Where have all the jobs gone?

Primary teacher graduates go door-knocking

CHARTER SCHOOLS
Classes behind closed doors

ROBYN MALCOLM
"Pay teachers more!"

CITIZEN SCIENTISTS
Bridging the decile divide
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• Give it to your Board of Trustees
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• Add it to the pile of magazines at the gym

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Budget beware

The government’s annual Budget will be announced in mid-May. After the debacles of the last year — Novopay, classroom sizes, Christchurch — it can only be hoped the government has chosen its plans for education with care.

At the same time, the Budget is possibly the government’s last chance to push through more of its radical agenda on education before election year 2014. We know that Treasury has been working on a “Total Resource Model” for schools, which sounds uncomfortably like code—speak for bulk funding.

We know too that funding for ECE has been under discussion, with an emphasis on “targeting”, in a debate that’s largely gone on behind closed doors.

If past behaviour is an indication, we can expect that any announcement will be played down as a minor change, or a “trial”. Remember what the government had to say about the introduction of National Standards then charter schools.

National Standards wouldn’t change how teachers worked, there wouldn’t be league tables, and charter schools, well National Standards weren’t equivalent to a year and a half of schooling.

The tragedy is that quality ECE is not rocket science — it doesn’t work on the cheap. With this in mind, NZEI Te Riu Roa has launched a five-year campaign, called Best Start, calling for investment in early childhood education to give every child the best start in life (www.beststart.org.nz).

Every child deserves quality ECE, yet the government’s official figures show it is unlikely to reach its target of 98 percent participation in ECE by 2016.

NZEI wants 100 percent qualified and registered teachers in ECE, small group size and good teacher-child ratios. Too many New Zealand children are spending too many hours in low-quality care. We want all children to have access to quality public education. Some of our most vulnerable children — those living in poverty — are finding it increasingly difficult to access ECE.

ECE has not been as “free” as it was supposed to be. There are now fewer early childhood centres in poorer areas and a growth in wealthier areas — especially of private providers — whose aim is to make a profit. Good quality ECE is vital for our tamariki and we are prepared to dig in for the long haul to make sure this happens.

Best start

As Educationalists we know about the importance of good quality early childhood education, especially for children from deprived backgrounds.

Education does change lives — a recent analysis of the PISA reading test results shows that the difference between students with more than a year of early childhood education (ECE) and those with none is equivalent to a year and a half of schooling.

The tragedy is that quality ECE is not rocket science — it simply requires investment: the key word here is “quality,” it doesn’t work on the cheap. With this in mind, NZEI Te Riu Roa has launched a five-year campaign, called Best Start, calling for investment in early childhood education to give every child the best start in life (www.beststart.org.nz).

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Letters to the editor

Is the “modern learning environment” the new education myth? In 1986 Dr CE Beeby, (Director of Education 1940-1960), published a thought–provoking essay on what he called the “recurrent failure to see the obvious” in New Zealand education policy.

Dr Beeby sought to explain this failure by referring to the emergence, growth, and decline of highly influential myths in education. “By “myths” he meant a device by which “every generation creates, or simply assumes, its own … unattainable but approachable goals … on which to build its plans for education.”

Dr Beeby emphasised that myths involve more than mere fads and fashions in educational policy. He argued that every educational myth has at its core certain ideals, aspirations, a sense of direction and purpose (but not a prescription), some continuity with a former myth (“tenacity”, to use Beeby’s word), as well as an indication of outcomes that cannot always be predicted confidently.

It is, of course, one thing to describe a myth that belongs to an earlier or more recent age but quite another to try to envisage what a contemporary myth might look like. Dr Beeby suggested in 1986 that it might be equality of results or of outcomes.

What are the functions of these myths? Essentially they provide the “unity of a common purpose”, furnish shared objectives, and embody broadly agreed upon social purposes.

We shall now apply the notion of educational myths to aspects of the Canterbury school renewal strategy.

Virtual teachers? The official documents delivered to Canterbury residents’ mailboxes since November 2012 claim it offers “a unique opportunity to make it [the education system in Canterbury] better by addressing inequality of learning”, and that “new ways of delivering education … will provide better opportunities for local children and lift achievement”.

These are articles of faith, given that the documents’ authors are presenting their own question “What will the future of education look like?” solely in a rhetorical form. Our preference is not to take their assumptions for granted. These deserve scrutiny in order to ascertain whether they could become deep-seated educational myths.
Such myths, as Dr Beeby has reminded us, tend to last for at least a generation.

