

# PPTA

NEW ZEALAND POST PRIMARY  
TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION

TE WEHENGARUA

## **PPTA members and National Standards**

**Report on  
assessment workload survey  
2010**

ISBN: 0-9582633-9-6

Published by New Zealand Post Primary Teachers'  
Association, Wellington, 2011

## Introduction

As reported in [\*The cost of change: PPTA Survey on NCEA Workload 2010\*](#) (NZPPTA, 2011), PPTA conducted an online survey of its members in Term 4 2010. The purpose of the survey was primarily to establish a detailed picture of the impacts on secondary teachers' workloads of the NCEA changes that are being implemented between 2011 and 2013.

An additional purpose was to find out how many PPTA members were affected by the implementation of National Standards, as another form of high stakes standards-based assessment, but this time in Years 1-8, and whether any of these members were also tasked with making the NCEA changes at the same time. (PPTA has coverage of teachers in Year 7-13 schools, as well as of those teachers in area schools who choose to belong to PPTA rather than their alternative union, NZEI.)

519 of the 3,259 members who responded to the survey said that they either taught in Year 7 and/or 8 in 2010 or expected to be doing so in 2011. This report focuses on that group of respondents only.

## Results

### ***Teaching and assessment responsibilities***

Of the 519 respondents who had Year 7/8 teaching and assessment responsibilities, 89% had these responsibilities in 2010 and the other 11% expected to have them in 2011.

Interestingly, of these 519 respondents, 66% also had responsibilities in 2010 for teaching and assessing at Years 11-13, and another 4% expected to have those responsibilities in 2011. This means that 362 of the respondents were potentially assessing both for National Standards and for NCEA.

### ***Workload impacts of National Standards***

Not all of the 519 respondents who taught and assessed at Year 7 and 8 were experiencing increased workload from the National Standards, but around 50% were. It is important to remember that the National Standards are in Reading, Writing and Mathematics, so those respondents who are doing specialist teaching in other subjects at Years 7 and 8, e.g. Technology teachers, Music teachers, or Visual Arts teachers, may be less directly involved with the implementation of the National Standards.

On the other hand, the Ministry of Education's advisory material for the National Standards does encourage schools to use evidence from the full range of curriculum areas to inform their overall teacher judgements of students in relation to the Standards. If a school was following this guidance and taking a broad-based curriculum approach to the Standards, then all teachers, whether specialists or generalists, would be involved in some way.

The survey asked teachers of Years 7 and 8 “To what extent is each of these causing you increased workload now in 2010?” and “To what extent do you believe the following are likely to cause you increased workload in 2011?” These stems were followed by a list of tasks likely to be associated with the implementation of the National Standards as listed in Table 1 below. Respondents were asked to rate each task on a four-point scale, with the choices being ‘A lot’, ‘Quite a bit’, ‘To some extent’ or ‘Not at all’. Percentaged responses for ‘A lot’ and ‘Quite a bit’, and for ‘Not at all’ for both years are shown in the table.

*Table 1 – Workload impact of tasks associated with National Standards*

<b>Task associated with National Standards implementation</b>	<b>2010 Rated ‘A lot’ or ‘Quite a bit’ %</b>	<b>2011 Rated ‘A lot’ or ‘Quite a bit’ %</b>
New reporting requirements	55	61
Making judgements against the National Standards	49	57
Revising planning to accommodate National Standards	46	58
Demands of internal moderation	46	56
Extra assessments to generate evidence for National Standards	43	55
Total number of respondents	500	502

It is apparent from this data that respondents expected the workload around National Standards to increase significantly in 2011, presumably because from this year schools are required to set targets and begin to report results to the Ministry of Education.

Some respondents expressed a perception that National Standards were something yet to be grappled with:

- *All of this is still in development - happening primarily at middle management.*
- *I haven't been told much of how the changes will affect me.*
- *We are starting to prepare now for what will happen next year. We have a lot more to do and will be getting to it over the coming months. At this stage it's largely a case of not knowing what we don't know.*
- *I am taking up a position at another school and have been told I will be expected to contribute to providing evidence. I need to learn what that means!*
- *We have only begun to teach these levels so have not had time to digest national standards. We expect our work load to increase.*
- *I have a good HOD who manages this stuff pretty well. I'm a bit unsure of what to expect on this at this stage.*

