



New Zealand

PRINCIPAL

NGĀ TUMUAKI O AOTEAROA

June 2016
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HORA HORA PRIMARY SCHOOL

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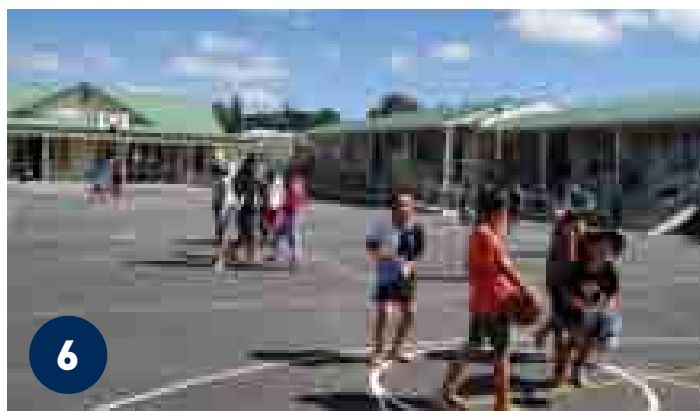
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HORA HORA PRIMARY SCHOOL, WHANGAREI



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EDITORIAL

Liz Hawes EDITOR



WE HEAR MUCH about the lack of agreed educational purpose and loss of a coherent vision for education these days. Professionals feel rudderless as they try to navigate their way through a fog of seemingly random changes being constantly foisted upon them. As Professor Andrew Hargreaves, in the Moot report in this issue p.18 points out, imposing a continuous stream of change initiatives unconnected to any overall agreed strategy provides the foundation for the growth of disempowerment and stress for leaders who are left in the dark struggling to implement them.

If we think that under these circumstances professionals simply stop trying to create new and better opportunities to strengthen their profession and stop building quality into the teaching and learning programmes in their schools, we are wrong. The profession is remarkably resilient despite the conditions around them being less than ideal. As is evidenced by the many stories about remarkable innovations, occurring in schools that have been published in previous issues of *NZ Principal*, our school leaders are not just caving in or dwelling on the negatives. Neither is the NZPF.

NZPF's role is to advocate in the best interests of principals and it has been relentlessly pursuing its own goals for principals even whilst bringing the flaws of politically motivated changes to the attention of the political leaders in Wellington. There are positives emerging on many fronts. The joint NZPF, Te Akatea, Ministry Māori Achievement Collaborations (MACs) have been well covered by *NZ Principal* over the past two years and again in this issue p.12 you can read about a recent Northland hui where twenty-three interested principals from the region gathered to hear the progress stories of those who are well advanced on their own MAC journeys. Doubtless the MAC PLD in the North will be welcoming new principals into their fold before long. The MACs are a success story in which principals can rightly feel huge pride. Throughout the country they are making a difference by boosting the learning success rates for Māori children through school culture change.

Secondly, persistent lobbying is now gaining traction with Ministry officials now keen to discuss the detail of how we might expand the Principal Leadership Advisory Service. In the short time since his appointment in Northland, David Hain's role has now become central to the lives of principals up there. Through building the confidence, skills and support networks of the current principals in the north, there is a far greater chance that

they will grow into outstanding principals who will stay in the north and in turn support and coach their own middle leaders into future principal positions.

It is well known that around 70 per cent of all current principals in New Zealand are less than fifteen years from retirement age. If we do not build the capacity now, school leadership will be in crisis within a decade. It makes sense then to expand the PLA service across the country so that principals everywhere can benefit from the professional coaching, support and advice that principals like David can offer.

To have the PLA service offered system wide has been the goal of NZPF since the first proposal for the service was submitted. Like the MACs, it is a PLD initiative that works, because it has been developed by principals and is delivered by principals. It is a popular service with integrity, relevance and validity and like the MACs is getting results. It operates under contract from the Ministry through 'Team Solutions' of Auckland University, a factor that David considers critical to its success. He says being independent is a big reason that he is able to work closely and in a high trust way with principals. Independence gives the service integrity and that is the only way that progress can be made.

Elsewhere in this issue you can also read a critical account of the *Investing in Education Success (IES)* policy by Emeritus Professor Warwick Elley p.17 and some new research by Smarden and Charteris on principals' views of the *Communities of Learning (COLs)* p.24. This Government investment initiative has had a more difficult ride with the sector not because the idea of investing in collaboration and shared challenges is not welcomed but because the structure for the collaboration is not a comfortable fit with what principals would consider successful collaboration models. It is a good example of why it is better to include principals in the development stages of policy, rather than at the end.

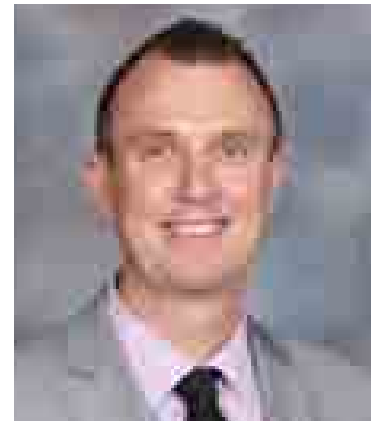
It is one of those policy announcements that was seemingly made randomly. It is one of those many initiatives that leaves principals feeling disempowered and disconnected. But is it a policy that paralyses principals? No! Principals are much too busy transforming exciting creative ideas into positive innovations for great teaching and learning in their schools.

NZPF's role is to **ADVOCATE** in the **BEST INTERESTS OF PRINCIPALS** and it has been relentlessly **PURSUING ITS OWN GOALS** for principals . . .

PRESIDENT'S PEN

Kia ora koutou katoa

Iain Taylor NATIONAL PRESIDENT, NEW ZEALAND PRINCIPALS' FEDERATION



EVERY TIME ANOTHER call for feedback hits the desk, whether it's from the Ministry, the Education Council or a Select Committee, I think 'principal hauora.' At the start of the year we ran a quick survey to get an indication of where to focus our advocacy work on your behalf this year. You came back in big numbers 'shouting' principal well-being, workloads, impossible timeframes and stress; In other words, principal hauora.

Some of you went further explaining that the source of the stress was not so much the increase in volume of paperwork, meeting deadlines, or even thinking through whether the new Community of Learning (CoL) concept is a good idea for you, but rather that none of the changes and expectations fit together logically. They are not generated by professionals and communities making rational, evidence based suggestions to improve learning for students. They are imposed, often with no warning at all, by people who have no direct experience in teaching and learning. This leaves principals searching for reasons, for connections and for links to improved student outcomes. It is when that search proves futile, that principals become more stressed and their trust in the system is weakened.

No busy, dedicated principal wants to be filling their day with tasks that are pointless and have no logical link to improving the quality of teaching in schools or helping kids learn. They want to be focussing on things that are strategic, that are leading to constant improvement in the quality of everything we do so that kids get the very best learning experiences we can possibly offer them every day.

The job is hard enough already. NZPF recognises that. We are one of the very few professions that is not supported by a system-wide 'professional supervision' scheme. It has been well documented by academic researchers such as NZCER's Cathy Wylie that since *Tomorrow's Schools* and self-management, principals have become less connected and more isolated. The competitive elements of the *Tomorrow's Schools* policy also means that principals are less likely to seek help, except through other more experienced principals they trust. It's a very hit and miss support system.

The evidence shows that isolation, together with inexperience in leadership, results in a breakdown in relationships between Boards and principals. Inexperience in itself should not be a reason to fail. All great leaders started somewhere. What is missing is sustained support, advice and guidance for those inexperienced principals. We have the 'First-time Principals

Programme' and the 'Aspiring Principals Programme' but could we do things better? The support is not sustained over time. Principals need access to quality professional supervision throughout their careers, not just for the first twelve months.

That is where Principal Leadership Advisory (PLA) comes in. The NZPF executive has been investigating this scheme since 2014. We knew there was a successful system running in New South Wales and in Victoria, Australia and we looked into both of those. What we wanted to do was make sure that we didn't just end up with an imported scheme (think Novopay!), but a scheme tailored especially for the New Zealand context.

Principals need access to **QUALITY PROFESSIONAL SUPERVISION** throughout their careers, not just for the first twelve months.

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There were some elements from the Australian schemes that made sense. First, the schemes were run by principals on secondment. It was like a sideways career step for principals for two years, after which they returned to their schools. They were all trained in coaching and mentoring skills and nearly all of the interaction with principals was face to face. They were available to all principals irrespective of their level of experience. In Australia, that resulted in some hefty travel bills.

The key element we took from the Australian experience was that any professional support would need to be initiated by principals for principals. We already have one shining example with our Māori Achievement Collaborations (MACs). A big part of the success of the MAC PLD is that it was developed in response to a need identified by principals. It is also directed and delivered by principals.

Our first steps in getting a PLA service established have followed that same mantra. It is 'For Principals, by principals'. David Hain, our first PLA, was appointed to work alongside Northland principals a year ago. What a difference that has made! Principals are lining up to draw on David's extensive experience, knowledge and wisdom. He boosts their confidence and empowers them. Because he is a trusted colleague principals are unafraid to admit their failings and weaknesses which makes finding solutions so much clearer. NZPF says we need more 'David Hains' everywhere!

Extending the PLA service is a priority. Alongside that priority is the toughest issue of all and the source of our greatest stress. It is the lack of trust in our current system of education. There is no simple answer but the complete lack of a vision for developing quality leadership in our schools or indeed in our system as a whole is an impairment to progress. That is why we instigated the debate on 'the purpose for education' at our Moot (see report p.18). That is why we keep asking the Minister and the Ministry to give us a 'map' to show us how proposed changes fit together. And that is why we will continue this advocacy until we get results.



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HORA HORA SCHOOL

Liz Hawes EDITOR

The sign on principal, Pat Newman's, office wall reads: 'I plan to be a curmudgeon when I grow up and I'm making very impressive progress.'

THIS MAY BE a perverse intent of the far north principal, but ask the little girl who features in another picture. She may have quite a different opinion. Pat Newman is lifting her up onto the jumping platform at school camp. It's hard to reconcile the word 'curmudgeon' with the man who cares so much for kids.

You don't go far to hear this sentiment repeated. You hear it from his teachers, his kids and his colleagues. It is what lifts this giant amongst principals to another level amongst his fellow professionals. He is the one the younger, less experienced principals call when they need advice and mentoring. He's the one who walks the dark valleys with them when their relationship with the Board turns pear-shaped or when they are feeling especially isolated. He's also the first to chastise them if they do something foolish that could possibly impinge on the rights of a single child.

Pat Newman is not a man universally loved for all of his views.

Just ask any Minister of Education or Secretary for Education who's held office in the last twenty years. His veins pump overdose levels of Southern Irish Catholic justice and fairness; Mix that with a potent dose of bristling Māori righteousness and the result is a man who is fiercely staunch, who carries mana amongst his peers, who is widely respected and who will stop at nothing to fight for fair outcomes for all.

