

Sabbatical Report - Performance Management

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Term 3, 2009

The school's function is to deliver 21st Century Schooling. It is for students who:

- are confident, connected, actively involved, and equipped to be lifelong learners;
- are creative, energetic, and enterprising;
- seize the opportunities offered by new knowledge and technologies to secure a sustainable social, cultural, economic, and environmental focus for our country;
- work to create an Aotearoa New Zealand in which Maori and Pakeha recognise each other as full Treaty partners and in which all cultures are valued for their contributions they bring;
- in their school years continue to develop the values, knowledge, and competencies that will enable them to live full and satisfying lives;
- are strong in the five key competencies: thinking; using language, symbols and texts; managing self; relating to others; participating and contributing.

(Kiwi Leadership for Principals 2008:8)

Background and Introduction

My goals for this project were to develop attestation and appraisal processes which

- a) are compliant with the requirements of the Ministry of Education for purposes of salary progression, i.e. Professional Standards and for Teacher Registration with the NZ Teachers' Council, i.e. The Satisfactory Teacher Dimensions.
- b) encourage teachers to set personal development objectives which relate to both the school's strategic goals and to their personal development as a teacher
- c) provide scope to measure teachers' professional progression in their ability to deliver 21st Century Schooling and their ability to mentor other teachers
- d) create a forum for teachers to engage in professional reading, self reflection, opportunities to observe other teachers and from these, evaluate their own practice and set realistic targets for their own development
- e) are useful to the individual teacher, to the teams they work in and to the school

Process – Part 1: Research into Current Trends & Practice

As part of my sabbatical I interviewed a number of key personnel who were involved in projects which were relevant to this study.

1. David Stewart is leading a project called *The Ariki Project*. In this project the focus is on the reflective group in the form of Quality Learning Circles. In David's paper *The Ariki Project; Collaborative Critique Based on Evidence of Practice*, he makes logical links to the appraisal process, which in this model becomes a developmental process for all participants, enabling them to improve their practices from individual entry points.
2. I interviewed Kay Tester, the principal of St. Brigid's School in Johnsonville. Kay is in the second year of leading her school in *The Ariki Project*. All teaching staff are fully involved in the process within the school, and Kay's *Quality Learning Circle* is a group of four Wellington principals, lead by Liz Millar, who initiated the implementation of this project as part of her leadership in NZPF. Kay described this process as a highly effective model of teacher development which will result in raised student achievement across the school. The self reflection and peer observations completed by teachers during this process are very specific examples of evidence based practices. Depending on continuation of Ministry funding for this project, I am hoping to be included in this project for Principals at a future time. My goal would be to trial this collaborative process of improving teacher practices with a group of self nominated teachers whose salaries are capped at Q1 Step 10, who wish to gain a Q3 qualification by completing an alternative pathway. I will elaborate on that in the part of my background and introduction which relates to a relevant NZEI initiative. The process used in *The Ariki Project* has a well structured framework and has clear protocols for each activity. It focuses on teacher development to raise student achievement. Information about *The Ariki Project* was published in *NZ Principal*, March 2009.
3. I met with Cynthia Shaw to learn more about the Draft Registered Teachers Criteria being developed by the NZ Teachers' Council and I attended two workshops organised by the council to provide information about the criteria and to seek feedback from Principals about them. My interest in the development of new criteria related directly to my project on appraisal and attestation of my staff. It made sense to me that as all teachers are required to meet a) the Professional Standards for pay progression and professional development and b) the Registered Teacher Criteria 2009 for competency, the ideal scenario would be a blend of the two sets of compliance criteria for attestation and to further develop the school's appraisal system to facilitate teacher development. All teachers have to be appraised against the Professional Standards annually and the Satisfactory Teacher Dimensions once every 3 years for registration. A combined system of criteria would overcome the management issues of teachers' registration dates being spread throughout the year.
4. Jane Porter, Executive Officer NZEI has led the development of the *Practice Based Attestation Pilot 2009*. The NZEI, NZSTA, Ministry of Education and many teachers

and principals have worked on the development of this project. Practice Based Attestation (PBA) is a process that has been developed as part of the Union's plan to create a range of career pathways for teachers. The process has been designed to enable Q1 & Q2 teachers to gain access to salary progressions to Q3 Step 13 through formal recognition of the knowledge, skills and attributes of effective teachers. Attestation candidates will be required to:

- bring a higher level of scrutiny to their work than is normally expected for appraisal
- demonstrate a capacity for self evaluation
- demonstrate a disposition to be innovative and to improvise
- be confident when working and communicating with students, whanau and colleagues
- work collaboratively with colleagues to improve teaching and learning outcomes for all students within their classrooms and schools..

For the purposes of this report, the process of Practice Based Attestation could be developed for individuals or a group of teachers using the structure of *The Ariki Project*.

The Knowledge, Skills and Attributes (KSA) required for PBA are described in 3 dimensions: 1) Professional Knowledge, 2) Professional Practice, and 3) Professional Relationships and Values. To achieve attestation, teachers are required to present evidence of effective practice in relation to all of the KSAs. Within all the dimensions, they will be required to provide clear and convincing evidence of:

- their knowledge of current theory, literature and resources
- how they use that knowledge in their practice; and
- how their practice enhances learning for students.

