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New Zealand
PRINCIPAL
NGĀ TUMUAKI O AOTEAROA

June 2021
Volume 36, Number 2

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SUBSCRIPTION
Distributed free to all schools in New Zealand. For individual subscribers, send $40 per year to:
New Zealand Principals' Federation
National Office, PO Box 25380,
Wellington 6146

New Zealand Principal is published by Cervin Media Ltd on behalf of the New Zealand Principals' Federation and is issued four times annually. For all enquiries regarding editorial contributions, please contact the editor.

ISSN 0112-403X (Print)
ISSN 1179-4372 (Online)

PHOTOS FOR THE MAGAZINE:
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CONTENTS

JUNE 2021

Walking the gully track is a popular lunch time pastime

Companion planting attracts the bees to ensure healthy crops

EDITORIAL

Liz Hawes EDITOR

THIS YEAR'S NZPF Moot was an uplifting occasion. Regional presidents had turned out in force knowing that the major discussion of the day was a topic close to their collective hearts. The day would be dominated by the recently announced 'Curriculum Refresh'.

Teaching and learning have been in the public spotlight of late, given the sliding performance of our young people in literacy, mathematics and science. Whilst international league tables, rating OECD countries in these subjects, show New Zealand students slipping down the order, we are quickly reminded that comparing different countries and their students' academic performance is of little value.

They are of little value because they take no account of the different contexts of countries. Some countries are largely homogenous, others highly diverse. Some are ensconced in testing regimes, teaching to tests and subjecting students to extra tuition outside of school hours, to ensure they will pass, whilst others are more interested in deep inquiry approaches to learning and monitoring individual progress. Some take a standardised, age-based approach whilst others see learning as a continuum. Some are highly content driven, others more strategic.

The measure that makes more sense for Kiwi students is our own country's national monitoring results and these too are showing decline over time. So, what is the problem, is there a solution and what would it take to implement it?

Those who have had long careers in teaching recall how Aotearoa New Zealand frequently held the top spot in educational performance. So, what has changed? Discussions at this year's Moot revealed several possible culprits.

The New Zealand Curriculum (NZC) launched in 2007, was hailed as world leading. With its set of key competencies at the front end, supported by subject level expectations at the back. It promoted delivery of a broad and rich selection of content, based on local priorities. This was an innovative and ground-breaking document. What happened next was less so.

Before the NZC could be embedded, and before any PLD was established, a monumental shift took place with the 2008 Government's adoption of the national standards regime. All focus was now on the three core subjects of reading, writing and mathematics and relentless measuring of these against age-based standards. The results became high stakes and were used to compare schools' performance. The excitement of delivering a rich and broad curriculum quickly faded.

The national standards prevailed for a decade before the election of a new Government in 2017 which had campaigned on throwing them out. Whilst the profession joined in collective celebration, there were now many teachers who knew no alternative way. They struggled to adapt and embrace the NZC which had never been fully implemented. Couple that with a system of self-managed schools and no central provision of curriculum advisors, many teachers were left floundering. The Ministry had been gutted of curriculum expertise and leadership leaving schools to seek curriculum PLD from private providers, who came in a range of guises, expertise and quality.

Whilst some schools had the experience, curriculum knowledge and resources to transition out of a national standards-based system, not all schools had these luxuries. With no national or central provision of support, inevitably there would be inconsistencies across schools.

A further issue canvassed by the Moot was Initial Teacher Education (ITE). This too was seen as a contributing culprit of the slippage. It was noted that the shift from delivering teacher training through Teacher Training Colleges, which were places filled with expert curriculum practitioners and lecturers with years of practitioner experience, training was now delivered mostly through a lecture-based model at universities. Whilst arguably capable of delivering well on theories of learning, teaching and thinking critically, the universities fall short on teaching practice routines. The 'how' of teaching and exciting young people about learning has been conspicuous by its absence. That means beginning teachers require far more mentoring and coaching in the practice of teaching than many schools can support.

Despite these obvious barriers to curriculum delivery, principals enthusiastically engaged with the opportunity to contribute their ideas to refreshing the curriculum. Enough of them have deep curriculum knowledge and know about good teaching practice. They brought their experiences to the debate with passion and enthusiasm.

Deciding on a framework and model for a truly bicultural curriculum was the easy part. Even looking at the complexities of content did not phase most, nor did the challenge of meshing the national curriculum priorities with the local. What remained problematic and largely beyond the reach of the regional presidents to solve, were the issues all principals know are critical to successfully delivering an exciting curriculum. They are ongoing centrally provided PLD, expert curriculum advisors, central curriculum leadership and well-trained teachers. These are all dependent on political will and in a COVID environment are unlikely to get traction in the next Government Budget. Schools might just have to wait a while longer.

PRESIDENT'S PEN

Perry Rush NATIONAL PRESIDENT, NEW ZEALAND PRINCIPALS' FEDERATION

THE MINISTRY OF Education's Curriculum refresh is underway with a stated purpose to ensure curriculum is clear about the 'learning that can't be left to chance'. Curriculum is important, as each curriculum discipline delineates national goals, but any robust national education system must join curriculum to pedagogy. To understand the pedagogical change that needs to occur to respond to our current achievement challenges we need to return to the intent of the New Zealand Curriculum (NZC) mandated in 2007.

Underpinning the 2007 NZC was a recognition that the vast quantities of new knowledge generated by the information age made the learning of formal discrete knowledge in each curriculum discipline an impossible task. It was felt that knowledge should be generated in 'just in time' settings rather than 'just in case' it was needed. Within this approach, knowledge reflected curriculum contexts that were localised and problem based.

An explicit goal of the NZC was its generic design (think *Essence Statements*) that required the application of local contexts so that relevant local knowledge goals could be joined to national 'big picture' curriculum statements. This process of localisation favoured giving students significant control over their learning. Students were able to decide what they learned about and this sometimes meant that core discipline knowledge that did not reflect a student driven context, was not taught.

Professor Gert Biesta writes about this when he identified the 'learnification' of our education system. In such systems, preeminence is given to learning rather than teaching. Teaching has a capricious connotation and is almost seen as a process that somehow disenfranchises students in that it imposes knowledge on young people in the form of teaching and learning goals.

In a recent televised debate on the nature of New Zealand's achievement challenges, I noted the tension implicit in the debate about who owns the knowledge – the learner or the teacher?

The debate was evenly split with traditionalists stacked on one side advocating for clear, explicit teaching goals and deliberate acts of teaching within an unambiguous curriculum. On the other side were the progressivists who were flying the flag of localised, inquiry approaches rooted in context and culture.

It was a shame that the debate encouraged such a simplistic organising principle between teaching and learning. We tend to fall to the binary response when dealing with complex ideas. The truth is that it is not one or the other, it is both!

Clear, explicit, discipline-based teaching goals are important and so too are pathways to help students make sense of knowledge in ways that are relevant and meaningful.

The alchemy of teaching has never been about letting students 'learn what they want' but rather for the teacher to design students into powerful understanding. Of course, the knowledge that underpins that understanding should be curriculum based because that is what a state school system commits to when implementing a national curriculum.

We have become overly enamored with student centeredness to the extent that teaching appears to have become a 'dirty word'. I recently heard about a teacher that did not want to call out faulty thinking in a child's theory of the world in case they undermined the child and hijacked their theory. Let's call this out for the nonsense that it is.

Young people are immature in their understanding of the world. A teacher's job is to design young people into new and challenging learning. We know powerful learning occurs when we connect prior knowledge to new knowledge, to work for

the known into the unknown. Designing young people into new knowledge does not disable them as learners, it does the opposite, enables them!

We need to urgently confirm the importance of explicit teaching goals linked to a clear discipline-based curriculum and then celebrate the incredible talent of our teaching workforce and the many creative ways that they design young people into knowing. Holding explicit teaching goals should not stop young people joining local context or problem-based learning to important curriculum, but it should occur in an environment where the teacher is crystal clear about the importance of deep curriculum learning with strong, purposeful teacher intention.

Briar Lipson writing in her book, *New Zealand's Education Delusion* has been harshly critical of New Zealand's commitment to child-centered schooling. If learning whatever you want in an environment of flimsy curriculum understanding and without the adequate challenge that arises from careful curated teaching is what she means, then she has a point. However, any educator that holds such a view of child-centeredness in a New Zealand context is simply supporting a laissez-faire way of working.

Such an approach has no place in our education system.

New Zealand teachers have **NEVER EMBRACED A 'FLIP-TOP' HEAD APPROACH** to teaching where the **TEACHER IS THE EXPERT** and simply **POURS THEIR KNOWLEDGE** into the student.

Counter to this, New Zealand teachers have never embraced a 'flip-top' head approach to teaching where the teacher is the expert and simply pours their knowledge into the student. Such an approach ignores the opportunity to help the young person make meaning as they experience challenges carefully built into the process of learning. Powerful child-centeredness values children's emerging theories about the world but never fails to challenge faulty thinking to drive young people towards a deep and appropriate understanding of the curriculum.

Child-centeredness is an expression of the value of engaging the child in the process of learning so that teaching can be informed by a rigorous understanding of the potential and fallibility of a child's knowledge to design the children more expertly into knowing.

We need to rediscover our mettle as teachers, confirm the importance of getting clearer about the learning that cannot be left to chance, and then join it to teaching that is challenging and focused on building new knowledge and understanding that is nationally coherent.