Some describe him as a walking almanac of all things educational. His extensive knowledge of educational legislation, policies, regulations, guidelines and compliance issues is legendary. Even more importantly he knows exactly how they all apply. This knowledge of Pat's also means he has been a front-runner when it comes to elections for various representation roles such as the Teachers' Council, the NZEI and his local Te Tai Tokerau Principals' Association over which he currently presides. He also did a stint on the NZPF executive and was its



Getting ready for a game



Pat Newman, in contemplation

President for a two-year period.

Pat Newman felt very at home in Wellington, so close to the houses of parliament. The cut and thrust of politics has always attracted him and he thrives on the hurley burley of political debate.

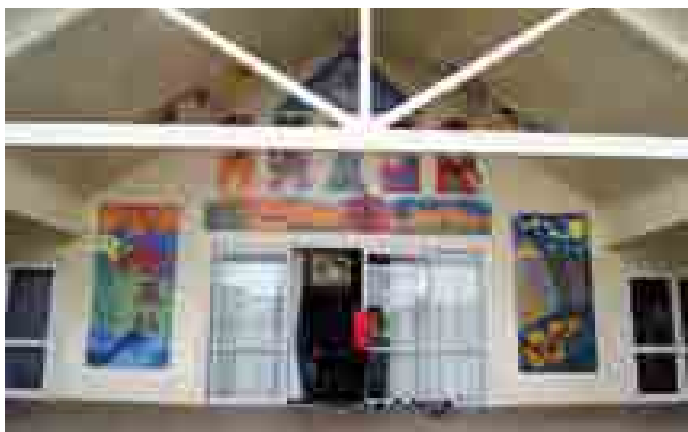
He is most fearless when he thinks that government policy or new regulations will intrude on children's learning opportunities. All his motivations to act emanate from what, as a professional, he believes is best for the children. He doesn't hold back, whether it is national standards, legislation changes, new Acts, changes to the Teachers' Council, ERO or indeed any related education body, the public will hear Pat's views loud and clear if he cannot see advantages for children and their learning. It is his belief that he has an ethical duty to speak out on behalf of children who don't have their own voice.

Pat also attracts staff who are unafraid to voice their opinions.

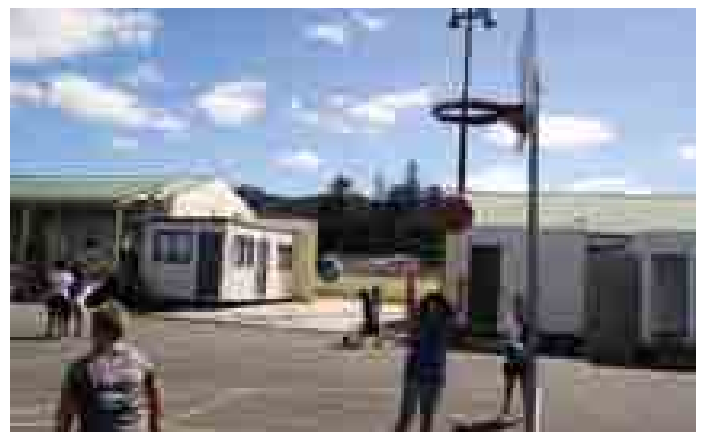
'My staff will argue over issues,' he said, 'and what I have to remember is that I employed them all!' The staff may not be shy to voice their views but they are also very supportive of each other. I spoke to a beginning teacher who was on a release day. 'I have only been here less than a term,' she said, 'and I love the school. The kids are awesome, bright and engaging and I feel so supported here.' I couldn't help but think this young beginning teacher was off to a flying start in her teaching career and I don't think she could believe her luck either.

Pat's school is a low decile school and against the trends, is also a growing school. He has a massive building programme underway with four new classrooms due to growth and a further six that need replacing due to their age and other related issues, making them effectively unusable.

The new block has a way to go before it is ready to open but Pat has planned the whole building programme around modern



The symbolic art work adorning the school hall



We shoot for the stars at Hora Hora and if we miss then we at least get the ball in the hoop!



The old and the new mix seamlessly at Hora Hora – This is now the school hall building



Hora Hora School main entrance

learning pedagogies. The new block will incorporate shared spaces including kitchen facilities. ‘I want to bring cooking into the curriculum,’ he says. ‘It is a great applied skill which also teaches the kids maths and science.’ Cooking is about measuring ingredients, mixing them in certain ways and applying heat. In the course of this process, changes are made that are observable and from which the kids can extrapolate scientific facts. It’s a very pleasurable activity with rich learning attached.

Another critical area of focus for Pat Newman’s school is transforming it into a bicultural environment. To this end, Pat volunteered to involve himself in the Māori Achievement Collaborations (MACs) PLD programme as a facilitator. Some 78 per cent of the children in his school identify as Māori and he wants to give every one of them the very best start he can. To meet this goal successfully, he knows all of his Māori kids must feel comfortable in his school so that they can take full opportunity of all the learning opportunities that come their way. Part of that means the school must reflect the needs of the community at large and that also includes our Pakeha kids, he says.

Over the years the community has been engaged in debates over issues such as the school’s vision and establishing practices in the school consistent with the research findings of Dr Anne

Milne. This year the school has engaged the services of CORE Education to align the school’s Māori and Pakeha values.



Pat Newman, proud to be caricatured by Webb

One of the school’s values that has persisted for the last seventeen years is that ‘We look after each other.’ A Doctoral student did a huge study on the culture of our school,’ says Pat proudly. ‘It was all about creating a community of care in education,’ he said. One practice that sets Hora Hora school apart is the partnership it has with a local iwi under the ‘Whānau Ora’ scheme, to address the community’s health issues. ‘One morning a week we have a full practitioner nurse and a podiatrist who run a clinic in our old dental clinic,’ he said. ‘Anyone from the community can come and the service is free. Diabetes is a growing problem for the community and by offering free access to treatment we are supporting our community to be healthy,’ he says.

Another day each week the ‘Nit Busters’ programme is run from the school. This is one way to keep nits from spreading throughout the classrooms and hopefully will help to eradicate the problem altogether.

Pat is not one to complain about a lack of funding. ‘It’s all about priorities,’ he says, ‘and you have to be a bit creative sometimes.’

He is keen to expand his bilingual units in both the senior school and new entrant to year six. He finds it hard to find



Swimming classes at Hora Hora



Moving with the times – 10 new classes for Hora Hora

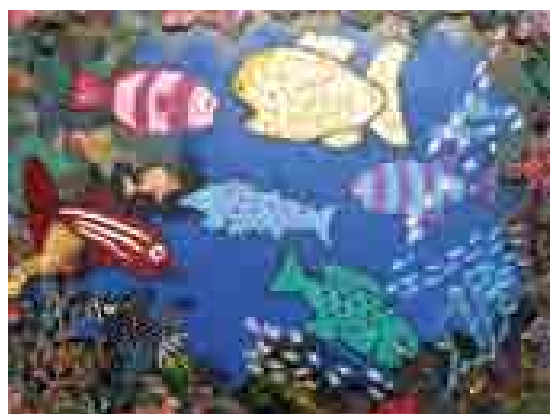


Swimming's over!

suitable teachers fluent in Te Reo. To help overcome this problem he arranged for Te Reo classes to be made available three hours a week, as a night class. It takes thirty weeks to learn the basics of the language. 'Sixteen of my teachers and twenty parents have taken up this option,' says Pat. 'I reasoned that parents who wish to have their children in immersion units need to be more fluent in Te Reo themselves.'

Pat is proud that his Board of Trustees supports his direction with the Māori language and has agreed that the next permanent teacher appointed to the school staff will be fluent in Te Reo. There are positive side effects of bilingualism beyond preservation of the Māori language. 'Children who are bi-literate also grow in fluency in their native tongue,' he says.

Hora Hora has its challenges with the socio economic status of the neighbourhood being at the lower end, but Pat tries to look at the individual needs of each child and respond accordingly. One thing we can be certain about: Pat Newman will stand up and fight for the needs of those kids, no matter what the cost.



A restful painting adorns the principal's office wall



The real Pat Newman helps one of his students up onto the jumping platform at school camp



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MĀORI ACHIEVEMENT COLLABORATIONS (MACS) IN ACTION

Liz Hawes EDITOR

SOME WOULD SAY that the MACs are the most effective way principals can change their school culture so their Māori students can succeed as Māori. Last year the Minister gave the PLD programme the big tick. She increased the funding which cleared the way for Hoana Pearson to be appointed national co-ordinator or Te Pitau Mātauranga. That meant expansion of the programme could be managed. This year ERO has also endorsed the MACs.

These are not the most important reasons that the MACs are the best gig in town. It is because they evolved from concerns expressed by principals themselves about the academic progress of Māori children. This was not a new issue. Many had grappled with it before, mostly from a 'deficit-thinking' perspective, assuming that there was some sort of gap for Māori kids that prevented them from succeeding. Needless to say, there was no progress made on that front.

Back in 2013 a whole new enlightened way of thinking was

cultivated. This concept was led by Peter Witana, Keri Milne-Ihimaera and Whetu Cormick of the NZPF executive and the leadership of Te Akatea, the Māori Principals Association. The thinking was about recognising two completely separate and valid world views and allowing them to coexist in our schools. Each has their own set of values. Each has their own cultural beliefs and practices. Both are heading in the same direction. That direction is success for all children. There is no room for deficit thinking in this new environment.

The MACs are winners and within the first two years of getting the first six collaborations off the ground, an independent evaluation of the PLD showed that Māori children were already benefitting. It is therefore not surprising that principals all over the country are lining up to take advantage of the new PLD.

The MACs programme was initiated by principals in response to a shared challenge. The programme is administered by principals and collaborations are facilitated by principals. It is a



The MAC Board members (left to right): Rose Carpenter, Liz Hawes, Leanne Otene, Iain Taylor, Hoana Pearson, Whetu Cormick, Kiritina Johnstone, Myles Ferris



Discussions over lunch at the MAC hui

programme run by principals for principals. There is complete trust and ownership of the initiative and therein lies the key to its success.

I travelled to Whangarei to observe a MAC hui in action. MAC facilitator, Pat Newman, principal of Hora Hora School in Whangarei, was the day's host. He had several of his MAC principals in attendance and had invited twenty-three more principals from secondary, intermediate and primary schools from throughout the Te Tai Tokerau region. These principals had already registered interest in joining the MAC but wanted more information before committing to the kaupapa.

Te Pitau Mātauranga, Hoana Pearson, gave a stirring presentation demonstrating how awareness and acknowledgement of ethnocentric belief systems can lead to a willingness to open up to accepting alternative world views and thus beginning a bicultural journey. She presented compelling examples of how a dominant culture can unwittingly create racism and prejudice through ignorance. She told the story of the Māori child who went to school with her Māori name and came home with the Pākehā name 'Jane', because her real name was too difficult for the other children to pronounce. 'People don't understand that

these are racist behaviours,' she said, 'because they are so embedded.' She made no secret of the fact that transforming the system would not be easy. 'The education system was set up to undermine Māori success,' she explained, 'and to keep Māori at the lower end of the social ladder. You can't overcome all of that overnight.'