- *This is a massive task that we are just beginning to get more detailed information about.*
- *I haven't been told how this will affect me as a drama teacher.*
- *I am unfamiliar with National Standards and what impact it will have on the course that I might be teaching next year.*
- *Not entirely sure how this will affect my practice/be implemented at my school.*

Some respondents appeared to be in schools which were hoping that National Standards would somehow disappear:

- *We have begun preparing for National standards in an exploratory way. We are introducing asTTle that is aligned with National Standards but principal does not want to waste time if it becomes unnecessary.*
- *School has decided not to implement standards, as they are so unclear, and hope no-one has noticed.*
- *There has been no discussion of this within our school.*

Those who had begun to seriously grapple with the National Standards had quite a few comments to make about that:

- *The extra PD and meetings to do with National Standards are also taking a lot of time and are frustrating because most are not sure of where they are heading.*
- *National Standards is a joke. It is an inappropriate means of assessing the holistic development of year 7/8 students. Teachers are already encouraged to do individual planning for their students and these standards just impinge this process by discouraging achievement based learning and development.*
- *Quite an alarming change in paperwork and meetings to make sure we are getting it right, when the major difference is really just the language or terms for things we are doing already.*
- *In my pastoral care role, I assist teachers, students and their Learning Supervisors, e.g. by undertaking some of the testing (not the marking), explaining to families what Nat Stands and results mean etc. This has proven very challenging to learn (and time consuming to do) yet very limited training given.*
- *Not nearly enough non-contact time to do this in. Being in an AREA SCHOOL, not even having a management unit nor any free time whatsoever. All this work is being done by me in the evenings and on the weekends, which is why I am now forced to take out some mental time!*
- *Why are we doing this? Who benefits? Our feed forward was most often ignored and so will the extra workload that this requires.*
- *All students learn at different rates and this is not allowed for. I am all for honesty of reporting but it is too black and white and impersonal and perhaps a turn off to school in earlier years*
- *PD has not been across the board enough in our school - only a couple of teachers have been allowed to attend and so rest are in the dark.*
- *The report load for mid year reports was HUGE due to national standard reports and also normal reports still having to be written.*
- *Extra meetings after school, more files etc. Angry parents...*

- *National Standards have had a dramatic impact on workload and this has not been helped by flaws in the system (aligning PAT and asTTle data and curriculum with standards) and the very poor quality PD which has been available.*
- *National Standards are impacting greatly on teaching and learning processes and just getting in the way of us being able to accommodate to individual learning needs. It is placing high demands on teachers and should be discontinued.*
- *More paper work - I trained to teach, not run a desk!*
- *Working out what National Standards actually mean would be the largest amount of work.*
- *It's still going to be a big work in progress next year - reports are going to be constantly re-vamped until the implementation is fully understood.*

A number of the comments in response to the questions about 2010 and 2011 explained why teachers did not see themselves as greatly affected by the National Standards. Many of these comments are interesting in the light of the Ministry's wish that evidence be collected from across the whole curriculum:

- *I do not teach a subject that National Standards applies to.*
- *Not being a primary teacher I have not been provided with any information regarding national standards - it may or may not impact my teaching workload next year.*
- *Science is not regarded as important by the Ministry so we seem to have escaped National Standards. Others might not agree, but it has not affected us to date.*
- *No National Standards in Science.*
- *I teach PE so therefore the immediate impact is less than other subject areas.*
- *I am not sure of how these standards will affect me at all teaching PE. Therefore I am assuming that I will not have to implement national standards for PE.*
- *It is my understanding that Drama does not need to follow National Standards.*
- *In my area (Health) I am unaware of any National Standards requirements.*
- *Our Year 7 and 8's come for Technology only.*
- *Teach in Fabric Technology so not directly affected by national standards.*
- *As a Technology teacher I am only involved to a point.*
- *As a music specialist, I am not personally involved in the National Standards, but I think it affects everyone by restraining energy to be involved in supporting creative programmes*

### ***Professional development about National Standards***

Respondents who taught and assessed in Years 7 and 8 were asked about their access to professional development about the National Standards in the following question: "In 2010, have you had access to satisfactory professional learning and development about the National Standards changes?"

Table 2 shows that only about a quarter of the respondents believed that they had had access to satisfactory professional learning and development about the Standards.

