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# PPTA NEWS

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**Why stay?**

**p6**



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5pm, 23 August for articles and advertising.

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# Ops grant increase cloaks the swindle

Parents and boards of trustees are our natural allies in a common pursuit of achieving the best educational outcomes for students. The “partnership between parents and the professionals” is never more important than when the provision of education comes under threat. Reviews are good if the intent is improvement of service, but all too often we see them lead to overall reductions in the education spend and reductions to professional input. Both of these then facilitate opportunities for business to make profitable inroads into the sector.

The health sector underwent a similar transformation which saw doctors and nurses kicked out of management and administrative posts in hospitals and replaced with generic managers trained in accountancy and business administration. The money changers have not only taken up permanent residence in the temple, they have also set up booths in schools and hospitals.

For several reasons the agenda has been less successful in schools than in hospitals.

The successful battle that teachers and communities fought against bulk funding and site-based employment conditions meant that the notion of a fair and equal access to a high quality public service was not as comprehensively undermined in education as in health.

The illusion of the generic manager never really took off in schools. It is true that the requirements on principals to provide administrative and management leadership has come at the cost of professional leadership but that is still a far better compromise than bringing in financiers to make sub-prime decisions about education. I like to think that the overwhelming stropiness of secondary teachers in the face of uninformed and incompetent leadership causes careerists to look for easier prey. Long may it continue.

The most significant deviation

from the neo-liberal plan for education was as a result of parental involvement. The assumption underpinning the change was that parents would take an adversarial approach to teachers and set about reducing their conditions to save money for the government. Instead, parents quickly found that devolution was a political scam which allowed governments to underfund schools while demanding better and better outcomes. Moreover, parents who play an active part in school governance come to appreciate how complex the issues around teaching and learning are and what a challenging job teaching really is.

There is no better example of the reality of the partnership model in schools than the practice boards follow of appointing extra teachers from the operations grant.

The economic theory of Tomorrow's Schools was that boards should be bulk funded for both salary and operations in the expectation that they would be forced to reduce staff numbers (and eventually, as a result of site contracts, teachers' pay) in order to pay the heat, light and water bill. The reverse has happened: boards have been quick to recognise that the most valuable asset a school has is its teachers. That is why the recent Budget has had another crack at valorising bulk funding by attempting to entice schools to cash-up unused staffing in order to make up for shortfalls in the operations grant.

Boards of trustees' appreciation of the importance of adequate teacher to student ratios to effective classroom delivery might explain why the promised \$50 million staffing cut did not eventuate in the Budget. Although that doesn't mean that it won't be implemented in a less direct way.

The Budget has proposed sweeping changes to the formula for funding schools. Funding has been set at the 1 March roll so schools can plan programmes for the year with



by Kate Gainsford

**“The problem with a system that has funding following the students to another institution is that it undermines the delivery of courses for those students who remain in school.”**

some certainty but the ministry has figured that there may be savings if rolls are recalculated every term.

Of course what seems imminently rational to a bureaucrat sitting in an office in Wellington may be less sensible at the front line.

The problem with a system that has funding following the students to another institution is that it undermines the delivery of courses for those students who remain in school. It may work in large tertiary institutions that have sufficient funding to carry a loss-making course through to the next year but it won't work in cash-strapped secondary schools.

In the worst case scenario, timetables will be re-written every term and courses will collapse with consequent disadvantage to students. As for bureaucracy, it will quadruple at the school level.

This change, along with the 20% increase in GST, will obliterate the Budget's 4% increase in the operations grant so boards and teachers will need to continue to work together to expose what is simply a financial trick. •

## No national standards in secondary

After persistent rumours that there were government plans to introduce National Standards into years 9 and 10, education minister Anne Tolley has promised in writing that this will not happen.

PPTA president Kate Gainsford wrote to Tolley after hearing conflicting messages from officials about government plans to extend the National Standards development to years 9 and 10 to “fill the gap” between the standards in year 8 and the beginning of NCEA in year 11.