A pilot group of principals and teachers in the Hawkes Bay have trialled the project in Terms 1 & 2, 2009 and very detailed guidelines, definitions and indicators have been developed. These resources will be modified during the trial in preparation for release to all schools at a later date. The Expectations, Possible Indicators and "To Spark Thinking" questions, which have been developed for every dimension of each of the KSAs, relate well to the dimensions of the Professional Standards and the Satisfactory Teacher Criteria.

5. My final visit as part of my project was to 2 Auckland schools with leading principals, who had agreed to talk me through their performance management processes.

Madeline East, Principal of Farmcove School, a decile 10 school in Auckland and her Deputy Principal Stephanie Young presented 2 very systematic, transparent processes of attestation and appraisal. The aspects of compliance for salary purposes are completed by Madeline. By November each year, she had a range of evidence about every teacher to support their attestation. The aspects of the appraisal for professional development are led by Stephanie the Deputy Principal, and are carried out by herself and team leaders through a series of goal setting observations, self appraisal, reviews and summary reports. The whole system is efficient and aimed at raising student achievement. The 2 processes, which operated concurrently, are clearly documented. All aspects are useful to individual

teachers and to the Management Team in identify strengths and areas for development.

My second visit was to a very different type of school. Shirley Mahi is the Principal of Finlayson Park School in Manurewa. It is a very multicultural decile 1 school with a roll of approximately 870. Shirley has also implemented 2 concurrent processes of Performance Management; one for attestation and one for professional development. The leadership of both processes was shared by the Management Team and Team Leaders. The processes were clearly documented. In 2008, the Management Team worked with an external consultant. Their goal was to raise student achievement through enhanced teacher performance, and the senior teams adopted the practice of 4 minute walk-throughs as a way of developing a stronger Professional Learning Community. In 2009, all teachers are included in this programme of peer coaching and the Management Team have refined the original programme to meet the needs of the school. The process is reflective as opposed to evaluative. The focus this year is on the process; in 2010 the focus will be on targeted professional development.

Summary

As part of my sabbatical, I visited 3 quite different schools, St. Brigid's, Farmcove and Finlayson Park, each with a very different system of performance appraisal, but each highly successful and useful for each school. They were each led by effective, reflective principals and each had the same goal; to raise student achievement through enhanced teacher performance. I feel very fortunate to have had the opportunity to spend quality time with Kay, Madeline and Shirley all of whom were very generous in sharing their time and resources.

Process Part 2: Making links between Professional Standards, Satisfactory Teacher Criteria & KSAs

An examination of the Professional Standards for fully registered and experienced teachers and of the draft Satisfactory Teacher Criteria showed a clear inter-relationship between the two. For purposes of attestation and registration, I have added the STC into the corresponding Professional Standard, and this new document, with Expected Outcomes and Indicators will replace my school's existing job descriptions.

The only STC which I believe was not already included in sufficient depth in the Professional Standards was criteria 12 – “demonstrate commitment to critical inquiry and problem-solving in their professional practice”. I have added this into the dimension: Professional Knowledge.

In the initial scoping of this projects, I had planned to link the Knowledge, Skills and Attributes (KSAs) required for Practice Based Assessment to the criteria of the Professional Standards in a similar way to the inclusion of the Satisfactory Teacher Criteria. However a

close study of the 8 KSAs, the related expectations and possible indicators has suggested that although they all link directly to the Professional Standards and the STC, the intent of them and the attestation of them are considerably more complex than the criteria in the Professional Standards and the Satisfactory Teacher Criteria. The attestation process will require teachers to provide very in-depth evidence of their Professional Knowledge, Professional Practice and Relationships & Values.

The programme is very well documented with useful resources to streamline the process for principals and to aim for consistent requirements for attestation between schools.

It is the intention of the developers that the Knowledge, Skills and Attributes for the Practice Based Attestation carry with them the expectation that successful candidates will be able to meet and exceed current standards for experienced teachers. I have abandoned the thought of integrating it into the 2 attestation processes – it is definitely about personal professional development.

During 2010, I plan to develop a further modification to the Eastern Hutt School job descriptions by including clear, agreed on descriptors of the practices of highly effective teachers. The section on Effective Pedagogy in the New Zealand Curriculum will form the basis of our inquiry.

The second aspect of the school's Performance Management Process I planned to include was a developmental aspect that related to the use of the inquiry process in learning.

My Deputy Principal led a series of workshops with senior teachers who have expertise and experience in the implementation of an integrated curriculum using the inquiry process. Their task was to debate and define the key characteristics of a teacher effectively using the inquiry model, and to categorise these as expected outcomes for Provisionally Registered Teachers, Fully Registered Teachers and Experienced Teachers.

These characteristics have been included in a draft form into the three job descriptions and they will be trialled in 2010 by nine teachers, three of which are in each category. This aspect of the job descriptions will be reviewed and modified for inclusion in all job descriptions from 2011.

Summary

My school's current job descriptions now encompass:

- the Professional Standards for Teachers (Ministry of Education)
- the Satisfactory Teacher Criteria (Teachers' Council)
- a progression of skills for teachers in the implementation of an integrated curriculum using the inquiry process.

This model will be trialled in 2010 and will be modified according to the experiences and results that become evident through our cycle of review.