*Table 2 – Access to satisfactory PD*

<b>Answer</b>	<b>Percentage</b>	<b>Number</b>
Yes	26	128
No	66	329
Don't know	9	43
Total responses		500

There were 96 comments in total. Some of these comments reflected considerable cynicism about the Standards:

- *I have been kept updated, however there appears to be no substance to National Standards. I am satisfied to have no PD on what appears to be a pointless shuffling of bureaucratic terminology.*
- *It has not been satisfactory because the standards were not trialled so the PD is very much trial and error based.*
- *National Standards are not standardised. Very subjective... Exemplars inconsistent on web. Nat Stds, asTTle and PATs are not aligned with National Curriculum. Student can be at the level in one assessment and below in another. A lot of time spent assessing to find you have to use teacher judgement. A waste of time!*
- *Had as much as we could expect but still too many uncertainties and differences in interpretation as to what evidence is required to justify a student reaching a level. Open to many different interpretations throughout NZ!!!!!!!*

Other comments were critical of the PD on offer:

- *The feedback I have received from those that have attended is that they are crap. It was more "what have you done" rather than what you should do.*
- *We have not had enough specific examples of what they look like and the PD days I have attended have been very vague.*
- *Called professional development but not very informative or useful.*
- *Quality has been very poor - it has been 'busy work' rather than really helpful ideas and examples. I have found this incredibly frustrating and it is very inefficient.*

For a number of respondents, the professional development available has been entirely school-based, and for many respondents this was not satisfactory:

- *More external PD would have been useful - we just had our HOF dictating to us what we have to do.*
- *The only professional learning was offered to the HOD and she had problems understanding it and then coming home to teach us about it.*
- *It was limited to management and we were just told to follow their instructions with no real understanding of what the standards were being assessed for.*

- *But not from outside providers which has been hopeless. Has been within school.*
- *The standards have been explained in a school wide professional development. Otherwise I have not been involved.*
- *Others in the faculty went to courses. Information I received was summarised - not all that satisfactory in my opinion. I needed first hand training.*
- *We have had paper handed to us to read and then some time to discuss this in meetings and around the staffroom table but it is still overwhelming and we are all worried about getting it right.*
- *Just talking about new reading materials.*
- *In our Year 7&8 syndicate, yes. Whole school, not a lot at all. Or if there has been... it didn't meet my needs.*
- *Just very briefly in Department Meetings.*

One respondent felt that they had been 'out of the loop' because they were in a Year 7-13 school:

- *Our school missed out on being notified about courses locally on National Standards (maybe because we're Y7-Y13?) - I have been to ONE half-day course!!!*

Another respondent admitted that they had missed out on PD because their school was boycotting the standards:

- *Our school has boycotted any PD.*

Some of the respondents who answered 'No' to the question commented on the workload impact of the lack of professional development:

- *As a result non contact time has been used on a weekly basis as a means of developing us professionally in the area of National Standards.*
- *Yes, however much of this has been done in non contact time taking time away from other subject areas for planning, assessment etc.*

Not all comments were negative, however:

- *Our school didn't bother with all the moaning and groaning and got on with it. We have a great intermediate dept who were willing to attend all professional training offered and we also have an excellent enthusiastic lead teacher.*

### ***Time to collaborate***

The final question directed at Year 7 and 8 teachers was about time to collaborate, as follows: "In 2010, has your school provided you with sufficient time to collaborate with colleagues about the National Standards changes?" Table 3 (see over) shows the responses:

Table 3 – Sufficiency of time to collaborate with colleagues about changes

Answer	Percentage	Number
Yes	26	130
No	63	314
Don't know	11	55
Total responses		499

There were 81 comments in response to this question. Many of them complained that no specific extra time had been set aside for this work:

- *It should not have been used in non contact time. A call back day would have been preferred.*
- *I would have liked time out of our regular meeting to do this. Everything was focused on the reports not changing our teaching.*
- *We have done this collaboration in our own time and at after school meetings.*
- *There have been no opportunities for ANY collaboration.*
- *We give up our own time for meetings on National Standards. No time during teaching school hours.*
- *It is recognised that we are doing this but no extra time is given within the timetable for this collaboration and this is where the pressure arises. Adding in work and not giving time to do it in an already busy schedule.*
- *NOOOOOO! WE HAVE TO WORRY AND MEET UP IN OUR OWN TIME.*
- *No time has been provided for this.*
- *We have just been told to fix it!*
- *We have had to find time on top of all other meetings and extra-curricular activities.*
- *Just normal meeting time, no release for individual testing of pupils.*
- *None offered at all.*

Others complained about the inadequacy of the time that had been allocated:

- *Some time has been given but not enough. Again there seems to be no monetary support from the Ministry for upskilling teachers and making curriculum changes. Also no specific support for Y7-13 schools with specialist teachers, so for us the English teachers have become responsible for all the National Standards assessment for reading and writing.*
- *Some time has been provided with a few individuals but not across the entire school.*
- *We have had a timeline to work to but it was too rushed and has caused a huge amount of stress. We are too busy trying to do it all to waste time chatting about it. We have just got on with it.*
- *Part of one hour long staff meeting.*
- *1 hr to allow writing of report statements for NS.*
- *This has almost all been done in our own time and in professional discussion.*
- *Have provided some time but fairly limited.*

- *Very briefly in Department meetings. We are too over-loaded with marking and assessment.*
- *We have had meetings to go through the reading standards. However, there has been little time to moderate marking between classes and teams.*

Not all comments were negative:

- *We have had no specified time to collaborate, however, we expect little to no change with National Standards. Therefore, I am happy with no time set aside for it.*
- *Faculty time has been allocated to this - a very supportive senior management.*

## **Conclusions**

Many PPTA members who teach and assess in Years 7 and 8, either in a Year 7-13 or 7-10 school or in an area school, are experiencing negative impacts on their workloads and stress levels from the implementation of National Standards. The 70% of respondents who are also tasked with implementing revised achievement standards are being doubly affected.

From this survey there is little evidence of enthusiasm for National Standards from PPTA members who teach in Years 7 and 8. There is also a common perception that the National Standards have nothing to do with them because of the specialist subject(s) they are teaching, despite the government's encouragement of schools to involve all curriculum areas in the development of students' reading, writing and maths and in the collection of evidence against the Standards.

## Appendix – Sample characteristics

Respondents who taught in Years 7 and 8 are a sub-set of a much larger sample of 3,259 PPTA members who responded to the survey in Term 4 2010. Like the larger sample (reported in *The cost of change: PPTA survey on NCEA workload 2010*, NZPPTA, 2011), this sub-set is strongly representative of the PPTA membership.

### Type of school

Most of the respondents who taught Years 7 and 8 were in Year 7-13 or 7-10 schools rather than area schools, judging by their responses to the question “Which collective agreement are you covered by?”

*Table 4 – Applicable collective agreement*

<b>Applicable collective agreement</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Secondary Teachers' Collective Agreement (STCA)	443	90.6
Secondary Principals' Collective Agreement (SPCA)	2	0.4
Area School Teachers' Collective Agreement (ASTCA)	44	9.0
Area School Principals' Collective Agreement (ASPCA)	0	0.0
Skipped question	30	

### Respondent's main role in school

*Table 5 – Respondent's main role in school*

<b>Main role in school</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Senior management	24	4.8
Middle management (e.g. HOD/TIC)	157	31.5
Principal's Nominee (for NZQA)	1	0.2
Guidance counsellor	1	0.2
Careers advisor	2	0.4
Classroom teacher	256	51.3
Special education teacher	7	1.4
Other (please specify)	51	10.2
Answered question	499	
Skipped question	20	

## PPTA region of school

Respondents were asked to name the PPTA region of the school as a way of checking distribution of respondents across the country. The responses are a very representative distribution when matched against PPTA's membership distribution, with a slight bias against areas like Auckland and Counties-Manukau which are largely urban and therefore have fewer area schools or Year 7-13 schools, and in favour of the more rural areas such as the West Coast and Otago.

*Table 6 – PPTA region of respondents*

<b>PPTA region</b>	<b>Number of responses</b>	<b>Sample Percentage</b>	<b>Membership Percentage</b>
Aoraki	17	3	3
Auckland	103	21	23
Bay of Plenty	38	8	4
Canterbury	49	10	11
Central Northland	8	2	2
Central Plateau	7	1	1
Counties-Manukau	6	1	4
East Coast	9	2	2
Hawkes Bay	12	2	4
Hutt Valley	15	3	3
Lower Northland	14	3	1
Manawatu-Whanganui	19	4	6
Marlborough	7	1	1
Nelson	14	3	3
Otago	40	8	5
Southland	35	7	3
Taranaki	11	2	3
Thames Valley/Western Bay of Plenty	8	2	5
Upper Northland	12	2	2
Waikato	27	5	6
Wairarapa	4	1	1
Wellington	32	6	7
West Coast	8	12	1
Don't know	3	1	
Answered question	498		
Skipped question	21		