The curriculum refresh is occurring, so now let's seize the opportunity to power up teacher knowledge of curriculum, the importance of teaching, and an appropriate and rigorous understanding of child-centeredness.

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ONCE MORE INTO THE BREACH D – ONCE MORE . . .

Professor Roger Openshaw and Professor Margaret Walshaw

Covid-19 in the historical context of the influenza virus and poliomyelitis

WE'RE NOW WELL into 2021 and, despite the challenges of Covid-19, school life continues at pace. It's been a roller-coaster ride through successive lockdowns, not just for us, but also for students, parents and guardians—all of us catapulted into a new and unexpected educational reality. Thoughts of Zoom meetings and Google classrooms are hard to shake off, infiltrating our conversations and our well-being.

People inside an inhalation chamber in Christchurch. The chamber was set up by the Public Health Department for disinfecting throat and lungs.c.1918 *[G- 8545-1/1 The Press (Christchurch) Collection, Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington]*

The 1918 Influenza virus

Pandemics have always had an effect and have always impacted upon school life. Let's turn our minds back to October 1918. World War 1 had not yet ended and after a few months making its presence known in the Northern Hemisphere, the Spanish Flu (also known as the Black Flu), reached God zone. New Zealand was now confronted with a seriously infectious disease for which there were no effective vaccines and little in the way of precedents in relation to ways of containing the spread of this new invisible enemy.

A tangi in the Chatham Islands. The death was that of a child of Ngatiki Te Aho Piripi. Ngatiki wears a black arm band, and Tommy Solomon, the last full-blooded Moriori, stands to the right of him (with moustache). *[G- 38462-1/2. W B Burt Collection, Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington].*

During the first two months following its arrival, the influenza virus created widespread devastation that affected virtually every New Zealand family. Like Covid, the disease attacked the lungs but unlike Covid, the influenza virus did not discriminate: healthy people were just as likely as the vulnerable to succumb. Thankfully, those of school age were, for the most part, spared, but they suffered significantly in other ways. Many children were orphaned, having earlier found themselves in the unenviable position of assisting in the care of their seriously ill parents. Understandably, given their new responsibilities at home, and because many teachers fell ill, normal school life was put on hold.

As the influenza pandemic spread across New Zealand, most businesses, as well as public facilities such as schools and cinema theatres, were forced to close. As with Covid,

EAR FRIENDS

limits were placed on public gatherings. Good personal hygiene was advocated and isolation and quarantine measures were enforced. All these measures were intended to be consistent across the nation. But New Zealand society during 1918 was spread much more thinly and was far more rurally-based than is the case today. Geographical isolation was still experienced in many parts of the country and the Māori urban drift had yet to take place. Both these circumstances acted to make the effective dissemination of essential information and the roll-out of control measures far more problematic than is the case today

These are the bare historical facts: The 1918 influenza continues to be our worst public health disaster. In all, around 9000 New Zealanders and, globally, an estimated 50 million individuals lost their lives. But we learnt hard lessons from that experience. The 'wait-and-see' approach initially adopted in 1918 stands in marked contrast to the 'go fast and go hard' response to Covid. Admittedly, the Covid response has also benefitted from the latest international medical advice and from innovative computer modelling of community transmission, both of which were unavailable in 1918.

Poliomyelitis

Over the century, epidemics of one sort or another would continue to impact upon everyday life and on education in New Zealand, none more-so than Poliomyelitis, otherwise known as infantile paralysis. As a disease that targets the spinal cord and nervous system, polio results in paralysis of limbs and sometimes paralysis of the entire body. The disease had first been officially recorded here during the 1890s and had again appeared in 1916 shortly before the influenza pandemic. It persisted in making its presence known, returning in 1924, 1936, 1947-48 and 1955-56 and each time it appeared, it took young lives. If a child contracted polio, strict quarantine measures were put in place and survival meant a recovery that was invariably slow and often only partial. Not until the early 1960s, when polio was finally eliminated following mass immunisation campaigns, could everyday life return to some normality.

Polio created distress and panic and brought significant consequences for schools. As with Influenza and Covid, schools were closed quickly. But so rapidly did the official notification of school closure arrive following the 1947 outbreak, that teachers were often forced to stand by the school gates to send arriving students back home. To some, living through the successive outbreaks, it seemed that as fast as schools opened, they closed. When schools closed yet again during the 1955-56 outbreak, the general public and the medical profession became highly agitated over the decision. But, as the Minister of Health and Child Welfare explained at that time, '. . . what does a few weeks of education that a child can catch up later mean when we may have children crippled for life?'

Students' initial joy at early closure of schools was short lived: as always, the official narrative was that learning must continue. Through the earlier polio outbreaks, in place of the blackboard instructions familiar to students of the time, school lessons were set out class by class and were posted prominently in national and local newspapers. Later, following the onset of the most serious post-World War 2 polio outbreak in late 1947, when schools closed for many months, lessons continued through correspondence and through school radio broadcasts. As with school closures during Covid, school closures through all the polio outbreaks meant that home schooling became the new normal.

Children being vaccinated against polio at Newtown School, Wellington, c.1956.
[F- 40570-1/2. Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington].

During Covid through lockdowns, in many homes, both parents have at times assumed the role of educators. During polio outbreaks, however, given prevailing gender attitudes and practices, while fathers were usually out working, mothers were, by default, assigned the role of surrogate teacher, often with little or no support. Compare this, for example, with the more extensive official and professional advice offered during Covid, and it is easy to have sympathy for the harassed housewife depicted in the above cartoon.

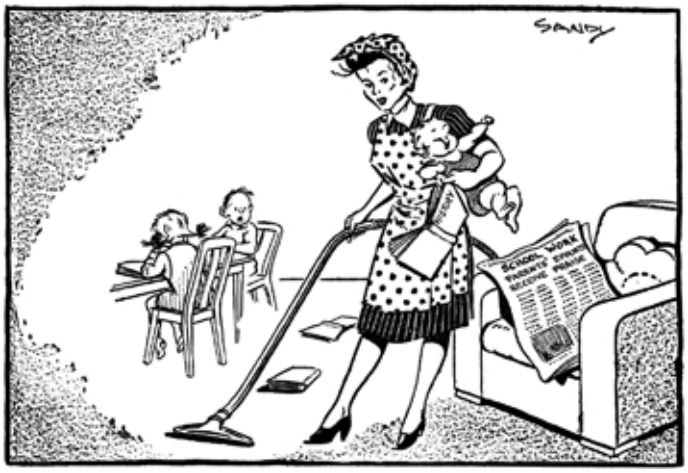

Figure 1 – Sanders, James E. 1911-1998: Top of the class, Auckland Star, 5 March 1948, *(Alexander Turnball Library, Wellington). Reproduced by kind permission of Dr Diana Sanders.*

Everything's the same, but everything's different

Pandemics share a number of common features. Those who lived through the influenza pandemic and the polio outbreaks experienced the same sense of powerlessness amidst uncertainty that many today experience with Covid. Yet in virtually every case, amidst the anguish and unpredictability, the principles of kindness and caring for others have shone through.

Responses have varied, however. Unlike the coordinated effort we have all witnessed recently, during which many schools have become a major reference point for 'wrap-around' family assistance, responses to the influenza pandemic and the polio outbreaks were much more ad hoc. Nevertheless, in addition to the medical assistance given to patients by local nurses, practical community assistance was available during these earlier public health emergencies. As an example, during the influenza pandemic, relief committees established soup kitchens at which numerous volunteers assisted. Schools also played a role during the influenza outbreak by opening up their facilities for food preparation. Some school students, too, particularly those in the Scouting Movement, assisted in the distribution of food to the sick. As they walked the streets with their delivery baskets, they kept a close lookout for a white cloth or sheet hanging in a front window—a signal that assistance was needed.

Outwardly at least, earlier public health outbreaks tended to reveal rather more societal restraint than that expressed during Covid. Possibly, war-time experiences and the post-war sight of limbless and mentally affected wartime returnees meant that New Zealand whānau and families generally tended to deal with grief and crisis in a rather more matter-of-fact manner than is generally the case today. One only needs to look at the general

style and tone of articles in the 2020 issues of the *Education Gazette* to appreciate these generational changes.

There are a number of other points of difference to be noted. The official response to earlier pandemics tended to be less inclusive and, given the relatively primitive technologies available, arguably less effective than that of current educational responses to the Covid crisis. We might also acknowledge the existence of a more informed population today. It is not surprising, then, to learn that many adults in the 1950s were largely unaware of exactly how polio spread. As misinformation spread, the Minister of Health and Child Welfare, herself, admitted she did not know exactly how the disease was transmitted.

School students' understanding of how polio spread and how it was treated appears to have been non-existent. Perhaps the point that treatment for severe cases required sustained periods in a compression chamber or 'iron lung', with no visitors permitted (parents included), was considered a fact far too traumatic for young minds to comprehend. Nevertheless, the reality of classmates fitted with callipers to strengthen withered legs was a constant reminder in schools that polio was something to avoid at all costs.

> During the earlier 1936 outbreak Philippa Werry's father, who had been reading a newspaper, suddenly fell silent. Her sister, Flo, looked at his newspaper and read the headline he had turned to: *'Concern at Dunedin,'* she read out. *'Outbreak of in-fant-ile . . . para . . . Five cases reported.'* She then asked: *'What's infantile para . . . par-aly-sis'?* (Werry, 2008, pp. 13-14).

How does the past inform the present?