One concern is the premise that the mere act of restructuring (modernising?) schools will automatically enhance the quality of children’s learning. There appears to be some confusion here between style and substance, between form and function.

The notion that “old schools only support one style of learning” should be examined closely by teachers and principals who work in what might be classified as old schools. “Old” appears to refer to institutions built in the 1950s. The authors also take as fact their declaration that it is “difficult for these schools” to adapt to new ways of delivering education.” We maintain it is teachers who can ‘deliver education’, not schools.

Cargo cult
A second concern rests with the authors’ assumption that having ICT in schools means, ipso facto, that all learners will receive a high quality education. This is but one example in the documents of what can be labelled cargo-cult, or reductionist, thinking: that is to say, believing that input and output are always commensurate - that merely providing a particular technology will automatically bring about learners’ educational transformation. It may turn out that learning and teaching are enhanced by such technology, but a strong case needs to be made, as opposed to a bold declaration that this will occur. We ought to be especially careful to ensure that this type of thinking does not produce yet another educational myth.

What, then, are we proposing? We suggest that Canberrans and other interested parties seriously question the premises behind many assertions within the official documents, and that they examine the following questions in as many venues as possible: Is the present government seeking to create a new educational myth? Is so, what form might it/they assume?

Finally, do we want to debate it or simply endorse it? Professor Howard Lee of Massey University, and Professor Gregory Lee of Canterbury University

Our winning letter writer receives a $100 book voucher - send your letter to education.aotearoa@nz.ea.nz

The poll results*

Support staff and Novopay: How often have you been paid incorrectly since Novopay began?

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As a result of Novopay, which of the following applies to you?

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From a survey of 500 support staff

More social workers in low-decile schools
The Social Workers in Schools (SWIS) programme has been expanded to all decile 1–3 schools this year - an increase of 388 schools at a cost of $11.1 million per year. In 2012, teachers and social workers in schools were responsible for 947 of the notifications to the Child Youth and Family out of a total 192,800 notifications. More than 61,000 of all notifications required follow-up. There were 1332 more notifications from schools than in 2011.

More information is available from www.ea.unsw.edu.au or any other details of their functions. As EA went to print United Future’s Peter Dunne withdrew his support for the legislation, but the Education AmendmentBill was still expected to pass. (See story on page 26.)

The early Childhood Council says the government needs to control the number and location of licensed early childhood centres, especially in Wellington and Auckland. Chief executive Peter Reynolds says while more and more new centres are opening in already oversupplied middle and high-income areas, there aren’t enough in low-income areas. Survey results released in March found more than 70% of the council’s members have empty spaces in their centres, with 40% of community centres full, compared to only 23.5% of privately run centres. Many with empty places say it’s mainly because parents can’t afford it. Centres fear more cuts in government funding, and some are laying off staff. Mr Reynolds says the intense competition threatens quality, with many centres having to replace qualified with unqualified staff, stack professional development, defer building maintenance, and cut non-essential services.

Select committee ignores submissions
Despite an overwhelming number of submissions opposed to the setting up of charter schools, the Education and Science Select Committee decided in April to recommend the government’s plan to establish them. Only 62 of the 2193 submissions to the select committee were in favour of charter schools and a whopping 2100 were opposed. The committee’s report recommended only minor changes: the Ombudsman’s Act will now apply, but only where students have been suspended or stood down – not in relation to how charter schools spend public money or any other details of their functions.

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No more Novopain

A protest outside Education Minister Hekia Parata’s office in Petone was one of more than 30 at MPs’ offices around the country in March. It heralded the first step in official acknowledgement of the pain the Novopay debacle has inflicted. NZEI Te Riu Rua successfully argued for an interim support package for the new payroll system, which has seen thousands of teachers and support staff underpaid, overpaid or not paid at all, and caused countless flow-on problems, especially with third party payments and school audits. Schools have received the first interim support package to make up for the massive amounts of extra time and stress Novopay has caused. Meanwhile, the Minister for Novopay, Steven Joyce, has until the end of June to fix it and has instructed Talent2 to act on the technical review. NZEI membership service centre staff say the review vindicates members’ complaints—that the system is unstable, error ridden and will require a superhuman effort to fix. The backlog is still being addressed, schools now routinely patch up recurring mistakes and members say Novopay’s appalling communication is still their biggest headache.