Gainsford asked for a definitive statement that National Standards would not be included at a secondary level and explained why doing so would be a very bad idea.

“Such a move would be poorly received by secondary schools, which

are already overwhelmed with the demands of summative assessment at years 11 to 13 ... In fact there is evidence that some secondary schools have become overly focused on assessment at the expense of developing innovative approaches to teaching and learning. To add a further layer of assessment would exacerbate this problem,” she said.

She was relieved to receive a reply from the minister saying “there are no plans to introduce National Standards for years 9 and 10,” and that she was surprised that Gainsford had heard anything to that effect from officials.

Gainsford said while she was pleased to have such an assurance from the minister, a close eye would be kept on the issue.



“We have the minister’s assurance in writing now and we expect no shifts from this position,” she said.

PPTA’s position paper on National Standards can be found in the “Issues in Education” section of [www.ppta.org.nz](http://www.ppta.org.nz) – or you can google the keywords: PPTA national standards overview. •

## NZQA apologises for “miscalculation”

NZQA chief executive Karen Poutasi has admitted the organisation’s “miscalculation” led to secondary teachers being loaded up with extra moderating work.

PPTA president Kate Gainsford issued a “please explain” letter to Poutasi after it was discovered teachers were being made scapegoats for a blunder made by NZQA when it drew up schools’ moderation plans for this year.

NZQA is required to moderate 10% of all internally assessed NCEA work to ensure marking consistency, but only realised part way through this year that it had seriously misjudged the number of marking samples needed.

Instead of owning up and telling the government the target could not be met, NZQA passed the buck to teachers, meaning schools due to be moderated in the second half of this year will have to organise considerably more work to send in.

“Springing extra work on schools, for no good reason and with little notice, is unfair and unproductive,” Gainsford said.

Gainsford had already heard of some schools refusing to submit extra standards and said she was not surprised.

“In response to a recent email survey, many principals reported high levels of anger about the NZQA demands, and PPTA continues to protest vigorously on members’ behalf.”

Poutasi acknowledged PPTA’s annoyance.

“Unfortunately, it is now clear we did not select enough achievement standards compared to unit standards ... we became aware after two rounds of moderation that insufficient student evidence was being submitted.

“We accept, however, that we could have more clearly stated that this situation occurred as a result of our miscalculation,” she said.

Poutasi said NZQA would accept benchmark samples or offer extensions of time for the additional standards selected and would also accept extra student evidence for the standards listed in a school’s original moderation plan.

Poutasi also apologised for the lack of consultation with PPTA and assured Gainsford that NZQA would consult with PPTA if there were any further matters that significantly impacted on teacher workload. •



### What you can do

1. Send twice as many samples for standards in the original moderation plan, ie eight rather than four for a unit standard, 16 rather than eight for an achievement standard. (This is instead of sending samples for the newly requested standards.)
2. Instead of randomly selecting samples for a newly requested standard, send your “benchmark samples”, the ones you keep from year to year to help you make judgments. This is okay even if the odd benchmark sample is quite old, as long as it is still relevant to the current standard.
3. Ask for an extension for submission of newly requested standards. This could be two or three months if you deem this amount of extra time is needed to get the job done. •

# Teachers' Council raises fee to help reverse deficit

An increase in fees from the New Zealand Teachers' Council has been met with outrage by a number of PPTA members, but the council says it can no longer absorb the increased costs of the last eight years.

The increase in the three-yearly practising certificate renewal fee will see it jump from \$120 to \$216 starting 1 July, and increase to \$220.80 from 1 October because of the rise in GST.

On a number of occasions since the increase was first mooted, PPTA president Kate Gainsford conveyed members' anger to the council, which had been consulting on the fee increase but announced on 21 May that it was going ahead.

In a director's message the council offered teachers whose practising certificates will expire between 1 July and 31 December 2010 the option of renewing in advance at the current rate, as long as their applications are received by the council by 30 June at the latest.