In times of deep trouble like a pandemic, loss of life tends to dominate thinking and action. So too, do the educational, economic and social hardships that emerge both during and after pandemics. But in the past, numerous gains were made too, based on people's experiences. One positive outcome that became highly informative for future responses to pandemics within New Zealand was the Public Health Act of 1920 that followed in the wake of the influenza outbreak. This Act set out new powers and new responsibilities for periods of infectious disease outbreaks and was later to form the framework of the 1956 Health Act, current until recently.

For schools, a number of significant gains were made that owe much to previous experiences of both the influenza pandemic and the polio outbreaks. After the influenza experience, school medical officers introduced a programme of regular students' medical examination, not simply to determine infection risk, but also to assess students' physical well-being. Curriculum content changed too. Following examples in both England and Sweden, new prescriptions for physical education were issued in 1920 by the New Zealand Department of Education. These included a new emphasis on and requirements for games and sport, together with numerous breathing exercises specifically designed for children.

Later, during the interwar period, serious attempts were made to improve classroom environments, resulting in better lighting, ventilation, and better types of school desks. Open-air classroom experiments were introduced in schools throughout New Zealand. New ideas also extended to pedagogical practice as teachers were urged to experiment with more 'progressive'

educational ideas leading to more informal and innovative classroom practices. These included the Dalton Plan, Montessori Education, auto-education, and experiments in classroom self-government.

Further positive educational developments followed the polio epidemic. Although schools were often closed to students for sustained periods of time during the public health emergencies, teachers were required to front up as usual. Since they were not required to teach, they embraced the opportunity to interact as a teaching community, collaborating with other teachers to develop new schemes of work. New and innovative syllabuses in subjects such as social studies, art and crafts, mathematics, physical education, nature study and science soon followed.

Not all innovations succeeded, however. Following the polio outbreak of 1955-56, the Health Department introduced a handwashing campaign for schools on the grounds that this might help stop the spread of disease. The actual impact, however, tended to be limited, since handwashing facilities in schools were often woefully inadequate and finance for any upgrade was short. For example, Christchurch South Intermediate provided only 16 hand basins for 800 students. As is sometimes the case today during Covid, practical realities often lagged behind good intentions, requiring local ingenuity on the part of teachers, parents and students.

What will the future hold?

Covid-19, like the 1918 influenza pandemic and the successive polio outbreaks, has been a cataclysmic event. As with the influenza virus and polio, the challenges of Covid have stretched capacities, challenging not only the medical, socioeconomic and political health of our nation, but our educational views as well. One thing seems certain: there will be fresh questions posed. But the answers to these may be innovative, leading to genuine benefits and transformation. These questions might include:

'How might we repurpose technological tools for education?'

'What might a re-imagined curriculum look like?'

'How and in what ways might we ensure a future that works, not only to preserve the best in education, but also eliminates the inequalities within it?'

In the meantime, as we move towards the mass vaccination programme, there is an urgently practical issue to address:

'How might we best serve student needs in this time of national crisis, given that some students and their parents will continue to be influenced by the more pessimistic views expressed on social media?'

We are currently being reassured that there is light at the end of the tunnel, even if that tunnel has been described by the Minister of Education and Covid Response Minister, Chris Hipkins, as being 'very long.' Perhaps we can do no better than to recall the words with which incoming United States president Franklin D. Roosevelt (himself believed at the time to be a polio survivor), opened his inaugural address in March 1933:

'The only thing we have to fear is fear itself – nameless, unjustified terror which paralyzes needed efforts to convert retreat into advance.'

SUGGESTED READING:

For the 1918-19 influenza pandemic, there are the various publications by Geoffrey Rice, including *Black Flu 1918. The story of New Zealand's worst public health disaster* (Christchurch, Canterbury University Press, 2017). For details regarding successive polio outbreaks, see Jean Ross's 1993 University of Canterbury thesis, 'A history of Poliomyelitis in New Zealand.' Philippa Werry's book *Enemy at the Gate*, first published in 2008 and subsequently re-released by Pipi Press, 2020 gives a moving account of a polio outbreak from the perspective of someone who was a child at the time, as does Judith Doyle's 'Into solitary confinement: a memory of New Zealand's last big polio epidemic' (*New Zealand Memories.* no. 116, pp. 48-49, October/November 2015). For contemporary comparisons of New Zealand pandemics and their impact, consider searching for relevant articles in *The New Zealand Medical Journal* by Michael Baker, Rice, and others.

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Professor Emeritus Roger Openshaw holds a Personal Chair in History of Education. He had six years teaching experience in New Zealand primary and intermediate schools prior to gaining his doctorate in history from the University of Waikato. He subsequently became a university researcher and teacher with forty years of experience. His research interests have been focused primarily on the history of education, and New Zealand social/political history. He has written/co-written/edited/co-edited over twenty national and international books, both non-fiction and fiction, together with over 50 articles and book chapters. His last book is *Safeguarding Super. The Government Superannuitants' Assocation. A Centennial History, 1920-2020,* published by Steele Roberts Ltd, Wellington in September 2020.

Professor Margaret Walshaw is Professor Emerita at Massey University. While her research field is primarily mathematics education, she has also undertaken extensive work on the history of education. She has published 10 books and numerous articles and has been an invited keynote speaker at a number of international conferences.

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RURAL SCHOOLS ARE DIFFERENT

Liz Hawes EDITOR

Oropi School in Western Bay of Plenty was established in 1899. Although compulsory schooling has seen endless changes since then, Oropi bears witness to the fact that not everything that runs deep in rural communities is open to change.

ANDREW KING IS proud to be leading his school of just over 350, mostly rurally based, youngsters. 'The school had a roll of just over 100 when I came here, but has rapidly grown as dairy farms have converted to life-style blocks and horticulture has become the dominant industry,' Andrew said.

Does this mean that the school is no longer a rural school? 'Not at all,' says Andrew, 'our families deliberately send their children to our school because we espouse the rural values they share.'

These values include connecting to the natural environment, taking considered risks, exploring new ideas and being excited by learning because it is driven by the children's individual inquiry. The school's motto is 'Be all you can be', and more recently the core values of ako, manaakitanga, rangatiratanga, whanaungatanga, kaitiakitanga and whakairo have become priorities of the school. These aspirations are deeply linked to a rural mindset.

Principal Andrew King is proud to lead Oropi school's distinctive approaches to learning

'That's why parents send their children to us,' says Andrew. 'They want them to be connected to the real world they live in; to understand the history of the place, the potential and importance of the land and how to protect it for future generations; to question and seek answers; to be resilient and to extend themselves physically. The other draw card is the school's popular "Garden to Table" programme, which is linked to our core curriculum,' he explained.

The kokako bird is a significant icon for Oropi school because this bird is renowned for clarity and it has a unique voice

We visit the woodwork space, one of two fabricated sheds, where Andrew's younger students are building simple, useful objects.

'We call this "play-based" learning,' said Andrew, 'and start the day with these engaging activities.' 'Every child comes to school with their own wonderings, questions, passions, strengths and needs,' he says.

'The children use the practical experiences, to explore their individual questions and use what they have learned, for example, in their writing class,' he explains. 'It is what we call responsive, "just in time" learning which affords the children a strong sense of control.'

Alongside the woodwork activities children also participate in water play, floating boats in the swimming pool for example, and sculpting shapes in the spacious sandpit.

This learning by doing is a purposeful, pedagogical choice for the children in their first three years. The approach links well to the early childhood curriculum and provides an easy transition into formal school learning. The children are well resourced, supported and given the time to explore their own questions, to experiment and to challenge their own ideas. Andrew explains that starting the day with action learning is motivating for the children and immediately gets them engaged. The teachers

Families are encouraged to buy swap or gift produce at Oropi school

observe the children carefully, recognize a learning moment and respond so that no opportunity to extend the children's thinking and learning is lost. 'Once they are engaged, they can focus on their core curriculum activities,' he says. 'Through this approach they master the dispositions for learning which link comfortably with the curriculum key competencies,' he explains.

The school's academic results clearly show the logic of Andrew's pedagogical approach and Māori students achieve just as well as non-Māori children. 'We see learning as a six-year project, and the children progress at their own pace. Formal assessment before that doesn't necessarily tell the whole story of a child's progress,' he said. 'We take a holistic long-term approach, keeping the child at the centre,' he said.

Oropi has become a more diverse school over time and this is well celebrated.

'We have 60 Māori children attending our school and are proud of our bilingual class which we established in 2018,' said Andrew. 'Currently we have 28 students enrolled, who learn for 30 – 50 per cent of the time in Te Reo.' This, alongside prioritizing Māori values, has undoubtedly been a factor in lifting Māori student achievement. The school also hosts 13 international students and has a small number of Asian students.

'We offer Mandarin as a foreign language option,' says Andrew, 'not just because we have a small number of Asian students, but because we recognize that knowledge of the Mandarin language could help our youngsters into a job in the future. It is in line with our school's Asian Awareness programme and reflects New Zealand's increasingly multicultural society. Celebrating other cultures, learning about their history, cultural practices and language is one way we encourage our children to be inclusive and tolerant,' he said.