PPP primary school opens in Auckland

Supposed to save taxpayers $1.98 million, the business case alone for Auckland’s Hebe’sville school has already cost us $3.5 million. The primary school, due to open in May, is the first in New Zealand to be built under a public-private partnership (PPPP), between the Crown and Learning Infrastructure Partners, a consortium of firms including Hawkins, Programmed Facility Maintenance and Public Infrastructure Partners Fund. We are locked into a contract for 25 years. In 2009, the Treasury warned that “the advantages of PPPPs must be weighed against their contractual complexities and rigidities”. NZEI supports Food in Schools Bill

NZEI is a member of the Food in Schools Coalition, which supports Hone Harawira’s Education (Breakfast and Lunch Programmes in Schools) Amendment Bill, designed to provide meals for all children attending decile 1-3 schools. The Principals’ Federation is calling on all school principals to support the bill, which is expected to get its first reading in Parliament in May. NZPF president Philip Harding says there’s a need to provide substantial breakfast meals, including daily protein, to all low decile schools. Interventions must be sustainable and appropriately funded, he says, and government agencies should provide for a paid worker to co-ordinate food programmes in every school.

New schools for Hamilton

Education Minister Hekia Parata has announced a new $7-10 million primary school in northeast Hamilton to open in 2015, as well as a new Year 7-13 school to open in 2016. Ms Parata says the ministry will consult neighbouring state schools whose roll might be affected by the new schools. She says the number of primary school students in the area is projected to grow from 1910 to about 2500 by 2016. A final decision on the new primary school, including who will fund its construction, is due in June. The Minister hasn’t ruled out it being a charter school, or a public-private funding model.

British teachers to strike over pay

The UK’s two biggest teachers’ unions – the National Union of Teachers and National Association of Schoolmasters Union of Women Teachers – have both voted overwhelmingly in favour of strikes over plans to scrap national pay rates for teachers and cut pensions. The first strikes are likely to start in the (northern hemisphere) summer term, with NUT members threatening regional days of action throughout England and Wales. The dispute is over pay, pensions and increases to teacher workloads. Education Secretary Michael Gove plans to dismantle the current national pay structure by scrapping annual increment increases for teachers that allow them to rise up the pay scales. Instead, he wants it to be up to principals to decide whether teacher’s move up. Christine Blower, general secretary of the NUT, said: “The Secretary of State will say this is about giving teachers more but if there is no more money in the system then it is not possible to say how paying good teachers more will work unless some teachers are paid significantly less.”
Rally in support of Christchurch schools

Teachers, support staff and school communities held a rally and march in February to show solidarity with schools affected by the Ministry of Education’s planned closures and mergers in the wake of the 2011 earthquake. The planned strike was called off as a sign of good faith after the ministry said it would work with the union to ensure real engagement with teachers and school communities and put them at the heart of any future decision-making. Many Cantabrians believe sweeping changes to schooling in Christchurch, especially in the suburbs worst hit by the quakes, are being made too soon. Minister of Education Hekia Parata announced her interim decision to close seven schools and merge 12 into six on February 18. Another 12 schools earlier flagged for closure or merger will stay open. But people are still moving in and out of suburbs – Central New Brighton School, which is set to merge with South New Brighton, had 18 unexpected new enrolments this year. NZEI president Judith Nowotarski says despite the ministry’s more transparent process, people are still uncertain as to how change will be managed and the impact on their children’s lives. She says it’s vital the Minister genuinely listens to schools’ submissions on her interim decisions. A final decision is due at the end of May, and at the end of Term 2 for Aranui schools.

Where have all the jobs gone?

In October last year a speaker contracted by the Ministry of Education caused a furor by telling a group of Victoria University primary teaching students they should go overseas after graduation because only 20% of them would get work in New Zealand. The seminar was to advise students about their job prospects, and they were told only two out of five new teachers would get full-time permanent jobs within three years of graduating. On the very same day, Victoria University was touting for new teacher education students in the local newspaper.

New graduates are resorting to short-term relieving jobs – in schools if they’re lucky – going overseas, working in offices or retail – or even working in a school for free to get experience.

