. As we began the uphill climb at 9.00am, all the students soon realised this was going to be more difficult than we had thought. However, this realisation made us push ourselves harder, at times making the climb a competition.

After about 40 minutes we stopped for a rest and then again just below the snowline. After this the snow was about knee deep, although the gradient was not as steep. Fortunately we were able to follow the tracks of a climber in front of us.

We eventually met the other climber and started to break the trail ourselves. We reached the low peak of Mt Bealey at about 1.30pm for a well earned rest. We decided to try for the high peak of Mt Bealey, however the gradient was too steep and the snow was waist deep., so we backtracked to the low peak and unfurled a NZ flag and Hillary House banner.

The descent was easier and quicker than going up. We stopped near the snowline for a snowball fight in which Mr Moyle came off worst. We reached the bottom of the track at 5.15pm and got home about 8.00pm. Not a bad way to spend a Saturday.

Trip Participants: Rebecca Peterson, Kathryn de Hamel, Sam Hawkins, Charlie Stephen, Oliver Bersani, Mr Smith, Mr Van Voorst, and Mr Moyle.



Alliance Francaise Quiz

On 27 July, eight Rangiora High School students participated in the 11th Alliance Francaise French culture quiz at Burnside High School.

Our winning team consisted of Ciaran Searle, William Dieckermann, Hannah Fortune and Emma Hunt (pictured). They were delighted to improve on the second placing they earned last year.



Our other team consisted of Amy Glubb, Esther van der Weij, Chelsea Williams and Kirsten Dwyer.

They achieved an impressive sixth place (out of 13), only eight points behind the winners.

This is a great event, which is always a lot of fun. The students were wonderful (as per usual) and were a credit to our school.

Abigail Wiseman
HOD Languages

Tu Kanohi Ora

Tu Kanohi Ora is a mentoring and goal-setting programme for Maori students facilitated by Te Tapuae o Rehua. A large number of our Maori students are now actively involved and enjoying working together.



The programme has already been of great benefit to many students.

The next session for senior students is 14 September.

The next session for junior students is 2 November.

Julia Malcolm
Deputy Principal - Student Services

Boys' Project Meeting

The Rangiora High School Boys' Project has a focus on developing balanced young men to serve the North Canterbury community. As a school community, we would like to invite you to a meeting to discuss the progress of boys' education because, as parents, you play an immensely important role in our school community.



In New Zealand, boys have academically fallen behind girls by a long way. Nowadays, we see girls performing better academically in NCEA Levels 1-3. This trend is also true for countries like Australia, Canada and the United Kingdom. More females are gaining university degrees and males do not seem to see the point of further study after secondary school. This trend is now a phenomenon and we see more and more young men being unmotivated to succeed.

According to a 25 year research study done by Dr Leonard Sax, there has been a slow decline in boys' academic performance and the reasons are as follows:

1. The change in education for boys over the last 25-30 years
2. Video games
3. Medicines
4. "The decline of the old heroes"

We would like to invite parents to an evening of discussion on the above topics as described in Dr Leonard Sax's book called "Boys Adrift". This evening will give you insight into boys in education and will hopefully be the catalyst for us to improve our boys' educational performance at Rangiora High School.

Topic: How to improve our boys' achievement

Date: Tuesday 31 August 2010

Time: 7.00pm

Venue: Rangiora High School Hall

I look forward to meeting you at next week's meeting.

Mario Williams

Co-ordinator, Boys' Project

GATE Programme: A New Approach from 2011

We have long felt some concern that our GATE (Gifted and Talented Education) classes at Years 9 and 10 have tended to cater to a limited group in limited areas.

We do know that, generally speaking, a person will have particular areas of exceptional ability, and of course sometimes those areas will not necessarily be aligned to curriculum programmes.

We will continue to seek advice from contributing schools, from parents and caregivers, and from the results of testing programmes, but in addition we are going to ask students themselves to write telling us what they see as their exceptional ability, what they have achieved so far and how they would like to develop in the future.

How will the Enhancement Programme work at Rangiora High School from 2011?

