

Special Reports to Annual Meeting 2011

ambition progress success for my child
NZ values fair for all high achieving aspiring accountable
for every child strong relationships
excellent the best way the best world class
happy children
independent
achievement investing in the future
qualified teachers
great start in life quality

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**Special Report to
Annual Meeting**

**Moving
from
Great to
Excellent**

What do we want for New Zealand's education system?

“Only the very best...so each child will develop an enquiring mind, become passionate about learning, and grow and achieve as an active, thoughtful citizen of Aotearoa New Zealand and of the world.” (NZEI Vision and Values, January 2011)

1. Our Vision and Values

A strong, vibrant and well-resourced public education system is the best investment Government and communities can make for the future of Aotearoa New Zealand.

Education is the foundation of an active democracy and a fair and prosperous society. It ensures our success as individuals, as successful, democratic and inclusive 21st century communities, and as a nation based on Te Tiriti o Waitangi. Public education must therefore be, and remain, the first priority of any Government.

We believe public education is about the opportunity for every child to access a free and excellent education from the early years, regardless of income, ethnicity, religion, gender or disability.

What every child needs:

- Every child deserves to attend a quality local early childhood centre and school where their own identity and community is reflected and valued, where learning is culturally and geographically relevant to them, where their family and whānau are valued and recognised and they feel they belong.
- Every child deserves to have quality learning opportunities because education is transformative: it empowers the individual but is also a force for the good of society as a whole.
- Every child deserves quality teaching and support so that their individual needs are met and their potential is realised.

As educators, we know that every child is unique – they learn at different rates and in different ways, they have different interests and strengths. The job of our early childhood centres and schools is to help them learn to the best of their ability, so that every child has an education that meets their diverse needs and fulfils their potential.

New Zealand's education system is rated in the top handful in the world but some children are still missing out.

That's why we need more investment in education to meet every child's needs. We are ambitious to make our great system the best in the world. We need more investment in children, more investment in the partnership between teachers and parents and whānau, and more investment in people working in education.

2. Moving from Great to Excellent – Our Framework for Change

New Zealand students are already the fourth best readers in the world and do very well in mathematics and science. The OECD calls New Zealand a “top-performing” country in education. Our success is built on high quality early childhood education, an innovative and broad curriculum, learning supported by assessment information and practice, effective teaching, a high trust relationship between policy-makers and professionals, and locally accountable and responsive schools and centres.

However, we spend less on primary schooling than the OECD average, and less on early childhood education than recommended by UNICEF. We also have greater social inequity than many OECD countries, which means 10-15% of our children arrive at school significantly under-equipped for life and learning.

We can do better. We are ambitious to do better.

To move from great to excellent we need to invest in access and opportunity for every child and invest in the people working in education. The OECD’s review of top performing countries suggests that rather than radical reforms, top-performing countries tend to “build self-adjusting systems with rich feedback at all levels, incentives to react, and tools to strengthen capacities to deliver better outcomes”. Evidence is used to guide policy-making, combining international benchmarks with national surveys and with agencies such as inspectorates to provide a better diagnosis. The OECD also notes that partnership between policy-makers and professionals is critical for change.

“Many of the countries with the strongest student performance also have strong teachers’ unions, and the better a country’s education system performs, the more likely that country is working constructively with its unions and treating its teachers as trusted professional partners.” (OECD 2011)

Specifically, this means:

- Access to high quality ECE for every child, and sustainable funding to provide professional salaries and conditions for ECE teachers.
- Curricula that respond to and extend every student’s learning. The 2011 OECD report, Building a High Quality Teaching Profession - Lessons from Around the World, noted:

“...In virtually all the countries that performed well in PISA, schools and teachers are responsible for engaging constructively with the diversity of student interests, capacities, and socio-economic contexts. They don’t have the option of making students repeat the school year-retention is not permitted-or of transferring students to schools with lower performance requirements... [They are moving] from prescribed forms of teaching, curriculum, and assessment toward an approach predicated on enabling all students to reach their potential...[there is a] drive to make such practices systemic by establishing clear learning pathways and fostering independent and lifelong learning among students. Obviously, such personalized learning demands a curriculum that provides both breadth of study and personal relevance.”

- Growth of creative practices are encouraged, recognised and spread through the system.
- Resources targeted at the 14% of students who are low achievers and their families; including smaller class sizes that make quality teaching achievable for every student.
- Building genuine learning partnerships and respect between teachers, students, their families and the system.

- Strengthening and supporting self-review and robust assessment. The OECD notes: “assessment and self-evaluation is for building capacity for, and confidence in, professional accountability. The primary purpose of any systematic assessment of school performance in [top-performing countries] is to reveal best practices and identify shared problems in order to encourage teachers and schools to develop more supportive and productive learning environments”.

High-performing countries recruit strong teacher candidates, promote sound subject matter preparation, offer induction programmes that support new teachers during their first few years of teaching, and offer ongoing professional development. These countries are abandoning the traditional factory model, with teachers at the bottom of the production line receiving orders from on high, to move toward a professionalised model of teachers as knowledge workers. In this model, teachers are on a par with other professionals in terms of diagnosing problems and applying evidence-based practices and strategies to address the diversity in students’ interests and abilities.