Why are there no jobs for new primary teacher graduates? Who plans the teaching workforce and how can they get it so wrong that so few will get a job? Michelle Nixon investigates

Wary of the Australian example

GardyneHOLT partner Malcolm Dale says schools have too, if not three, audiences to communicate to: “The student, the parents and for overseas students, a student’s agent. And all three might collectively be making a decision about the future education of a child. That means schools and educational institutions need to effectively communicate who they are and what they have to offer.” Dale says for the education export industry, marketing is vital to attracting students, a student’s agent. And all three might collectively be making a decision about the future education of a child. That means schools and educational institutions need to effectively communicate who they are and what they have to offer.

A good case for judicial review?

Phillipstown is a small community clustered around the city end of Ferry Road. With its long history and powerful community support, the school is not going to give quietly. Local groups, parents, teachers and the wider Christchurch community, including Mayor Bob Parker, have written to the Ministry of Education in support of Phillipstown School’s submission to stay open. Last year the ministry’s call for submissions proposed a merger with Woolston School – on the Linwood College site – to go ahead in 2018. But in February the minister dropped a bombshell – a merger is planned on the current Woolston site as early as next year. The school’s roll has increased from 132 on the day of the February 2011 earthquake to 165 in March this year. As a decade one school, half of whose students are Māori and Pacific island children – Phillipstown’s outstanding achievement statistics are a grand example of success for the government’s priority groups.

A Auckland-based Titirangi Primary School recently underwent a rebranding initiative for this very reason. Principal Gary Pearce says staff, parents, and the school board worked for 18 months to create a vision and a set of values for the school that encapsulated the partnership between the school, parents and community.

By creating visual symbols to represent the school’s values, Titirangi is now able to more easily communicate with parents and students about the values it holds. “Our five visual symbols encompass a richness of stories we can explore with the children and use with our communication to parents,” Pearce says.

SPECIAL PROMOTION

DESIGNED FOR SUCCESS – BRANDING IN SCHOOLS

Education and marketing are words seldom used in the same sentence, but design firm gardyneHOLT says effective marketing is as important to schools as any other organisation.

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KEY POINTS

• Teacher-training graduates are struggling with student loads and no jobs. Many are at their wits’ end.

• Some jobs are attracting hundreds of applicants.

• Older teachers are staying on longer, and current unemployment levels mean many are reluctant to move on to new endeavours.

• Some say that with projected growth in student numbers, the government should step in to enable older teachers to mentor new teachers to keep them in the workforce.

Where have all the jobs gone?

Why are there no jobs for new primary teacher graduates? Who plans the teaching workforce and how can they get it so wrong that so few will get a job? Michelle Nixon investigates

October last year a speaker contracted by the Ministry of Education caused a furor by telling a group of Victoria University primary teaching students they should go overseas after graduation because only 20% of them would get work in New Zealand. The seminar was to advise students about their job prospects, and they were told only two out of five new teachers would get full-time permanent jobs within three years of graduating. On the very same day, Victoria University was touting for new teacher education students in the local newspaper.

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The shortage that was
No vacancies

Beginning teachers who have forked out $7000 a year for their studies want to know why there’s such a mismatch between the numbers of graduating teachers and the number of available jobs. Many are now lumbered with loans of $30,000 or more and have no prospect of a permanent job.

In March the Education Gazette was advertising 214 primary teacher vacancies, but just 41 were for permanent jobs. Figures vary, but some say only 19% of new graduates get a job in their first year.

Sara Sabin graduated from Auckland University in 2012. She did a three-year BEd (primary) and has a student loan of $37,000 which she says she’ll be paying off for the rest of her life.

“When I applied for uni I was under the impression there was a massive teacher shortage and that’s the only thing I was looking for a job. They said there were more kids than ever and we’d always need more teachers.”

Sara has always wanted to be a teacher but is worried about how she’ll get her provisional registration. “That’s why I haven’t gone overseas, I want to stay here. As long as they make the education system a career in itself I would say I can stay here. I’ve been in touch with a number of schools and there’s no reason why I wouldn’t have any trouble getting work. There was only one student out of a class of 30 who got a job inRotorua. I’m a bit annoyed – so many of us expected to get jobs. You don’t expect to finish a degree and have a huge student loan and not get a job. It’s not even easy to get relief work because schools already have their relievers. I’m so sick of hearing: ‘Sorry we’re looking for someone with a bit more experience’.”