PPTA's representative on the council, Hagley Community College teacher Di Wills, has fielded a number of queries from members about the council including its apparent lack of independence from the government.

Members have been critical of the fact that the council is a crown entity with four government appointees, including the chair, yet is almost totally funded by teachers.

Di said that while the council's role was not to advocate for teachers in industrial negotiations with the government, it had discussed how and when it could speak up for teachers "in areas that are in line with its legislated role and the constraints of its status as a crown entity.

"The current National Standards business, which is causing enormous grief and damage to morale for primary teachers, is a case in point, where the council is in a difficult position if it might want to criticise government policy," she said.

In answer to queries about whether the council was operating in a cost-effective manner, Di said she believed the council ran on a similar "shoestring budget" to PPTA.

"From my experience of 10 years or so on the PPTA executive, the shoestrings are remarkably similar," she said.

Di said the council was very active in consciously and overtly restricting spending.

"Meetings are combined where possible, staffing numbers and pay increases are very tightly controlled. All sorts of things are recycled and reused. Council members are quite reluctant to claim even what they are entitled to and staff outputs are monitored to ensure areas are not overstuffed.

"Expenditure is closely and continually monitored in detail and at every meeting I have attended there has been some open expression of an awareness that it is 'teachers' money' which is being spent. It is this attitude that has caused the fees increase to be put off, arguably for too long, to the point where the council is actually into a significant financial deficit just to maintain its functions as required by law, and for which it is held directly accountable to government."

The PPTA executive will be developing a paper for annual conference that will consider a long term vision for the role of the teachers' council and compare this against the functions laid out for the current council in the Education Act.

Kate Gainsford said 'what has the council ever done for me?' was a commonly asked question by members.

"The council's core role in ensuring



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**- Di Wills, PPTA  
Teachers Council rep**

that only the right people enter teaching and that the 'bad eggs' are removed from the profession is actually central to teachers' conditions of work. Teaching alongside a teacher who is incompetent, or who is behaving unethically, is enormously stressful. We certainly need a body to carry out these functions. Who should 'own' it and what else, if anything, it should do will be for members to discuss in branches and at annual conference this year," she said. ■

## Feeling the heat

They are skilled, they are qualified and they're leaving the country. A vast number of subjects, our best and brightest are packing their bags. Liz Knowles\*, who has been teaching in Jordan and Dubai for the past 10 years, says New Zealand seriously needs to address and warns those thinking

Teaching in the Arab states has proved a mixed bag for Kiwi ex-pat Liz Knowles with resources ranging from “phenomenal” to non-existent.

At times she has found herself frustrated by antiquated education systems, poor resources and arrogant students – but one theme that ran through the entire area was the appreciation of the value of education, she said.

“Here, education is seen as the key to what the rest of the world has, entrepreneurship, position, possessions, standards of living etcetera. Here people, from all over the world really, really value education – hence we get paid well and are afforded huge respect just by being educators.

“I suspect that as the world changes and other countries begin to see education as a means towards upward political and social mobility, they will draw even more numbers of teachers from New Zealand and Australia – who are well-trained and flexible – as they will be prepared to pay well to educate the leaders of the future.

“Many Kiwis are not just being employed as teachers but as advisors across the board – and this loss of educators with institutional knowledge will be hugely detrimental to the future of New Zealand. New Zealand has to do something about this,” she said.

Despite the glossy brochures and lure of money, Liz stressed it was very important for Kiwi teachers to do their research before accepting a job in the Arab states.

Her first school, in Jordan, was part of a long chain of international schools with their own form of teaching and behaviour management, based on a failed French system.

The school, which was run by a Lebanon-based company, focused on rote learning

and formal weekly tests.

Students who failed to achieve a satisfactory result were brought back on a Saturday morning to resit the tests. Marks were often fudged or “adjusted” to suit the school’s purposes, Liz said.

There were no laptops or resources of any kind provided.

“It was a chalk and talk environment – very primitive.”

As a result of this antiquated method of teaching students of the modern tech-

nological age, behaviour was shocking. But teachers were not allowed to punish students, she said.

