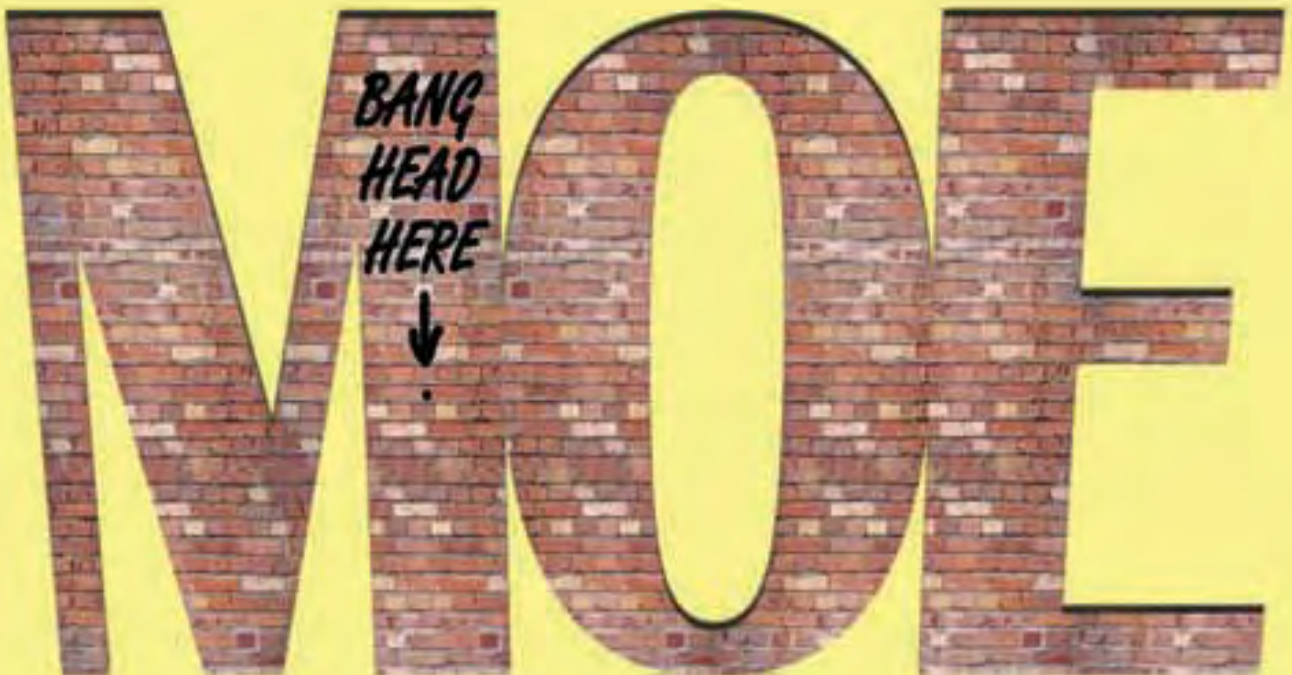


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PPTA NEWS

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STCA negotiations
All in all it's just another ... p6



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Not all the opinions expressed within *PPTA News* reflect those of the PPTA.

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Manufactured crisis

With nearly nine out of ten students leaving school with a recognised qualification, why does the minister say one in five are being failed by the system?

The Education Review Office has just released its national report on inclusion of students with high needs. Predictably enough, based on a sample including 30 secondary schools, they've determined that 20% of schools don't use inclusive practices.

Then the minister of education got in on the act with her recent announcement of a "major new approach to lifting student achievement" because "one in five of our children are being failed by the schooling system". Where does this stuff come from?

The Education Counts website publishes a raft of education statistics and reports. The 2008 school leavers report tells us that 85% had a minimum qualification of NCEA level one. In fact 71% of school leavers had NCEA level two (or better) and nearly half left with UE (university entrance). It also tells us that three-quarters completed their secondary schooling, leaving at the end of year 13. Whichever way you crunch these numbers they don't add up to one in five.

Moreover, the statistics don't show the further group of students who leave school with partially completed NCEA qualifications, with which they are able to complete (or cross-credit towards) vocational training courses at polytechs, PTEs, or through workplace apprenticeships and other earn-while-you-learn programmes.

Nor do they alert us to the fact that a small and valued group of students in our schools will not attain NCEA due to their special learning needs. There aren't many of them, but as mainstreamed students following integrated programmes of teaching and learning they are rightfully included in the data.