Caitlin Turner did a three-year Bachelor of Education online through Canterbury University. She’s been looking for a job in Rotorua since December. As students, her cohort was told there’d been a baby boom so by the time they finished they wouldn’t have any trouble getting work. There was only one student out of a class of 30 who got a job in Rotorua. “I’m a bit annoyed – so many of us expected to get jobs. You don’t expect to finish a degree and have a huge student loan and not get a job. It’s not even easy to get relief work because schools already have their relievers. I’m so sick of hearing: ‘Sorry we’re looking for someone with a bit more experience’.”

Caitlin has had relieving work at an early childhood education centre – “it’s all about survival at the moment” – but when EA last talked to her she was over the moon to have a one-term relieving job in a school.

An NZUSA survey of student teachers found many highly critical of the information provided before they were enrolled and the quality of the initial teacher education they receive. The union will hold a second Student Teacher Summit this year and give feedback to government agencies.

The President of the Union of Students’ Associations (NZUSA), Pete Hodkinson, says it’s a tragedy that students are being let down by a system that “lacks genuine workplace planning and that continues to aggressively recruit without any alternative approach.

“Students have made huge sacrifices and a significant investment based on the premise of careers in teaching our nation’s children and young people.”

The Ministry of Education doesn’t expect there to be jobs for newly qualified teachers, though it uses words such as “it’s a competitive” rather than saying there’s no work.

Teachers hanging on

Why aren’t there enough jobs? The TeachNZ website says the rate of teachers leaving the profession is at its lowest for 10 years and so is the number of vacancies. It puts this down to the “impact of the global economic recession”.

TeachNZ Group Manager Education Workforce Rebecca Elvy says teacher “loss rates” from permanent, full-time jobs (which include teachers leaving temporarily as well as those retiring) have been decreasing – from 12% in 2006 to 9% in 2011. “In real numbers, this means that fewer than 4000 of the 86,600 teachers employed in

schooling over 2011 were lost to the profession.”

She confirms that employment rates for new graduates have been falling, with the number getting permanent jobs in their first year dropping sharply from 956 in 2006 to 561 in 2011.

Unemployment and school closures compound the problem. A teacher who’s just Fitz worked on this stuff. “When people leave the country to get work, their kids go with them. When teachers leave Christchurch to find work because the government is closing schools, the competition for jobs becomes more fierce elsewhere.”

Precarious employment

Of the jobs that do exist, many aren’t permanent or full-time. One academic EA spoke to said some schools have a “try before you buy” attitude. TeachNZ manager Dr Davies says almost half (45%) of the 30,000 primary teachers employed over the past three years were in “flexible roles” – part-time, fixed-term, job share, casual relievers.

“Our forecast shows that each year over the next five years, we will need 260 new teachers to meet roll growth, but patterns of employment show they are most likely to come from existing teachers in flexible roles.”

But even relieving jobs are in short supply. Rebecca Elvy says between 2006 and 2011 the number of new graduates getting any kind of teaching work in their first year was “waning”. Day relief, dropped from 3700 to 3000.

That said, the situation could change quickly. Although right now there’s an “oversupply” it could return to a shortage. In 2012 the rate of teachers leaving the profession permanently was very low but it’s been up to 20% at times.

The primary school population will keep growing – the government’s 2012 Budget forecast roll growth of 7% in primary schools between 2011 and 2016 – and a great swathe of baby boomers is likely to drop out of the workforce over next 10 years.

Teacher supply

But there’s not an overwhelming supply of new graduates and the number of teachers in training continues to fall. The Ministry of Education’s website says there were 1230 fewer students studying for a bachelor’s degree in primary teacher education in 2011 compared to 2005.

Auckland University’s Deputy Dean of Teacher Education Lexie Grudnoff says enrolments there are slightly down. “This could be influenced by fewer jobs – or it could also be due to a number of other factors such as the negative attention education has been getting in the media.”

The Ministry for Business, Innovation and Employment (MBIE) says the number of teachers who completed qualifications dropped from 4240 in 2009 to 3680 in 2010.

MBIE says because the population of children under 15 is projected to increase (by 3.2%), in the long term demand for teachers is stable – though this doesn’t take into account the effect of charter schools, which won’t have to employ qualified teachers, or any influx of graduates of six- week training courses like Teach First NZ. Charter schools will also siphon off students from state schools – a further drain on jobs.

Dr Grudnoff says history suggests a boom or bust approach to teacher supply will carry on: “We will continue to switch between over-supply and under-supply.”

Forget Plan B – we need a Plan A

Tertiary Education Union spokesperson Stephen Day says the statistics are there to predict the number of teachable roles.

