

ISNZ Newsletter

Government and Parliament

Aspire Scholarships Scheme

On Wednesday 25 November ISNZ met with Hon Heather Roy to discuss the Aspire Scholarship Scheme and to provide her with feedback from ISNZ Member schools. Some of the points raised by schools and discussed with the Minister included:

1. Most schools have referred to the very tight timeframe in which to interview successful scholarship recipients.
2. A few schools do not have places available for 2010, places were allocated well before the ballot dates (particularly at the Year 9 intake level).
3. Holding the ballot mid-year would be much easier for schools to process applications and hold places for Aspire recipients.
4. For those applicants who already have children in private schools there should be full disclosure of how the school fees are being met and by whom.
5. Some families have shown a low income threshold in these economically straitened times but may have had a much higher income, well above the threshold, in the years prior to the economic downturn.
6. Not enough information relating to the specifics of the scholarship has been sent to schools prior to the interview process with recipient families.
7. The Ministry should advise schools of when candidates have been notified and ensure that all related Ministry requirements are communicated to schools before they begin the enrolment process with successful candidates.
8. Successful candidates have been largely unaware that they need to participate in the enrolment process before a place at the school can be confirmed eg sighting school reports, references, spending a day at the school and having an interview. Many have presented with the attitude “We have an Aspire Scholarship – we have a place at your school”. Clear advice needs to be given to successful applicants that some schools have further criteria that they will need to satisfy to gain entry.
9. Some scholarship recipients have wrongfully assumed that the scholarship includes boarding fees.
10. Successful candidates should be advised that they need to fund any costs above the \$1500 to cover the uniform and other costs eg laptop costs.
11. Some schools have found that successful candidates have not proceeded with an application once they have been made aware of extra costs.
12. If a candidate applies to the school, confirms a place but then changes their mind and does not take up the place, who will pay the application and confirmation fee, should those costs apply? Some families are telling schools they do not have the money to pay it themselves.
13. The scholarship scheme has clearly met a need and aspirations of Maori students.
14. Interviews:
 - 14.1 Some schools have found the interviews very positive with a “great attitude” being demonstrated by parents and students;
 - 14.2 Some recipients have visited schools and stated that in accepting a place at a given school they would want their child to be excluded from some parts of the curriculum eg religious education. It is recommended that families should understand that a scholarship recipient, accepted into a school, must meet the contractual requirements expected of every other student.
15. Schools have asked that if the number of scholarships is increased will that mean cuts to the capitation grant. ISNZ Member Schools are strongly opposed to further cuts to the capitation grant.
16. If the allocated number of scholarships is not taken up in 2010 will these be transferred? If not, will that allocated funding be transferred to the capitation grant?
17. How is data being collected and collated? We would like to be given a breakdown of each year’s ballot eg gender, year level, regional distribution, ethnicity, scholarship take-up rate.

Inside this issue:

| | |
|-------------------------------|---|
| Govt and Parliament | 2 |
| Ministry of Education | 2 |
| Immigration Policy Change | 2 |
| Charities Commission | 2 |
| Charities Commission | 3 |
| NZ Teachers Council | 3 |
| Payroll Giving | 4 |
| ISNZ 2010 Conference | 4 |
| Excellence in Teaching Awards | 4 |
| HISST Grant | 4 |
| Sponsors | 4 |
| Other Conferences/ Workshops | 4 |

Government and Parliament cont'd

Aspire Scholarship Scheme

18. What review process will take place to monitor the scholarship recipients and the financial status of the family?
19. Will there be an annual adjustment of the scholarship for inflation?

The Minister stated that subject to discussion with the Ministry, if the allocated number of scholarships was not taken up in 2011 they would be transferred to 2012, or the equivalent allocated funding would be transferred to the capitation grant.

We have asked that a report be prepared by the Ministry to give a summary of the Scholarship Scheme with collated data on the gender balance, distribution of scholarships to different regions, ethnicity, number of applications and at which year levels, uptake numbers etc. The Minister has said she will come back to ISNZ after she has liaised with the Ministry.

Other Government Relations Issues

ISNZ has requested that the Minister give consideration to some other issues outlined in the ISNZ Government Communications paper. Hon Heather Roy informed us that in her recent discussions with Hon Anne Tolley, it was made quite clear that there is no further funding for private schools in the foreseeable future. However we shall continue to present a case for funding/assistance in the following areas:

- Ultra fast Broadband Roll out project
- Secondary Tertiary Alignment Resource (STAR)
- Gateway
- Careers Information Grant (CIG)
- School Transport Assistance.