What Hoana could offer however, was the very best start to



Peter Witana, whose inspiration drove the development of the MACs and Hoana Pearson Te Pitau Mātauranga, Co-ordinator of the programme

turning this situation around and set principals off on a journey to make our schools a place where Māori children not only feel they belong, but feel valued equally alongside their Pākehā student peers.

Principals were visibly affected by Hoana's powerful presentation. For some it was their first experience of having the subtleties of racism and ethnocentricity so starkly exposed. Uneasiness was apparent on the faces of many, yet the support and unity of the wider group created a safe haven within which these new ideas could percolate.

Next it was time to hear the experiences of MAC principals who had been actively participating in the PLD for a year or more. Here is a sample of the commentary.



Secondary Principals from Whangarei Boys High and Tikipunga High School discuss how the MAC might help them

Hayley Read, principal of Whangarei Intermediate School, talked of how her school's commitment to whānau and manaakitanga marked the beginning of a major turn-around.

'We first had to practise these values with each other as a staff before we could expect that the kids would share them,' she said. Then we established a Māori Development Team, drawing all our Māori teachers together. 'We agreed that every Māori teacher would teach Te Reo Māori,' said Hayley, 'and we set some minimum expectations, even though we would have preferred maximums. Every student learned to present their own tikanga pepeha (introducing themselves in Māori) and we began work on creating our own school waiata. A year later and these things are not negotiable. They are just normal common practice, along with opening and closing hui with a karakia and adhering to our school kawa. Staging powhiri to welcome visitors is also common practice in our school now and our aim is to have all of our students capable of leading a powhiri, not just our whānau group.'

The powerful transformation that Hayley described to the group was the 'normalising' of Tikanga Māori in her school such that the status and importance of Māori culture and practices was equally as important as those of Pākehā. There was no doubt that Hayley was expecting to expand on these beginnings and create an even richer tradition of biculturalism in her school in the future.

Lana Wolfgram, principal of Totara Grove School in Kamo, was new to the MAC PLD programme when she first attended the MAC conference at the Waitara Marae. As leader of a school with 80 per cent Māori students, she said the hui was perfect timing

for her as she was beginning to think strategically about how she might address her school culture to better accommodate her high Māori student population. Inspiration came in the form of Dr Melinda Webber and her description of the five sources of mana. These were Mana Whānau or identifying the family as a key to Māori children's success; Mana Motuhake or sense of identity; Mana Tangatarua or navigating success in two or more worlds; Mana Tū referring to courage, humility, tenaciousness and self-efficacy; and Mana Ukaipou or the place of learning. 'The Board and I reflected on these five sources of mana and decided that we wanted to build pride in our area through stories. We met with our local kaumatua and the kaumatua from the wider region,' she said, 'because we wanted stories that were broader than our immediate area. We wanted stories that challenged people.'



Principal of Whangarei Intermediate Hayley Read shares a cup of tea with Leanne Otene from Manaia View School

The idea of the stories was to make connections and build relationships which Lana and her Board had identified as a key starting point. The Kaumatua had advised that success was about school and community working together. 'We are making progress in small steps,' she said.

Robyn Posthumus, principal of Hurupaki school had a similar story. 'We looked at the Treaty, land wars and other historic events that had significance for us,' she said. Although her school roll is 25 per cent Māori, school culture change means taking everyone with you and for Hurupaki school it is important that everyone knows what it is to be Māori. 'Our whole school participates in KapaHaka and we have a separate performance group as well,' she said. The second focus for Hurupaki school is engagement with whānau. 'We consult annually with whānau and last year trialled some on-line consultation too. We want whānau to contribute their ideas and we want to share what we are doing,' she said. 'We want to try and do what our Māori parents have asked for, like taking our kids out to the marae and introducing school-wide karakia,' she said.

Like Totara Grove School, it is small steps, but significant ones.

Leanne Otene from Manaia View School also has a high Māori population and said, 'Things like introducing karakia do not tick the box for us.' It is pedagogical change that she wants and that means a constant whānau voice. 'We are not the only ones giving information,' she said, 'we are receiving it too.' At Manaia View, everything they do is 'Mahitahi' (working together as one) and strategically planned. That includes the whānau influence in the school. 'We use the MAC 'measurable gains framework' to give us



A new principal shares her expectation of the MAC PLD with the group

a picture of the shifts in staff thinking and this becomes part of their appraisal,' she said. She explained that the MAC PLD is all about changing the whole culture of the school, understanding the importance of whānau and extending those changes to activities outside the school gate too, like EOTC programmes.

Host of the hui Pat Newman pulled it all together after the MAC speakers, making some pertinent points:

- It's all about relationships and challenging our own thinking as a staff, and staff are likely to be the slowest to change
- It is our role as leaders to get that change and we may feel threatened in the process so reassurance from the MAC group is important
- When looking at our graduate profiles we must also consider questions like 'How do we demonstrate whānaungatanga and manaakitanga? Manaakitanga is after all giving away power, to boost the mana of our visitors
- We are a bicultural nation irrespective of whether our school's Māori population is 1 per cent or 99 per cent
- Bringing the community into your school to be in true partnership is critical to success and connecting through

stories is a good way to support this process. An holistic approach is best

- If our parents will not engage with us, we must ask why? The answers are within us and our own school cultures
- There are entrenched negative attitudes towards Māori which are hard to shift and will take time. Even some Māori grandparents still tell their mokopuna to enrol as Pākehā because they will have a better chance in school. The MACs help us address those issues
- The registered teacher criteria state that each will learn to use Te Reo in context. It is a professional accountability factor so we must take this seriously (Hoana Pearson)

Breaks during the hui gave participants a chance to meet each other and the visitors an opportunity to ask the more in depth questions of those already experienced in the MAC PLD. From the level of interest shown, I have no doubt that the Te Tai Tokerau MAC is about to accommodate a whole new expansion process and without doubt we will see secondary school participation for the first time.

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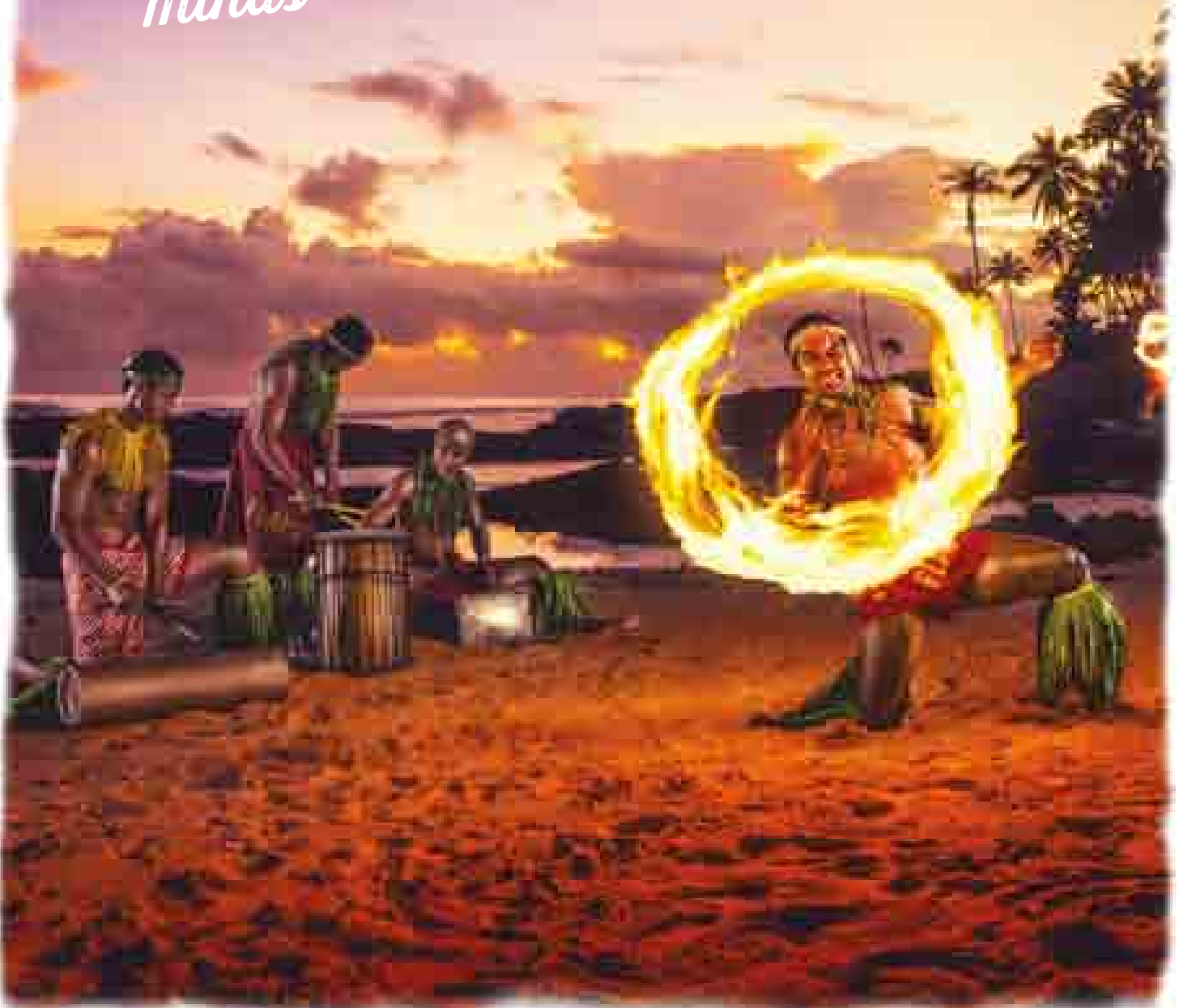
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WHY ARE WE SQUANDERING \$359 MILLION ON MISGUIDED EDUCATION POLICIES?

Professor Emeritus Warwick Elley

NOW THAT THE Ministry of Education is reconsidering, with primary teachers, the shape of its keynote plan 'Investment in Education Success' (IES), we should examine the evidence for the original proposal. The scheme was rejected by 93 per cent of primary teachers, not just because it was another surprise package, imposed without consultation, but because teachers see more drawbacks than benefits. I share their scepticism.

First, the Minister exaggerates the potential of schools to reduce gaps between high and low achievers. She quotes poverty as accounting for only 18 per cent of the differences between students. That figure ignores the influence of many non-school indicators not measured in PISA. Visiting expert David Berliner, Regents' Professor Emeritus of Education at Arizona State University, puts our figure at 78 per cent of student achievement differences due to home circumstances, neighbourhood influences and school social status. That leaves little room for changes due to differences in the quality of teaching. We cannot generalise from the dissenting Tennessee study quoted by the Ministry. It is dated, confined to one subject and one cohort, and assumes that NZ teachers vary in quality as much as US teachers. Furthermore, common sense suggests that there are many ways of being a good teacher. Raising literacy and numeracy test scores are only two.