“There were ‘supervisors’ who patrolled the corridors and they removed offenders. But these supervisors were Arab and didn’t like upsetting the often very rich, and very indulged,

children – and as children are revered in this part of the world, little or nothing was done to amend behaviour.

“My partner, who has been teaching for over 30 years walked out on three classes as he, a large imposing man with great rapport with students normally, couldn’t control the overly confident students. They had removed ceiling tiles and broken glass in the door,” she said.

Liz herself has had her eyes filled with splinters from chalk missiles, food thrown at her and received abuse from students for reporting their bad behaviour.

“But the piece de resistance was when a student I had told off during class snuck upstairs during break and tipped a bottle filled with his own urine under our door. That was it – we were out of there.

“The most tragic thing was there were some truly lovely kids at this school, who were well brought up and wanted to learn – they didn’t have a hope,” she said.

Liz’s second school, in Dubai, was the

“... a student I had told off during class snuck upstairs during break and tipped a bottle filled with his own urine under our door.”

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country. While New Zealand faces teacher shortages in a few subjects, their bags for schools in the Middle East. Kiwi ex-pat Liz has been there for three years, thinks this teacher exodus is something New Zealanders should be heading over to do their homework.

is the polar opposite in terms of resources. It was a British-style international school with “phenomenal” resources. “Laptops, textbooks, interactive whiteboards – absolutely everything was available ... the schools in this part of the world are fairly new – big classrooms, resources such as libraries, common room areas, swimming pools and air-conditioning everywhere.”

Liz was lucky to land a job at the college because those that had not been educated in the British system often struggled to find work in the British international schools.

“Management is very pro-Brit, but sometimes they are desperate enough, or the qualifications of the applicants are such that they do employ non-Brits,” she said.

Despite this, New Zealand teachers were seen as very attractive in the Arab states because they are qualified in more than one subject, take on areas of responsibility readily, adapt and adjust very quickly and work hard.

“They pop up all over the place, and are refreshing for their ‘cut to the chase’ attitude and ability to laugh,” she said.

The Arab states can also be a dangerous place to be if you suddenly find yourself out of a job, Liz said.

“Many end up in huge financial trouble when they lose their jobs, can only stay three to four months looking for another (depending on their visa restrictions) and if they default twice they go to prison till the debt is cleared. Hence, thousands of cars have been left all over the city as people flee the country before being locked up,” she said.

Liz has found working in the Arab states a fascinating experience that she “wouldn’t have missed for the world” but she is now heading to Asia to embark on a new adventure.

“We are heading to Hanoi in Vietnam for the next teaching year, after a visit to New Zealand in July. Like most Kiwis, after three years, we’ve done our tour of duty in this part of the world.” ▪

*\* Not her real name.*



## A shortage of reasons to stay

- Shortages in key subjects like Science, Maths, Technology and Te Reo persist as there are better paying opportunities overseas or outside the teaching profession.

- At the height of the biggest recession for generations, one in 10 of the jobs advertised could not be filled by 15 March this year.

- One in 13 jobs advertised had no New Zealand applicants and one in six had no applicants who met the basic measures of suitability (qualifications, experience and communication skills) to be considered for the job.

- Teacher supply will deteriorate

rapidly as the economy recovers to pre-crisis levels as teachers move overseas, take up non-teaching jobs or retire.

How can we fix this?

- To retain highly skilled secondary teachers as the unemployment rate begins to fall again, salaries will need to become more competitive.

- Investment now can build capacity and capability in the sector to meet diverse student learning needs.

- We must demonstrate that secondary teaching is a professional career of first choice. ▪

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EDUCATION • FOR ALL • FOR GOOD



**CAMPAIGN KIT**

## Taking our task to the community

Every PPTA branch should have received a copy of a kit to assist them in explaining the collective agreement claims to the local community.

All members are encouraged to participate in getting the message out and explaining the issues that the claims are intended to address.