A co-ordinator will be given time and a budget to oversee the programme. This would involve:

- Working with a designated teacher within each department to develop a department specific programme. This could cover extension programmes outside the year level schemes, including multi-level subject choice.
- Outside discipline programmes which would develop extra-curricular activities or courses such as philosophy, debating, future problem solving (especially for Years 9 and 10).
- Involvement with Canterbury Association for Gifted Education (CAGE) which holds competitions, Olympiads, conferences, etc.
- Ensuring that non-academic strengths are identified and catered for.

Obviously this new approach is very much in its planning stage.

In order to gain feedback from our community we plan to hold an open meeting later in the year.

In the meantime, you are welcome to contact either of us at school on 03 3118888 if you wish to discuss this issue.

Jan Patterson
HOD Guidance

Margaret Neate
HOD Teaching and Learning

Girls' A Basketball: Australian Development Tour 2010

The Rangiora High School Girls' A Basketball team recently completed a development tour to Australia in the July school holidays. This was the third tour Rangiora High School Girls' A teams have made in the last five years. The tours are a key part in the team's programme of individual and team development. The girls played eight games over the ten day tour against a range of high schools around Brisbane and the Gold Coast.

The tour is the ideal challenge to develop individual skills and team play in preparation for the South Island Secondary Schools' Premierships held in Nelson in early September. The team's goal for Nelson is to finish in the top six and gain qualification for the National Finals.

Almost all of the schools the team played hosted the girls two years ago on their last tour and all were very pleased to continue to develop that relationship and were very kind, accommodating and generous in hosting them again this year.

The team finished the eight game schedule with a pleasing 5 win, 3 loss record. The three losses came against Australian schoolgirl powerhouses John Paul College and Brisbane State High, and a loss to a very good Queensland Under 15 Representative team. The three losses were of tremendous benefit to the girls; being able to see and experience the standard of basketball and individual skill possible for high school girls dedicated to training and improving in the right environment. The Rangiora High School team had periods of being very competitive with these teams but are still learning to maintain the speed, accuracy and execution these excellent teams played with for the whole game.

A significant number of girls really stepped up to the challenge of a long tour against some top teams and played above themselves which was very pleasing. Without doubt the girls improved their team play and efficiency in preparation for the South Island Premierships.

The tour also included plenty of fun away from the courts, with the team base being Broadbeach on the Gold Coast. The day at Dream World theme park was a highlight for many, as were the numerous shopping sprees, mall visits, South Bank markets, and swims at the beach and in the pool.

The 2010 Girls' A team that attended the tour was:

Hannah Graham, Marnie Block, Tegan McNeish, Samantha Keeling, Emma Cheesman, Caitlin Willis, Ry van Keulen, Olivia Gray, Brier O'Shea, Edana Sparks, Caitlin Kippenberger, Cassie Daley.

The team is coached by Clinton Olson and Hayley Gray; and is managed by Julie Graham and Nikki Block.

Clinton Olson
Coach



Boys' A Basketball: Australian Development Tour 2010

The Senior A Boys' Basketball team set off to Australia to enjoy the hot weather and play some good strong basketball.

This was a first time travelling overseas for some of the boys and was a great chance to not only strengthen their basketball skills but to experience competing against Australian opposition.

We played nine games against some strong teams coming away with two wins.

We were lucky enough to play against John Paul College and Brisbane Boys' College who have nationally recognised basketball programmes.

All the boys had a great time both on and off the court and would like to thank their managers Julie Haigh and Janelle Crawley and their coach, Andrew Gebbie.

The Australian tour has been very effective with regards to preparing the team for their up coming South Island Premiership Tournament.

Luke Hawkins-Belliss
Sam Haigh-Ward
Scott Edwards



Cantamaths

Cantamaths is an annual Mathematics competition held in Christchurch every August. At Cantamaths the goal is to solve as many mathematics problems as possible within thirty minutes.

Each Canterbury school chooses their two best teams at Year 9 and Year 10 level to compete. Over 100 teams from schools as far as Timaru and Greymouth participate.

Our Year 9 teams consisted of Erica Arthur, Kiri Atkin, Angus Hawkins, Anna Hendrie, James Marsh, Zoe McVicar, Rhiannon Mertens and Zac Todd.