The objective of IES is to raise the achievement of all students, high-achievers and selected priority groups – Māori, Pasifika, Low SES and Special Needs students. As we have consistently out-performed other nations in the percentages of students achieving at the highest levels, but have failed to reduce our 'under-achieving tail', it is surely better to focus those millions on reducing the gaps between the priority groups and the rest. Spending up in the top schools will only increase the size of our gaps, as the research consistently shows that untargeted interventions help top students the most.

Much of the Ministry evidence justifying IES comes from two British sources – the McKinsey Reports. These purport to reveal the secrets of systems described as 'sustained improvers' in international surveys. No mention is made of the critiques of these reports. For instance, claims about the success of England's literacy and numeracy strategies are surely false, as the gains quoted predated the relevant surveys. Likewise the successes attributed to Michael Fullan, popular adviser in Canada, Australia, England and New Zealand, must also be questioned. All these education systems have been in steady decline in PISA

in recent years. Bias or shoddy scholarship?

There may be merit in forming 'Communities of Schools' to share 'best practice' but the case is not well made. As this Government has done so much to provoke strong competition between schools – through National Standards and league tables – the hoped-for cooperation between schools would be half-hearted at best. We should follow the example of most European countries and dispense with competitive rankings of schools, which are clearly shown to polarise achievement levels. Moreover, the idea of absenting top teachers and leaders from their stations – with big bonuses – to help others, is unpopular with teachers and parents. Research shows that many teachers are effective when they spend

long hours, going the extra mile for their own students. Low-achieving schools need the best principals and teachers fulltime, not as periodic visitors. We need more incentives to secure this outcome.

Importing the teacher-sharing models from Asia is highly debatable

as their systems are much more authoritarian, their educational goals narrower, and the contribution of their after-hours coaching schools may be greater than their regular schools. Even the quoted example of principals spending time supervising a range of municipal schools in Finland ignores the fact that we are unique in having no structure between schools and central authority, which lumbers our principals with far more duties to perform. Few could spend days away from their desk.

Perhaps 'best practices' of successful teachers should be identified and disseminated if possible, but many already exist. For instance, students who struggle in reading need *early, individualised, intensive, expert* help. Such effective tutoring has been given to thousands of 6-year-olds, here and overseas, in the form of Reading Recovery. Yet only half of our low-decile schools, where most strugglers are found, can afford it. Jeanne Biddulph's 'Reading Together' Programme where parents are taught effective tutoring practices is another proven strategy. There is research to support numerous other targeted interventions. The millions should be invested here, not on teacher bonuses.

Of course, IES would have minimal impact if the root causes of achievement gaps – poverty and inequality – are not addressed more vigorously, in the early years. More resources for pre-natal care, more support for young mothers, more 'at risk' children given easier access to quality ECE, earlier screening for disabilities – such measures would generate 'sustained improvements'. The research is clear – dollars invested in quality child care will save thousands later!

First, the Minister **EXAGGERATES THE POTENTIAL** of schools to reduce gaps between **HIGH AND LOW ACHIEVERS**.

MOOT 2016

Liz Hawes EDITOR

THIS YEAR'S NZPF Moot had an air of expectation, different from most. The Federation's executive decided it was timely to launch a debate on *'The Purpose of Education in New Zealand'*. The question of purpose for education drives to the very heart of the teaching profession's *raison d'être*. There were a number of reasons for choosing this topic including that educational reforms within the past decade are not grounded in any articulated set of values we expect to see lived out in our future citizens and are not linked to any stated vision or strategic intent. Whilst schools have been bombarded by many significant changes, principals have struggled to see how these changes logically connect to each other or to any unified overall direction. Furthermore, debates

was the well quoted proclamation of then Prime Minister Peter Fraser who said:

The government's objective, broadly expressed, is that all persons, whatever their level of ability, whether they live in town or country, have a right as citizens to a free education of the kind for which they are best fitted and to the fullest extent of their powers.

Taylor described this statement of intent as inspirational, inclusive and uplifting. He explained that the declaration had never been enshrined in any iteration of the Education Act and quickly added that the values embedded in the statement were



Professor Hargreaves meets the regional presidents over lunch



President Iain Taylor presents his ideas about 'The Purpose of Education'

on updating the Education Act had already raised the issue of embedding a statement of *'The Purpose of Education'* in the Act.

In recognition of the seriousness and the complexity of the question, the NZPF executive brought internationally renowned educational researcher and scholar, Professor Andy Hargreaves from Boston College in Massachusetts, to address the gathering and summarise the day's deliberations. Other speakers talked of the purpose of education from a variety of different points of view including that of the Minister of Education, Māori Achievement Collectives, the Treasury, Future's Consultancy, the Wellington City Mission and Asia New Zealand.

President, Iain Taylor

First up on the day's programme was **President, Iain Taylor**. He opened his address by telling the audience of some 120 principals from every region in New Zealand, that there had only ever been one guiding statement for education since the 1930s and that

very much alive in the National Educational Guidelines (NEGs) today. The first goal of the NEGs, he said is for students to reach:

The highest standards of achievement, through programmes which enable all students to realise their full potential as individuals, and to develop the values needed to become full members of New Zealand's society.

The intent and values embedded in the Fraser statement thus remain a driving force in the NEGs and many would argue that the NEGs, together with New Zealand's world leading curriculum are quite sufficient to guide New Zealand's education system well into the future.

Taylor wouldn't necessarily disagree. He did however want to dig deeper into the current context and lay bare the features of society that schools encounter today. He talked of the advances in technology and the ways in which technology can be used to liberate and empower students. He talked about global warming



Professor Hargreaves stunned his audience saying that Academies in the UK must be loyal to their brand, not their local community

and the importance of teaching today's students responsible practices of conservation and pollution reduction. He talked about how New Zealand has become a multicultural nation. '... if our kids are to make the most of living in such a culturally rich country, they need to embrace tolerance and be culturally astute,' he said. He spoke of the growth in the number of students with special learning needs and of the societal inequities that have led to exponential growth in child poverty.

It was a compelling, strongly delivered outline of the context for education in today's New Zealand. But Taylor was just warming up. He saved his most powerful words for the NZ Curriculum and self-managing schools proclaiming that NZ teachers are world class professionals right across the deciles as proclaimed by the OECD just the previous week. He then told his audience that the close relationships public schools have with their local communities mean that community aspirations and values create a context for each school's unique curriculum. This allows schools to continually adapt and change in response to demands for new skills. New Zealand schools can thus remain ahead of the game. Whilst much of the rest of the world were still immersed in standard methods of teaching and testing, New Zealand has leapt ahead into inquiry learning and teaching, problem solving, critical thinking, self-management of learning and other innovative approaches. As he got down to talking about the day to day business of teaching real kids, Taylor's delivery became more raw and passionate. 'If it's not good for kids we shouldn't be doing it!' he bellowed. At this point you might have thought Taylor was turning his back on the incoherent collection of educational reforms which expressed neither vision nor evidence for advancing kids' learning.

In conclusion he said, 'Our statement of purpose for education will inevitably involve knowledge and skills; it will involve a

range of values and competencies reflecting our growing cultural diversity, our environmental concerns, the need for equity, fairness and justice, inclusiveness and the desire to see our children grow into responsible, compassionate and contributing global citizens.'

Minister of Education, Hon Hekia Parata

Minister of Education, Hon Hekia Parata was the next speaker, warming her audience with her opening line 'How wonderful [it is] to see the faces of education that lead it.'

In addressing '*The Purpose of Education*' she said that education is a 'powerful... social platform for excellence so that people can participate in the economy and grow in prosperity and cultural awareness.'



Hon Hekia Parata, Minister of Education tells the audience of principals that the purpose of schools is to cause learning to happen and know that it did

Parata insisted that ‘[the purpose of] schools are to cause learning to happen and know that it did. Anyone not passionate about that should get out of the education business,’ she suggested. ‘I don’t want miserable people around our children or around you!’ she told the principals in the audience.

She acknowledged that teaching was a complex and challenging job because it requires finding out how learning happens for each child. She spoke of the collapse of time and distance with the bright new digital world but quickly added that whether you are talking about the business of schools or of governments, the greatest influence comes from good quality leadership.

Investing in leadership excellence is a focus for the new



Time to question the Minister

Education Council (EC), the Minister told her audience, and the EC is charged with creating career pathways for leadership and teaching, suitable for the 21st century.

She also addressed the issue of professional learning development (PLD) saying that although \$85 million per year is spent on PLD no one could tell her what difference it made. This would be a transition year, she said, whilst she took advice from academic, Professor Helen Timperley before deciding on the future shape of PLD.

Her next PLD focus was the Aspiring Principals’ and First Time Principals’ programmes, which did not get glowing reviews from the Minister who said the results were not great, in part because ‘the programmes are self-selecting and under-estimate the job of the principal.’

Principals became very focused as the Minister told them that she would be announcing a curriculum for the leaders of new Communities of Learning (CoLs) because ‘they require a new style of leadership to coordinate the groups and collaborate with members of the group around the achievement challenges.’ She said the role would be part advocacy and part leadership because the CoL leader will not displace or undermine the principals within the cluster.

She concluded her brief address by reminding principals that leadership is the cornerstone of a flourishing education system. She said that as Minister, she works hard to give principals a good system and added that ‘It is not my job or yours, to make choices for kids but to give them choices.’

Questions to the Minister

Qu: What is the long term vision and focus of school reviews?

Minister: Long term, [reviews are] directly related to NZC and are evidence based. We do not prescribe what you do to meet them. Schools are ecosystems and you know the outcome indicators. You do it your way. We are a high trust system [which] places you at the centre as experts.

Qu: But currently Māori achievement is the only focus . . .

Minister: Our system has failed for anyone who is not Pākehā. We have not been good at cultural diversity. Cultural access is now required and Māori are a priority group but equally [so are] Pasifika, low SES and [those with] special needs. When ERO said [they require] evidence, [that is a] system challenge. Be courageous and brave and use data. [Cross-School] data tells us we are lifting but [there is] still a deficit.



A group led by Hoana Pearson think about the purpose of education for Māori

Qu: Why is there so little flexibility in leadership for CoLs? Having one principal who leads and is paid is a barrier. Before, we all worked together.

Minister: Extend [the argument] to [a] school. One principal leads a school. CoLs are about principals working together. It’s a horizontal leadership role. It’s not about inputs. [The Lead Principal] is not in charge of individual schools and they don’t shift resources. It’s a career pathway.

Qu: We are appointed by Boards to lead schools. CoLs are different. We haven’t joined because we don’t believe in the leadership position. We want to co-share. We believe in collaboration. Can you tell the Ministry to be open to more discussion on flexibility?

