



Remutaka RTLB

Resource Teachers: Learning & Behaviour

Te roopu akoranga whanonga



Enhancing SENCO Networks to Build School Capability

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SENCOs

- ▣ Who are they?
- ▣ What are their various roles in the schools in your cluster?



The current situation

GROUP DISCUSSION



- ▣ In what ways do the RTLB in our clusters currently engage with SENCOs?
- ▣ What are the challenges in establishing and maintaining ongoing supportive relationships with SENCOs?
- ▣ What are the benefits in enhancing the role of SENCOs in our cluster schools?

One cluster's story



At the time of Transformation:

- ▣ Two SENCO Networks already operating, one for all SENCOs across the Upper Hutt Cluster and one for Secondary SENCOs in Masterton
- ▣ Some schools had SENCOs or others with a similar role, others didn't
- ▣ In some smaller rural schools this role was held by the principal
- ▣ Some colleges had Special Needs Committees
- ▣ "One off" PLD opportunities were sometimes provided by RTLB for SENCOs and other teachers

The picture in 2013

- ▣ A SENCO is identified in each cluster school
- ▣ RTLB have designated Liaison Schools (3 - 4 each)
- ▣ RTLB meet regularly with the SENCOs in their Liaison Schools
- ▣ SENCOs are a conduit between RTLB and teachers for cluster information e.g. procedural updates, newsletters, PLD opportunities

SENCOs' Role in the RTLB Intake Process

- ▣ SENCOs and liaison RTLB discuss students of concern, prior to teachers making requests for RTLB service
- ▣ This sometimes means that potential requests for RTLB service can be directed towards more appropriate support e.g. hearing checks, family counselling, paediatrician
- ▣ All requests for RTLB service are signed by the SENCO and Liaison RTLB as well as the teacher making the request (no surprises at Intake meetings)

SENCO Network Meetings



- ▣ Three SENCO Networks are now operating in the cluster, covering all schools
- ▣ Meet once each term after school (3.30 – 5ish)
- ▣ Afternoon Tea is important!
- ▣ Needs Analysis to inform meeting content for the coming year
- ▣ Evaluation and review at the end of each year

Examples of Topics Covered

- ▣ Role clarity – a look at job descriptions, roles and responsibilities
- ▣ Teacher Aides – how to use TAs to support inclusive practice in classrooms
- ▣ Sharing of useful websites, apps and resources
- ▣ Special Needs Registers
- ▣ Transitions – Primary to Intermediate, Intermediate to College
- ▣ Specialist Assessment Conditions for NZQA

Resource Folders provided for each school

- ▣ **Agencies** - who they are, how they can help and how to contact them
- ▣ **Unpacking specialist reports** - a list of learning & behaviour difficulties, what the terms mean and classroom strategies that support students identified with these difficulties (e.g. auditory processing disorder, dyspraxia, PDDNOS)
- ▣ **Steps to Achievement** - a folder with 'below level one' learning steps for oral Language, motor skills, reading, writing & maths

Inclusive Practice

- ▣ SENCOs and senior management met to discuss what inclusion looks like in their schools in terms of policies, attitudes and practice
- ▣ Appreciative Inquiry approach – what is working well? Next steps?
- ▣ Folders are being compiled for each school to document their journey to inclusion
- ▣ Sharing of Ministry initiatives and tools e.g. School Review Profile (SRP) and Inclusive Practices Tools (IPT)

SENCO Induction

“Drop in afternoon” to support SENCOs newly appointed to the role. Discussions include:

- ▣ SENCO Job Descriptions
- ▣ Special Needs Registers
- ▣ Who's who in the world of special education?
- ▣ What do all the acronyms stand for?
- ▣ Familiarisation with resource folders provided for SENCOs in cluster schools

Next Steps



In what ways could your cluster enhance relationships with SENCOs, to build school capability?

What do the SENCOs say?

The SENCO Network Meetings always make me think and examine the way I do things and "tweak" some practices to try and do my job better.

From our point of view the transformation was pretty seamless. The best feature is having a regular liaison RTLB to contact.

Every meeting was useful - makes me reflect on what is happening in my own school.

Thanks for the meetings and the opportunity to meet up with other SENCOs.



The SENCO Network Meetings are run by a very 'on to it' team with practical, relevant knowledge, skills and experience.