



Alice: Which way should I go?

Cat: That depends on where you are going!

Alice: But I don't know where I am going.

Cat: Then it doesn't matter which way you go.

Lewis Carroll, 1872

Introduction

1. Curriculum Direction
2. Managing Implementation
3. Curriculum Fluency
4. Dimension 1: Vision
5. Dimension 2: Principles
6. Dimension 3: Values
7. Dimension 4: Key Competencies
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11. Putting it all together

Alice: But I don't know where I am going.

Cat: Then it doesn't matter which way you go

It does matter which way we are going in education, and to this end the national curriculum sets out a vision for our young people. This statement of the qualities we would want our young people have and show is aspirational. The school on its own cannot be held fully accountable for whether or not the aspirations become manifest in our young people. The child's personality (unique attributes), family, home and community all contribute. But the school has an important part to contribute.


Vision as a searchlight from the national curriculum.

We do not create visions. They happen because of what we believe, what we can foresee, what we know, and what we do.

New Zealand Curriculum March 2006 Draft

Our Young People: A Vision

Our young people will stand tall as New Zealanders, with the competencies (knowledge, skills, attitudes and values) to make a difference both locally and globally. They will be ...



Confident
Positive in their own identity
Motivated and reliable
Enterprising
Resilient

Lifelong learners
Literate and numerate
Critical and creative thinkers
Active seekers, users, and creators of knowledge
Informed decision-makers

Connected
Able to relate well to others
Effective users of communication tools

Actively involved
Participants in a range of life contexts
Contributors to the well-being of New Zealand – social, economic, environmental

The future is not some
place we are going to,
but one **we** are creating.

John Schaar

A vision is not developed in seclusion but rather in dialogue with others. It is this sense of connectedness with others that sustains personal vision. To bring about real transformation requires a high level of shared vision and teamwork.

Touhy, D. 1999. *The Inner World of Teaching. Exploring Assumptions.*

Visioning is a way of strategic thinking. That strategic thinking involves ‘seeing’:

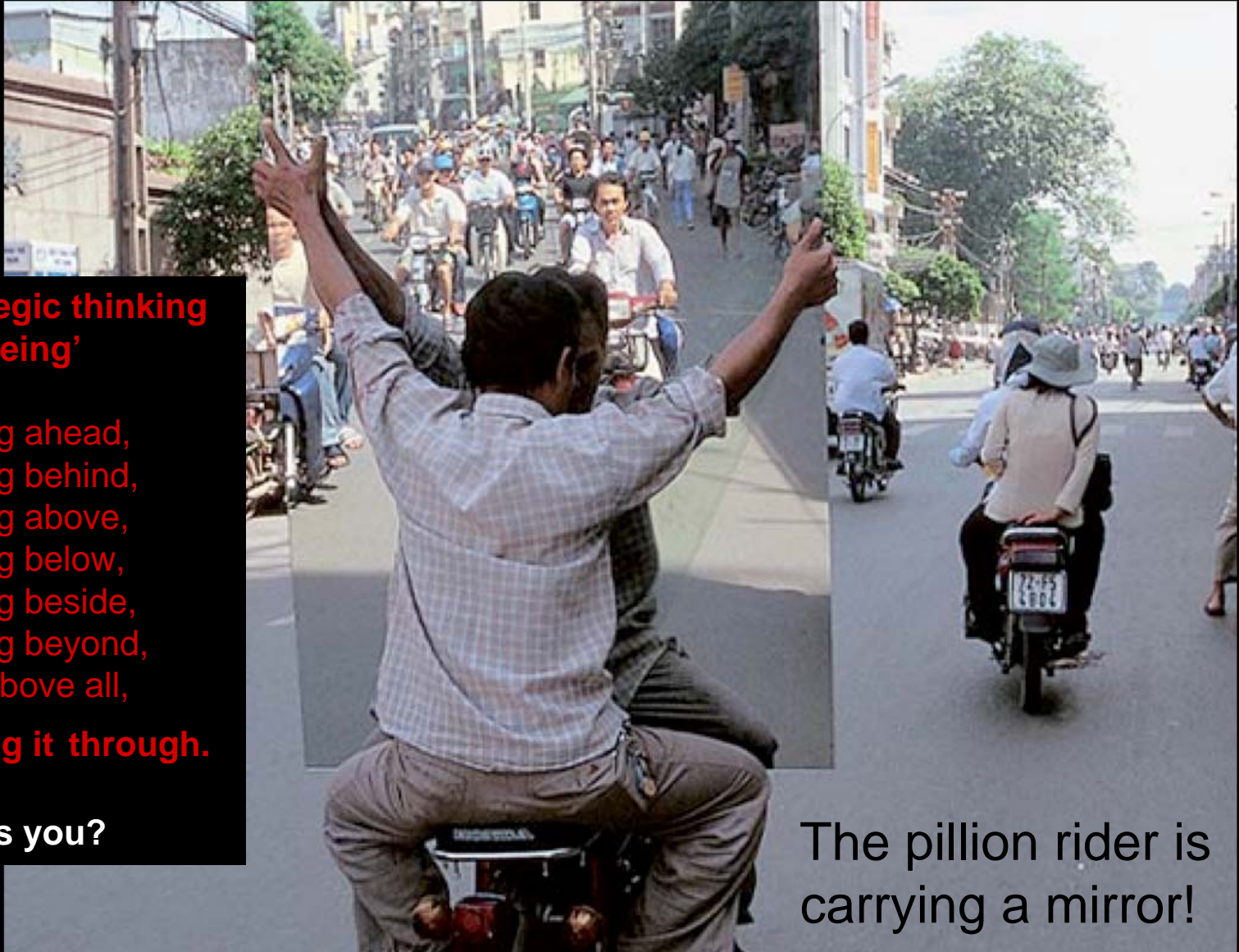
seeing ahead,
seeing behind,
seeing above,
seeing below,
seeing beside,
seeing beyond,
and above all,
seeing it through.