The truth is that nearly nine out of ten students leave school with a

nationally recognised qualification and the trend is upward. Unfortunately, the real figures are no help if your goal is to manufacture a sense of crisis.

And it's not good news if you are wedded to the old system that condemned most students to failure. There are worrying signals that universities hold a dim view of secondary school teachers and their ability to form judgements based on internal assessment tasks and don't trust NZQA's system of national moderation. They are busily developing their own tests – which apparently will be valid and reliable.

Meanwhile, NZQA has embarked on a well overdue UE review. There's a bunch of officials (and a teacher or two) sitting around a table trying to work out what might constitute a fair and reasonable measure of a student's readiness to embark on university study. According to the university rep on that, secondary schools are not equipped to make that judgement either.

They also consider much of what is taught and assessed to be NOT a valid subject – hence the need to keep an approved subject list. Apparently merit or excellence endorsements are no substitute for good old fashioned subjects, despite MOE research that says the opposite.

At the very least this is irritating, especially given that almost every secondary teacher in the country is a graduate of a New Zealand university or – better still – a more highly ranked offshore tertiary institution, and likes to think their qualifications render them (at least partly) fit to teach and assess at secondary level.

In the meantime, schools are trying to work out how to redesign senior courses to take account of the breadth and depth of the New Zealand Curriculum, the re-aligned



by Kate Gainsford

standards (whatever they might look like), with reference to the legendary teaching and learning guides (roll on November, please), work out what to do once most of the unit standards have disappeared in 2012, and maintain an inclusive, challenging, engaging and worthwhile curriculum for all learners.

In case you sense a loss of direction here, let me recap. On the one hand schools are supposed to amend any and all practices (using great leadership) to ensure inclusion of every student, whilst also lifting their academic standards sufficiently to meet a vision of NCEA level two as a benchmark. On the other hand, the universities are suggesting that to study at their august institutions high school graduates need NCEA level three or better (made up entirely of externally assessed achievement standards from a slimmed down list of approved subjects).

It's enough to make me come over all biblical (and a bit sexist and classist to boot). "No man can serve two masters."

Either we are working towards a more inclusive secondary system with pathways for all students as per the Skills Strategy or we are returning to last century when secondary school programmes were controlled by universities in the interests of the 10% of students who were bound for academia.

I know which vision I prefer. ▪

Your voice Your vote Your union

As a PPTA member, Annual Conference is your opportunity to participate in developing PPTA policy. Each year PPTA members put forward a number of papers with recommendations that are debated and put to the vote among conference delegates.

The 2010 PPTA annual conference will be held from September 28 to 30 at the Brentwood Hotel, Kilbirnie, Wellington and all members are invited to attend.

Papers this year cover a number of important issues such as behaviour and engagement in

secondary schools, public, private partnerships, the role of the New Zealand Teachers' Council, developing secondary school leadership and improving the education system.

The PPTA team in your region is now selecting delegates. Let them know

that you are interested.

Information for conference delegates and an online registration form can also be found on the PPTA website at: <http://www.ppta.org.nz/index.php/annual-conference>.



Catch your union live

Workload pressures mean that keeping up with your union's activities is always going to be a challenge.

We hope that by providing ready access to the dialogue, debate and decisions that make up PPTA's annual conference we can keep you better informed.

Between 28 - 30 September look for the live video streaming on the homepage of www.ppta.org.nz. Unable to see it live? That's ok. Clips of key speeches, debates and decisions will be available on the website. Give it a click. •



Treasury buries advice

PPTA has asked the Ombudsman to step in after combing through Treasury papers that show more deletions than text.

President Kate Gainsford says the information that is not blacked out appears to show a return to the failed policies of the 1990s.

“Treasury has stepped back in time to the days of bulk funding, performance pay, privatisation and cost-cutting, and there is some evidence that the minister of finance supports this agenda,” she said.

PPTA has asked the Ombudsman to review some of the deletions that are justified by a need to “protect the confidentiality of advice given by officials”.

While the Treasury advice does acknowledge that the proportion of school leavers with at least NCEA level two has improved (particularly for Māori and Pasifika students and students from low decile schools) it questions the value of investing in the very initiatives that helped produce this result, Gainsford said.

“There remain questions around the value obtained from schooling investments in recent years, especially the cost of smaller class-sizes... Looking forward, we need to get better results with no new money,” the advice reads.