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Auckland University’s Deputy Dean of Teacher Education Lexie Grudnoff says enrolments there are

seriously seeking work

Caitlin Turner did a three-year Bachelor of Education online through Canterbury University. She’s been looking for a job in Rotorua since December. As students, her cohort was told there’d been a baby boom so by the time they finished they wouldn’t have any trouble getting work. There was only one student out of a class of 30 who got a job in Rotorua. “I’m a bit annoyed – so many of us expected to get jobs. You don’t expect to finish a degree and have a huge student loan and not get a job. It’s not even easy to get relief work because schools already have their relievers. I’m so sick of hearing: ‘Sorry we’re looking for someone with a bit more experience’.”

Caitlin has had relieving work at an early childhood education centre – “it’s all about survival at the moment” – but when EA last talked to her she was over the moon to have a one-term relieving job in a school.

Who’s to blame?

How much of the current problem can be blamed on tertiary institutions enrolling too many students and how much on government policy, including the so-called proliferation of providers?

In an earlier, simpler age there were just six main colleges of education across the country, but radical changes in the 1990s brought in deregulation, a competitive market and new funding policies – and the number ballooned out to almost 80, though it has now settled back to 26 (including early childhood education). Most mainstream primary teacher education programmes are at six universities, which have now swallowed up the colleges of education, the rest are mostly smaller.

There’s a common perception that universities enrol as many students as they can to boost their funding (bums on seats) – and that still holds true, but only to a point. The Tertiary Education Commission (TEC) allocates funding to providers according to “high-level priorities” for tertiary education, but can enrol one or two more students than they’re funded for but get only the student’s fees.

The commission doesn’t have statistics relating to workforce planning, so its funding priorities aren’t related to jobs, nor does it monitor post-graduation employment. Instead, a spokesperson says it expects providers to “work with communities to identify supply and demand for training”.

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Wanted – a teaching job
Melanie Porter is looking for a job in Auckland. In 2009 she responded to TeachNZ ads saying there was a shortage of teachers, but she says her provider took on too many students, perhaps expecting a lot to drop out. “My cohort was aged 30-plus so maybe we had a bit more staying power.” She started looking for work in September and has lost count of the number of jobs she’s applied for, but says it’s at least 50. She has had some interviews – but when you’re up against hundreds of people and you’re a beginning teacher… “When you’re up against hundreds of people and you’re a beginning teacher… you’re going to have go and train a whole lot more.”

There were 150 applicants for one job, and they wanted to meet her so she started looking for work in September and has lost count of the number of jobs she’s applied for, but says it’s at least 50. She has had some interviews – but when you’re up against hundreds of people and you’re a beginning teacher… “When you’re up against hundreds of people and you’re a beginning teacher… you’re going to have go and train a whole lot more.”

Looming shortage?
But he says, obviously it’s a relatively finite length of time that people will stay on after 65, and the current situation isn’t permanent, and a lot might leave within a short period, opening up jobs for beginning teachers – it’s even possible to imagine a looming shortage.

“We also know that there are more primary school students entering schools up until 2019.” He says part of teacher education should include preparing students for when they leave: “We have a responsibility to ensure people have understanding and are not misled.”

But there’s also an onus on prospective students to consider employment opportunities and he suggests they contact the Ministry of Education if they want to know their job prospects. However, “they’re likely to get mixed messages from government agencies – the Tertiary Education Commission is still funding a similar number of places and the TeachNZ website continues on an apparent overseas recruitment drive with comments such as “in New Zealand recruitment is a teaching qualification is portable, and people can use it to get a job elsewhere.”

“I make sense to change student teacher ratios and put more teachers into schools while we have the chance, so we don’t lose these new graduates.”

And the Education Ministry seems happy for teachers to continue in short-term and casual relieving jobs so they’re there to plug any future gaps. “Analysis shows that there are more than enough teachers to meet this demand overall,” Rebecca Ely says.

Practice makes perfect
But graduate teachers’ first years in the classroom are vital – if the only jobs they can get are short-term or day relieving, they won’t get the support they need as beginning teachers. Dr Grundoff is concerned about the increasing trend to employ new teachers on short-term contracts “because of implications for their induction into teaching and for their ongoing professional learning and development”.

Beginning teachers also need the opportunity to put what they have learned into practice, and Professor Molteni says although many get experience through fixed-term relieving jobs, walking into a school to cover for a teacher is quite different from having your own class and a permanent position.