At the lunch time break, we stroll the school's expansive outdoor fields, weaving our way through the fast-paced running and ball games. We observe those nimbly navigating the vertical ladder leading to the platform of the popular flying fox. An elevated, tunnel chute slide – a larger version of the kind you might see on the back of a concrete truck – occupies the attention of another group while regular adventure playgrounds, climbing bars and sets of swings provide further physical enjoyment. You'd be hard pressed to spot the child sitting quietly under a

The school gully is a star attraction for Oropi school children

These girls enjoy their meal of salad and apple pie

The woodwork shed is an industrious space at Oropi School

Teacher Aides are employed to assist with dishing up the meal once the children have prepared it in the kitchen

tree absorbed in a book.

Star attraction for tough physical challenge though, is the school's gully. This natural feature is a magnet for the thrill-seekers. With its extensive native plantings, board walk, bush tracks, rope swing, tyre-rolling ramp – which couples as a mud slide after enough rain – and trees to climb, it is the "Queen" of adventure playgrounds.

'Our children are outdoor kids,' says Andrew, "and love to challenge themselves physically. That's an important characteristic of who they are,' he said.

Another star attraction of the school is the 'Garden to Table' concept, the brainchild of the *Garden-to-Table Trust*. It is a food education programme linked to the curriculum. Children learn about growing food, companion planting to attract bees, composting waste, recycling and storing water to feed the plants. They harvest the produce and turn it into delicious meals in the school's outdoor kitchen. The final step is sharing their scrumptious efforts al fresco style under the expansive roof shelter adjoining the kitchen. On wet days they share their cooking efforts in their classrooms.

'This is a hugely popular part of our curriculum,' says Andrew. 'The *Garden-to-Table Trust* provides wonderful guidance and resources which are all linked to the curriculum and we employ a coordinator and two teacher aides who are specifically trained in the programme. We also have local volunteers to help in the kitchen and assist with maintaining the gardens,' he said.

Oropi school is fortunate that most of the vegetable plants and native plants are donated to the school by local nurseries.

Most of the work is done by the children under supervision of volunteers and every week, every child will have a meal from the kitchen, which they have prepared themselves. They learn about looking after the land, which in turn looks after them, seasons of food and recipes that fit the produce in the gardens at any given time. They grow a wide selection of herbs to flavour their dishes and they learn about growing food from seedlings to planting. They learn about how worms help aerate the soil and how to make 'compost stew' to feed the plants until they are harvested. They also tend an orchard of fruit trees and make delicious fruit puddings.

'The children also have classroom activities that link to the gardening and cooking,' says Andrew, 'and the *Garden-to-Table Trust* provide resources to help with that too. The children write poems and stories about making compost stew, for example, and record recipes to take home.'

Oropi school is a pleasure to visit. The children are proud of their school, they are engaging, interested and unafraid to offer an opinion. The staff and children operate as a big family, which is in large part attributable to Andrew's astute leadership and his years of rural school experience. But he is acutely aware that not every rural school runs so smoothly.

'Rural communities are quite different from urban,' says Andrew. 'Historically they were very isolated and they all relied on each other to survive.'

In the country, the local school and community hall have typically been the most valued community assets. The community are proud of them and feel a strong sense of ownership. Rural families have gifted land, provided materials, built and

continued on pg 18

Play-based learning includes creating sand sculptures

The Al fresco dining area adjoins the gardens and kitchen

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Once lunch is over, children are on the move

maintained these facilities. They are heavily invested and emotionally enmeshed in them. Generations of family weddings, dances and fundraisers have been conducted in rural halls. They form the hub where locals gather, socialize, have some fun and ease their feelings of isolation. Even if they are not the families who designed the hall or the school, the names of those who did will still be known and respected. There are threads of these sentiments in all rural communities.

Self-reliance is another strong characteristic of rural folk. They are used to doing things for themselves. You can't be waiting for a city tradesman to fix the leaking water pump or build a hay shed. That self-reliance has often extended to the local school so there is never a shortage of offers when the school needs its fence

An outdoor pizza oven is used to make pizzas for a tasty meal

repaired, or the playing field needs levelling. The locals will call a working bee and the job is done. A plate or two of sandwiches and a few quiet beers in the hall and everyone goes home happy.

These days, the 'do-it-yourself' approach can rub up against the demands of legislation, regulations and Ministry processes. Navigating these legislative requirements whilst maintaining strong relationships and the good will of the local community keeps many a rural principal awake at night. Less experienced principals, cutting their leadership teeth on a small rural school, are particularly vulnerable and can unwittingly come unstuck.

'It takes an experienced principal to keep on-side with the rural community and be compliant with legislation,' says Andrew.

Andrew has supported, coached and mentored other rural principals over the years and understands the diverse demands.

'In rural communities, people don't just feel "ownership" of their school, by extension, the principal is included too,' he says.

Seedlings are grown in the glasshouse ready for planting out

The school gardens produce lush crops of herbs and vegetables for the kitchen

'You are never off duty. There is an expectation that you will be actively involved in everything happening in the community, whether that is helping cut the four-wheel drive track for the annual community fun day or doing maintenance work at the local tennis courts. You have to be prepared to join in the rural lifestyle,' he said.

Andrew realizes that many young principals don't understand these relationships and expectations. He has seen too many potentially excellent principals fail because they were not well prepared for these special demands.

'Rural principals don't have access to the rural advisors who were there in the early days,' said Andrew. 'Rural advisors were fantastic. They had all led rural schools themselves and knew exactly what the pressures were and how to make the most of the good things about leading a school and living in a rural community,' he said. 'They used to check in on rural principals, connect them with other rural principals, encourage sharing of ideas and resources and facilitated access to PLD,' he said. 'There are 700 U1 – 3 schools in New Zealand, and many of these would be rural schools. That is not an insignificant number,' he said.

The demise of the rural advisory service has left a gaping hole, especially in supporting rural principals' wellbeing, overcoming isolation and helping them understand country life.

Realising the pitfalls, and having a broad range of experience in both very small and much larger rural schools, Andrew decided to create a formal network to support his rural colleagues and

The outdoor kitchen is kept sparkling clean with the help of volunteers

Fruiting citrus trees and companion plants border blocks of classrooms

this year formed the 'NZ Rural Schools Leadership Association (NZRASLA).' The organisation aims to provide updates, regional and national platforms for discussions both on-line and face to face, opportunities for action research, PLD, mentoring and support for rural school leaders, by rural school leaders.

'PLD facilitators or contractors are not the only answer,' he says. 'We need to identify rural principals with expertise and experience, because hearing the experience of real principals is the best way to learn,' he said.

In many ways, these are functions that a Rural Advisory would be providing. Andrew recognises that leading this organisation, whilst still running his own school, is no small undertaking and that ideally, he would be fully released with a team of rural advisors to do the role.

The Ministry of Education has offered $180,000 over three years from the 'Network of Expertise Funding'.

'Securing this Ministry funding is great,' says Andrew, 'and it allows us to make a start on establishing some support systems for rural principals. To provide meaningful advice and support to all rural principals, however, requires a lot more,' he says.

Taking on this new responsibility for his colleagues is an extra job for Andrew who continues in his full-time role as principal of his own Oropi School.

'The progress I can make whilst still working as a full-time principal, is minimal,' he sighs. Yet he has a vision that, if fully resourced, would not only develop and support hundreds more rural principals, but help sustain a strong and successful principal workforce for the future. He has all the credentials and experience to lead a modern-day rural advisory team, now he just needs the good-will of the Ministry and the budget to make it work.

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MOOT 2021

Liz Hawes EDITOR

Spare chairs were as scarce as snow in summer at this year's NZPF Moot. Regional Presidents from across the country gathered to hear updates from Ministers Hon. Chris Hipkins and Hon. Jan Tinetti. Equally exciting was to be participating in 'Curriculum Refresh' debates throughout the day.

MC for the Moot, Oriini Kaipara, injected some stories of her own education experiences

THE MOOT WAS ably chaired by Māori broadcaster Oriini Kaipara, who added flavour to the day by occasionally injecting stories of her own educational experiences.

Curriculum is the life force of teachers and principals. It is what they entered the profession to do – to develop and teach the curriculum. It enthuses them; it energises them; and provokes wonderful commentary and debate.

NZPF President Perry Rush enthusiastically introduced the curriculum discussions with some thoughts of his own before handing over to Kaylene McNee, the Ministry's advisor on curriculum and Kay Tester from the NZPF executive. Finally, participants were invited to report their own local issues in a session chaired by NZPF executive member, Sandy Hastings.

Minister Hon Chris Hipkins

The Minister opened his address congratulating the sector on how they managed the COVID health crisis last year and how they continue to manage it. He noted that hundreds of thousands of home learning boxes of materials were sent out to families; 55,000 households were connected to the internet; two TV channels were established.

'We all learned that we could be nimble,' he said, 'and so as a Government, we were willing to let people at the forefront make decisions and then back them.'

'I want to capture that momentum we gathered last year,' he went on, 'draw on those lessons and embrace them as we look to implement the recommendations made through the review of *Tomorrow's Schools*.'

Minister Chris Hipkins updates Regional Presidents on the political landscape

Minister Hipkins invited his audience to think back to the education conversations of 2018, through which people from all walks of life had expressed what they most valued about education. There was a big focus on school property and on free school lunches. Wellbeing was an issue which came through repeatedly. Key to lifting wellbeing was first getting kids fed, he added.

New Zealanders reported they wanted their education system to be about Aotearoa New Zealand. They wanted our own stories and our own history told in schools. They also wanted the basics like literacy and mathematics and they told us that a rich curriculum was the better way to deliver learning. They reported that there had been too much emphasis on core curriculum over the past decade and that children would do better on the basics through a rich curriculum.