The document also reveals that around 45% (\$10 million) of the school support services budget is now being funneled into literacy, numeracy and National Standards at the expense of other subjects.

“This has been achieved through a reduction in the support services that the ministry purchases for other curriculum areas such as Science, Technology and the arts,” the document says.

The papers also show that, when it came to the subject of staffing cuts,



education minister Anne Tolley took on the Treasury and won.

“The Minister of Education wishes to take a paper to Cabinet to discuss options for realising \$50 million of savings from staffing entitlements, including an option not to realise these savings and to increase the Vote Education baseline instead... Our view is that the Cabinet paper should not proceed, the advice reads”.

While PPTA is pleased that Tolley rejected Treasury’s \$50 million staffing cuts, blacked out sections of the advice document still ring alarm bells, Gainsford said.

Under the heading “next steps” the document signals that reviews of “staffing ... will affect future teacher workforce policy and the management of cost pressures for Budget 2010 and beyond.” What follows is blanked out. It also says there will be consequences from “the outcome of a review of staffing entitlements, and value for money reviews of professional development and resource teachers...” (the rest is also blanked out).

The phrases “manage down” and “room for reprioritisation” appear repeatedly throughout the

document, particularly in reference to the “modest operating allowance in comparison to past Budgets.”

Most concerning was the phrase “the Minister of Education has already made some decisions to manage down Budget pressures,” which was followed by a large number of deleted sentences.

According to Treasury it is not necessary to spend large amounts of new money to lift achievement. Productivity can be improved by “using limited funding more efficiently to achieve the same or better results,” and “shifting the balance between public and private funding to better reflect public and private benefits”.

The general tone of the advice (between the deletions) was that schools could do more with less, Gainsford said.

“We are hoping for a clearer picture from the Ombudsman, so we know what we will be up against,” she said.

* For further commentary on Treasury’s advice visit the Pigeon-hole blog at www.ppta.org.nz and look for “Treasury advice on education – never mind the quality, feel the width.”

MoE ignores constructive approaches

The story so far

By the time this issue reaches schools PPTA branches throughout the country will be holding paid union meetings (PUMs) to make progress on the next steps in the STCA campaign (see page opposite.)

Negotiations broke down late last month when PPTA walked from the bargaining table after 13 fruitless sessions. PPTA's claim was designed to be practical and affordable in improving conditions in schools for teachers and students.

The ministry however ignored all constructive approaches at the table and instead lodged a raft of counter-claims, PPTA president Kate Gainsford said.

"The ministry continues to undervalue teachers and shows little indication it wishes to achieve a ratifiable settlement at this stage," she said.

Straw poll results

The exact results of the secret ballot held at the end of term two are now available.

More than 80% of PPTA's branches took part and voted overwhelmingly (97.5%) to support the PPTA executive's rejection of the ministry's offer for settlement. They also voted, in the same numbers, to call for an improved offer from the government.

The offer would need to address claims to ensure safer school learning environments and better learning conditions for students, remove all attacks on current provisions and offer a salary that valued the vital work of secondary teachers and supported recruitment and retention, members said.

"In other words, teachers want a fair and reasonable offer, not one that offers only 1.5% and 1% pay increases in exchange for two weeks' extra work, while ignoring all teachers' claims – many of which were low or no cost," Gainsford said.



The ministry's mantra

At the ministry's request (a month after being informed of members' rejection of their offer) the PPTA bargaining team went back to the table on 27 July in the vain hope there would be something more to discuss. Instead there was a re-run of the "telling it like it was" article in July's *PPTA News* (vol. 31, no. 6).

"When teachers vote something down, they mean it, which is something the ministry needs to understand," Gainsford said.

"There was no recognition of the worth of teachers in the public education system and no understanding of the increasing workload expected from teachers and the decreasing time to do it in. It is hard to have faith in the process if all they are prepared to do is press the play button on a pre-recorded mantra," she said.

There was scant regard for the possibilities of reaching agreement on low or no-cost items that boards of trustees in many schools already provided, she said.

"Clearly there is not enough in the ministry's current funding envelope to present an improved offer that values teachers - although they say they are willing to rearrange the deck chairs 'within reason'.

"Such an answer will simply leave us with a massive teacher shortage."