“One of the things we are addressing is what are the demands and challenges of being a relieving teacher – so graduating students understand what is involved and do not become prematurely disappointed.”

No jobs and not enough teachers?
“An enlightened government would find ways of employing beginning teachers now, while they’re still brimming with enthusiasm,” NZEI president Judith Nowotarski says. “NZEI would like the Teachers Council to have a formal role in workforce planning. It makes sense to change student teacher ratios and put more teachers into schools while we have the chance, so we don’t lose these new graduates.”

And then there are the baby-boomers still at the chalkface – with loads of knowledge and experience but weary from decades in the classroom. Why not employ them in an advisory role, or as mentor teachers, freeing up more classroom jobs for new graduates?”

Number of primary teaching students in 2005 and 2011

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Bachelor of Education</th>
<th>2005</th>
<th>2011</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5760 domestic</td>
<td>5820</td>
<td>4380</td>
<td>4590</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60 international</td>
<td>830</td>
<td>860</td>
<td>1690</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Graduate Certificate

| 770 domestic          | 830  | 860  | 1690 |
| 60 international       | 830  | 860  | 1690 |
BYOD: what you need to know

BYOD was once all about taking your own bottle of wine to a restaurant. These days the talk is all about BYOD – or bring your own device to school.

By Diana Clement

Benefits

Education is becoming much less teacher directed, says Jen Porter, ICT specialist teacher at Ponsonby Primary School. BYOD is one technological development that is allowing that to happen. The benefits of BYOD, says Derek Wenmoth of CORE Education, can really be summed up in the personalisation of the educational experience: “It is very very deeply bedded in the move towards catering for students’ individual needs, interests and abilities.”

Although the science of BYOD learning is still in its infancy, studies are suggesting that children who learn in class with portable devices may perform better than their peers.

How to

The first step is to create a policy. Then it’s a matter of working through the technological implementation. Schools such as Diocesan School For Girls that have big budgets have ideal BYOD solutions, says Peter Mancer, CEO of Watchdog. Diocesan has set up a “Captive Portal” that allows all devices with a browser to log on and connect to the system with a single sign on. At the other end of the scale some schools have simply opened up their networks to learners’ devices. It has not always worked, says Mancer, with networks grinding to a halt thanks to excessive YouTube use.

Security

At one end of the scale, some schools use software to control exactly what the children do on the devices and can monitor in real time what they are looking at. At the other end, says Wenmoth, they implement a policy that tells students what is acceptable and what is not on the school network and rely on personal responsibility. Wenmoth knows of one school that made it clear that “if there is any silly business we will be able to identify you”. No student stepped over the line and only one had to be spoken to for getting close to it. Many schools use the Watchdog network filtering to either whitelist or blacklist websites. Mancer adds that it’s ideal to segment the BYOD traffic from the school’s networked devices for security reasons. Schools must also provide adequate firewall, anti-virus and filtering systems, which don’t come cheap.

Policies

Schools need to create BYOD policies, which cover what access these devices will be given to the network and what is expected in return. A typical policy will cover:

• learner responsibilities.
• allowable activities and rights of inspection.
• who provides technical support for the devices.

Schools should consider taking advice before creating a policy, or piggy back on another school’s tried and tested policy. A number of schools have uploaded their policies to the VLN.school.nz website.

Risks

Physically giving access to the network isn’t that difficult. Schools need to consider, however:

• that additional devices on the school network may open up security holes.
• the school is not the administrator of the device.
• devices owned by families or teachers may not have suitable security software installed.
• teachers may struggle with the technology themselves.

How to get started

Schools need a leader to progress online learning. Whilst that may be the principal, individual teachers or even school trustees might fill this role.

Find out more

The Virtual Learning Network has a discussion board and blogs about BYOD. http://www.vln.school.nz/groups/profile/185369/byst-in-schools
Radical changes to the Education Act will allow organisations including private businesses and religious sects to use taxpayers’ money to set up charter (partnership) schools. They’ll be contracted to improve student achievement but won’t have to have qualified teachers or follow the curriculum – and they won’t have to show how they spend our money. Michelle Nixon investigates

Unchartered waters

The original charter schools were started by teacher unions in the United States more than 20 years ago to enrich the public school system by trying out new ways of doing things and sharing what worked. But the model has since been hijacked by right-wing political parties, big business, and fundamentalist thinkers who want to use them to replace state schools.