In addressing the problem of equity in New Zealand, he noted the school donations scheme and Government's offer to pay $150 per student to schools up to decile 7 if they did not ask for donations; he explained that the free school lunch programme was now available to all decile 1 – 3 schools; and fees were no longer being charged for NCEA exams. He noted that in the past some students had been denied their own NCEA exam certificates because families were unable to meet the cost of exam fees.

He said that the education work programme for the next three years had now been signed off by Cabinet and that, as he had already signalled, the Early Learning Action Plan, getting more qualified teachers into the sector and achieving pay parity for the ECE sector were the highest priority.

COVID, he said, had slowed down implementing the reform programme following the *Tomorrow's Schools* review but work on establishing the Education Service Agencies (ESAs) and the Curriculum Centre will continue. He explained that the Ministry of Education has oversight of the whole system but does not have funding for curriculum per se.

Other issues he listed were the curriculum refresh, learning support, attendance and engagement (Minister Tinetti's responsibilities), ongoing investment in school property, and building a strong and competent work force. Careers' advice and transitions were other issues; providing a safe environment for students including rainbow students; and expanding the creative experience.

He said progress had been made over the past three years and there was now a much better vibe in the education sector with rich professional conversations taking place.

One strong finding of the *Tomorrow's Schools* review, he said, was that the sector likes the empowerment that comes with *Tomorrow's Schools* but acknowledges support is needed. He suggested as we work through the curriculum, attendance and

support issues that the profession could look at problem solving these issues at the local level.

The Minister then called for questions and comments from the floor.

Question:

I notice in your speech you didn't touch on Māori Education. Why is that?

Answer

Māori Education is an area that Minister Kelvin Davis is passionate about and there are some interesting challenges. The teacher workforce is a big one. We need more trained teachers in Te Reo Māori particularly for immersion classes. We know we need more cultural competence right across the system. I don't want to make that accusation as a blanket one but more work is needed to make Māori and Pacific Island teachers feel included and that we are meeting them on their terms, rather than having them comply with some other set of expectations. So, there's a lot of work to do.

We are looking at a Māori medium pathway right from Kohanga Reo to strengthen it and include your voice in the process. The Treaty of Waitangi is now at the centre of how the whole system will operate but having said that changing the law is the easy part. Changing what happens on the ground is the bigger challenge. That's the challenge ahead of us.

Question

Thinking about trust, and [the Government] trusting the sector to do what is best, what about taking the staffing for Kahui Ako and using it in school for an intended purpose?

Answer

I agree the Kahui Ako model needs to be more flexible, he said. I do not want good things like collaboration to stop because that is a crucial part of what schools do and need to do. To change the Kahui Ako leadership positions model though is difficult, he said, because the employment laws around this would also need to be changed. He did not rule out future changes to the model but warned that turning such things around can take a long time.

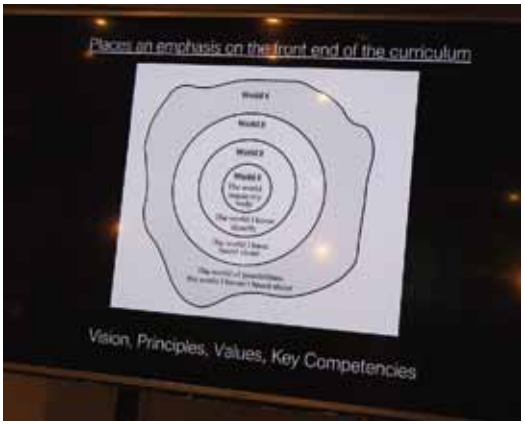
Question

Our schools are experiencing a crisis regarding the management of violent behaviour. We have Te Tupu Managed Moves operating in the Hawke's Bay and it is showing great success and even allowing kids to be returned to the mainstream successfully. What is your view on rolling that out further?

Answer

I am aware of this, said the Minister. He noted that there is a practice in our country he would call 'pilot-itis'. We set up pilot schemes, they come to an end and we then move on to the next pilot. He agreed that there needs to be more flexible funding to address this serious issue.

President Perry Rush introduces regional presidents to the Curriculum Refresh discussions



President Perry Rush outlined John Holts theory of reality to explain the worlds of a child

President Perry Rush

President Perry Rush first acknowledged NZPF Kaumatua, Hata Temo, the regional presidents who had turned out in big numbers this year and the many special guests, including curriculum staff from the Ministry who had come to hear the views of principals on refreshing the curriculum.

Curriculum, he said, is in our DNA as principals, core competencies are what we are about. It is the teaching and learning that makes the greatest difference to our students, he said.

We are about to embark on an interesting journey, he said, and it involves placing our curriculum in the spotlight. The Ministry has announced a 'Curriculum Refresh'. It will be moving forward at pace this year and unfolding over the next three or four years. We think it is important that we, as sector-based leaders and professionals, partner with the Ministry and have a strong influence in this Curriculum Refresh, he explained. One of the core principles in the Tomorrow's Schools review was re-establishing trust between the Ministry and the sector and this is one way we can start that journey.

He returned to the curriculum document of 2007 – which replaced the former curriculum – to highlight weaknesses that had been addressed. These fell into six main categories.

He noted that the achievement objectives had been reduced; there was more emphasis on the key competencies; the student was central to the learning process; the document was deliberately generic to allow for local context and input and to take into account the substantial increase in knowledge available on the internet which wasn't the case a few years before; teachers' professional judgement was given high value as a means to inform prescriptive assessment; and there was a strong emphasis on encouraging community input to localize the curriculum and give it local relevance.

Whilst all these improvements were laudable, he noted that they came without clarity. Interpreting the curriculum, he said, had become the responsibility of individual schools. This meant consistency was lost. It became a minefield for some, whilst others, perhaps the more experienced principals and teachers, relished the freedom it offered. He also noted that the curriculum came without on-going PLD and curriculum advice, which requires substantial resourcing and is critical to successful implementation.

He told his audience that his own theory of curriculum and how the child learns is based on John Holts '*World of Reality*'. He described the four states: the internal world of the child; the world the child lives in; the world the child knows about and the world of possibilities. In his view, it is the world of possibilities that is most neglected and we need to lift our sights to bring possibility into the classroom. These worlds are essentially the child's context for learning. That said, it is his

belief that these ideas are not well known by teachers.

He then recommended to his audience *'The Beautiful Risk of education'* by Gert Biesta. As the title implies this critical pedagogical practice gives risk elevated status.

'Students are not to be seen as objects to be moulded and disciplined,' he said, 'but as subjects of action and responsibility.' He was adamant that this did not preclude teachers from having clear curriculum goals.

Seven key educational concepts of creativity, communication, teaching, learning, emancipation, democracy and virtuosity form the core of educational endeavour through this lens. Contemporary education policies and practices tend to be risk averse, he said, but this emphasis brings risk to the forefront.

None of this means that we don't have clear curriculum goals, he explained. *'The Beautiful Risk of education'* talks to the *'how'* of education, not the *'what'*, he said, as he moved on to describe teaching and learning as a partnership relationship between teacher and student, not a hierarchical or binary one.

He set out his view of how the curriculum currently looks and where it might be improved. We have a choice, he said, about what to teach, using teachers as 'coaches' rather than as sources of knowledge with which we fill children's heads.

Te Akatea President, Bruce Jepsen addresses the Moot

His suggestions were that schools would have choice about 'what' to learn, according to the local curriculum, and teachers would deliver that by taking a coaching approach to teaching; there would be freedom for schools to cover each learning area but they might select the most appropriate topics while not being compelled to cover every topic. Can we take a national curriculum and say we will take these bits and not others, he asked his audience; schools would teach from authentic contexts that were relevant to their local students, making learning more real; investment in deep learning processes, such as inquiry learning, would be favoured over teaching to every knowledge detail and our Ministry experts will have to think hard about this in the curriculum redesign. He used an example from his own learning experience – of a teacher taking his primary school class to the rocky shore. The teacher, he said, had extensive knowledge in this area, the marine life, rock inhabitants and environmental characteristics. The teacher did not fill our heads with his knowledge, he said, rather he guided us to this knowledge through a careful series of questions and deep inquiries. That turned us all into problem solvers who found answers to our own questions and in turn that generated a new set of questions. There would be clarity of learning intentions for teachers, communicated in a way that did not interfere with the students' exploration of the topic; teachers would act as facilitators of learning, using a variety of learning tools, and not be robotic or expect students to all follow a standardized system.

He continued, saying we must avoid the binary response and not say we are student centred or curriculum focused because we can be both. A national curriculum, if it is truly national, should mean something to us all. This is an important aspect to consider in the context of a curriculum refresh discussion, he said. There is challenge about covering selected aspects of the national curriculum but not all. Is that freedom appropriate? he asked. Some learning, he suggested, cannot be left to chance.

Finally, he addressed the culturally sustainable curriculum saying this is critical to our future. The time is right now for Pākeha to walk the bridge towards Te Ao Māori, he said, not just the other way around. We must challenge the whiteness of our curriculum, he said, build understanding through a culturally sustainable lens and a process of deep learning. That way we will produce successfully contributing national and international citizens, joined up across the globe.

Bruce Jepsen, President Te Akatea

Bruce Jepsen opened his address noting that the majority of tamariki Māori are in English medium schools. The power sits with you, he told his audience of predominantly Pākehā principals.