The kit is available online on the members only section of [www.ppta.org.nz](http://www.ppta.org.nz).

A briefer version is also available on the public side of the site for parents and community members who are interested. You can find it at:

<http://www.ppta.org.nz/index.php/collective-agreements/teachers-bargaining>

## Council tightens the rules for teacher education providers

The New Zealand Teachers Council is moving to tighten up some of the rules around the approval and monitoring of teacher education courses.

Following sector-wide consultation last year the council has proposed new requirements that teacher education providers would have to meet when they sought approval for a new course, or had their approval renewed.

According to PPTA's representative on the reference group to review the rules, Judie Alison, the council appeared to have listened to the views teachers expressed during consultation.

"It has become obvious that teachers do not have high trust of teacher educators," she said.

"There is a perception that they don't listen to teachers, they don't involve teachers enough, and that they are more interested in putting bums on seats than ensuring that courses graduate only people who are

fully ready to start teaching."

Teacher educators, on the other hand, argue that they are struggling with insufficient funding to do the job well.

"Since the move of teacher educators to universities they have been forced to do more of their teaching in large lecture-style classes, and to spend their time doing research to meet requirements of the PBRF (performance-based research fund) when they would rather be teaching students," she said.

The Teachers Council was proposing greater involvement of teachers in the approval and running of teacher education courses as members of approval and selection panels.

A new issue that PPTA will need to decide its stance on is the movement of some universities towards making their education courses level 8 (post-graduate level) with an expectation or even requirement to upgrade them to Masters qualifications in the early

years of teaching, Alison said.

"This idea seems to have arisen because the Tertiary Education Commissions rate tertiary institutions on the proportion of their students who move on to higher qualifications, termed 'progression'.

"When a student completes a BSc, for example, then goes on to do a Graduate Diploma in Teaching that is not progression. If the teaching qualification was post graduate, it would be," she said.

A problem with this would be that universities' staffing levels meant that post graduate courses would have fewer teaching hours and more independent study hours than graduate courses. In a level 8 programme, students might well see their lecturers less often, she said.

"There is also the question of how beginning teachers could possibly cope with Masters level study in their first few years. So far, we have said that we are not convinced that this would be a good move," she said. ▪

Blog of the month

# Perfidious misery - the Budget and Vote:Education

By Silverback

**H**ave you seen the part of Vote: Education that changes the ops funding calculation for secondary schools?

From 2011 the ops funding will be recalculated every quarter and secondary schools will have the ops funding adjusted accordingly.

The Ministry of Education website says that this is an incentive to schools to improve their retention of students.

What?

Apparently in the mind of the ministry schools now influence the school leaving rate more than: the state of the national economy. Or the state of the local economy. Or the needs of employers to recruit apprentices or employees in the midyear. Or the armed forces or police with their midyear intakes. Or population movements. Or the collapse of a local industry.

In effect schools are going to be fined for having their kids sorted and ready to move on to the next step in life.

Made the cut for intake into the Navy, Angela? Excellent, we'll fine the school when you leave.

An apprentice for your engineering firm, sir? To help take up that free trade opportunity in China? Sorry, can't help. If we give you a student in the middle of the year, we'll be fined.

Apparently the only time kids can leave school for any reason is at the end of the year. At any other times schools will have their funding cut. They'll be fined.

So a 4% increase in secondary ops funding, less the 20% increase in GST, plus the reduction in ops funding due to the new calculation method equals no increase for secondary schools.

Any school unfortunate enough to have students leave during the year will probably be worse off than they were before this budget.

I'd love you to tell me that I have got it wrong, but I think that the only way I can have this wrong is if there is an as yet undetected proposal to fully compensate schools for the GST increase beyond the 4% rise announced in the budget.

I wonder which bright spark gave the government this piece of stunning policy advice? Perhaps the minister has been sold a pup

by a disingenuous official who has devised a way to use a superficially appealing phrase like "incentive for schools to improve their engagement with students" to claw back the money that the GST has not already got.