Minister: I’m the one saying no. First, this is the implementation year. CoLs with achievement challenges approved, they are away. This issue is about the whole pathway of kids. I’m tired of hearing from secondary that primary schools are not preparing students well enough. You are the experts for establishing the platform for kids. You know that transitions are a vulnerable time. Kids are left to navigate them. Schools are ignoring what’s gone on at earlier stages. I want a focus on data and achievement. If you don’t want to be part of it, fine. The OECD says LCNs are the best collaboration in the world but as a mechanism for sector wide collaboration that’s different. Moreover there is a penchant to cluster with the adults you like and they are not necessarily the schools in your kids’ pathway. My job is to focus on the system and how to invest in innovations. We have a world leading system and you make that happen but do not be complacent. We are plateauing.

Professor Andy Hargreaves

As the speaker following the Minister, Professor Hargreaves offered some initial reflections saying that 'Whilst not everyone will agree with what the Minister has just said I have to say that as a British citizen and resident of Boston, USA, her degree of passion, articulateness, knowledge and willingness to engage is something the American Republican Party could do with right now!' He was of course referring to the reportage of some of the outrageous statements being made by one Donald Trump, a candidate in the selection race to be the USA Republican Party's Presidential candidate.

Hargreaves expressed his observations of cultural and agricultural changes that have occurred in New Zealand over



Professor Andrew Hargreaves explains what conditions trigger negative emotions to the audience

the past decade then silenced his audience with some facts about changes in Britain. 'In 2011, in England, there were local school districts. From next year, there will be no schools controlled by local districts. All will be Academies under brands, like carpet companies, and the Academies will be loyal to the brand not the community,' he said. The statement cut deep. Everyone in the audience at once recognised that Academy Schools in the UK are equivalent to Charter Schools in New Zealand.

Hargreaves then turned to the topic in hand. He immediately drew comparisons with other countries saying 'There are two discussion trends world-wide,' he said. '[These are] progress and direction. [That means] how you are doing and where you are going.'

He assured the audience that they were not alone in thinking that there were far too many initiatives and changes constantly coming at them. School leaders throughout the world felt the same. It was important to ask why leaders felt there were too many initiatives and the simple answer is because we are unclear about their purpose. 'There are lots of initiatives,' he said, 'but no initiative!' Consequently people feel disempowered. There are no connections between the different initiatives, where they come from or the purpose behind them. There are no narratives and no dreams.

These are not just the opinions of Professor Andy Hargreaves. His assertions are supported by a body of research into the emotions of teaching and what circumstances create positive and negative emotions. The number one negative emotion generator is feeling you don't have control; feeling you have no power over your curriculum; feeling that the purpose of what is required is unclear and does not belong to you; feeling that

you are implementing someone else's purpose and you don't even know what it is. Next is bad or no relationships and finally, unfulfilled purposes.

According to Hargreaves, great statements of purpose are inspiring and inclusive, clear and compelling, short, palpable and connect the future to the past. Hargreaves told the story of President John F Kennedy visiting the NASA space centre in the early 1960s and coming across a cleaner. 'What's your job?' asked the President. 'My job is to put a man on the moon,' replied the cleaner. There could be no doubts about the clarity and inclusiveness of NASA's purpose.

The best statement of purpose for education will be bold, inspiring and challenging, said Hargreaves. He then proceeded



Simon Draper, Asia NZ shows some statistics about what New Zealanders know about Asia

to make suggestions about what ideas a 'purpose statement for education' might include. These were:

1. Citizens cannot maintain both ignorance and freedom
2. Education should be paid for, controlled and maintained by the public
3. Education is provided in schools that embrace children from varying backgrounds
4. Education should be non-sectarian
5. Education should be taught using tenets of a free society
6. Education should be provided by well-trained, professional teachers

Simon Draper, Asia New Zealand Foundation

The Executive Director of the Asia New Zealand Foundation did not have a comprehensive notion of the 'purpose of education' to offer, but he certainly could tell his audience about the significance of Asia to the ever changing New Zealand landscape. There are more people in the world living inside the Asia Pacific region than live outside of it, he said. Further, the growth in spending of the Chinese alone has increased by 571 per cent.

Currently, 12 per cent of New Zealanders are of Asian descent but by 2038 that percentage is expected to rise to 21 per cent. In the case of Aucklanders the percentage of Asians is already 23 per cent and expected to rise to 33 per cent by 2038. These are big demographic changes which will have a significant impact.

So how have New Zealanders responded and what do they know about their new Asian compatriots? The answer is that 66 per cent of New Zealanders know very little or nothing about Asia, yet the more they mix with Asians the more confident they

are with them and the more likely those New Zealanders are to be successful in the future.

Without doubt New Zealand students do not understand Asians or Asian culture enough to fully appreciate the contribution that they make to our own country and society. That is where the Asia New Zealand Foundation can assist with support for Asia events in schools, presentations, study grants and resources for teachers. There are special supports too for school leaders in the form of workshops, Asia evenings and educators network meetings. For the more adventurous there are also cultural connections trips to Singapore, Korea studies workshops and a Shanghai business forum for teachers.

He may not have an answer to the purpose of education but



Michelle Branney, Wellington City Mission puts the case for the most vulnerable citizens

Simon Draper certainly had ideas about what it is not. 'It is not having New Zealand students finishing studies and knowing nothing about the history and culture of their fellow citizens,' he said.

Michelle Branney, Wellington City Mission CEO

Michelle Branney explained that a number of schools and students seek assistance from the Mission. 'The Mission,' she said, 'is home to the most vulnerable. 'Take Newtown as an example,' she said. 'The Newtown Mission whānau is strong and people know that they have a safe non-judgemental place to stay there.'

Many who come to the Mission will be disengaged from mainstream education, she told the principals, and many will not have a nuclear family structure but a self-chosen whānau. We try to make the Mission a family of community, she said. What is important for the high Māori population with the Mission is to first establish a sense of identity and belonging and make, especially our youth, aware that they can return to education at any time. We work from strengths not weaknesses and help people overcome feelings of not being good enough. We try to find creative outlets for our people to express themselves and encourage them also to give back to the community through simple acts of caring and sharing because there is dignity in giving. She left the audience with four principles important for working with our most vulnerable. They include providing a place to come back to, taking a long term view, using peoples' strengths and interests to encourage learning for life and acting on the premise that socially engaged people believe in reciprocity and participation which results in an enriched society.

Dr Cheryl Doig, Futures Consultancy

In addressing the purpose of education, Dr Cheryl Doig who works as a 'Futures Consultant' said there are more questions than answers. Whilst we want to value the past, it must be acknowledged that we are heading in a very different place now and that place is driven by technology and globalisation, not by learning to read, write and get a job.

Education will be a life-long learning process, according to Cheryl Doig, and school is just a small part of that. We will be creating humans who independently cope with themselves and influence the planet in their own ways. We are heading for a personalised world. Indeed in a very short time, we are likely to see universities singularly focussed on technology for example,



Dr Cheryl Doig talks about education in the future

rather than having all universities with general degree offerings. The world is changing at such a rate that you cannot have a school or university curriculum that is not instantly changeable. The very nature of what a school or other educational institution is will blur and change rapidly. Schools will be learning ecosystems, fit for purpose, adaptive, agile, complex and contextual. Learning opportunities will be accessible everywhere. Take MOOCs for example, Massive On-line Open Courses which anyone in the world can take for free. Look at robotics accelerating the pace of artificial intelligence.

Humans and machines are much more intertwined now, so what does that mean for educators? What do you do when you meet your first child with an implant? When we ask what is the purpose of education, whose purpose are we planning for? Who gets to choose?

Different requires us to be bold, Cheryl Doig told her audience. It is predicted that our university and school traditional physical campuses will become redundant in time paving the way for an entirely 'new way.' So we might ask, what that could be like for students?

Our current system is not broken, she said. It works quite adequately for what it was designed for. The thing is, we must call time on that era. As Sir Paul Callaghan once said, 'New Zealand must become a city of four million people, a country where talent wants to live.'

Grace Campbell-MacDonald, NZ Treasury

Whilst Grace Campbell-MacDonald made it clear that there is much value in a shared statement of purpose for education which would provide clear direction, she was equally clear that the role of Treasury is to advise. 'We don't hand out the money!'

she said. 'Our interest is in the framework, the living standards framework,' she said.

Like Cheryl Doig she noted the rapid changes taking place and the importance of creating a policy environment that is responsive. She identified equity as an issue and the need to address it and said that education has its part to play in the reduction of the equity gap.

'We want a country that is more prosperous, sustainable and inclusive where people can participate fully in the economy and society,' she said. 'Prosperity means higher incomes and security of employment. Sustainability is not just for today but for the future,' she said, 'except we can't be sure what that future will look like. That means we will need to be resilient and resilience



Hoana Pearson puts the case for Māori Education

is fostered in high trust communities,' she said.

Grace Campbell-MacDonald described education as pivotal to achieving prosperity. Through investing in knowledge and skills and thus having a more skilled workforce, people will earn more and the availability of a skilled work force drives the economy, she said. She also noted that statistically, having NCEA Level 2 meant you were more likely to be in employment and less likely to be on welfare or in prison. That statistic creates a challenge to lift the success rate at NCEA 2.

'There are challenges for lifting performance,' she said. 'In New Zealand the impact of socio-economic status is the strongest in the world.' The answer it seems is twofold. It is part education and part addressing the equity imbalance.

She also noted that Māori education was critical because according to the demographics, Māori would make up a significant proportion of the workforce in the future. The audience of principals showed no surprise at this suggestion.

It was also important to note the changing nature of work with 47 per cent of jobs that exist right now being capable of automation. The kids of today therefore need multiple opportunities to prepare them for a successful future because many will be in jobs that don't exist yet whilst many jobs that exist today will have disappeared.

Hoana Pearson, Te Pītau Mātauranga

Leader of the MACs PLD programme, Hoana Pearson took her audience by storm in her usual strong and direct style. She outlined the rationale for the MACs (see p.12 on the MAC Hui which outlines this rationale) with a passion and sincerity that held her audience in awe. She also showed the evidence

supporting how the MACs can make a difference and how they are currently operating in six different regions of the country. As ever Hoana paid tribute to those who provided the inspiration to develop this initiative and to those facilitators who are committed to this kaupapa and coaching principals on this culturally embracing journey. For Hoana and her people, the purpose of education for Māori is for all tamariki to have the opportunity to succeed as Māori and at the heart of the MAC PLD is that very intention.

Summary

From the discussions of the day came a great deal of feedback, which Professor Andrew Hargreaves summarized at the end.



Grappling with 'The Purpose of Education' generated deep thought from the principals

He noted the ideas and sentiments which principals repeated many times, including that we want the statement of the purpose of education to be bold, specific, holistic, encapsulating diversity, clear, inspiring, courageous, inclusive, passionate, bicultural, apolitical, collaborative, global, sharing, demonstrating professional ownership and reflecting NZC.

Further sentiments also echoed by the speakers included dignity, identity, ubiquity, authority, inquiry and intervention. Hargreaves noted that 'if you don't know who you are you are not self-confident enough to succeed.'

Hargreaves concluded that there were many components of a statement for the purpose of education raised by the Moot and they were not bland, they were inclusive, reflected dignity and served everybody. He believed that the group was well-placed to now launch the debate more widely and engage others in developing that elusive statement of the purpose of education in New Zealand today.