OECD: Key Feature 3: Strengthened Teacher Professionalism (see www.ascd.org/publications)

3. Our Political Strategy

“In a flat world, where everything is interconnected, relevant educational standards of excellence are no longer those of the city or state next door. Work that can be digitized, automated, and outsourced can now be done by anyone from any place in the world (Friedman, 2005). Countries that invest heavily in education to meet the demands of the new global knowledge economy benefit economically and socially from that choice” (OECD)

It is now accepted that the current Government has a radical reform agenda for public education. Derivative of reforms in the US, UK and Australia, it is using the mantras of “accountability” and “choice” and adopting a mechanistic, market-based model of education more relevant to the “factory learning” of the Victorian era than the 21st century learners’ needs.

The Government has already flagged the key elements of that agenda - cuts to ECE, dropping the goal of 100% qualified teachers, the introduction of National Standards, the refusal to rule out league tables, constant undermining of the profession, lack of respect for professional advice, and moves toward performance-based pay. There is a decided shift in the Government’s philosophy from the principle of universality to that of targeting. Privatisation through boosting independent schools and PPPs, market-based pay, or performance pay linked to unreliable and deeply flawed National Standards, and sub-inflation budget increases which impact on quality are all on the horizon.

Government reforms promise...	Top-performing countries have...
Contractual accountability	Responsive accountability
Change imposed by Government	Change developed by teachers
Regulation	Development
Imposed accountability	Individual and collective responsibility
Government directed and controlled	Profession developed and managed
Mistrust	Trust
External regulation	Self review and regulation
Compliance	Activism

(Adapted from Judith Sachs, Presentation to PPTA, 2011)

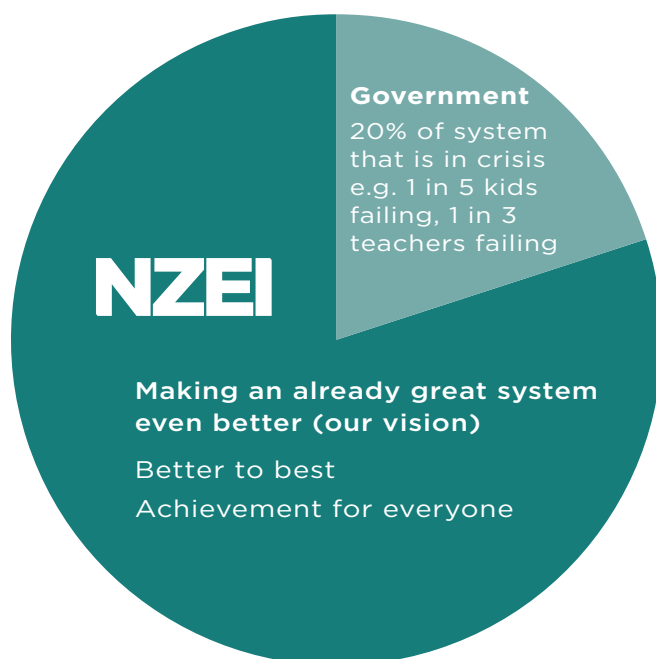
The Government's strategy has been to constantly reiterate that there is a "crisis" in New Zealand's education system; that one in five children are failing, that one in three schools are "under-serving" their students, that one in three teachers are ineffective. It has realised that to embed long-term change in education, there must be a shift in culture in the sector, not just policy shifts. It sees education unions and professional groups as dominating that culture, and has worked to marginalise and make those groups ineffective.

The Government aims to use the political capital it still enjoys as "political headroom" to introduce further radical reforms in future. It continues to work to reduce our professional influence in order to weaken our industrial strength and our influence in our communities.

However, research in early 2011 showed the Government's "crisis" message had not taken hold strongly with the public. Most parents responded overwhelmingly positively to the work our schools and centres are doing and had high respect for the job teachers were doing. The Government has also ignored international evidence about the need to genuinely engage teachers and their representatives to achieve successful reforms.

Consequently our strategy, is to "populate the positive space". It's simple. If we compare our political strategy to a flag, the Government has literally cornered 15-20% of negative territory – the territory of failure and crisis. This leaves us with 80-85% of what works, what is successful and what we can build on. It's a much more positive place to be, and we can use this territory to outflank the Government's crisis framing, not take them on directly in their territory. We need to occupy 85% of "successful space", and in doing so, build a popularly-supported alternative vision of education for New Zealand.

Our political strategy



This will enable us to:

- Build on the existing successes of the NZ education system to argue that we must be the best and we know how to get there.
- Frame all of the conversations about education, within our vision.
- Have our activities – professional and industrial - seen as supportive of that popular vision.
- Have reforms that undermine our vision widely seen as destructive of the wider community's vision of education.
- Attract widespread support from allies – both within the sector and within the community, particularly parents.
- Attract and build membership, activism and leadership amongst education employees.

4. Campaigns to Deliver our Vision and our Strategy

National Standards

National Standards undermine the vision of quality teaching and learning based on a curriculum capable of meeting every individual’s learning needs. Schools should be confident that we already know how to develop effective learners for the 21st century. The continued focus of teaching should be on the New Zealand Curriculum’s student-centred learning approach, not National Standards. We remain ambitious for all students: one of our aims is to increase the number of students achieving in reading, mathematics and writing from its current level of 86%.