He then acknowledged retiring President of Te Akatea, Myles Ferris, for his leadership, using a metaphor to describe his contribution. The Kuaka (godwit), he said, flies for four days without food or water from the Antarctic to the Chatham islands. Flocks fly in a V formation. The Rangatira bird is at the front and when its work is done, it drops back to let another leader take over. These strategies and knowledges, he said, are used to achieve the unachievable.

He then focused his address on Ka Hikitia, the Māori curriculum document that showed great promise for a better future for Māori education. It was all about Māori succeeding as Māori. He said we must look to the past to understand the present and move forward to create a new future.

Ka Hikitia means to step up, to lift and to lengthen our stride. The Ministry adopted this name to acknowledge the need to step up for Māori. The first iteration was in 2008. It was seen as a gamechanger for Māori tauira [learners, students]. But little changed [because it arrived without PLD]. This version was followed by phase two called 'Accelerating Success' which was an imposition on schools who were chronically failing Māori. Last year came phase three which had a focus on racial bias and discrimination.

Thirteen years later, across the system, we still see chronic Māori underachievement. Schools are not responding to the calls to acknowledge Māori identity and Te Reo Māori in schools. But why would we see changes when Ka Hikitia has had no support?

Last year, he said, my youngest son turned 14. He was a baby when Ka Hikitia was launched. His entire schooling years should have been characterized by Māori succeeding as Māori. Instead, in 2019, a survey of Māori student wellbeing showed that more Māori students did not have a sense of belonging; more Māori students felt like outsiders who didn't belong at school; one quarter did not feel emotionally supported by a teacher. More Māori students experience stigma and racism. Would this be acceptable for Pākehā students? he asked.

My attention, he said, is on the future. Look to our past to build the new future. Include Māori knowledges in the curriculum refresh to truly create a curriculum that supports young Māori to succeed. Te Akatea invites Kaumatua and iwi to be involved in the Curriculum Refresh. We acknowledge the opportunities we now have to give life to Te Tiriti o Waitangi. As Treaty partners, Māori need the funding and support to seek diverse options. We all must be held accountable for Māori success, he concluded.

Minister Hon Jan Tinetti

Minister Tinetti is no stranger to an audience of principals, having been one herself prior to entering politics.

Her first message was a request to be an equal partner with principals as they work their way through the many complex issues education inevitably lobs our way. There would not be time to cover everything, she acknowledged, but she would address some of the most current and troubling issues.

She began with one of the most contentious – learning support – conceding that there were more questions than answers.

Minister Jan Tinetti's address was well received

We have learners who thrive and those who do not, she said, but our aim is for all to thrive and have success. To achieve that requires a strong learning support network. That is not easy to achieve and the challenges are complex, she admitted.

She acknowledged Tracey Martin's work over the past three years saying that under her guidance, $1.1billion had been invested in learning support. Whilst that sounds like a substantial amount it has to be noted that one in five children need some additional support.

Learning Support Coordinators (LSCs) were established under Martin's watch and there have been some great results from the work they do. Any future roll out, however, is subject to evaluation and budget availability. 'I want you to tell me how valuable this resource is,' she insisted. 'I need that evidence from you.'

We have employed 1000 experts and specialists for schools. Despite this there are still critical issues in schools. The problems are bigger than just resourcing. Students have challenging and complex behaviours. 'I hear your requests for kids with behaviour that is challenging to others and who are at risk of disengaging. We need a strategic position, not a short term one.' We tend to see a problem and we plug it and then it's no longer funded, she said. These problems are not just for education to resolve, she said, schools cannot do it alone. We need help from the health and welfare sectors too. That means breaking down the silos as

Ministry staff attending the Moot ready to note any important feedback

the Mana Ake programme in Canterbury has done.

We must together look at parts of the system that need to shift rather than just add another initiative. For example, behaviour and learning intersect with attendance and that has been declining since 2013. Every day a student attends school makes a difference, especially when we focus on their safety health and wellbeing. School provides a social network for children too. The public focuses on achievement but we must put wellbeing first. Investing resources in attendance services is essential and I intend to review this area. The Urgent Response Fund (URF) for schools, kura and kohanga reo enables teachers and teacher aides to visit homes and connect families to additional wellbeing support if needed. There is no one model, but local decisions must underpin use of this funding – local decisions for local problems.

She then moved on to the curriculum and the curriculum refresh, the topic of the Moot. 'Students need a curriculum rich in Te Ao Māori,' she said, 'and parents want certainty about what will be taught and the expectations of learning'.

Each learning area, over the next five years, will be refreshed in order, with social sciences and the new histories curriculum first, then mathematics, statistics, science and English.

Driving the curriculum refresh will be equity, trust and coherence. We will bring the national and local curriculum together so learning is meaningful and more consistent across the country. Ākonga (students) are at the heart of why we are refreshing the curriculum. What we are doing in mathematics for example is not working for all because we are seeing a decline in performance and Māori and Pasifika students are especially affected. We will be working with professional practitioners to refresh the mathematics curriculum.

'There will be an opportunity for you to engage with us,' she said, 'because we can't do this without you.' This Government has invested significantly more in learning support than any other Government, but resources aren't the only answer. 'Education can sometimes feel like a Christmas tree,' she said, 'with one initiative piled up on all the rest. If you get any more, it topples the tree.' We want a curriculum where every child sees themselves as having a place.

A Heartfelt waiata followed Te Akatea President, Bruce Jepsen's address

I too am an educator, she said. Even though there will be times when we disagree, I will always hold you in the highest regard and value you as an equal in this work going forward. The difficult conversations are often the most useful ones.

Minister Tinetti then called for questions and comments.

Question

I acknowledge your work as a principal, teacher and now Minister. My question is about accessing URF funding. We assess and develop the programme and the funding doesn't last the programme. I find the Ministry behave more like gatekeepers than helpers. We have programmes running but the money doesn't go there. The rubber band is close to breaking. I'm surprised parents have not complained.

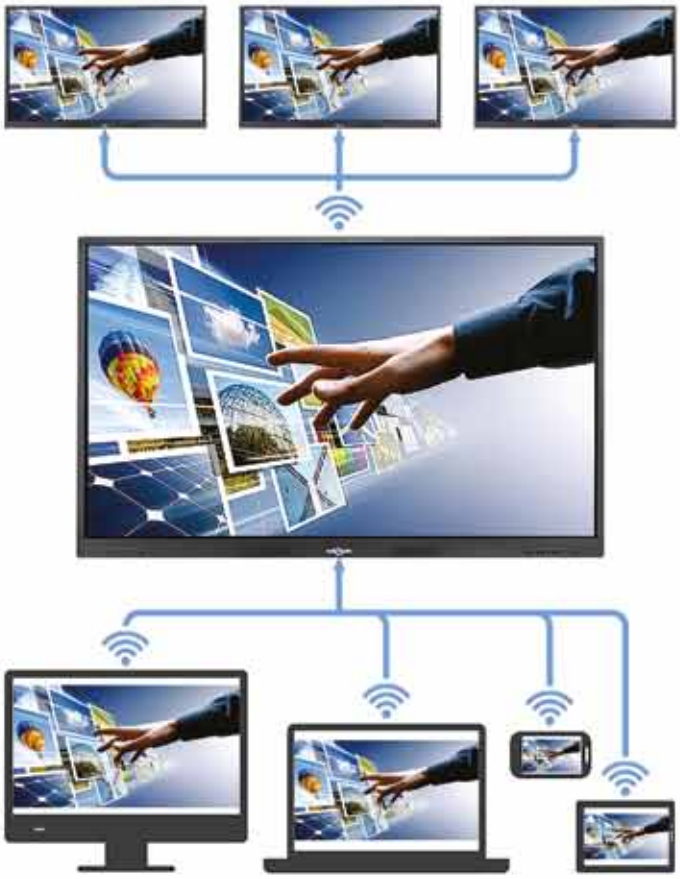
Answer

I understand those stresses. I am looking at some immediate solutions. For example, should it be Intensive Wraparound funding or URF funding? That's why I'm coming to you. I am looking at the short term but we want progress for both the medium and long term. You tell me what's important because that helps me get this over the line.

Question

I am passionate about Māori education. What additional

continued on pg 29



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funding has been allocated to Ka Hikitia for Māori Education and to hapu and iwi so that they can contribute as partners? How much work has been done on that in the Ministry?

Answer

All of that is subject to budget processes. Although this is Minister Davis' area, what I can say is that it's a prominent conversation in our meetings, including about the resources needed.

Question

Systems change is about a cultural shift for the whole system. ERO's change in direction for example does not seem to be working. How much work is being done to change Ministry thinking so that they can make the shift into a supportive role?

Answer

This is a good question. I know there are officials as determined to achieve these shifts as you are. We continue to have conversations to remind officials, including ERO, that over lockdown we changed attitudes, broke down barriers and worked collaboratively with the sector and we want that to continue. We want to keep that momentum going. Personally, I would like to see a big change and need your support to do it.

Question

One thing that broke my heart as a principal, was the exclusion of a child from my school for serious violent behaviour. I saw it coming and couldn't get the help he needed. He needed help outside of the conventional classroom of the mainstream school. We have been highlighting these issues for the last ten years. We need urgent action to give these kids the therapeutic help they need.

Answer

I know you've been advocating strongly for the Te Tupu Managed Moves programme [to be funded and rolled out] and I have been up to Napier to see it. But it is not something that can necessarily be replicated. Seeing it as a cookie cutter will not work and the director of the programme said that. This is not an easy issue. I am however prepared to take on this challenge to find a solution for our extreme cases.