Sifting through the myriad ideas in groups

ARE YOU ON BOARD THE 'CHANGE PRINCIPAL PERCEPTIONS OF INVESTING IN EDUCATIONAL SUCCESS

DIANNE SMARDON AND JENNIFER CHARTERIS UNIVERSITY OF NEW ENGLAND, ARMIDALE, NSW, AUSTRALIA

ARE YOU CHANGE-INVIGORATED, change-weary or just pedalling to keep up with recent Ministry of Education (MoE) moves? However you are travelling, it must be apparent that Aotearoa/New Zealand school administration is undergoing significant change through the current schooling reform process termed *Investing in Educational Success* (IES). But what is it all about?

Two years ago, in January 2014, the NZ government launched IES. Under the umbrella of IES, the MoE framed a school administration structure and funding model that aims to provide targeted tools and resources to build teaching capability and improve learning through the establishment of three initiatives: Communities of Schools (CoS), a Teacher-led Innovation Fund and a Principal Recruitment Allowance. (The third arm of this strategy is described by Professor Ivan Snook (2014) as performance pay for senior leaders.)

As 'the engine room' of IES (MoE, 2014), CoS is framed in social justice terms as an approach to target the most disadvantaged young people in NZ.

Communities of Schools are groups of kura/schools that come together, along with their communities, to raise achievement for all tamariki and young people by sharing expertise in teaching and learning (ako), and supporting each other. (MoE, 2015, p.3)

The MoE acknowledge that in many regions there are highly successful clusters.

Your kura/school may already be part of a network or cluster. These professional groups do great work and it is likely that such a grouping will translate well into a Community of Schools. This will depend on how well it already reflects the educational pathway from primary through to secondary level. (MoE, 2015, p.6)

Although it is not acknowledged in this CoS literature, there is a significant difference between the nature of networks and clusters. Networks are needs-based collaborations that are generated on a voluntary basis through interactions of like-minded people who have a shared aspiration. On the other hand, clusters tend to be a geographical connection by location. This does not preclude the development of shared goals, yet the collaborative focus is not the driver for their constitution. The CoS initiative fits the latter notion and, with their funding contingencies, there is a mandated aspect to them.

In a 2014 cabinet paper, the Minister of Education, Hon Hekia Parata, provided a rationale for the initiative through highlighting that 'capability is inconsistent' in school leaders and

teachers throughout NZ and IES would universalise practice. It marks a significant swing from the local, contextualised curricula of the Tomorrow's Schools ethos toward a 'tight-loose-tight[er] system of school governance' (Fiske & Ladd, 2001, p.540).

Evidence demonstrates that investing in the profession to raise the quality of teaching and leadership provides the best opportunity to deliver the improved educational outcomes we seek. There is sufficient capacity in the system and we have some of the best teachers and leaders in the world. Capability is inconsistent however, and there are barriers to ensuring best practice is universal practice. (Cabinet Paper: IES design and implementation, 2014, p.3)

Curious to know how primary and secondary principals in Aotearoa interpret the IES initiative, we conducted 31 interviews. The school leaders articulated a range of perspectives, alluding to the rich potential of cross-school collaborations, the desirability of a progressive career trajectory but also concern that the proposed changes may be detrimental to school communities. Representative comments from principals (pseudonyms provided) are included here. The range of issues identified by the principals include: fiscal motives; accountability and control; loss of responsiveness and lack of local knowledge; hierarchical considerations; and uncertainty in the face of change.

Fiscal motives

The policy is viewed as an economic strategy for reducing Education expenditure.

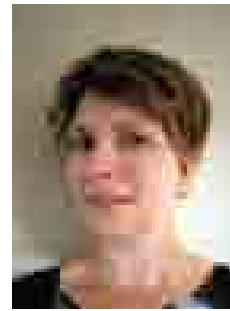
I think that they just brought something over and plonked it on top of us and that's been a result of wanting to save money. (Trina)

Concern is expressed that money may not be available to schools that are not fast to access incentivised funding when it is offered. Kate alludes to the coerciveness of needing to apply for PLD funding as a CoS or risk missing out. She alludes to the potential for the initiative to change the nature of an existing cross-school collaboration.

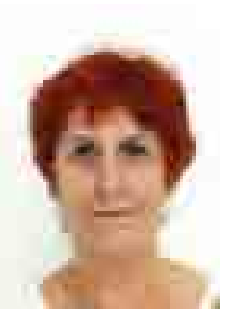
And the government has made it so that if you don't [join], you don't get professional development (PD) funding and PD is fundamental to our survival. If you don't join you're just going to get starved. We have to believe in ourselves enough, in our relationships to believe that we can actually survive the structure and make it work for us. We have to. (Kate)

However, Noah, a principal from a disadvantaged area of

TRAIN' STING IN



Jennifer Charteris



Dianne Smardon

Aotearoa, notes that the potential for pooling of funds is a positive way to collaboratively access MoE funding.

[It] is about pooling your resources as a grid of schools and buying professional development or [having] buying power for an innovation that you want to do in your little school district. (Noah)

Accountability and control

Principals described an increased pressure for centralised power over school administration and management. They suggest that this intensified control may be filtered through the executive principal to provide an additional layer of administration to the existing system.

The model is like Sydney schools where you have much less autonomy in the school and you have a district supervisor. [The minister] talks about career pathways and creating these super principals who will have oversight of a number of schools. And that's sort of adding another layer of management that's really unnecessary. She's calling it a career structure, but then she is laying another layer of control over the schools. (Dana)

They want somebody to be accountable –somebody to beat over the head. They want somebody to say 'here's your target, you're going to improve.' They need a direct line of authority. (Kate)

The potential for intensified accountability through increased scrutiny of student achievement data was noted. Through this monitoring, it is perceived that schools that are not thriving will need to be brought into line with the rest. Some leaders suggest that this targeting of underperforming schools, and by extension practitioners, through the CoS project is an unwarranted, draconian measure imposed on all schools.

They are forcing it on us. They have titles like 'lead principal' and 'change principal'. I think that the Ministry is trying to get more control because they're all independent schools. By encasing us in a community, it might be easier to manage the random [schools] that are out there . . . If you're a s*** school and you are fighting your data or hiding your data, you're going to be 'got' in the CoS. (Magnus)

I know that some schools are not functioning very well. Now if they aren't, then the Ministry needs to be able to deal with it. However, when schools are functioning extremely well, they shouldn't have to put on the control. (Dana)

The principals we spoke with aligned the intensification of the audit culture with league tables where data is gathered and

published. A link is also drawn between a model of governance of a cross-school Board of Trustees and moves to implement performance pay.

I think it's just totally achievement driven not learning driven and we are going to get hyped up about results, which actually is league data . . . I think that's how we'll be judged and I think it's quite an ideological focus from this government and this particular Minister and I don't think it's a good idea. (Trina)

The agenda may become five schools to be run by one principal with one board of trustees taking over all of those schools . . . I have an issue with teachers being paid on the results. (Nigel)

Loss of cultural responsiveness and lack of local knowledge

A general governing body responsible for a number of schools was considered an issue for the social and cultural uniqueness of a school community. Dana expressed concern that responsiveness to each school's context and community would be lost in the push for universalism.

When you've got somebody who doesn't fit in the community, making decisions for the school, they're not necessarily going to have the knowledge of those norms that make or break a place, you know, those cultural understandings and beliefs. (Dana)

Suzanne points out that less affluent schools may not have a presence amongst their more wealthy counterparts and therefore may be underrepresented in the CoS.

I think they're going to have us all under an umbrella and I don't necessarily think that it will be in the best interest of everybody . . . In affluent schools, the parents are much more engaged and they have those skills that you would hope to have on your board, you know, lawyers, accountants, people who are senior business people. I think that a school like mine could easily get lost and therefore the kind of interests or the direction we're working towards will get consumed by those other schools. (Suzanne)

Aligning collaboration with a business model is an issue for Trina, a secondary principal. She sees that both resourcing and the logistics of coordinating with a large group of schools may be a distraction from the 'core business' of leadership in her own school.

Well, I love the idea first of all that schools collaborate,



but I just don't think it's being resourced properly and in a way that's going to allow [collaboration] to happen. It's a communal collaborative process with the business model put on top of it. I think the reality of actually getting together with several other schools to come up with some common goals would actually distract me from my core business, which is leading the school that I am in. (Trina)

Hierarchical considerations

There is concern over the hierarchical nature of the CoS structure where there is a well remunerated executive principal who has authority over other principals. Kate considers a hierarchical model would jeopardise the existing collaboration.

It has the capacity to kill the sort of collaboration where everyone has a responsibility for the initiative and people all have different roles. [However], when you look at that executive principal, you're saying: 'Well, you're getting 25 grand, you do it. You're getting the money!' . . . I don't think we need that in our cluster –somebody having 25 grand and the authority to come around, you know, beating their chest and saying I need this. (Kate)

Uncertainty in the face of change

Uncertainty in the face of profound and far-reaching change is an issue that concerns school leaders. Jackie uses a maze metaphor for the introduction of IES.

It just seems like [the Ministry] are wanting to do something but we just don't quite know what it is that they're wanting to do. It kind of makes you feel like they know the way out of the maze but we are stuck in the middle of it . . . And we are meant to be leading and innovating and collaborating but nobody is to get a newer map to get out. (Jackie)

Eliza also comments that, although she likes the collaborative focus on shared goals for student learning, there is a lack of clarity about the wider agenda for the educational changes taking place.

I have got no issue with principals working as a cluster collectively to plan professional learning and development, focusing on our shared achievement challenge. [However], the level of transparency and the level of clarity around the [CoS] vision is not there. The issue is that we've got this snippet of it but we haven't got the big picture of what the Ministry intends around the CoS. So we don't actually have a concrete understanding of what we're signing up for. We see the benefit of working for our kids and working collegially with a learning focus. But, what we don't know is how much bigger this is going to get. (Eliza)

Our initial research findings suggest that NZ principals are critical interpreters of policy and are cautious of the implications for accountability and control mechanisms associated with IES. It is apparent that we are witnessing a swing away from the decentralization marked by Tomorrow's Schools yet this also differs from the centralised accountability of the Departments of Education of the 1980s. The IES move can be seen as the intensification of an audit culture through the additional layer of administration. There is clearly a need for greater clarity in sharing the big picture vision for schooling change and a need for further consultation with school leaders and communities.

As illustrated by the comments of Eliza and others above, NZ educators are interested in undertaking influential and positive collaborations. Over the last few decades, we have seen generative and generous collaborations throughout NZ with initiatives like Extending High Standards Across Schools (EHSAS), Resource Teachers: Learning and Behaviour (RTLBs), and Digital Opportunities. Recognising the significance of the proposed change, it is appropriate for a principal to have the last word in this article. Kate highlights the pressure for leaders to 'get on board' with recent changes to schooling administration, the weight of influence inherent in powerful professional collaborations and the perils of 'stepping off' or being 'left behind'.