Mintzberg, H. 1995. *Strategic thinking as “seeing”* in *Developing Strategic Thought: Rediscovering the Art of Direction Giving*

**Strategic thinking
is 'seeing'**

seeing ahead,
seeing behind,
seeing above,
seeing below,
seeing beside,
seeing beyond,
and above all,
seeing it through.

Is this you?



The pillion rider is
carrying a mirror!



Strategic thinking is 'seeing'

seeing ahead,
seeing behind,
seeing above,
seeing below,
seeing beside,
seeing beyond,
and above all,
seeing it through.

Is this you?





Our visioning for our children begs the question: **what will the world be like to live and work in when they reach our age?**

In *some* respects, this seems almost impossible to answer. It is highly speculative. In *other* respects it is quite easy to answer. In a human society there are many qualities and abilities that transcend time. They were relevant and important to generations past, and they will continue to be important for generations future. Not everything has to be “new”!

Can you identify those qualities and abilities that have relevance for the past and the present, and will continue to do so into the future?

The New Zealand Curriculum states a vision that is big and ambitious, yet sufficiently clear and attainable. But realisation of this vision is not something for which each school can be held finally accountable as a result of a student's journey through the system.

The New Zealand Curriculum is designed to allow schools to localise their directions and priorities, so that they have relevance for their students and community.

It is appropriate, therefore, that each school give expression to its vision for its students. Such a vision can have the potential for power of realisation from the ownership it creates.

Moreover, if the vision is stated in a way that has a “focal range” in time and space for the students at the school, it can provide a very useful tool for reviewing the extent to which the vision *is* being realised by the students. In other words – the vision does not become an ethereally benevolent statement of aspiration. It has tangibility!

When considering the statement of vision for a school's students and their learning, the positioning of that statement is something to think about. The requirements for the school's charter do not specifically refer to a statement of vision, yet such a statement is unquestionably part of a well designed charter framework. Arguably, the "mission" of a school could be stated as its "vision".

SCHOOL CHARTER: EDUCATION ACT 1989

SECTION 61: School charter

(1) Every Board must, for each school it administers, prepare and maintain a school charter.

(2) The purpose of a school charter is to establish the **mission, aims, objectives, directions, and targets** of the Board that will give effect to **the Government's national education guidelines** and the Board's priorities, and **provide a base against which the Board's actual performance can later be assessed.**

It makes a lot of sense to have a statement of vision that is located in both the charter *and* the school's curriculum plan. But this requires a particular understanding of what that vision should be about, how it should be expressed, and how it should be decided.