We encourage our members to proactively communicate NZEI’s vision as “Assess for Success” - mapping children’s progress and achievement so that they move forward with their learning - rather than being labelled for failing to meet an artificially constructed, fuzzy set of standards. Schools should constantly strive for greater engagement with parents and whānau in learning, including clear reporting on student progress and achievement. This includes support for online information and reporting on learning (e.g. electronic portfolios) to supplement face-to-face information for parents, so that parents and students have “anytime, anywhere” access to information that celebrates, assesses and sets goals for children’s learning.

While the profession needs to understand and be informed about National Standards, NZEI encourages members not to implement them. Instead, we support united collective action through NZEI, professional associations and groups such as the Boards Taking Action Coalition.

NZEI members will not settle for a backwards move to standardisation and mediocrity that will not solve the purported problem. Schools should not mess about trying to use National Standards or trying to make them work. Each school should articulate its own high expectations which reflect student achievement and progress. These expectations should fit the school’s vision for its students, be challenging and be based on the New Zealand Curriculum.

A world-class system that:	A standards-based environment which:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> meets 21st century needs by developing: knowledge, skills and learning for living 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> takes primary teaching back to mediocrity and educates only for employment skills
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> produces creative, energetic and motivated learners by broadening opportunity based on literacy and numeracy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> narrows learning opportunities by focusing solely on isolated aspects of literacy and numeracy
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> is based on a concept of learning as organic - depending on a diversity of talent 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> is based on a concept of learning as going through a linear track with a singular conception of ability
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> has a New Zealand Curriculum which teachers are encouraged to customise and personalise for every student 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> demands conformity where every student is expected to be at a particular standard at a particular time
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> allows schools to decide on the individual learning needs of their students 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> gives politicians and bureaucrats control and regimentation over learning

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • encourages teaching which builds on students' strengths and is pitched just above their present level of achievement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • has a framework that does not take account of students' strengths and is pitched to a particular standard
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • allows for the interpretation of the curriculum within each school but is informed by normed assessment information throughout New Zealand 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • has no evidence base as Standards have been mapped backwards from NCEA Level 2 and do not match the current performance levels of students
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • demands that the curriculum and teaching take account of student's diverse backgrounds, interests, and needs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • assumes that a learning approach of "one size fits all" is appropriate
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • every student is valued for what they bring to school 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • means any gains in student achievement levels will rarely be reflected in assessment results reported publicly
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • has intrinsic accountability with professional responsibilities to students, the school and its community 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • unfairly measures students against standards which are above, at, below or well below where they are at
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • has formative assessment practice to assist better learning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • misuses standardised assessment tools for diagnostic and accountability purposes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • encourages teachers to motivate students and bring spark, spontaneity and a love of learning through the NZ Curriculum 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • means there will be less time for the teachable moments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • celebrates every student's learning achievement and progress 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • is likely to distort the philosophy of child-centred teaching
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • uses data reported nationally to support improvements in teacher practice or inform school development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • will not tell the real story of what is happening with student achievement as large scale reporting necessitates simplified data and the information gained is inadequate
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • encourages parents to engage with their child's learning as part of the learning partnership between the teacher-student-parent 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • is based on political direction that wants children's achievement reported to parents against a four-point scale
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • uses a curriculum which was developed over nine years and followed wide consultation with teachers, parents, community, business groups, and students 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • was developed in haste meaning the clarity of purpose and use of the standards has been compromised
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • already uses a considerable amount of national data on literacy and numeracy available through annual charters, numeracy data, and literacy professional development programmes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • creates comparative data rather than data for learning which the media can collate to create league tables

Whakahau, Whakamana, Whakahihi – Boosting Māori Student Achievement

Ensuring all Māori students reach their potential is part of our vision of quality local schools and centres focused on a curriculum that is culturally relevant and engaging to every student.

- Schools/kura/kōhanga reo/early childhood education centres already provide the potential for success.
- The goals for tamariki Māori are the same for ngā mātua me ngā kaiako.
- Māori are over being the negative statistics of Aotearoa/New Zealand and it is time to turn this waka around.
- We often discuss cultural competence but now we need to practise cultural competence for ourselves and for our tamariki.
- Schools/kura/kōhanga reo/early childhood education centres parents and education practitioners are doing great things that can be emulated throughout Aotearoa/New Zealand with collegial support for each other.
- We need to celebrate our successes regionally and nationally.

The “3W” campaign, led by Te Reo Areare, is a campaign focused on the successes achieved for tamariki Māori throughout Aotearoa, involving gathering evidence of success stories and strategies, recognising heroes for Māori student achievement and exerting political pressure on decision-makers.

Māori educators believe that the National Standards are not designed to reflect a Māori world view and are therefore an assessment tool that marginalises the 85% of Māori learners within our mainstream education system. The Whakahau, Whakamana, Whakahihi campaign is an effort to discover the way forward for Māori education and to raise achievement levels for tamariki Māori. Previously the work of Te Reo Areare has focused on identifying deficiencies and then providing possible solutions which were invariably ignored by agencies and Governments. The Whakahau, Whakamana, Whakahihi campaign intends to take a positive approach which will provide solutions that have been trialled and are already in practice in schools/kura/kōhanga reo/early childhood education centres throughout Aotearoa.

The “3W” campaign reflects the approach that being Māori is an advantage, that all Māori learners are inherently capable and that most Māori learners are succeeding. The 3W campaign focuses on what schools and centres are already doing well to support Māori achievement, and looks at how we can build on what we know works. It rejects the Government’s “framing” of Māori learners and learning as a narrative of deficit, failure, problems and risks.

