
Editorial

As we bring you this first issue of *set* for 2007, a number of key issues for education have already emerged and as the year goes on we will bring you both research and informed comment on these and other issues.

Governance of schools received considerable publicity as the boards of trustees elections took place. From the surveys of primary and secondary schools undertaken by NZCER, Cathy Wylie has compiled the “thinking” piece feature. She identifies both strengths and weaknesses in our school governance systems and highlights the parts where more work is needed: “... we need more connectivity in the system, better ways to support schools to make good, well-informed, and ethical decisions ...” She concludes with some realistic suggestions for providing this support for schools and their boards.

New Zealand has a wealth of experienced educational researchers, some of whom have spent their careers specialising in particular fields and have become dedicated to making their research available to teachers, and helping to improve learning outcomes for students. To acknowledge the contribution of these researchers and to bring their key ideas to readers, we have started a new “spotlight” feature. We will carry a researcher interview in each issue. This time, Sarah Boyd interviewed Cedric Croft who is well known to teachers for his work on developmental spelling.

Assessment has been, and still is, a major focus for parents, students, teachers, administrators, researchers, politicians, and policy makers. Our regular feature, Assessment News, has proved to be popular and useful. This series aims to explain the meaning of measurement in a succinct and accessible way. In this issue, Charles Darr continues the conversation using a self-explanatory title: Getting our Heads Around Percentiles.

There’s a bonus in this issue too. School principals have recently received a summary of NZCER’s primary and secondary school surveys. The summary of the primary school survey is reprinted here for readers.

Each year we try to break new ground with some of our articles. Until now, there has been very little research on the Arts published. Deborah Fraser’s article: Relational Pedagogy and the Arts begins to redress this neglect. There will be more on this topic as Deborah has been awarded the 2007 Beeby Fellowship which will enable her to develop and publish an arts resource that embodies the key competencies.

In the next issues of *set* this year we hope to bring you more on the arts, assessment, diversity, student engagement, personalised learning, the key competencies ...

Bev Webber
Managing Editor