Question

I applaud the extra billion dollars that has been injected for learning support over the last few years, which is about $400,000 per school. I haven't seen an extra $400,000 investment in my school. But it's not as simple as just giving us the money, we need the right people. Where are these people? My concern is that this money sounds impressive but it is not reaching the children.

Answer

I agree this is complex and money is not the only answer. It's more than that. We need to look at the entire workforce that supports this and examine all the resourcing because it tells me there are things that need changing further up in the system.

Stuart Armistead – Normal and Middle Schools Association (NAMSA)

Stuart's address focused on Initial Teacher Training (ITE) and its current shortcomings. Normal schools, he said, were established in 1876 and were intended to quite literally set the norms for teaching. They are the training grounds for beginning teachers, offering intensive mentoring and coaching of those teachers. Currently, in Aotearoa New Zealand there are 21 Normal and 8 Middle schools.

He raised the issue of ITE quality, noting that too many teachers were being trained through reduced programmes and how that impacted on beginning teachers. He explained that the costs of longer training programmes and high university fees deterred students from choosing more comprehensive training.

He noted that the return of teachers to Aotearoa, due to Covid, would reduce the pressure for training high numbers of new teachers so we could refocus on quality.

In 2018 the Teaching Council announced that ITE must be responsive to changes in education and training programmes must reflect that.

My training, he said, was memorable and rich with lectures and tutorials. We had ample passionate and knowledgeable lecturers. We experienced a sound blend of theory and practice. Now that has all changed. Since the demise of Training Colleges, Universities have become the dominant ITE providers. All those passionate and knowledgeable lecturers who knew the craft of teaching, are no longer there. The quality of training has reduced because university lecturers often have no classroom practice themselves.

Stuart Armistead, President of the Normal and Middle Schools Association, talks about ITE and its short falls

Underfunding from Government to support quality teacher training does not help and the universities have competing priorities from their core function which is research. We all live with the consequences of these changes and now we see standards slipping for students. There will be multiple reasons for this, including a shift to neoliberal policies. But there is no doubt that ITE has been moulded to fit the university model.

Now we have a chance to reignite ITE, which has been neglected for too long. The Teaching Council's new approach is to involve the sector through forming authentic partnerships with providers. The Teaching Council will establish approval panels who will assess the performance of ITE providers and decide whether they are meeting the necessary standards as the profession expects. If not, then the ITE provider will not be funded to continue.

Normal and Middle schools will continue in their role, to fill the gaps and provide the necessary mentoring. They will also provide PD as required, delivered by experienced passionate teachers. The in-school component is the most valuable for any trainee teacher.

Armistead suggested that obstacles be removed so that recently retired, experienced principals might become tutors in ITE programmes. It is that professional knowledge that current ITE programmes lack. He also suggested there be networks set up for Associate teachers to strengthen their effectiveness.

NAMZA, he said, is committed to working with NZPF and

Kay Tester shares her curriculum knowledge with the Moot participants

Kaylene McNee, chief advisor to the Ministry on curriculum, addresses the Moot attendees

NZAIMS to effect the necessary changes because they can't make progress on their own.

Kaylene McNee and Kay Tester on Curriculum Refresh

Kaylene introduced herself as a principal and Chief Advisor in curriculum to the Ministry, and Kay, as a member of the NZPF executive, who has also been a member of the curriculum Ministry Advisory Group for the past three years and is now on the curriculum working party group, giving advice to the Minister.

Work with New Zealand histories dovetails with the curriculum refresh work. The Curriculum Refresh will be bicultural, inclusive and clear about what ākonga need to understand, know and do to be successful now and in the future.

The draft curriculum content for the Histories curriculum shows what changes to the New Zealand curriculum might look like. It includes an 'Understand, Know, Do' model as well as clear learning progressions and progress statements. In line with repeated calls, the audience was assured that the number of Achievement Objectives would be further reduced; there would no longer be a front and back end to the curriculum because we have not connected the Key Competencies with the curriculum content well in the past; the first consultation group will be the students themselves because as learners, their voice is the most critical.

There were two questions for the Moot attendees to consider. These were:

1. To think about the ways that the History draft curriculum helps schools and teachers to achieve the intent of the curriculum that is bicultural, inclusive, clear and easy to use, and what challenges and opportunities exist in relation to this?
2. Thinking about these change features, what do we need to consider so that schools and teachers are well supported to implement these changes in the rest of the curriculum refresh as they emerge over the next 3 – 4 years?

Feedback from the Regional Presidents on Curriculum Refresh

1. Concern about how teachers will provide greater clarity on curriculum knowledge. Carolyn English (Ministry) explained that the curriculum will be produced as both paper-based and digital and will be cut as progressions so you can see how both context and practices grow. She noted that there will be plenty of examples drawing on three big ideas and because it will be digital, you can click on resources as you go.
2. Noted that the 'understand, do, know' model is good, but teachers need knowledge and time. Will we be resourced for extra Teacher Only days and how will they get this knowledge? The answer lies in a resource produced to use with teaching staff so that, for example, local histories can be learned together.
3. Concern was expressed about the Intellectual Property of the context of local histories. This is an issue to be worked through with local iwi. The Ministry has 10 – 20 partnerships with iwi about what histories they would like shared. You can go to them and they will decide what resources they would like to produce for you to use. Questions of who owns the histories and stories is about bringing iwi and hapu together to share this process with you.
4. For those who are in the Māori Achievement Collaborations

(MACs) and would use that model for acquiring content for the history curriculum, their concern is the continued funding of the MACs. The response was that the Ministry is committed to continue funding the MACs.

5. Concern that many in the teaching workforce are only now transitioning from a national standards environment and now there will be a series of curriculum changes. The concern is how this can be done successfully. The concern was addressed by Kaylene saying that the design is deliberately holistic with a bicultural framework so that it can be all woven together.
6. This is a pedagogical shift that will require PLD. This was acknowledged and presidents were assured that PLD would be designed with the sector
7. Noted that the challenge is agreeing on the content of the curriculum and the limited expertise of teachers, especially in local history curriculum because that will not have been covered in their ITE. Concern that there will not be time to do this well.
8. Concern expressed about throwing out aspects of the curriculum that schools are wedded to such as the key competencies. They are what schools treasure and they enhance practice. There was assurance offered that this is a refresh of the curriculum and many tools already in use will continue to be used.
9. Concern expressed in relation to the history curriculum, that our Kaumatua and Kuia will have a great deal more pressure on them and they need to be properly resourced.
10. It is exciting to hear the language being used in these discussions such as understanding colonization, local histories and understanding history from a Māori perspective. There is no need to be concerned about what your teachers know. Your communities are a huge source of knowledge. Māori know what colonization is about because they have lived it. This is nothing to fear. The bigger challenge, when learning history, is to recognize whose history it is and from whose perspective. There are plenty of resources out there to support schools, even if some material is a bit political. It was also noted that if this makes Pākehā colleagues feel uncomfortable that is also OK.
11. Concern was expressed about how we show we value Kaumatua input. If we were inviting a mathematics, reading or science expert to contribute their knowledge, we would be paying them. We need to recognize Kaumatua contributions with more than a cup of tea.
12. The timeline was noted for the refresh. History is part of the social sciences curriculum, so that curriculum is the first.
13. Noted that a curriculum voices group is to be established for the design and implementation process and writing groups will design and produce the content. There will also be a social sciences group and the Ministerial Advisory Group's input. Beyond that there will be working groups to design specific content resources. Overall, this will be a collaborative process. This will be followed by developing the progressions and then inviting schools to do the testing. Already there are 320 schools involved in fast testing of the design phase. It is important to have those involved at the testing phase who are not experts so they can give feedback of a more practical nature. The work teams will respond to the feedback and then undertake wider testing.
14. Noted that there is a bicultural framework across the whole and nothing will be left in isolation. When the curriculum is complete about 4 -5 years from now, it will be up to schools to choose how they prioritise which area to implement first.

NZPF Kaumatua, Haterei Temo closes the 2021 Moot

15. A concern was noted about testing with many different schools including special schools. There was reassurance that the curriculum voices team would be diverse.
16. Further concerns about implementation and having relevant and plentiful support to make that successful. It was noted that the NZC was a great document which lacked the support to embed it.

Moot 2021 was a day filled with positive energy. Regional Presidents listened attentively, discussed vigorously, questioned intelligently and in the end offered Ministry staff in attendance, plenty of helpful feedback to continue their work. Perhaps it was because curriculum is central to their DNA, as NZPF President Perry Rush had suggested at the start of the day, but whatever the impetus, this was a cracking good Moot.

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KIA HIWA RĀ

Not all parents are saints, and we forget it at our peril

Martin Thrupp thrupp@waikato.ac.nz

I'VE BEEN THINKING for a while now, that I would like to write a column about parents, because dealing with unhappy parents often falls to principals and I think it must be one of the most difficult parts of the role.

Don't get me wrong, many parents are nearly always wonderful and can be great allies for principals, teachers and children in all sorts of school situations. It's just that some parents can be unreasonable and some are downright awful to deal with at times. Then there are those that veer between occasional vulnerability and frequent arrogance.

Certainly, it's important for principals to be understanding and to try to see things from the perspective of parents who are being 'difficult' as there might well be something further behind their dissatisfaction or antagonism.