The 3W campaign tells stories about successful examples of ako (effective and reciprocal teaching and learning relationships where everyone is a learner and a teacher), manaakitanga (the care for students as culturally located people above all else), mana motuhake (the care by teachers for the academic success and performance of their students) and whakawhanaungatanga – the nurturing of mutually respectful and collaborative relationships between all parties around student learning.

The 3W campaign has a strong basis in good evidence. ERO research into schools with high or substantially improved Māori student achievement has found consistently good presence and engagement of Māori students, and practises that are inclusive of students and their parents and whānau. School leaders and teachers understood the centrality of te reo me ngā tikanga in the curriculum, responsive teaching, positive student-teacher relationships, and the inclusion of parents’ views and aspirations in working with Māori learners. ERO found that schools that had developed targeted initiatives in response to what they knew about Māori students and whānau tended to be more effective in building better relationships and enhancing achievement.

By focussing on Māori potential and success, the 3W campaign is focussing on what works: strong partnerships with whānau, strong ECE foundations, strengthening Te Reo, schools and centres having knowledge and data about Māori students.

In 2012, the goal will continue to be raising awareness of the educational successes of tamariki Māori. Key outcomes include:

- All New Zealanders are involved in the educational journey of tamariki Māori
- Cultural competence is successfully practised by ourselves and our tamariki
- Great things achieved by parents and education practitioners are emulated throughout Aotearoa/New Zealand
- Our successes are celebrated regionally and nationally.

Themes for each term include cultural competence, Matariki and Te Reo, culminating in celebrations of a year of success. This work will be led by Te Reo Areare with support from aronui tōmua, area councils, branches and komiti pasifika.

ECE Cuts Don't Heal

There is a world of difference between the Government's rhetoric about investment in early childhood education and NZEI's vision of a quality ECE sector based on quality, participation and collaboration. Cuts to early childhood education undermine the right of every child to access high quality ECE.

Quality

Budget 2010 cut funding to ECE centres with 100% qualified teachers affecting more than 2000 centres. Budget 2011 offered centres a sub-inflation increase – effectively a cut in their budgets. Most centres got a 1.1% increase in funding, which is not sustainable if teachers are to be paid professional salaries.

NZEI disagrees with the National Government's assertions that too much is being spent on early childhood education. New Zealand spends less than half of the OECD average on early childhood and is 25th out of the 29 OECD countries in investment in the early years so increased investment is unarguably a need. Over the long-term few types of Government spending deliver a better return than early childhood education making it of high value to taxpayers and the community. (Heckman, 2010) Recent Governments have made a deliberate decision to increase investment in early childhood education, from a low base, and to move the costs from families towards society as a whole.

In a review of international evidence commissioned by the Ministry of Education, Mitchell, Wylie and Carr, (2008) conclude the returns on Government investment can be up to \$17 for every dollar spent.

*“A reduction in funding in the early years creates a financial debt for a future generation.”
(Mitchell, Wylie and Carr 2008)*

“Early childhood education is a proper investment economically and morally ... the question is not where to cut, but where to invest” (Nobel Prize winning economist James Heckman)

The Early Childhood Taskforce also endorsed a policy of quality and investment, taking note of international research supporting this.

We call for a continued programme of investment and improvement in early childhood education, so that it is available, accessible, appropriate and affordable for all. Investment in universal early childhood education is fundamental to a successful society.

Participation

Participation in New Zealand is already high, and has been growing steadily in recent years, with 94.5% of children attending in 2010. Participation rates have been growing more rapidly for Pasifika and Māori children than for Pakeha children (Education Counts, 2010), reflecting the investment in the sector.

In addition, the number of hours each week, and the duration (in months and years) of attendance have continued to grow, and it is this sustained regular participation, rather than mere enrolment, that makes a difference.

However, those children who do not take part are those who could most benefit from early education. The reasons why these children do not attend are complex, but participation could certainly be improved if there were sufficient places in each community.

NZEI has for many years been calling for planned provision, and for every child to have a right to a place in a suitable service. It is not surprising that, when places are limited, it is the most disadvantaged who miss out. The current arrangements rely on either the market, or community organisations with limited capital, to provide sufficient places. Many families do not have access to a place at all, or to a place in a service that suits either their cultural identity, or their family circumstances, in terms of hours, geographic location or affordability.

Current levels of participation are at risk from policies which cut funding from more than 2,000 mainstream services from February 2011. Most of these services have increased fees, jeopardising participation from low-income families. These mainstream services already serve more than 85% of Māori and Pasifika children.

NZEI supports targeted initiatives to attract hard to reach families, but not at the expense of high quality mainstream services. The proposed targeted initiatives are experimental, and may not be of sufficient intensity to reduce educational disparity on their own. Rather, it is desirable that children placed with targeted services are eventually introduced to suitable mainstream services which can provide sustained, regular exposure to quality educational environments.

In a minority report to the ECE Taskforce (June 1 2011), Emeritus Professor Anne Smith argued that the proposed new funding system which would scrap ECE 20 hours free, and reduce subsidies for middle-income families, may have a negative influence on participation rates in ECE. She quotes a recent European Commission Report:

“There is clear evidence that universal access to quality ECE is more beneficial than interventions targeted exclusively at vulnerable groups. Targeting ECE poses problems because it is difficult in practice to identify the target group reliably, it tends to stigmatise its beneficiaries and can even lead to segregation at later stages of education. Targeted services are also at more risk of cancellation than universal ones.”