A vision without a plan is just a dream.
A plan without a vision is just drudgery.
But a vision with a plan can change the world.

Marzano et al. 2005 School Leadership that works from Research to results 'old proverb'

A practical approach to developing and reviewing a school's vision

1. Decide who should be involved? Is the process to be one of “informing”, “consulting”, or “engaging”? (See Managing Implementation Chapter).
2. Set the “terms of reference” for the statement of vision.
3. Record priority considerations from a synthesis of ideas contributed by those participating in the process. Try hard to limit these to a maximum of three or four major points of focus. The fewer the points, the more amenable they are to being carried around in people’s heads without the constant need for paper (“cognitive portability”), and thus their potential to impact on practice.
4. State the vision in a style that allows for review, and regularly (e.g. annually) review the extent to which your vision is being realised by students.

A practical approach to developing and reviewing a school's vision

1. *Decide who should be involved? Is the process to be one of “informing”, “consulting”, or “engaging”?* (See *Managing Implementation* chapter)
 - Schools are differently situated when it comes to the practicalities of involving people (teachers, students, parents and whānau, board members). At a minimum, the staff and board should engage in the process. An external facilitator can give an atmosphere of neutrality and allow the principal to be an active “member” of the process.
 - Have people “talk together” in small groups (no smaller than three, or larger than four). Each group has a cross section of people (junior school, senior school, males, females, etc.).
 - Ask groups to write down, in summary form, what they together agree should be the qualities that the students will show as a result of learning and living in the school and its community. (If parents and the community don't join in the ownership, confidence in the realisation of the vision is diminished). If the group has lots of ideas, get them to try to bring them down to the three or four most important. This very typically takes around 20 minutes.
 - Have each group share its ideas – seek out the common points, but DON'T get into word-smithing. That should be done after the discussions by a person who is competent in drawing together and writing up the statement – which in turn is referred back to those who were involved in the discussion for validation.

A practical approach to developing and reviewing a school's vision

2. *Set the “terms of reference” for the statement of vision.*
- Provide each group with a recording sheet that sets the focus for the discussion, identification, and recording of the dimensions of the vision.

Example:

Vision for our students at Newtime School

The qualities our student will show as a result of their years of learning in our school and its community:

A practical approach to developing and reviewing a school's vision

3. *Record priority considerations from a synthesis of ideas contributed by those participating in the process. Try hard to limit these to a maximum of three or four major points of focus. The fewer the points, the more amenable they are to being carried around in people's heads without the constant need for paper ("cognitive portability"), and thus their potential to impact on practice.*
- During group discussions it is common for some groups to get quite voluble and voluminous. Keep reminding them that the process should lead to the identification of high priority points of vision – the top three or four, not the 13 or 14, 30 or 40!
 - Experience shows that groups are quite capable of identifying the priorities. (One way is to suggest that they put a big tick alongside the priority points).

A practical approach to developing and reviewing a school's vision

4. *State the vision in a style that allows for review, and regularly (e.g. annually) review the extent to which your vision is being realised by students.*
- Reviewing performance against the school's stated vision for its students is a powerful means to ensuring the integrity of intentions.
 - This need not be unduly time-consuming – but it should be worthwhile (which means the feedback is *used* in some profitable way).
 - An easy method is to ask students in their final year at the school to reflect upon, and give feedback on how well they think they have developed the qualities expressed in the school's vision. This can be done orally or in written questionnaire format.
 - It could involve a small cross-section sample interviewed by teachers or the principal. It could be a simple questionnaire survey of all leaving students. There are no “absolutes” here. The whole point is to get a valid “sense” of how far the vision is being realised. The feedback from students will undoubtedly lead to some rich school-wide reflection on its vision.



Vision

for our students at Newtime School

The qualities our students will show as a result of their years of learning in our school and its community:

Think in terms of

- learning to do
- learning to be
- learning to know
- learning to get along with others.

Delors et al. (1996) Learning: the treasure within

Is the school's vision

- **inspirational**
- **aspirational**
- **achievable.**

VISION

Review Questions

- Is our vision for our students and their learning clear and shared?
- Does it express what we want for our young people at our school and in our community?
How might our vision be reflected in the design of our school's curriculum?