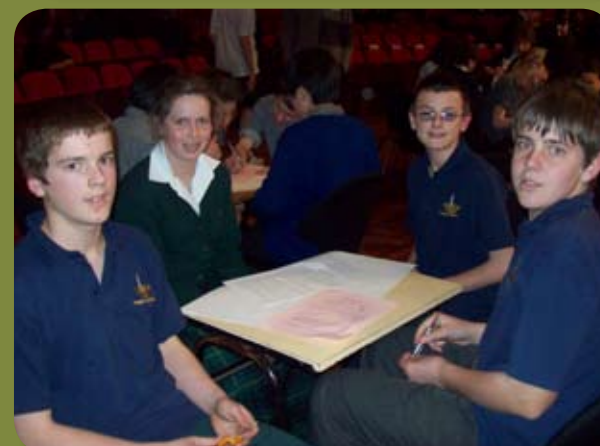
At Year 10 Jonathan Booth, Bryce Franklin, Brent Hainsworth, Ellen Hawke, Jack McCullough, Joshua Pellet, Alysha Rigter and James Te Aika were chosen to compete.

Although our teams did not manage to answer all questions, their teachers Mr David Van Voorst and Mr Brent Rollo were happy with their results.

One of our Year 9 teams scored 70/100 points, which is the best result for Rangiora High School in many years.

One Year 10 team placed in the top 20 teams.

Well done to all involved.



Service

Well done to the students of 9HPP who recently volunteered to assist the Rangiora Rotary Club with the bagging of new telephone directories.



Pam Bernards

Recently Pam Bernards, our Specialist Classroom Teacher and the foundation Head of Lydiard House, was presented with a surprise trip to Auckland for the day to visit the Foundation for the Blind and view all of the new Guide Dog puppies.



In conjunction with Lydiard House, the whole staff donated money so that Mrs Bernards could travel to Auckland for the day in recognition of her dedication to the Foundation for the Blind whilst she was Head of Lydiard House.

Mrs Bernards is retiring from Rangiora High School at the end of this year after 32 years of service.



Japanese News

Planning for the trip to Japan at the end of this term is going well.

For the week that ended with Hiroshima Day (6 August) we had a number of senior students who are studying Japanese, as well as our Head Students, visiting form classes trying to get all students to make a paper crane.

The goal was 1000 cranes as this is the magic number Japanese folklore says you need to have a wish granted. At lunchtimes on most days we have had a least eight keen students come along to make cranes. By Hiroshima Day we managed to make over 1350 paper cranes as a school. Until the end of the term we will be stringing cranes to make them easier to transport to Japan.

We will be taking the paper cranes we made to Hiroshima as part of the 'Cranes for Peace' activity that we became involved in.

We will have a photo of the laying of the cranes at the Hiroshima Memorial in the Yearbook.

Michelle Dalley
Japanese Teacher

UN Model General Assembly

Year 12-13 students organised and held our fifth annual UN Model General Assembly for Year 9-10 students at the Baptist Church on 23 July.

Approximately 120 students dressed in costume with decorated tables, discussed world issues (i.e. the rights of indigenous peoples and nuclear proliferation).

Representatives from the Canterbury branch of the model UN Association came and spoke to our delegates/students.

For the first time, fifteen students from Rangiora New Life School were invited to participate in the day.

The day was an undoubted success. Much of this success has to be attributed to Year 13 student Hamish Ainsley and his band of helpers.

Rangiora High School is rapidly gaining fame for this event. Some of our students have been asked to help Burnside High School run one of their own.

Russell Henson
HOD Social Studies

“Partnership - not Mothership”

The Rangiora Schools' Educational Learning Network Community is an initiative that started in 2008 between Rangiora High School and its 22 contributing schools. It is rapidly gaining momentum.

Originally our contributing schools were surveyed with regard to the thinking skills and the theory behind their teaching strategies to assist Rangiora High School plan for the implementation of the new NZ Curriculum document that is now in place. The communication blossomed, principals met and a North Canterbury educational cluster was launched.

The original aim of the cluster was to enhance the transition for the students from Year 8 to Year 9, sometimes leaving a small school and entering the third biggest high school in the South Island.