I liken it to a freight train. You get on that and all those carriages are bearing down. All those schools are a carriage each. And the momentum for change toward a goal is huge. You dare not step off the train because you will be run over. You will be off it and it'll carry on and you will be left behind. So, there is a lot of pressure, peer pressure or professional pressure, to keep on the change train and working together to mould change together and make it work. (Kate)

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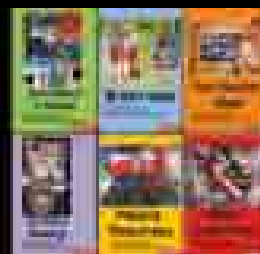


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I'VE BEEN THINKING about this topic for quite a while now because this statement raises many questions we might take a few minutes now to consider together.

What sort of difference or how much difference do you want to make and to whom?

How far does your moral purpose in education extend – to your classroom, your school, to students in the school down the road, to the New Zealand education system?

Can you articulate your moral purpose in education and how it guides your mahi in schools?

Actually, when did you last have a coaching conversation with another senior leader about your moral purpose and were asked questions like this? When did you last talk about your *own* moral purpose to your colleagues? When do you talk to teachers about *their* moral purpose?

Teachers and leaders the world over tell me, usually after my keynote addresses on this topic (e.g. see ACEL 2015), that the 'moral purpose conversation' is not a common one in their school staffrooms. So many teachers and senior leaders have told me that their principal has never talked to them about moral purpose or discussed their own moral purpose with them.

What is moral purpose and why is it such an important part of the leadership of transformative change in schools? Degenhardt and Duignan, (2010, p.17) stated that the answer to the dilemmas we face in our educational leadership '... is ultimately a matter of values, and what is understood to be the moral purpose of education.' We defined moral purpose in the following way (Robertson & Earl, 2014):

Moral purpose engenders the shared values of equity and social justice through the values of culturally responsive leadership and pedagogy, honouring the Treaty of Waitangi and the dual cultural heritage of New Zealand, and stepping up to actively address the under-achievement of particular groups who have not been well-served by the New Zealand education system.

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Jan Robertson is an international leadership consultant, a senior researcher for the Institute of Professional Learning at the University of Waikato, an Adjunct Professor at Griffiths University and the academic director of the New Zealand Aspiring Principals' programme. She draws her professional inspiration and energy from the sustainable lifestyle of her Waiheke community.



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Dr. Lorna Earl, Toronto.

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with the intention of having conversations with people about learning' (Nick Major, Aspiring Principal Coach, 2015.)

We were interested in how leaders learn moral purpose for equity. So we conducted a research study (Earl & Robertson, 2013, Robertson & Earl, 2013) that looked at thousands of reflective journal entries and survey comments to try and understand how the aspiring principals were learning about moral purpose. We found there were four main areas that were

important to this leadership learning:

- An awareness of the equity issues in education in New Zealand today
- The examination of their own moral purpose and what their values and beliefs are about leadership for equity and social justice.
- The ability to have their views challenged or affirmed through critical reflection on practice and deep learning conversations.
- The evidence and experience of building leadership capacity with others and acting on this moral purpose both within and beyond their own schools.

But what we found was paramount to this development was a strong, trusting coaching learning relationship to enable the type of conversations about leadership practice that approach areas of vulnerability, honesty and questioning of current practice. The *Coaching Leadership case study* also offers the research-based coaching SMART tool that NAPP coaches have used to initiate and deepen these conversations.

The coaching paradigm underlines every aspect of the akonga learning in NAPP to develop leaders who have coaching skills, have experienced deep coaching relationships, and understand the potential of coaching relationships to change professional practice. Each akonga has an *experienced leader coach* – very experienced, credible past principals who know how to develop new generations of principals for New Zealand schools who will be *more* than they have been able to be themselves. This takes a special way of working through reciprocal learning coaching relationships. These past-principals describe the experience of learning leadership through coaching partnerships like this:

‘How I wish I had known about and used a coaching approach in my years of principalship. What a difference it might have made!’
Nick Major, Aspiring Principal Coach, 2015.

‘When I left principalship I took up golf and bridge and got a coach for both those activities, yet I never had a coach for the most important job I have ever done in my life . . . be a school principal.’ Graham Young, Aspiring Principals’ Coach, 2015.

Each akonga also has a *peer coach* from NAPP who works through the year supporting and challenging their inquiry into their leadership for transformative change. One then-aspiring principal- now principal – NAPP described it like this: ‘Having a buddy throughout my leadership inquiry provided an authentic and purposeful learning relationship. The questions . . . were as challenging as those provided by my Kaiarahi. This also provided me the with many opportunities to devise and ask my own challenging, open ended and reflective questions. Throughout this process I saw myself change my own perception of what an effective leader is. Personally, it was acknowledging that I don’t have the answers and I don’t need to be the one that does.’ (February 2015).

The regional professional learning groups spend time on *group coaching* around issues of practice throughout the year. The online learning communities provide ongoing, flexible *online coaching* opportunities on all aspects of the multi-faceted role of the principal as the akonga engage in deep dialogue about current and future leadership practice in New Zealand schools. Another aspiring principal described the power of the connected community in working towards



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moral purpose for equity in this way:

‘What a journey so far – It’s been like hopping into a river in a canoe in the calm and then finding there are unanticipated white waters and rapids and falls . . . thankfully finding others in canoes paddling as hard as I was, and crashing against the occasional rock wall, has helped and connections with some amazing other aspiring leaders of learning has been supportive and affirming.’

Aspiring Principal, 2013

Why should we be talking a lot more about moral purpose for equity in schools? Educational leadership is all about the challenges and dilemmas of natural justice and fairness. Meira Levinson from Harvard University stated ‘A lot of everyday quandaries educators and policymakers face are dilemmas of educational justice, but we don’t support or even acknowledge their struggle to address these challenges and make ethical decisions,’ (Anderson, 2015). The injustices in education should be the drivers of our leadership practice. The injustices of difference in the quality of teaching within and between schools; the differences in resourcing between schools in New Zealand (Yes it is an injustice if you are in a well-resourced school and the school down the road is struggling for resources); the amount of time we give particular subject areas; the amount of knowledge in our curriculum of Te Ao Māori; the depth of partnership with iwi and community; the poverty in our communities; how well teachers’ pedagogies are in keeping with the needs of 21st century learning; the difference in quality of educational leadership between schools; the difference in academic performance between schools. And yes – it is an injustice if your actions adversely affect the wellbeing and education of students in other schools around you.

I could keep listing the injustices in our education system – but more importantly, is that leaders and teachers in our staffrooms in schools around Aotearoa New Zealand are uncovering, surfacing, acknowledging and talking about the injustices in their own regions and how they might work together with other schools to ameliorate them.

This leads us back to my first questions, and it calls us to account on what and how much difference we are really wanting to make as educators in New Zealand. Can we move from being part of the current problem to develop a new mindset and mobilise our courage to address and lead transformative change and become part of a solution?

Sir Peter Williams QC – an active and fearless campaigner for human rights and social justice in New Zealand – poignantly stated in his final year of life ‘The river of injustice has flowed since the beginning of time and will continue to flow forever. Your job will be to reduce its number of victims.’ (Chisholm, 2014).

We have to ask ourselves, is our current educational leadership practice in New Zealand education creating more victims or reducing the number of victims?

I believe this question is the greatest challenge for educational leadership in New Zealand. As Beatriz Pont from the OECD said in September last year at the leadership seminar in Zug, Switzerland, although many countries have the policies of social justice – they need further investment in developing leaders with the right skills and disposition for a moral purpose for equity and quality with the agency to lead transformative change for fairness.

The Education Council commissioned five Think-pieces

(Education Council, 2015) on the future of educational leadership in New Zealand and have developed a discussion paper for future direction for the leadership of communities of learning. The new Centre for Leadership Excellence established by the Education Council will be working to support and develop those principals who have stepped up into the system leadership roles of the Communities of Learning. Mason Durie, in his Think-piece, called for collective leadership focused on a loyalty to students:

E hara taku toa I te toa takatahi

Engari I te toa takatini

My success should not be mine alone: it was not individual success but the success of a collective.

Will these leaders in Communities of Learning be able to lead beyond their own school gates to create the new knowledge and capacity building with other leaders that will be needed to address their regional challenges? If they have the disposition to learn the way with their colleagues and lead together with a strong moral purpose for equity and justice their educational leadership *will* make the difference needed in New Zealand education today. What would education look like if systems were designed to be truly just?

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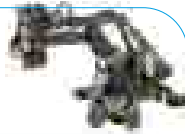
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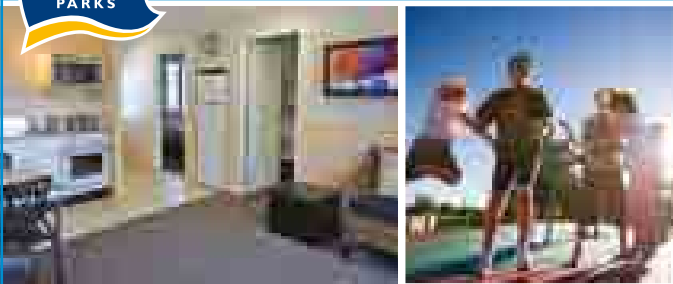
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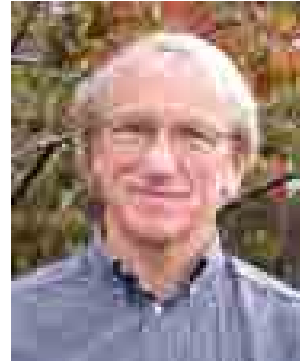


SCHOOL LINES

Acting Up on Education's Goals

Lester Flockton

FEEDBACK, FEEDFORWARD, FEEDUP, FEEDDOWN lester.flockton@otago.ac.nz



THE MINISTRY OF Education is to be commended for its well-presented summary of submissions to proposed Government changes to the Education Act (euphemistically termed 'updates'), bearing in mind that this is just a first step in the exercise; a step that gives an illusion of inclusive policy making. But now we have to try to make sense of all of this, to put it into perspective, and to consider possible ramifications. After all, we can submit as much as we like, but what the current Minister and her cabinet bosses like could be an entirely different matter – and therein the integrity of democratic processes is prone to fall apart, as we have too often come to see. So despite the honorable intentions of the Secretary of Education, we are entitled to be somewhat skeptical.

The Ministry of Education will develop specific proposals for the Minister of Education to consider. The Minister will then seek cabinet agreement to *her* (Ms Parata's) preferred proposals. (1)

Some 1845 submissions were made on the five topics permitted for discussion on changes to the Act. Contrast this number to the 9291 submissions that were made on The New Zealand Curriculum (NZC) and already we have some glaring messages: the time allowed was ridiculously short and very badly timed; the public at large probably had little idea that the exercise was afoot, and for those who were aware, many will have come to the conclusion that the work involved in putting together submissions within contexts of political control can be a complete waste of time.

