

Strictly embargoed until 12 September 2016, midnight

New Zealand's teachers recognised in prestigious national teaching awards

Six of the best teachers in New Zealand will receive ASG National Excellence in Teaching Awards (ASG NEiTA) on September 13 at an official ceremony hosted by Hon Hekia Parata MP, Minister of Education, in Wellington's Parliament Buildings.

Selected from more than 200 community nominations, the national award recipients will be honoured for their inspiring and innovative contribution to teaching.

This year marks a significant milestone for ASG NEiTA, which celebrates 20 years of recognising fabulous teachers, leaders and educators within education.

The recipients comprise early childhood, primary and secondary teachers from around New Zealand, whose contributions to the education of Kiwi kids is second to none.

The 2016 national ASG NEiTA recipients are:

- **Natalie Bell** – Maungaarangi Kindergarten and Whanau Centre, Tauranga (Early Childhood)
- **Rebecca Hansen** – Otatara Preschool, Invercargill; formerly Grassmere Kindergarten, Southland (Early Childhood)
- **Nick Johnston** – Marshall Laing Primary School, Auckland (Primary)
- **Suzanne Lois Ings** – Ngutunui Enviro School, Hamilton (Primary)
- **David Dobbin** – Trident High School, Whakatane (Secondary)
- **Diane McKissock-Davis** – St Cuthbert's College, Auckland (Secondary).

ASG NEiTA Chairman Allen Blewitt says the national award recipients are wonderful ambassadors to the teaching profession, who have also earned the respect of their wider school communities.

"It brings me a lot of satisfaction to know how communities all around New Zealand support their local teachers and the personal relationships they have built together. Since 1996, these awards have gone from strength to strength because of these relationships, which can last a lifetime and leave a profound imprint.

The national recipients are motivated by their desire to see their students succeed and empower them by being co-constructors of their own learning; designing plans; making decisions, and understanding how successful outcomes can be built on and shared with others into the future.

Today's students who are tomorrow's future leaders have been encouraged to take risks, recognise and reward excellence in others, and through community engagement have become aware of their social conscience, and how they can contribute as active participants. Congratulations to the ASG NEiTA recipients who have also engaged parents in their students' development and learning, enabling the further extension of learning," said Mr Blewitt.

Parents, grandparents, secondary student councils, school boards, councils, parent associations, committees of management and community organisations throughout New Zealand nominated the six deserving and inspirational recipients.



Media Release

Chief Executive Officer of ASG NEiTA, John Velegrinis says the ASG NEiTA recipients represent quality teachers who through their dedication and passion for education, motivate, encourage and inspire an appetite for lifelong learning in their students.

“Congratulations to the ASG NEiTA recipients. Parents have high aspirations for their children’s educational successes and the six national recipients have a fundamental and collaborative role in helping young people find their true passions, nurturing their strengths and ensuring they enjoy their learning experiences. This is the foundation on which young people will continue and embrace their education into adulthood, as they potentially change careers or retrain throughout their lives, adapting to changing markets and demands for specific skills and knowledge.

It is in this spirit that we say education is one of the most critical investments that parents, families and communities make, and a pillar of nation building. So it is crucial that we recognise and thank our ASG NEiTA recipients who are at the heart of education and help turn dreams and aspirations into successful and rewarding futures for New Zealand children. They are education heroes in their own right and the impact they have in supporting children’s education has also been felt in their local communities; engaging with parents from all cultural backgrounds; knocking on the doors of charity organisations and community groups; and opening their classroom doors through new lenses,” said Mr Velegrinis.

The six national recipients will each receive \$5000 professional development grants. For more information and to view their ASG NEiTA profiles go to: www.asg.co.nz/neita

For more information, images or to arrange interviews please contact:

Sarah Thornton
Account Manager, hPR
sarah.thornton@prcomms.com
021 753744

Editors notes:

The Australian Scholarships Group (ASG) is a member owned organisation, helping to create educational opportunities for children. ASG has been helping families and their children for more than 40 years. During this time, more than 530,000 children have been enrolled with ASG and more than \$2.5 billion in education benefits and scholarship payments returned to members.

The ASG National Excellence in Teaching Awards (NEiTA) started in 1994 in Australia and 1996 in New Zealand. Since inception, more than 30,000 teachers have been nominated by the community in the two countries, with more than 1000 teachers receiving almost \$750,000 in professional development grants, prizes and endowments.

For more information visit: www.asg.co.nz