It just has to be stopped somehow. What thoughts has PPTA got? •



Have a burning education issue you'd like to blog?

Like to see what is on teachers' minds? Check out PPTA's blog - The Pigeonhole <http://www.ppta.org.nz/index.php/ppta-blog>.

Send all blog ideas or content to [akirtlan@ppta.org.nz](mailto:akirtlan@ppta.org.nz).



## Want to make a difference to a child?

**Volunteer Mentors** sought by well established mentoring programme for children of prisoners in Christchurch and Auckland. Training and ongoing support provided. The role would suit current and retired teachers wanting to use their skills to walk alongside a child one-on-one.

**Contact PILLARS 09 262 2639**  
**[mentoringakl@pillars.org.nz](mailto:mentoringakl@pillars.org.nz) or see [www.pillars.org.nz](http://www.pillars.org.nz)**

## Out in the field

# ACC cases — they take time

Information and advice from PPTA's intrepid field officers.

**F**rank fell off a mountain at the end of December 2006.

He fell about 90 metres, and fractured his left ankle and collarbone. He was in hospital for eight days and off work for the first term of 2007. When he returned it was with the aid of a wheelchair and crutches. The surgeon said he would continue to improve, and in November wrote to ACC to say that Frank had recovered. Frank felt quite good that summer and, although he was still on crutches in February, felt that he was on the mend.

In April he collapsed and was in bed for a week. He struggled at work after that, was often in pain and tired, but still believed that his health would improve.

In November Frank had another collapse and this destroyed his optimism about his health. He struggled through to the end of the school year, unwell and in pain.

Over December and January, Frank made his decision. He had to

get to the Queen Elizabeth Hospital in Rotorua, which had a chronic pain unit. A friend in Rotorua offered him accommodation. Frank “disappeared” and the PPTA field officer became involved in February, to sort his employment situation out. Frank just turned up to the hospital and said he needed treatment. They explained that he needed to find a GP first, and eventually he was referred to a surgeon.

In May 2009 the surgeon told Frank that a CAT scan had revealed what the x-rays did not see: that the bones in his heel and collarbone had not joined. They were still broken. He was amazed that Frank had been able to walk around for the last two years. Further surgery was necessary.

Frank had the surgery in June 2009. In the same month ACC refused his request for weekly compensation on the grounds that his injury was not a recurrence of the previous one. Further evidence was presented, but to no avail. Eventu-

ally, the case went to an independent review hearing in February 2010. In an 11-page finding, the reviewer comprehensively quashed the decisions of the previous ACC panels. Even then there was further bureaucratic obstruction to do with medical certificates, and a complaint had to be lodged. Finally, in May 2010, Frank received weekly compensation dating from February 2009.

ACC cases are often hard work. There are jungles of legislation and bureaucracy to trudge through, and expert guidance is essential. The Council of Trade Unions (CTU) provides an injury advocacy service staffed by highly knowledgeable people. PPTA field officers work with the CTU service to guide members through the intricacies of the ACC legislation and processes. It takes a long time, and the dice may seem loaded against the applicant, but the independent review process can bring about pleasing results, as in Frank's case. •

## Letters

## Teachers' pay and conditions - "I'm well over it"

Dear editor,

I am thinking seriously about re-training as a lawyer and the latest *Negotiator* (#12, 8 June) has almost clinched the deal.

I already do more than what is required – according to the current collective agreement.

I work 55 hours a week, run field trips during term break and average only five to six weeks off a year.

Most teachers I know of spend several hundred dollars out of their own pocket each year on their classes. Several (like me) spend rather a lot more as we support student activities etc.

During rugby season it is hello to 70 hour weeks (now!), and I am still ensuring that the reports I write are strictly evidenced based!

Most of my friends with the same

level of qualification have the same holidays (five to six weeks is normal for a highly educated professional!) as I do, they only work 35 - 45 hours a week, and actually have most of their weekends free. I normally average six days a week throughout the year!