(Early childhood education and care: providing all our children with the best start (European Commission 2011))

She also cites Swedish sociologist and economist Gosta Esping-Anderson who found evidence that provision of universal quality early childhood education has greatly diminished the gap in income and educational achievement between high and low socioeconomic status children in some European countries, such as Sweden and Denmark. He is opposed to targeting, because of “the high transaction costs and difficulty of identifying need”, recommending instead, universal levels of coverage with graduated subsidies, consistent with New Zealand’s current 20 hours policy and Work and Income subsidies.

Means-testing – as suggested by the ECE Taskforce – typically suffers from high costs associated with the complexity of screening target groups accurately, the inequity of arbitrary cut-offs that exclude those just “above” the line, and sorting of the system (e.g. by families with the means to hide income in company or family trust arrangements). The ECE Taskforce’s recommended new funding approach implies centres will have to determine whether parents fit into “priority” categories – effectively making teachers “means-testers” and administrators. The mechanics and compliance costs of centres have to screen potential enrolments to establish their ethnicity, disability and income, are complex. Worse, the process could sour the critical relationships teachers build with families and whānau in supporting the child’s learning

Collaboration

In the area of collaboration, more needs to be done to link services together, both within the education sector, and with other services that families access, or could benefit from accessing, such as health, social services, housing services, and parenting support.

In 2008, NZEI was one of nine organisations involved in the Quality Public Early Childhood Education Project, which aimed to strengthen community based early childhood education. Its report (May & Mitchell, 2009) recognised the need for more Government intervention to foster collaboration. In particular it called for a national plan, new forms of provision to foster collaboration, promote sharing of facilities, promote links with umbrella organisations, and provision of support for those umbrella organisations.

Unfortunately several successful programmes to improve collaboration have had funding withdrawn, rather than being expanded and improved. For example, the Centres of Innovation that aimed to spread best practice across the sector, and were highly regarded and respected. This programme was cut for budgetary reasons in 2009.

The recent Parent Support and Development pilot in 18 centres began creating the sort of service hubs that New Zealand teachers have admired overseas and have also been advocating here. NZEI members associated with these pilots speak highly of their effects, but several services are struggling to continue the programmes without the funding.

An evaluation of this pilot showed it was successful, although it was also attractive to not-so-vulnerable families. NZEI’s position is that parenting support is valuable for all parents, and building family capacity should be seen as positive wherever it occurs.

The Way Forward

The Government says that it believes in the need for high quality ECE, but its rhetoric does not match reality. The Budget decisions of 2010-2011 and the funding proposals of the ECE Taskforce, if implemented, could continue to undermine New Zealand’s current system.

If NZEI believes that continued investment is needed to ensure that every child meets their potential, because we know that early childhood education sets the scene for life, we need to consider the structural and funding systems that can best guarantee long term societal and Government commitment to ECE - as an integral part of our quality public education system, led by professionals, rather than risking moving towards a low-paid and fragmented service industry.

NZEI’s vision includes every child’s right to equitable access to high quality education. If the government’s market-based reforms to teacher pay and bargaining, qualification rates and cuts to subsidies to many families continue, that right will be eroded. NZEI members risk being left on the margins of the debate in skirmishes over detailed funding issues, participation statistics, qualification rates and the relative merits and success of universal versus targeted initiatives. If we are to maintain clarity of purpose and the high moral ground for the future, we need a simple message that promotes our beliefs in the rights of children, and the needs of their families.

Growing support for teaching and learning

A high quality support staff workforce is critical to our vision of excellent teaching and learning for all. Almost one-third of the education workforce is now made up of teacher aides, school librarians, administrative staff, ICT managers and other school support staff. They are important to supporting teaching and learning. Recognising, valuing and increasing the skills of support staff is a critical step in moving our schools from “great” to excellent”.

However, support staff remain under-paid and under-valued by the system. The fundamental reason support staff are still bulk-funded, with the resultant job insecurity and low pay, is because their role in supporting teaching and learning is not yet sufficiently identified, recognised and valued. The Support Staff campaign has therefore adopted a 3-5 year plan that aims to ultimately win that recognition and concurrently, an appropriate resourcing model.

Phase 1 of the campaign builds on the report *“Support Staff - Collectively Making Resources Count”* (May 2011) which outlines the value of support staff and argues that schools could use them more effectively to support teaching and learning. The report, researched and co-written by NZEI Te Riu Roa, the Ministry of Education and the New Zealand School Trustees Association, recommends that school leaders integrate support staff more effectively into teaching teams and into the whole school team. It says more training and induction for support staff, including combined training of teachers and teachers’ aides, should be developed, and that management of support staff should be part of principals’ leadership training.

The report also highlights the valued and essential roles support staff play in supporting teaching and learning in 21st century schools. Phase 1 of the support staff campaign builds on this, with an emphasis on developing school and community understanding about what specifically support staff do to support teaching and learning. It also uses the valuable information gathered in NZEI-commissioned pay equity research.

In Phase 2, (2012-13) the campaign will build awareness and commitment to change. This will include identifying issues with the current system and possible solutions. Phase 3 (2013-14) aims to focus political pressure on getting the required change to the funding system.

