



Cansta “Moving School Governance Forward”

Chairman Report 2009

It is with pleasure I present the 2009 Chairman’s report for CanSTA. This report is not just to 2008 but includes our activities to date. The financial report is recording the 2008 The year began with the appointment of our Coordinator, Chantelle Parrant. It is with pleasure that we welcome Chantelle to our organisation and may the journey she has started with us continue. We challenged ourselves with 4 Strategic Goals and 7 Objectives and Key Result indicators all based around providing a service to our members.

1. Be recognized by the Ministry of Education and other sector groups as the default representative group for Canterbury school trustees

» CanSTA received invitations for submissions and representations from the MOE and other education sector groups

- *Participated in the Ministry consultation process for the development of a national strategic plan for property provision.*
- *Participated in the Governance Stock take.*
- *Clarification sought from the Ministry on the new methodology around training and support for board of trustees. Information on same added to the website.*

2. Determine the needs and aspirations of Canterbury boards

» Boards were surveyed to determine their needs and aspirations

We last surveyed in 2008 year and developed our Strategic Plan around the results. Following feed back from this meeting the newly appointed executive will reevaluate the strategic plan, particularly the Objectives and Key Results.

» Feedback from boards was recorded and key issues identified

Assisted board when enquiries made on issues such as policy development, school transport, by-election and currently providing advice and support to the Aorangi Primary School BOT

3. Active involvement in education sector representation groups

» A CanSTA representative attended every Canterbury education sector representational group meeting

- *Informal School Support Reference Group: The purpose of the group is to have a network of education representatives willing to share information on issues of concern to schools and to provide support when required.*
- *South Island Regional Property Forum: These forums provide an opportunity for sector representatives and the ministry to exchange information so that all parties are better informed*

both at a national and local level. The agenda is set by both the sector and the ministry and much of the new policy development and initiatives taken over recent years have been informed by discussion at the forums.

- *Canterbury Education Forum: The Canterbury Education Forum (CEF) is a strategic, coordinating network of senior representatives of organisations/agencies/ institutions of the Canterbury Education community, focused on improved outcomes for students.*
- *University of Canterbury College of Education Selection panel for Primary Teachers.*

4. Effective advocacy

» **Submissions were made to the MOE and other sector groups on matters of concern to Canterbury boards**

Our most recent newsletter seeks feedback on the National Assessment Standards. To date we have not been swamped with replies, but your executive will provide a submission on what our collective thoughts are.

5. Promote membership of CanSTA to Canterbury Schools.

» **CanSTA membership was either 80% of Canterbury boards or up 10% on the previous year**

Current membership stands at 44.5% (128 members of 288 schools). We have some work to do here. Last year our membership was 49% (141 288). We have been analyzing membership to determine what members require. Our WEB site was launched earlier this year and have a tension as to whether we offer a Members only area or open to all. Our thoughts are that when Membership gets to around 60%, then we will offer Members only information.

6. Provide service and value-for-money to members.

» **The regional coordinator had a job description in which servicing members predominated over administration**

We have decided that our principle tool in servicing members will be via the Web page. This is an area of growth for us and for you our members. We need to know what you would like presented or made available. To date we have been very reactionary with reports, opinions, presentation notes and encourage feedback. Dedicated phone and fax numbers also provide a service link.

» **The regional coordinator's performance was assessed as satisfactory : This will occur later in the year.**

» **The CanSTA executive's performance was assessed as satisfactory**

We haven't as yet determined what mechanism we will use to assess our performance. The membership data and perhaps a questionnaire to members who we have had contact with will be a way forward.

» **Member boards were invited to a minimum of four topical seminars during the year**

This is based on one per term. Term one we had Paul McGirr from the MOE with a refreshing approach to finance from a Governance perspective. His notes are on our web page. This term we have the Minister of Education, Anne Tolley, who will speak at the conclusion of this Annual General Meeting. We are open to suggestions for terms three and four.

» **Member boards received regular newsletters**

So far this year we have sent three newsletters with a variety of comments from different perspectives of our regions educational base.

» **Phone support was available to boards during specified hours**

» **Boards had access to an email tree allowing boards to network locally**

This option is available but so far has not been required or requested.

7. Effective budgeting.

» **An annual budget was prepared**

» **The annual budget was adhered to**

Testament to the Effective budgeting will be explained with the presentation of financial report. Our organisation has reasonably good reserves and it has been our intention to use these rather than increase membership fees. We intentionally budgeted for a loss as we do not see a need for this organization to have large reserves. It is our vision that if we provide a useful service, that will attract membership which will intern generate revenue.

Chairman's Perspective.

We are very well served with a very experience executive, supported by an energetic and very capable coordinator. We have excellent potential to grow and flourish. Our relationships with other sector groups is professional and effective.

On the surface, the business of education is changing and diverse. A change of Government to date has heralded changes to, national assessment standards, education amendment act and changes to trustee training. All topical and potentially consuming of our time and dialogue. When we look to what might be in Education in 20 years from now, look back 20 years and ask what has happened. We still need to read and write, typically with parents as first educators instilling the thirst for knowledge and refined and polished in a classroom. Yes a classroom is still an effective place for group learning and a teacher still stands up the front and delivers information and determines acceptable behavior. We still assess new entrant children to determine their needs and continue to monitor or assess children to ensure our practices are correct. We still have curriculum statements and although the current document is to be introduced next year and has taken an extraordinary amount of consultation to get to where we are, essentially it is the same as its predecessors in that it instructs what needs to be taught, what morals and values are placed.

What change we do see is in relation to the fast changing aspects of our society. Information technology for example is renewing at an extraordinary rate and we have a tension in our communities to keep up and significant demands on government to allocate taxes accordingly. Through this speed of technology growth, comes the enormous increase in information and facts, which changes the emphasis on teaching from disseminating facts to learning to learn. Learning where to access information, tools to analysis this information in numerous forms and reporting on this data.

Another tensions, on us as trustees, is where to allocate discretionary spending, how will we interpret data from National assessment standards. I recently used the questions from our last newsletter to discuss some possible outcomes from this data. For example what do we do as trustees when our parents extol the virtues of a teacher who has demonstrated consistently high value added learning? Conversely what happens when poor performance is identified? The trustees I spoke to were very defensive and felt they should know first and have an opportunity to react. Fair comment. When some of this data becomes public this can equally be seen as taking some of the onus away from a Board and Principal. We may be, and should be, asked by our community, to question, further analyze and develop different strategies based on nationally referenced data. No different to what we are teaching our students, except easier as the information will be provided. We will have to analyze and report, not just justifying our own individual circumstances but ask how can we improve. There may emerge a role for CanSTA to provide a commentary from a regional perspective.

Whatever else happens, as parents we need to be informed, as trustees it is essential to be informed with data local, regional and national and find ourselves in a privileged position of more information than our community. It is from this position of privileged knowledge we are empowered to think strategically to determine what direction and where we would like to see our school in the future. So yes we set goals and targets for our schools based on good information.

Instead of taking a negative approach to the introduction of the national assessment standards, lets embrace them and use for what they are intended to be used for. Let us mirror what happens in our classrooms and what we expect of our students, let's access the information, analyze, report and react for the benefit of all our students.

Mike Wilson