Local campaigning

PPTA urges members to continue to use the STCA Campaign Kit sent in June to inform local parents and communities about the issues at stake. Local newspapers are interested in stories about local schools, students and teachers. Parents are interested in smaller class sizes, teacher recruitment and health and safety issues in the school grounds and practical classes. They understand that local schools must be able to attract experienced and skilled teachers – something politicians should understand too. ▪

Standing together

PPTA has prepared advice for members about looking after themselves financially in times of industrial activity.

Some branches and regions work collectively in this respect to support each other.

This material can be found by going to www.ppta.org.nz, logging in and going to Collective Agreements/Bargaining. ▪

Where to now?

Secondary Teachers' Collective Agreement (STCA)

Members to vote on campaign action

PPTA executive called for nationwide paid union meetings to be held on August 24 and 25, where members will decide the next steps in the collective agreement campaign. There are a range of options to consider, including industrial action. Executive believes PPTA is at a critical stage in the campaign to protect public education and get a fair and reasonable deal for teachers and their students in all schools.

"There is widespread and bitter disappointment that, after many hours of bargaining, the ministry remains inflexible about

the issues put to them at the bargaining table – many of which are exactly the issues identified by other parts of the ministry," president Kate Gainsford said.

"It is a case of 'but we can't possibly have the union involved – we can't let teachers' views count'."

Members will be asked to demonstrate their frustration at the lack of progress and support their representatives at the bargaining table. ■



Secondary Principals' Collective Agreement (SPCA)

Ninety percent of principals bargaining together

PPTA and SPANZ (secondary principals association of New Zealand) principals have agreed to a joint protocol for this bargaining round. This includes a commitment to adopt the principles of good faith by not undermining the other.

This has been extended to secondary teachers' bargaining as

well, as their common interests lie in protecting the interests of the wider secondary teaching profession and the public education system of New Zealand. This means that 90% of secondary principals are bargaining together. Joint claims have been lodged and the ministry's claim received.

The ministry's approach was once

again to describe its first priority in bargaining as "outcomes consistent with ongoing improvements in education" then make claims that had nothing to do with that, a member of the negotiating team said. At the time of writing PPTA and SPANZ had been waiting for three weeks to see the ministry's response to the principals' claims. ■

Area School Teachers' Collective Agreement (ASTCA)

Ministry foggy on own claims

PPTA worked jointly with NZEI (New Zealand Educational Institute) to form claims for area school teachers and lodged them on 27 July.

The bargaining team received much the same treatment as the STCA and SPCA teams did,

according to one of the negotiators. The only difference was that, when asked for more detail about the claims they had lodged, the ministry bargaining team was unable to do so. "This was either because they did not understand their own claims or they were

deliberately following an inefficient and clumsy plan to delay effective bargaining."

The PPTA/NZEI bargaining team is still waiting on further clarification of the ministry's claims and will be back in negotiations on 31 August and 1 September. ■

Principals engage



Principals from throughout the country took part in a three-day conference in Wellington late last month that was aimed at engaging them in a number of important aspects of their career.

The 'Engaging in Wellington' conference began with a speech by secretary for education Karen Sewell.

Participants then engaged with the New Zealand Curriculum through keynote speaker, Australian education and learning consultant, Dr Julia Atkin, whose

presentation can be found on the New Zealand Secondary Principals Council website www.nzspc.org.nz.

A workshop was held to discuss the various aspects of engaging different types of students and a speech was given by PPTA president Kate Gainsford.

NZCER chief researcher Cathy Wylie spoke to principals about a number of issues including morale and stress levels, staffing, and funding concerns. Delegates rounded up the first day with a dinner with minister of education Anne Tolley at Parliament.

The principals engaged with schools through a series of site visits and heard about working with

communities through a presentation by district court judge John Walker.

They engaged with bureaucracy through a panel discussion featuring NZQA deputy CEO Bali Haque, New Zealand Teachers' Council director Peter Lind, Dr Carol Mutch, Associate Director of the School of Professional Development at the Christchurch College of Education, Ministry of Education group manager Mary Chamberlain and Edgewater College principal Allan Vester.

The conference wrapped up with a speech on engaging leaders by chief executive and secretary of foreign affairs and trade John Allen.

For a more detailed article on conference presentations keep an eye out for the September edition of *PPTA News*. •

Transformation, celebration, liberation

The 16th PPTA National Maori Teachers' Conference was held in Rotorua last month at the Sudima Lake Hotel.

About 150 people took part in the annual celebration of Māori secondary education and this year's themes were transformation, liberation and celebration, consolidating Māori leadership, reclaiming collective space and shared conversations.