Recommendations to Annual Meeting

- **That the report be received by Annual Meeting 2011.**
- **That the report be adopted by Annual Meeting 2011.**

Special Report to Annual Meeting

Remuneration and Recognition in a Quality Public Education System

The right to a free, fair and accessible quality public education system enables people to fully participate in their society. In an effective QPE system, every child has access to an education that meets their diverse needs and helps them fulfill their potential. At the heart of QPE is the premise that education is a human right and a public good.

NZEI Te Riu Roa has a clearly-established focus on advancing quality public education (AQPE). The campaigns and activities in which NZEI is engaged are all part of the broader goals around AQPE. A key component of AQPE must be remuneration and recognition systems for employees in the education sector which appropriately acknowledge their contribution to providing and enhancing a quality public education system.

The education sector needs to determine the answer to this key question:

What does a remuneration and recognition system that best meets the requirements of a quality public education system look like?

In answering this question, there are two fundamental tenets:

Any remuneration and recognition system must reflect the commitment by NZEI and the Government, to move New Zealand's public education system from great to excellent.

An effective remuneration and recognition system should recognise the importance of the role of the education sector workforce and its contribution to New Zealand's future.

Based on these tenets, the next stage is to establish the underpinning principles, which must be consistent with NZEI's goals and vision, to guide work on this issue. During the primary Longer Term Work Programme (LTWP), principles that informed and guided that work were established. These have been considered and updated as part of the development of this paper.

The following principles will guide the future development of remuneration and recognition systems:

An effective remuneration and recognition system should be founded on:

- appropriate recognition for roles, responsibilities and expertise
- sufficient and effective resourcing
- professional development opportunities for all
- a consistent attestation model based on practice
- accessible career progression opportunities
- a cross-sector commitment to developing this work
- no actual financial disadvantage to current employees' remuneration and recognition as a result of changes to current models.

An effective remuneration and recognition system should acknowledge:

- leadership
- responsibilities
- ongoing professional learning and growth
- skills, knowledge and expertise
- qualifications.

An effective remuneration and recognition system must reflect that QPE is delivered through quality teaching and support from a wide range of education sector workers who are:

- creative, confident, competent and accountable
- respected and valued for their contribution to each child's wellbeing and learning
- appropriately-skilled, trained and qualified
- encouraged and supported to continue their own learning
- well-resourced and well-paid
- able to access a clear career pathway.

Why must we consider change?

NZEI Te Riu Roa is committed to advancing QPE. It is, and must remain committed to having the best possible education system. To achieve this goal, there must be remuneration and recognition systems that align with the QPE vision.

NZEI is leading the way on this issue, as evidenced by the high-quality work done around the Practice-Based Attestation (PBA) pilot. The broader work undertaken within the primary Longer Term Work Programme, the Support Staff Workforce Strategy and the skills framework initiatives in Special Education has paved the way for the future and will provide a robust platform from which to build.

As we move into the 2012 round of collective agreement negotiations, NZEI will look to take a leadership role in this discussion. In its Vision for the Teaching Profession document, the government signaled clearly that it supports significant change to remuneration structures that will bring the "lift" required to recruit and retain a highly-skilled and well-rewarded workforce. We are well-prepared to work with our membership to develop and promote structures and systems that will create a new and exciting environment that supports and nurtures the quality teaching and learning environment which New Zealand needs going forward.

A system developed using the principles underpinning this paper will be a system that will endure and stand the test of time.

Key questions

NZEI Te Riu Roa members will be engaged, through consultative processes and consider these key questions:

- How closely do our current collective agreements reflect our goals?
- What areas do we need more information about?
- How will we achieve a remuneration and recognition system that more closely aligns with our QPE vision?

**A strong, vibrant and well-resourced public education system is the best investment government and communities can make for the future of Aotearoa New Zealand.
(NZEI Vision statement)**

Recommendations to Annual Meeting

- **That the report be received by Annual Meeting 2011.**
- **That principle-based remuneration and recognition systems, that are aligned with the NZEI Te Riu Roa goals for advancing quality public education, be developed for consultation with members.**
- **That the report be adopted by Annual Meeting 2011.**

Special Report to Annual Meeting

Child Poverty

Not good enough!

The effects of poverty stay with children for life and in too many cases that life is short and often violent (Else, 2011)

What children are saying

“Can’t afford school uniform...Lack of books, can’t afford... Ashamed....Can’t go on school trips...No lunch...Not accepted by their peers...Left out...Get picked on at school...Stress... Low self-esteem... Unhappy...Lonely...Sad... Depressed...Angry...Feelings of worthlessness...Shame” (From Ministry of Social Development children and young people’s group definitions of poverty)

What educators are saying

“We were really distressed to see young students eating food out of the gutter on their way home from school.” (Email correspondence from a south Dunedin teacher May 2011)

“I spend a lot of my time sourcing and managing additional money” (Interview with principal about school programmes to help children living in hardship)

“New Zealanders would be surprised to know just how much schools rely on charities to help feed and clothe their students. Breakfast-in-schools programmes are essential and everything must be done to ensure they continue because all children deserve to start on a level playing field.” (Ian Leckie, National President NZEI May 2011)

One in five New Zealand children is living in poverty. Māori and Pasifika children are disproportionately represented in these statistics.

