

Special Federation Flyer 2013



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17 June 2013

NZPF No: 125 - Beckenham School

NZPF LAUNCHES PaCT TOOL POSITION

Over the past weekend the NZPF national executive has discussed the PaCT tool and established its position. We have resolved to strongly advise every school in New Zealand to **withdraw from its development, and boycott the tool in their school**. Our position has been fully supported in a joint statement signed by the NZEI, the Association of Intermediates and Middle Schools (AIMS), and the NZ Catholic Principals' Association. Click [here](#) for the joint media release.

This decision is necessary, not just because of the tool itself, but because of the use for which it is clearly intended. It will become a de facto "national test", with all the harm that represents. The Ministry's planned road map is crystal clear – and PaCT data will grow to confirm national standards as the sole arbiter of school and teacher success. Performance pay for teachers is merely waiting for a reliable way to identify successful practice. We now have confirmation in writing that use of the PaCT **will be mandatory** from 2015, and that the Ministry will be able to access its data. This will strengthen and legitimise the current view that national standards is the best way to lift student achievement in this country. We categorically do not accept this.

Below is pasted a copy of the letter that we ask you to deliver to your Board Chair. You can access the letter separately by clicking [here](#). We would ask that you address the letter to your Board Chair and deliver it.



*The most respected and influential advocate for
New Zealand's school principals*

Letter to School Boards and Principals regarding PaCT

As chair of your school's Board of Trustees, or school principal, you will be aware of a recent announcement that a web-based tool, the Progress and Consistency Tool (PaCT), designed to make national standards data more reliable, is to be made mandatory for schools from 2015.

NZPF has engaged with a variety of academic researchers, technicians, professional experts and colleagues for many months endeavouring to better understand the functions of PaCT, its strengths and its weaknesses, and how the tool may or may not assist teachers to make more reliable judgements about national standards. We now share our findings with you.

1. Data resulting from applying the PaCT could assist teachers in planning next learning steps. This is not necessarily harmful for children if used **solely** within the school context
2. All experts including academics, NZCER researchers, and technical experts agree that in developing the PaCT their intentions and motivations were that it be used exclusively within schools for the purposes of assisting teachers and not for any other purpose
3. Experts agree that the PaCT should not be made mandatory and the data resulting from the application of PaCT should not leave the school
4. The Ministry has advised NZPF that PaCT will be made mandatory from 2015 and have indicated their intention to access the data
5. A tool such as PaCT is static, does not include aspects of the whole student.

Given that PaCT will be made mandatory, and without Ministry assurances that the data will not be used for other purposes, NZPF cannot support PaCT's further development.

The clear message is now that the only thing that should matter to schools is the three aspects measured by national standards. The gathering of data in this way is no different to having a national test. NZPF is of the view that using PaCT will threaten our world class standing in academic achievement. Further, any initiative that undermines and narrows our broadly based and rich curriculum will not raise the achievement of our priority learners, nor foster the "key competencies" of the NZC.

NZPF asks that you and your Board of Trustees consider these issues carefully, and recommends that you resolve to have no further engagement with PaCT's development, including running trials of PaCT in your school, contributing to rubric evaluation, or engaging with it in any way.

NZPF supports the following statements:

- Teacher moderation provides valuable professional learning opportunities bringing a more robust judgement of student progress and achievement.
- Rich conversations about students take place in teams where teachers debate and acknowledge the value of programmes and their teaching practice.
- The whole student is considered as opposed to snap shot aspects of literacy and numeracy.
- The 'human aspect' of moderation ensures teachers will continue to improve their moderation practice and validity will also continue to improve.

Philip Harding
President
NZ Principals' Federation