Participants took part in two days of political debate, curriculum and cultural workshops and renewing professional relationships.

Workshop themes included Whānau Ora and the role of secondary teachers, introducing the new professional community on Marautanga, Te Reo Māori curriculum in English medium schools, Te Rautaki Māori – NZQA Māori strategy, insights of a practitioner



– moving from policy back to the classroom, literacy, Te Ataarangi learning and teaching methods and Te Kotahitanga.

Speakers included Dame Iritana Tawhiwhirangi, Robyn Roa, Te Rita Papesch, Daryn Bean, Marcus

Akuhata Brown, Melanie Riwai-Couch, Nicola Ngarewa, Ako Panuku, Irene Pewhairangi, Moeke Paaka and Johnny Waititi.

The next issue of *PPTA News* will feature an indepth article on some of these speakers. •



All PPTA members are eligible to run as candidates for PPTA president, junior vice-president and positions on the executive. If this sounds like you, from 23 August you can ask your branch chair for nomination information and application forms or download it all from www.ppta.org.nz.

Nominations close 5.00pm Friday 17 September 2010.

If this isn't you and you're just content with voting, we will feature candidates' blurbs in the next issue of *PPTA News*.

Subject associations feel the pressure

PPTA's professional issues advisory officer Sarah Dalton shares her views on last month's PPTA subject association forum.



The standards review was a hot topic at this year's forum, along with the ongoing lack of subject-specific support for secondary teachers.

Subject associations are feeling the pressure as Anne Tolley's relentless crusade for the so-called "national standards" continues to strip all other support away from secondary schools.

One of the key sessions at the forum was a panel discussion on Ministry of Education (MoE)/subject association partnerships in the context of the Standards Review.

What emerged was a history of difficult relationships and a resulting lack of trust in the MoE's ability to manage these productively and – at times – ethically.

While all speakers demonstrated a high degree of tact and goodwill, it was clear that time pressures and political drivers on MoE staff take precedence over careful management of ongoing relationships with subject associations.

The MoE official who was editing the teaching and learning guides acknowledged that neither the timeframes nor the production process have been ideal. In fact, the publication deadlines (November/December 2010) for most subjects offer little help to teachers planning for 2011.

However, the MoE is keen to engage with teachers and subject associations as the guides are developed, and welcome feedback as the guides appear on the website: <http://seniorsecondary.tki.org.nz/>.

The New Zealand Qualifications Authority (NZQA) came to the forum to explain the new QAAM (quality assured assessment materials) mark – a quality assurance process that means any assessment resource with a QAAM mark is guaranteed to be fit for purpose.

This may well be greeted with a sigh of relief from teachers who have long been fed up with the variable quality of assessment resources from Te Kete Ipurangi and from private providers. NZQA gave an assurance that all the new assessment materials for the revised standards will meet the QAAM standard. ▪

Working women get boulder



The gender pay gap has grown to 12.81% leaving many working women between a rock and a hard place. This would have been no surprise to the Pay Equity Challenge Coalition who left no stone unturned marking the anniversary of the closing of Pay and Employment Equity Unit. In a bid to highlight Minister of Women's Affairs Pansy Wong's promise to "leave no stone unturned in trying to close the pay gap" the group placed five large rocks with five solutions to the pay gap on Parliament grounds on 30 June. "We expect Pansy Wong will be thrilled that we have done the work for her and we look forward to our solutions being actioned," coalition spokesperson Angela McLeod said.

Mathematics resource



The *Effective Pedagogy in Mathematics/ Pangarau Best Evidence Synthesis (BES)* is an



overview of what works to lift achievement for diverse learners in mathematics.

The BES has been designed as a resource to support New Zealand teachers and pedagogical leadership and has a series of vignettes throughout to bring the findings to life.

PPTA has provided a foreword to the resource and free copies for teachers can be ordered from: orders@thechair.minedu.govt.nz

DEMAND FAIRNESS AT WORK

Your rights are under attack

The National Party promised change - but change should be for the better

They have attacked workers' rights from the start and it's serious

Contact your union

Go to www.fairness.org.nz for more info



Out in the field

One of the hardest questions in the book

Information and advice from PPTA's intrepid field officers.

Earlier this year we dealt with the matter of how much notice a teacher has to give if they wish to resign. The other side of this issue is: how much notice does an employer have to give a teacher? The answer in some cases is two months, in others one month and in some cases none at all. Why is there this variation?