Analysing the 'submitter demographic' gives a further perspective. Whereas a large proportion of submissions on the NZC resulted from school or community-based discussions and 'collaborations', this doesn't appear to be the case with this Act exercise. The majority of the 1800+ submitters were individuals, including 1200+ of the 50,000+ teachers in New Zealand, and 600+ of a possible 500,000+ parents. We are therefore justified in concluding that submitter representation of the populace was wafer thin. Regardless, there was some good sense in what some had to say, and some nonsense.

Let's take, for example, submission topic number 1, 'Making sure everyone knows the goals for education' – putting aside the ridiculous notion that stating goals in the Education Act will make sure everyone knows them – this topic, not unexpectedly, has captured and cornered the attention of those who are engaging with this Act exercise. It has fed that insatiable thirst for new topic diets. For a while it was formative assessment, then it was

Over the years, **NEW ZEALAND** has made great play of **DECIDING ITS GOALS** for education.

'thinking', then technology, then MLEs, then 'collaboration', and so it goes on. Regardless, interest in defining and asserting the goals of education is always heightened in times of perceived or real political control, manipulation and narrowing of purposes, emphases and resourcing. That view is currently alive and well in our primary schools, but thankfully many of the bright-eyed and enlightened professionals continue to look and take their children to wonderful well-rounded learning experiences that stretch beyond the confines of dominant fashion fences.

Over the years, New Zealand has made great play of deciding its goals for education. This is hardly a new idea. The Education

Development Conference of the 1970s, for instance, went to great lengths and took the time to engage every school-based community up and down the country in focused discussion and contribution. The resulting agreements on goals included such things as

- ensuring each pupil receives a balanced education
- encouraging a sense of history, an awareness of basic values, and the freedom of imagination that will assist in making choices
- developing an intrinsic and continuing motivation to learn
- developing the ability to speak clearly, listen carefully, read intelligently, and write accurately.
- Acquiring the basic understandings and skills of mathematics (Note the clarity of language and the absence of 'spin it up' fashion jargon.)

The current National Education Goals (NEGs) likewise derive largely from widespread discussions and engagement throughout New Zealand, and in light of current game-play, they are certainly worth revisiting and re-evaluating, because there is always room for some improvement. So what might you want to change, add or delete? Are they still relevant? Have they been successful drivers of educational policy, resourcing and practice in this country? Where's the evidence?

While it seems that the NEGs are a logical starting point for any review or discussion on national goals for education, that's not how it's being played out. Wonder why? And yet there is a further important consideration here. Unlike the relative inflexibility of the Act with the costly hoo-ha required when making even the smallest of changes, placing the goals in the National Education Guidelines mean that they can be, and have been, adjusted from time to time without the need for statutory



fuss. Moreover, the Act gives the NEG's the full force of authority over every school. Schools are obligated to the goals through their charter undertaking:

The purpose of the school charter is to establish the mission, aims, objectives, directions and targets of the board that will give effect to the government's national education guidelines . . .

Education Act (1989) Sec. 61 (2)

So what are the merits of putting the goals in the Act over putting them in the NEG's, given that both appear to have equal authority in practice. Well, that depends on which way we look through the eyeglass. It seems that there would be distinct merit if goals in the Act were there to hold the Minister and the Government accountable, just as schools are legally accountable for performance on their charter goals.

For too long there has been a perverse top down view of accountability, with the Minister declaring that she expects this, that and the next thing of schools. The time has come when we should radically flip the viewing angle and declare, 'This is what we expect from the Minister and the Government, because this is their obligation to the goals of education as stated in the Act.'

Let's take an illustrative example. For decades now, and throughout successive official and unofficial consultations on goals, a 'balanced curriculum' is sought every time. Goal 5 of the NEG's recognises and affirms this:

A broad education through a balanced curriculum . . .

If this goal were appropriately fashioned in the Act, then it would be incumbent on the Minister and the Government to do all possible to honour and uphold it. It would mean apportioning 'balanced' attention to quality professional development and resourcing in the social sciences, the Arts, health, physical education, science, key competencies, values, etc. But for the past decade or so this 'balanced curriculum' goal has been impoverished through official neglect. The Minister, preoccupied with measurable standards and data manufacture in one corner of the curriculum, has failed to effectively support schools to provide a broad education through a balanced curriculum across all four quarters. To suggest that her *Investing in Educational Success* scheme will fix this, is yet another pie to be baked in the sky.

It is right that the State should give expression to its goals for education and the reasons for them, but how much confidence and faith we can have in this latest act leading towards the Act is yet to be seen. And the worrying part is that all of this might be something of a smoke screen for other more pungent agendas that have yet to be fully disclosed. We won't know what we really need to know until Ms Parata's Bill eventually appears.

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SEEING THE FUTURE THROUGH UK EYES

Helen Kinsey-Wightman

I RECENTLY VISITED the UK to catch up with my family. My sister works in the Careers Department of Priory Community School (a secondary school of 1280 students aged 11–16 years). Ten years ago, based on results and reputation in the community, this school would have been widely viewed as one of the poorest secondary schools in the region. Under its current Principal, Neville Coles, the school has turned around and is now rated by Ofsted as Outstanding. During his leadership the school – like many in the UK – has become an Academy Trust and as of June 1st will become a Multi-Academy Trust. I took the opportunity to talk to Neville about his leadership and in particular the changes brought about by the move to trust status and his plans for collaboration with primary schools and other secondary schools through becoming a Multi-Academy Trust.

Priory students' results have improved greatly under Neville's leadership. In 2002 only 28 per cent of Priory students achieved grades A*–C with English and Maths at GCSE. By 2015 this had risen to 70 per cent. I asked him what deliberate strategies he had employed that he believes have made the difference. He spoke first about a focus on teacher practice, effective teaching and feedback to students. All lessons are expected to follow a 5 part pattern with the acronym LEARN which is broken down in great detail for teaching staff in the school's goal document entitled 'Progress for All':

- Link: Learning must be set in context
- Establish: Learning activities must be set up effectively
- Achieve: Students must be given opportunities to develop new skills and knowledge through varied learning activities

Review: Students must have opportunities to demonstrate new learning and assess progress

Next steps: Students must be asked to think about what they have achieved in relation to the big picture and where they are going next with their learning.



Secondly, he spoke about building a 'no excuses' school culture of total support and challenge for each pupil. He talked particularly about changing the focus of teacher duties to the expectation that teachers view this time as an opportunity to build their relationships with students. The school has a YouTube channel and students video Neville giving termly updates for parents <https://www.youtube.com/user/PrioryCSA>.

In 2011 Priory became an Academy Trust. Ofsted (the Office for Standards in Education, the UK equivalent of ERO) describes academies as publicly funded independent schools. Academies do not have to follow the national curriculum and can set their own term times. They still have to follow the same rules on admissions, special educational

needs and exclusions as other state schools. Academies get money direct from the government, not the local authority. They're run by an academy trust which employs the staff. Some academies have sponsors such as businesses, universities, other schools, faith groups or voluntary groups. Sponsors are responsible for improving the performance of their schools.

When asked what benefits this had brought about he talked mostly about changes to the financial freedom of the school and the ability to bid for central government funding rather than making budget requests through local government. The school has recently gained funding for 2 big capital projects; the Paula

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Radcliffe Gym and fitness centre – based at the school and open to the public and the recently announced £1.4M Sir Richard Branson Learning Support Centre. The school website quotes Sir Richard's response to the announcement that the centre will be named after him this week: 'Very proud that Priory Community School have named their support-to-learn centre after me. Education is very important, and having the right environment to learn is vital'. I asked whether bids for funding are based on successful outcomes – he smiled and said, 'Not officially.'

Academy status – like Charter status in NZ – gives schools the right to move away from national pay and conditions for teachers. Priory School has not taken this route although he did describe moving teachers up the pay scale more rapidly based on high performance and withholding pay steps for teachers who were being asked to address their performance.

The UK Government have recently published an education white paper – a **government** policy initiative and proposal for legislation – that would see all schools becoming Academy Trusts by 2022. <http://www.theguardian.com/education/2016/apr/27/academies-plan-10000-trusts-nicky-morgan-schools-teachers>

I was interested to find that Neville is not in favour of this – he feels that schools who are already successful should not be forced

to adopt an academy model. I commented that it appeared to me that Priory's success under this model was dependant on skilled financial and business management and that schools whose leaders did not have these skills would not flourish under this model. He agreed.

In recent years, Neville's success at Priory has led to him being called upon to share his model of success more widely. The Trust has school improvement contracts with other less successful

schools and hosts School Improvement Days on Fridays when other schools are invited to see the school in action and talk to school leadership about the strategies they have employed. In addition since 2007 the school has a role as a teaching school. In 2015 67 teacher trainees were working in the school which has 70 full time teaching staff. Currently one third of all teachers employed at the school were trained within the

school – a factor which must play a large part in ensuring the continuation of a strong culture of improvement.

Neville spoke to me from his temporary office space in the boardroom – he has handed over the office he previously occupied along with the day-to-day leadership of the school to his newly promoted Head of School. He is currently working on the establishment of Priory Learning Trust – the latest of around 973 Multi Academy Trusts currently registered in the UK – most of which have less than 10 schools in them.

I explained the NZ Investing in Educational Success strategy and the creation of Communities of Learning to encourage schools to collaborate together on student achievement and asked Neville how his Multi Academy Trust will operate in practice. He explained that Priory Learning Trust has currently reached agreement with one of its contributing primary schools and is in discussion with a neighbouring secondary school to contribute 5 per cent of total funding and join the trust. Neville will then become Principal of all the schools within the trust and will work with a board of 7 members, some of whom may be education specialists and some of whom will represent member schools, to further develop his vision of Progress for All.

When we finished talking Neville took me on a whistle stop tour of the school – he picked up a litter picker as we left the room and used it several times to put litter in the bin as we walked around. As we talked he scanned every room and stopped staff and students to remind them politely but firmly of the standards expected in terms of behaviour and presentation. Whilst he spoke to a staff member about the need for his department to ensure students left rooms neat and litter free, I noticed a poster reminding students to 'Respect the Community not just the classroom – when you're wearing the uniform you are an ambassador for the Academy.' I later saw these on the noticeboard at the local shopping centre – urging shopkeepers to call the school if they observed students causing a disruption.

During this final 10 minutes of my visit it became clear to me that if I were to summarise the key to Neville Coles' success in improving student achievement at Priory School it is his relentless drive for improvement.

I explained the **NZ INVESTING IN EDUCATIONAL SUCCESS STRATEGY** and the creation of Communities of Learning to **ENCOURAGE SCHOOLS TO COLLABORATE** together on student achievement . . .



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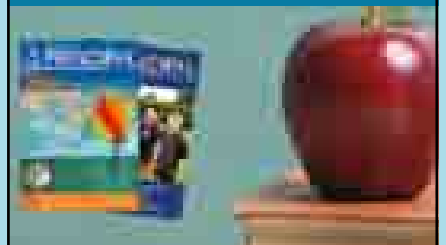
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