But often the attitudes and motivations of parents are just really hard to generalise about. So when principals say that 'our parents are great', you can be sure they are choosing to focus on the positive and glossing over instances where parents have been extremely painful, or worse.

Concern amongst principals to avoid a deficit view of parents is justified. It's a decade on now, but some West Auckland principals will remember John Tamihere raging against local schools for their treatment of Māori. As reported by the Herald's Simon Collins in 2010, Tamihere complained that, 'We are sick and tired of hearing that it's our solo mothers that are failing the schools, it's low-income families that are failing the schools . . . We know it's our schools that are failing the families.'

This also raises the preference, in many situations, for schools to use the term whānau to cover the many extended family situations that are not captured by the nuclear family emphasis of the words parent or parents. It's the same for educational policymakers – but in seeking to involve and empower parents and whānau, education policy typically paints them as rather saintly partners in the educational process too.

The neo-liberal education policies introduced since the Tomorrow's Schools reforms in the 1980s, also building on longer-term patterns of parent involvement, have created a myriad of complexities.

Here are just a few examples: Parent Board of Trustee members being employers of school staff; parents and whānau being encouraged to consider themselves as educational consumers who should always demand the best for their child; the 'right' of parents and whānau to view a school's student achievement data; ERO booklets about a school's obligations around parent and whānau engagement.

Such developments may look good on paper but the last few decades have also revealed some ugly truths about parents and schools.

Some have used the trustee role to further their business interests. Some parent trustees think it's nearly always better to have a man at the helm. Many parents make educational choices that serve their socio-economic or white privilege. Many care about their own child but are not very generous about the struggles of others.

The problem with policymakers overlooking such concerns is that principals (and teachers, and actually everyone else in school communities, including other parents) get caught between the rhetoric and the reality.

Principals sometimes end up having to do a dance around ignorant new board members when their own knowledge and experience should be being recognised. Accomplished and competent women get overlooked for the role of principal too often. Schools get dumped on reputationally when it is the classist and racist attitudes of parents that should be held up to the light. Principals take flak from parents who are unsympathetic to their efforts to protect children with special needs.

Many such issues to do with parents and whānau were signalled in the recent review of the Tomorrow's Schools reforms and let's hope the Government response comes to fruition. For instance, it's good that the Ministry are looking to take more control over school enrolment schemes. I hope they will also set about educating the public to understand that deepening the socio-economic segregation between schools is not a good thing for our society. Who knows, perhaps ERO will put out a booklet about parent and whānau obligations to schools and kura.

The fact is that there are reciprocal obligations throughout the educational process, so there is no need for principals or teachers to sacrifice their souls at the altar of parental demand. It is often important to push back a bit so that entitled parents recognise where a fair boundary exists.

If you are interested in a more detailed analysis of the relationship between parents and primary schools in Aotearoa then check out the 2020 article by Megan Smith, 'Parent participation practices and subjectivities: New Zealand primary education 1988–2017' in the *Journal of Educational Administration and History.*

Finally, to return to the topic of teacher education tackled in my last column – my opinion that it should stay in universities has drawn a bit of criticism. To clarify, as well as the matters I was writing about because of my interests, I'm certainly also supportive of more in-depth treatment of curriculum and pedagogy in university initial teacher education. I look forward to speaking to these issues at the Normal and Model School Association conference in late May.

CREATING POSSIBILITY

HELEN KINSEY-WIGHTMAN

ON BREAKFAST THIS week I watched John Campbell interviewing Supreme Court Justice Joe Williams (who has just become Sir Joe) the youngest-ever Māori judge appointed to the Supreme Court and the first Te Reo Māori speaker on the Court of Appeal.

John Campbell's first question was, 'What were you told as a child about what was possible?'

This question has really stuck with me and I have asked myself, 'How do we communicate a sense of possibility to the tamariki and rangatahi in our schools?'

In the same week I watched Priya Sami, a travel agent who lost her job during Covid, talk about how much she loves her new job as a tradie. She wishes her school had talked to her about this as a possibility.

It has got me thinking about how the young people in our kura see themselves in the role models we hold up for them. If we look at the diverse community in our classroom, do the people we offer as role models reflect this? How do we communicate what is possible?

In concluding his interview, Tā Joe Williams was asked to give his message to the young people of New Zealand about what they can achieve. He said,

> "My message to [tamariki] is to dream and imagine in a way that their parents and grandparents did not. My message to their parents and grandparents is to dream for those children. Because the world we are in is changing, and the Māori dimension of Aotearoa is going to take it to the stratosphere. This is their time."

So how do we create aspiration and possibility in our children and young people? As you walk around your school this week, I challenge you to take note of the role models on display – because your students certainly will. Think first about the role models offered to girls in your school. Do they see female tradies at work? If not check out the video stories and resources offered

by Women in trades womenintradesnz.com/news-info. Are they aware of women in science – think of our very own Suzie Wiles, in mathematics try the movie *Hidden Figures*. Our Head of Art is currently contacting recently graduated students who have gone on to have careers in creative arts and is producing posters about their careers to inspire other students.

As we look beyond gender, what aspirations do we create for LGBTQI+ young people in our schools? At the most basic level, Aotearoa has the highest rate of youth suicide in the developed world, with rates for LGBTQI+ people, even higher (Skylight Trust.) Many young LGBTQI+ young people talk about being aware that they are different from a very young age. Ensuring that we have clear messages of support for those who are looking could be as easy as wearing a rainbow badge, a poster in your office like the one above and a staff wide agreement to stand against use of the word gay in a derogative sense – as in "That's so gay . . . " Resources on the Ministry's Inclusive Education site https://www.inclusive.tki.org.nz/guides/supporting-lgbtiqa-students/ are excellent and can help teachers to inform themselves about ways to support children and young people with a growing awareness that they are different.

Some examples for role models can be found at tearaway.co.nz/out-and-proud-lgbt-role-models/. One example is Louisa Wall ex blackfern and the MP who introduced the bill which led to NZ becoming the 13th country in the world to legalise same sex marriage. In a recent NewsHub Nation Backstory interview she reflects that things have got better as she shares the trophy with a statue of a male player that she received when named Women's Rugby player of the year in 1997!

According to the New Zealand Disability Strategy, disability is 'something that happens when people with impairments face barriers in society; it is society that disables us, not our impairments.' How do we focus on those with different abilities? We could focus on our Paralympian athletes or the growing inclusivity of NZ Fashion week for models with disabilities. Loading Docs is a series of short films which often focusses on diverse young people like Petra Leary who is an aerial photographer and ambassador for ADHD NZ. Leighton Clarke is well known on social media as Uncle Tics and is featured on NZ Prime series Living with Tourettes.

How do we **CREATE POSSIBILITY** for students of **DIVERSE ETHNICITIES AND FAITHS** within our schools? **RELATIONSHIPS CAN BE BUILT** through taking an interest in **CULTURE AND BELIEFS.**

How do we create possibility for students of diverse ethnicities and faiths within our schools? Relationships can be built through taking an interest in culture and beliefs. As a girls' high school we have a growing roll of Muslim students. Every year we hold a pre-Ramadan lunch to recognise the special month they are about to begin and for those who will be fasting we ensure they know where they can go to pray and where they can gather on rainy days to avoid watching other students eating. Creating possibility for these students might be showing them the Iranian women's football team who fought to overturn the FIFA ban on wearing hijab (headcovering) and avoiding the stereotyping of Muslim women as oppressed and marginalised by talking about the fact that whilst the USA has never had a female president, to date 8 Muslim countries have had female leaders.

Given that our country is changing and in Joe Williams' words, 'the Māori dimension of Aotearoa is going to take it to the stratosphere,' how are we presenting possibility to young Māori students? Recently I was looking at our NCEA results and comparing them to national norms. I was stunned to realise that the percentage of female Māori Y13 students gaining University Entrance nationally in 2020 was 32.5 per cent compared to 58 per cent of female Y13 students of all ethnicities. Given that we need Māori at the table to redress biases across the professions, in medicine, social work, law and education where are those young professionals going to come from? How do we talk to tamariki about the possibility of going to University– particularly those who may be the first in their family to do so? I would suggest this begins at primary school. There is a great Facebook Page called Māori Role models with profiles of Māori such as Dr Lance O'Sullivan and those we might not know like Mana Vautier an aerospace engineer who subcontracts to NASA and aspires to be the first Māori in space.

Young people cannot be what they cannot see – so what are we showing them about what is possible?

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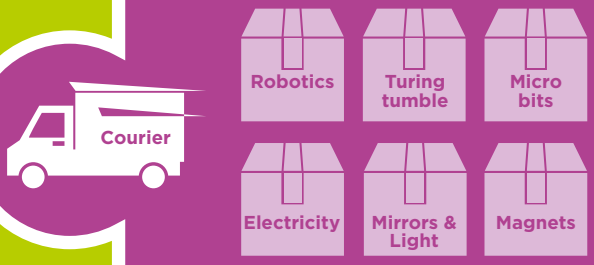
LEARNABLES - STEM KITS
Delivered to your school



Find your learning fit with MOTAT

Whether you are looking for an out-of-school visit including rich experiences and inspirational activities or a customised education programme delivered at your school, MOTAT can provide tailored learning opportunities for you and your students.

Visit, to explore our unique museum and participate in one of our education programmes, or let us bring our hands-on education experiences to you in a STEAM Cell visit to your school. Book an online workshop for an exciting in-class lesson or borrow a Learnables STEM kit to use in class.

Discover more at MOTAT.NZ/LEARNING