An employer giving notice of two months will be doing so because they are required to by the STCA or the ASTCA. The most common reasons for this are school closures or mergers or the operation of surplus staffing procedures that result in the loss or reduction in status of positions.

An important date in any year is 27 November because it is two months before the official end of a school year – 27 January of the

following year.

For long term relievers notice may be even more complex. It may be two months or it may be half the remaining period before the position was due to come to an end [STCA 3.11.2(a)] or it may be one month [ASTCA 2.8(b)] so the relevant collective agreement needs to be referred to.

A person occupying a maternity leave position is entitled to only one month's notice where the person who is on maternity leave gives written notice that they intend to return to their position earlier than originally intended.

No notice may be needed in situations where a teacher was employed and at the time of employment the end of the employment was already identified.

No notice is also required when a teacher is medically retired. No notice also applies in those extreme cases where a teacher is instantly dismissed under the competence provisions or for serious misconduct. ▪



Great school doco on DVD

Trouble Is My Business, a documentary that takes an inside look at the realities of the New Zealand teaching environment through a South Auckland high school (reviewed in *PPTA News* vol. 30, no. 4) is now available on DVD.

The film provides an insight into the struggles some young people have to overcome to get an education and explores truancy, bullying, drugs and social and cultural issues in New Zealand schools.

While the children and their families often dealt with significant social problems inherent within the community, there is great strength, dignity and humor in their lives. The film represents both the joys and trials of their experiences.

Those interested in purchasing a copy can contact producer Vicky Pope at vickypope@me.com. Visit www.troubleis-mybusiness.com for more information. ▪

★★★★
"This is a terrific piece of work. Funny, entertaining... downright moving."
Greene Tuchen, *Dominion Post*

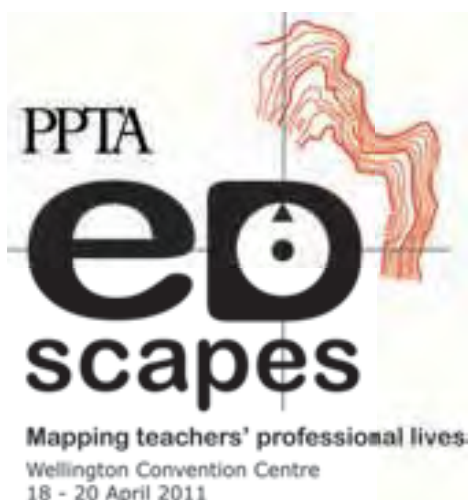


Watch the film in schools and on TV this weekend and the school holidays. Purchase your copy now.

TROUBLE IS MY BUSINESS

A documentary by
Juliette Veber





Give us a piece of your mind ...

If you're leading or involved with an interesting initiative in your school, come and share your experiences with other eDscapes delegates in April.

The conference organisers know many teachers are engaged in a variety of dynamic projects and schemes in their school, so they're keen to hear from teachers who could bring what they've learned and lead a workshop.

If you feel you've only got enough for part of a session, that's ok, we can pair you up with another workshop on a related topic.

To apply visit www.eenz.com/ppta11 and go to "Call for Prestns".

Visit www.eenz.com/ppta11 for information about conference themes, keynote speakers and online registration - only \$150 for PPTA members. Day registration available. Follow us @Edscapes on www.twitter.com

The Design a T-shirt Competition

Open to all Primary, Intermediate and High school students

First Prize - 8gb iPod touch, a 'What Now' Prize pack and a Cadbury Prize Pack!!!

Additional Prizes of Cadbury Prize packs, Cadbury World Family passes, Back Packs.



You design the print for the front of a white t-shirt and we will put it on the web. Encourage your friends and family to buy your design. The design which sells the most will win the competition.

Visit our homepage to learn more: tshirts.flyers2u.co.nz

Rules Overview

- See our website for the full terms and conditions.
- You must be in a Primary, Intermediate or High School to enter a design.
- You design an A4 sized print for a white t-shirt.
- We will list the first 300 acceptable entries on our website.
- You sell as many as you can (a minimum of ten shirts is required for the design to go into production and the entry to be valid)
- The entrant that sells the most t-shirts, wins.
- Entries open 6-8-2010.
- Entries close on the 6-9-2010.
- T-shirts go on sale as soon as they are accepted and uploaded.
- Competition sales close 31-10-2010. (Actual sales carry on till February to continue raising funds)

Winners will be announced shortly after 31-10-2010.