The income gap in New Zealand – the difference between high and low or no incomes – is the sixth most unequal of 23 rich countries (Wilkinson & Pickett, 2009)

In New Zealand we are lucky to have very few cases of absolute poverty – a complete lack of basic human needs. Unfortunately, for some time now relative poverty – the condition of having fewer resources or less income than others within a society or country, or compared to worldwide averages – is on the rise.

The statistics tell us that the proportion of children living in hardship in New Zealand (defined as below 60% of median household income after housing costs) fell from 26% to 19% between 2004 and 2008 (Perry, 2010). However, hardship rates for sole parent beneficiary families remained steady at around 55% and since 2008, the economic recession and Government policy have contributed to a widening of the gap.

Looking at the statistics close up, hardship rates for sole parent families were around four times those for two-parent families (39% vs. 11%). By 2009, 49% of all children living in poverty were in one-parent households (Perry 2010) – but the problem is not just one of single parenting. We currently live in a society that makes good parenting increasingly difficult. Work hours are long, wages are low (and have stagnated) and very few jobs outside the state sector have generous – or even easily accessible – parental leave benefits.

Having one in five children living in poverty is not a pretty picture for a country that prides itself on being child-centered. In New Zealand, poverty most often occurs in families with children. The effects of poverty stay with children for life and in too many cases that life is short and often violent (Else, 2011).

Poverty and Education – Not an Easy Mix

What children are saying

“Poverty is...going to school and no-one understands the difficulties families are having – shame and embarrassment ... Kids playing up at school and getting in trouble because of family issues... Being bullied... Schools reacting to kids’ behaviour and not why they are acting that way and maybe kicked out of school...not being able to do things and getting in trouble...not being able to get to school” (From children and young people’s group definition of poverty, Palmerston North)

What educators are saying

“It’s clear that more families are struggling financially in the past two – three years than previously...many parents are defaulting on fees/donations...more children are requiring support (like breakfasts in schools) or not having adequate lunches...more children are without appropriate clothing or resources when they come to school...more children are unable to go to camps or take part in extracurricular activities (NZEI OCC survey on issues impacting on children’s learning).

Early Childhood Education (ECE) can do much to reduce these disparities. Unfortunately there is no right to ECE in New Zealand. ECE is not affordable for many families, and poor children are more likely to miss out. Any child starting school without ECE is significantly disadvantaged and is unlikely to catch up. Addressing inequalities must begin early on. In order for a child to reach school with a good level of development they need a good start in life, from a healthy pregnancy, to being raised in a home where there is good quality and quantity of interaction.

Addressing continued inequalities in early child development, access to ECE, educational achievement and acquisition of skills, sustainable and healthy communities, social and health services, and employment and working conditions will have multiple benefits that extend beyond reductions in health inequalities

While low income in a family is a strong predictor of poor educational achievement (Cassen, 2007; Hirsch, 2007, St John & Wynd, 2008) it is not possible to draw a straight line between poverty and poor educational achievement. Some children living in poverty do well at school; other children from wealthier families do not. What we do know however, is that poverty attracts a cluster of conditions: poor housing, poor health and hygiene, lack of access to ECE, addictive behaviours, lack of technology for learning in homes and lack of support for education. The baskets of support that children of the poor bring with them to schools and centres are mostly empty.

At every stage of schooling, children living in poverty do worse and make less progress than their “better-off” classmates. The persistence of this achievement gap is of great concern. Poverty, the resources parents can bring to their children’s schooling, and the aspirations and expectations held by both parents and their children all count (Wilkinson & Pickett, 2009, CPAG, 2011).

There is a growing base of international research and evidence (Goodman and Gregg, 2010, UNICEF, 2011) that shows that the gap in attainment between children from the poorest fifth and the richest fifth is already large by the age of five, and grows more rapidly during the primary school years.

The cost to the nation of child poverty and failure in school is high. The Christchurch Health and Development Study (The Children's Social Health Monitor NZ, 2010), suggests that exposure to low family income during childhood and early adolescence may increase the risk of leaving school without qualifications, economic inactivity, early parenthood and criminal activity. Adjusting for mediating factors (e.g. parental education, maternal age, and sole parent status) reduces the magnitude of these associations somewhat, but they do not disappear completely, suggesting that the pathways linking low family income to long term outcomes are complex, and in part may be mediated by other socioeconomic variables" (Perry 2010, p. 55).

Inadequate income leads to low quality, poorly insulated housing, which contributes to poor health and for children, low educational attainment. There is also a direct link between inadequate income, stress, self-stigma and poor health. Poor health and low educational attainment increase the likelihood of long-term support on social welfare benefits (Welfare Justice in New Zealand, 2011). There is a general consensus that the relationship between poverty and adverse educational outcomes for children is not linear. However the impact of poverty plays out in lack of achievement and attendance in schools, and in ECE, in access, lack of transport, attendance and illness. The lack of clear cause and effect between participation, achievement and poverty means that children's vulnerability is less visible and therefore it receives less attention in setting the policy responses. The current Government's cuts to public services impacts on vital front line services. Proposals for reforms to welfare are highly likely to negatively impact on children. ECE cuts have already had an impact with a 12% rise in fees and several centres facing closure as result of lower enrolments because of the fee increases.