Approximately 25 teachers from our contributing schools visited and followed a Year 9 class through a typical day. This gave them a picture of the needs of a Year 9 student in a big school. Rangiora High School staff visited the contributing schools to see how a Year 7/8 class operated. Observations were shared and the transition process was modified accordingly.

Meetings then were held within the cluster to look at such things as the key competencies in the new curriculum and a shared vision between the schools in the area.

Funding was then granted from UC Education Plus (a Canterbury University advisory group) to expand the project. The transition process, after surveying the Year 9 students after being at Rangiora High School for 6 weeks, seems to be working and the youngsters are happy with their new school. Some of them do miss the “fort” and the “playgrounds” though.

The initiative has now moved to sharing best teaching practices across the Year 7-10 cohort and is seen as groundbreaking with such a large number of contributing schools engaged in working with their local high school.

At present approximately 30 Rangiora High School staff have “buddied” up with colleagues in our contributing schools and a reciprocal visiting programme is underway. This is going to culminate with a professional learning day lead by one of Professor John Hattie's team from Auckland University in early September.

At this stage it is hoped to look at some common teaching strategies over the Year 7-10 teachers and further enhance the transition process for the students coming to Rangiora High School.

The long term aim of the learning community is to develop a “seamless curriculum” across Years 7-10, and possibly beyond these years.

The learning community is lead by an active steering group of seven primary Principals and two Rangiora High School Deputy Principals: Graeme Barber (Principal of Woodend School) and Brian Hays and Scott Wright (two of Rangiora High School's four Deputy Principals) co-ordinate the project with assistance from UC Education Plus.

As the title of this article suggests, it is all about a partnership in the community to enhance your children's education. It is about the teachers at all the schools doing that little extra to ensure the best for the students of North Canterbury.

Brian Hays

Deputy Principal - Curriculum

Scott Wright

Deputy Principal - Teaching and Learning



Sharing Secondary Teacher Issues

Secondary teachers have been discussing a new employment agreement with the Government. Our current contract with the Ministry of Education expired on 30 June.

After thirteen days of negotiation, Post-Primary Teachers' Association (PPTA) members are frustrated and disappointed at the failure of the Ministry of Education to address our concerns.

As per the provisions of our collective agreement, we will be attending a two-hour Paid Union Meeting this week to discuss our next course of action.

Like you, we care very deeply about our education system and the health of our schools, both now and in the future. We believe that a fair and responsible national collective agreement lies at the heart of an excellent public education system.

The issues the PPTA are currently raising with the Government are based around five beliefs:

1. We believe that as a country we must invest in our children's education. Our claim looks beyond the recession and asks the Government to invest for the long term.
2. We believe schools should be places of safe and effective teaching and learning. Research on class size shows significant positive effects of smaller class size. We worry about health and safety, behaviour and the limitations on practical work and teaching methods that come with large classes. We want schools resourced so classes can be limited to 30 students. In addition, we want classes in hazardous situations to have no more than 24 students to keep the students safe.
3. We believe that all of our schools should be able to appoint and retain well qualified and trained graduates. We want teaching to be a first choice career. Our teachers are sought after internationally for their success with students and hundreds go to teach overseas each year. Despite the recession, one in 10 secondary teaching jobs advertised in the first term of this year were not filled. Salary rates set now will determine whether our schools are left short of teachers as the economy recovers. We think that an increase of 4% balances the long term needs of schools with the temporary economic position. It is also within the range of recent teacher pay increases in comparable overseas countries.
4. We believe that your child should have the benefit of teachers who are up to date. We ask the Government to invest in professional development so that we can improve outcomes for students. We seek the inclusion of good professional learning guidelines in our agreement.
5. We believe that teachers should get a fair go: We are very lucky at Rangiora High School - our laptops and annual flu vaccinations are funded by the school. Others are not so fortunate. We are asking that all schools pay the lease on the laptops that are provided to teachers for their work-related duties and fund annual flu vaccinations for teachers.

We hope that you will recognise that the issues we are raising are fair and sensible and intended to ultimately benefit our schools and our students and ask for your support and understanding as we work through these issues with the Government over the coming months.

We would welcome the opportunity to expand on any of these issues with you.

On behalf of all PPTA members at Rangiora High School,

Al Drayton
PPTA Branch Chairperson
Rangiora High School

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