We have also requested that she investigate the following issues:

- NZTC and the consultation on provisionally registered teachers
- Teach NZ Teacher Recruitment Scholarships
- The Conditional Integration Act: there are still some issues around 'donations' being charged by integrated schools that make for an inequitable funding playing field.

We have secured four meeting times with Minister Roy for 2010 and she has said she will also meet with us outside of these dates where appropriate. Minister Roy will host the ISNZ annual cocktail function in February and has also accepted our invitation to speak at the opening ceremony of the ISNZ conference in Queenstown. She remains very supportive and willing to "fly the flag" on our behalf. Please furnish ISNZ with any issues you would like us to raise with the Minister.

Ministry of Education

Law Commission: Report 108 Private Schools and the Law

The Ministry of Education has advised all private schools that the government will be responding to the recommendations made by the Law Commission as outlined in Report 108. The Ministry of Education will submit its own report on the Law Commission's recommendations to the Minister of Education, Hon Anne Tolley and the Associate Minister of Education, Hon Heather Roy. The Ministry has invited all private schools to provide feedback on the Law Commission's recommendations. This consultation process will assist the Ministry in writing its report to the Ministers. Feedback is required to be with the Ministry by 11 December or shortly thereafter.

Immigration Policy Change

Immigration New Zealand has made policy changes regarding the following: (1) International students changing course and/or education provider; (2) Temporary exemption for international students to live with their legal guardian. More information is at the Immigration New Zealand website—Q&As for changing course and/or education provider and Q&As for guardians.

Charities Commission

On Monday 30 November I attended the Charities Commission Forum and Annual Meeting in Wellington. This event was very well attended with nearly 400 registered charities represented. Some key messages from the Forum included:

1. An effective charity understands that the public has a valid interest in it, and manages its accountability to its stakeholders and to the public in a way that is timely, transparent, and understandable
2. Financial and **non-financial** information should be given in annual reporting
3. Use the Charities Commission register to promote your organisation and key messages: Who you are? Why do you exist? What you do? The Year's Successes; The year ahead
4. The Charities Commission register provides a good opportunity to promote your organisation but it also potentially increases media risk exposure and it increases competitive pressures. Hence the need to make information on the register clear, concise, transparent and timely.

Charities Commission cont'd

Future Changes

There is a move by the Ministry of Economic Development (MED) to adopt International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS) and International Standards of Auditing (ISA).

An Accounting Standards Review Board (ASRB) Discussion Document entitled "Proposed Application of Accounting and Assurance Standards under the Proposed New Statutory Framework for Financial Reporting" was released on 30 September 2009.

The Document is a companion to a Ministry of Economic Development (MED) Discussion Document entitled "The Statutory Framework for Financial Reporting" which was also released on 30 September 2009.

The MED Document considers the circumstances under which the law should impose requirements on entities to prepare, publish and obtain assurance on General Purpose Financial Reports (GPFR). The ASRB Document outlines the Board's tentative proposals on the accounting standards to be used by entities required to prepare GPFR under the MED document and the level of assurance that should be provided on those reports.

The closing date for submissions on both documents is Friday 29 January 2010.

New Zealand Teachers Council

The New Zealand Teachers Council has recently sought feedback on possible changes to requirements for teacher registration. Feedback from this consultation will contribute to further development of a registration policy. Feedback was sought on the following:

1. Teaching and learning environment for Provisionally Registered Teachers (PRTs)
2. Duration of provisional registration
3. Definition of a "teaching position"
4. Definition of "recent teaching experience"
5. Introduction of a proposed new registration framework.

ISNZ has made submissions on the consultation document particularly in respect to the proposed requirement of teachers to "have held the prime responsibility for a sustained, full cycle of teaching and learning using the official curricula".