What helps

We know quality ECE is linked to better educational outcomes later in life, and is a powerful 'equaliser', helping to reduce educational disadvantage among children from low-income households. Both New Zealand and international research confirms that attendance at good-quality ECE has lasting effects on educational attainment during school years. The countries that have maintained low child poverty rates tend to be those with a high rate of participation in state-supported ECE (Wylie and Hodgen, 2007).

An impressive body of research confirms that returns from quality early childhood education are high and long-lasting. Therefore, this is one of the most important investments a country can make (ECE Taskforce report, June 2011).

Early childhood services must be available and must include universal services, such as access to early childhood education, as well as targeted interventions, including: economic hardship, childhood disabilities, child maltreatment and parental substance abuse and mental illness. Programmes that combine child-focused educational activities with explicit attention to parent-child relationships appear to have the greatest impact. Longitudinal research indicates that generic programmes are less effective for families facing significant risk (Gluckman, 2011)

The Salvation Army Report Card had this to say about ECE in New Zealand:

To those that have, more will be given. The early rapid and now slowing expansion of spending on early childhood education has failed to bridge the educational disadvantage around unequal and unfair access to ECE opportunities. The current review of ECE by the Early Education Advisory Group ... should aim to provide ECE policy-makers with some insight as to why their policies have failed so miserably for Maori children and other children from poor communities. (Salvation Army, 2011, p.15)

We know that while schools and centres cannot completely overcome the devastating effects of child poverty, they can, make a major contribution to breaking inter-generational poverty, if they have resources in cross-agency strategies.

We know that unemployment, low-paid work, and the accompanying social, health and family issues - including child poverty - occur disproportionately in Māori and Pasifika families. Māori and Pasifika young people are at increased risk of a wide range of adverse outcomes, including educational underachievement, antisocial behaviours, problems with alcohol, mental health disorders and suicidal behaviours. We also

know that part of the solution is to promote the great programmes and activities that are happening for tamariki Māori and tamaiti o Pasifika in schools, kura, kōhanga reo, language nests and early childhood centres throughout New Zealand. The provision of learning opportunities and resources in first languages encourage families to participate, assist children to learn and their families to feel valued members of school and centre communities.

Participation in high-quality early childhood education “can make the difference between having a life of poverty and dependence or a life characterised by on-going self-development and positive social engagement”. (Early Childhood Education Taskforce, 2011, June p.13). Good quality ECE, building on the foundations for literacy and numeracy in school are powerful antidotes to the risks associated with child poverty and deprivation (Fletcher & Dwyer, 2008). Schools and centres can be effective bases for non-stigmatising provision of nourishing meals and health services, and for engaging parents in their children’s education and care. School programmes can counteract deprivation by enabling children and young people to participate in cultural and sporting activities, homework centres and computing equipment (Early Childhood Education Taskforce, June 2011).

But the provision of these services comes at a cost – a cost that can no longer be met by the goodwill of boards of trustees, parents, schools and centres, educators and communities. Government must not promulgate policy that abrogates its responsibility towards children and families.

What’s needed

Probably the best barometer of national policy is the status of a nation’s children. The negative effects of poverty on all levels of children’s lives and in particular school success have been widely demonstrated and accepted. The critical question for us must be – can these effects be prevented or reversed?

In response to growing concern, the Government is now initiating yet another ‘national discussion around what’s in the interest of children’. This follows a budget that delivered little and promised nothing substantial for children (Else, 2011). NZEI believes that this is not the time for more “conversation” or months of public ‘consultations’ that reveal little that is not already known.

NZEI believes that there is no ‘magic bullet’ to cure the systemic nature of educational underachievement by children in poverty – but there is clearly a need to focus on developing a strategy that addresses factors both in and outside of the education system.

NZEI calls for a cross-party national commitment to raising the educational achievement of children living in poverty. This must include a celebration and promulgation of programmes which have been proven effective and the provision and resourcing of coordinated, sustainable wrap-around, cross-agency approaches and investment in our children – and our future.

NZEI believes the Government must develop and implement non-punitive policies and programmes specifically targeted at reducing poverty. This means a coordinated approach that relies as much on social assistance, health and housing improvements as it does on education.

NZEI believes the Government is doing little to combat child poverty. Casting stones at individual agencies, schools and services will not alleviate the problem. By ignoring it or throwing piecemeal solutions at it, Government is only supporting the growth of inequality and child poverty. Failure to address this issue will ultimately come at a huge cost to society as a whole.

Recommendations for Government

Child poverty requires a bold approach. This must include:

- a fair and universal approach to supporting children to participate in society
- the development of a coordinated and audited cross-party/cross-agency approach that targets child poverty and audits the impact of Government policy on children
- a specific focus on quality public services for the early years to prevent poor educational outcomes which must include investment in high-quality publicly-funded universally-available early childhood education, particularly in disadvantaged areas, staffed by fully-qualified early childhood teachers who can deliver the ECE curriculum
- investment in extra resources for schools and centres to support children in poverty to succeed
- investment in parenting support programmes that support parents to engage in their children's learning
- investment partnerships between Government, schools/centres and the local communities to ensure freely-available food programmes and healthcare for low decile schools and centres so that all children have access to basic foods and healthcare regardless of the capability of their parents
- investment in the provision of a living wage for all New Zealanders. The minimum wage should be 60% of the average wage.

Recommendations to Annual Meeting

- **That the report be received by Annual Meeting 2011.**
- **That the report be adopted by Annual Meeting 2011.**

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