Most of my friends have a similar salary to mine, or make more than I do – only one makes less than I do – and that is by choice (remembering most of my friends are educated, and NOT teachers).

I am well over it!

To replace me will cost the taxpayer \$150 000 or more (remember student loans only account for 25-30% the cost of an education) just to educate someone to my level, and then they have to want to teach!

And I have effectively five



bosses: my head of senior school, the board of trustees, my principal (both are very supportive), the ministry (secretary for education), the Teachers Council and NZQA.

Even in the army I only had three!

Laughable really!

*Brett Smith  
Aurora College*



## Just rubbish

*MOE advice to schools:  
Risk Management (Disasters) -  
Reminder to Schools  
Rubbish Bins*

“Remove all rubbish bins from the school grounds, but if rubbish bins are necessary while the school is open please place them against a fireproof wall or somewhere away from the school buildings.

There has been a very high incidence of arson to school buildings as a result of fires lit in rubbish bins over the last year.”

For those of you wondering why there seems to be more rubbish than receptacles in schools these days.

## Time for Math lessons?

Tony Ryall either needs to get his facts straight or head back to school for math lessons. The state services minister has slated secondary teachers for asking for a “4% increase for each of the next three years”. The PPTA claim however is for 4% for a one year term of settlement, not 12% over three. Ryall has also trumpeted cuts in public spending overseas without appearing to look at the facts. *PPTA News* research shows that very few western countries are cutting back teaching positions and most OECD countries value their public education systems and the people in them and are continuing to invest in them.

(For more detail see the Pigeonhole blog ‘Ryall, Ryall, stnap no ryaff’ at: <http://www.ppta.org.nz/index.php/ppta-blog/ryall-ryall-stnap-no-ryaff.html>)

## Sprinklers in schools

“As a parent I would not be happy if my school was using money that should be going to the education of my children for sprinklers. I send my kids to school to get educated, not to have a shower.”

– education minister Anne Tolley

But sending kids to a burned-down school, or losing a student or teacher’s life is okay? (See Pigeonhole blog “Alternative realities - Stop drop and roll”.)

## Oh sugar!

*PPTA News* recently received a secondary school teaching resource from Chelsea sugar (along with some very sweet fudge brownies and chocolate flavoured icing sugar). The resources look at the positive social and economic impact of sugar on the community and suggest such educational activities as taste testing. Notably absent is any mention of sugar’s impact on communities’ weight or teeth! •

# 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 1970.

## Caught out

While the president and general secretary were in Taupo during April for the Bay of Plenty regional conference, they slipped out one afternoon for a spot of fishing on the lake. Things were just getting exciting from the happy fishermen’s point of view when a local PPTA member who (for various – and doubtless excellent – reasons) had not even been at the conference zigzagged into sight, his boat sinking. In the best tradition of the sea, all other pursuits were abandoned in order to save the sailor and his ship, and an hour later success crowned the presidential efforts...Moral of the story: look what services the PPTA supplies to members!

Alternative moral: serves you right if you don’t attend your regional conference!

## Staffing shortages

“The wonder of the staffing position is not that there is a shortage of teachers but that there are any teachers at all...A public enquiry a few years ago found an similar desperate shortage

in the police force, which was soon remedied with necessary upgrading of salaries.” – *Minister of Education Brian Talboys*

## Grasslands era demise

The last years of the ‘sixties gave one clear message to New Zealand. No longer can our economy rely predominantly on sliding frozen carcasses and 56lbs. cartons of butter into the holds of refrigerated vessels to be sold in protected markets in the United Kingdom. The purely grasslands era has gone and we must

diversify our economy or become a very poor country indeed...The adoption of a five year programme in 1968 by government to reduce secondary classes is a beginning. In doing so, it recognised that large classes made unfair demands upon teachers and that the pupils involved were likely to be inadequately taught. The early ‘seventies will see how far the government has realised the crucial part education will play in the future of this country...” – *from Secondary Education in the Seventies, Ted Hamill*



This cartoon ran with an ad for a new science textbook in an era that was a little less PC.



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