Some of the points made in the ISNZ submissions include:

- ISNZ is concerned with the proposed requirement of teachers to "have held the prime responsibility for a sustained, full cycle of teaching and learning using the "official curricula"
- Private schools in New Zealand have always been accorded the right in legislation to teach their own curriculum. Private schools have the right to develop and teach a curriculum that best meets the needs of its community
- Under the Declaration of Human Rights, "Parents have a prior right to choose the kind of education that shall be given to their children"
- Current legislation allows for private schools to be measured in efficiency in having suitable premises, staffing, equipment, and curriculum (section 35A(1)(a) Education Act 1989)
- That "efficient means giving students tuition of a standard no lower than that of the tuition given to students enrolled at (i) primary schools of the same class...; (ii) secondary schools of the same class...; (iii) special schools of the same class" (section 35A(1)(d)(i)(ii)(iii))
- ISNZ believes that under the Education Act there is adequate provision for the curriculum and its delivery in private schools to be measured and monitored thus ensuring that the curriculum meets the required standards of ERO
- Some independent schools choose to teach the New Zealand curriculum, others do not
- ISNZ believes that where an independent school chooses to teach an alternative curriculum that the teachers within that school should continue to have their training for registration recognised by the Teachers Council
- ISNZ believes that any changes to the type of curricula that must be offered by schools in order for a teacher to gain registration could be discriminating against the independence of independent schools and parental choice in education
- ISNZ believes that any discrimination against teachers in private schools seeking registration but who are not teaching the "official curricula" may be interpreted as the NZTC imposing the New Zealand curriculum on the private school sector
- ISNZ believes that teachers in a private school should not be disadvantaged regarding validity of training for registration. This would result in some teachers opting out of the private school sector for fear of not having their provisional registration training recognised
- Legislation has protected teachers in private schools and has provided for registration of teachers who demonstrate competence in the state's curriculum or in curricula that meets the "efficiency" criteria of section 35A of the Education Act 1989.

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Payroll giving

A new voluntary scheme for making donations called “payroll giving”, will be available from 7 January 2010. It will allow people to make donations directly from their pay, and to receive their tax credit directly. Heads and Boards may wish to publicise this to their parent body if you have not already done so. For further information go to www.ird.govt.nz

ISNZ 2010 Conference

A reminder that the 2010 ISNZ Annual Conference will be held in **Queenstown Friday 27–Saturday 28 August** at the Millennium Hotel. Please note there will not be separate ASBA, AHIS and ISNZ conferences in 2010. We will run one conference over two days with break-out sessions designed to meet the needs of different personnel within our member schools. Within this timeframe and on the previous day and the day after there will be opportunities for the different constituent groups to network and meet informally. We look forward to furnishing you with more information as the conference programme is developed. ISNZ will organise a Golf tournament and also a vineyard tour.

Excellence in Teaching Awards

ISNZ has received 20 nominations for the Excellence in Teaching Awards. These nominations have been forwarded to Gail Thomson, who will carry out the evaluations in the New Year.

Heads of Independent Schools Scholarship Trust

The Heads of the Independent Schools Scholarship Trust offers financial assistance to Principals and staff of ISNZ Member Schools for current research and/or study that advance the value of independent schooling in New Zealand. The funding available for 2010 scholarships will be \$3500 with another \$3500 held in reserve should the calibre of the applicants warrant additional scholarship funding. The programme of study or research, for which funding is given, should be completed within the 2010 calendar year. Notification of the 2010 Scholarship applications has been sent to schools. We hope that Board Chairmen will encourage their Heads and School staff to put their names forward for this prestigious scholarship. **Nominations close 31 March 2010.**

To our Sponsors

ISNZ is extremely grateful for the support and loyalty of our sponsors. It has been a pleasure and a privilege working with each of our sponsors and we did enjoy seeing you all at the Annual Conference in Wellington earlier in the year. Please accept our heartfelt thanks for your continued support of ISNZ. We value the partnership we have with you and we look forward to working with you in the New Year.

Other Conferences/Workshops

Education New Zealand—February 2010

Schools Sector: Marketing & Recruitment Workshops

For more information: http://www.educationnz.org.nz/registrationscomponent/3-sector_specific_advanced_workshops. Workshops include:

- Locating a market for recruitment
- Writing a marketing plan
- Looking after international students
- E-marketing on a budget

NAIS Annual Conference 24-26 February 2010, San Francisco, CA, USA

ISNZ Annual Conference 27-28 August 2010, Millennium Hotel, Queenstown, NZ

Inaugural IPSHA Biennial Conference 5-8 September 2010, Melbourne, Australia

Deborah James
Executive Director

From the team at ISNZ we thank you all for your support, guidance and wisdom throughout 2009. We wish you all a safe and joyous festive season, and we look forward to working with you in 2010.

Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year