The main perpetrator here is Associate Minister of Education John Banks, who got charter schools through the election deal between ACT and National. They are Banks’ pet project – taxpayer funded schools operated by “sponsors” who’ll get at least as much money as state schools but won’t be bound by the same rules.

Banks says the aim is to lift the achievement of children in disadvantaged communities – what the government calls its priority groups – a goal sponsors will have to prove they are reaching. But Auckland University’s Peter O’Connor says this is like using the children of poor districts as the research and development unit of the education system.

He says there’s already plenty of scope under our existing self-managing school system for state funded schools to run innovative programmes. But most are held back by woefully inadequate operations grants – especially in areas where parents can’t afford high fees to supplement government funding.

Even the Treasury didn’t back charter schools as a means of raising student achievement; it wanted incentives for better teachers and better leadership at low decile, poorly performing schools. It also pointed to inconclusive evidence for the success of charter schools in other countries (see panel, page 20).

What’s in a name?

New Zealand primary schools already operate according to a charter agreed with the local community – and they already have much more autonomy than schools in countries that have enthusiastically adopted charter schools, and who rank well below us on international tables comparing student performance.

They were introduced in the United States, the UK and Sweden partly to be more responsive to diverse communities. Here, with kura kaupapa, state-integrated faith schools and special character schools, the innovative New Zealand Curriculum and creative teaching methods – you could well ask, why do we need charter schools?

They’ve been renamed “partnership schools kura houora” by the head of the charter schools working group, former ACT Party president Catherine Isaac, who wanted something “cool and effective” to replace the negative connotations charter schools have. But who are the partners?

Existing schools are a partnership between educators and boards that represent parents and communities – charter schools will be a partnership between the Crown and sponsors, many of whom see running a school as a business. Their governing bodies will be able to contract out management to profit-making education providers that won’t have to have any parent, staff or local community representation.

John Minto of the Quality Public Education Coalition says charter schools aren’t about raising student achievement but “a political response to a corporate problem – how can we get into public education and make private profit from government spending?”

Taking care of business

With public money siphoned off from an already anaemic education budget, religious groups, private schools, businesses, tvi, foreign companies and culture-based sponsors will have much more operational freedom than state schools – and different approaches to teaching, property and school organisation.

They’ll get money for set-up costs and property that sponsors can keep if a school folds. Banks told Parliament they’ll also be able to keep per-student funding if a child drops out.

The Ministry of Education says funding will be non-tagged “to allow sponsors flexibility to make investment decisions that support the achievement of the contracted outcomes”.

So the schools will be cashed up – they’ll get the same property, staffing and operational funding as a decile 3 school (no matter where they are) and an extra $276 per student top-up in lieu of centralised support. The cash will go directly to charter schools, but they won’t be accountable for how they spend it.

They can have a chief executive instead of a principal, longer school days, weeks, and terms, and devise their own curriculum. They can cut costs by employing few, if any, registered teachers and by giving them lower pay and conditions. They might save money by not having libraries or proper classrooms.

Massey University professor John O’Neill says the extra money charter schools get – another five percent of overall funding allocated per student – could have an effect on achievement. How can it then be claimed that improved results are not due to extra funding?

KEY POINTS

• Charter schools will radically disrupt New Zealand’s highly respected public education system.

• They’ll get taxpayer funding but can be run for profit, with no community representation, unregistered teachers and without public scrutiny.

• Overseas experience shows they often end up shutting out the most disadvantaged children.

Illustration: Chris Slane

On the eighth day, John Banks admits creationist views...

I can’t say who’s giving me a hand. I prefer to remain anonymous...

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As well as being a threat to the secular nature of schools, charter schools pose a threat to a broad, humanist tradition of education, which offers a diversity of views and opinions.

Some may be run for profit. Peter O’Connor says it’s a wacky idea to give people money to make a profit out of education. Even in the United States, most states forbid charter schools to run for profit.

**Church and state**

Sean Faircloth, a lawyer and former US state legislator who visited New Zealand in April as a guest of the Association of Rationalists & Humanists, warns against charter schools. He says they’re a window for the entry of religious indoctrination that will divide child from child and divide society.

Faircloth says some faith-based schools could violate human rights. He says it’s unfair to teach children creationism – that the world was literally created in six days – or that girls should be subordinate to boys.

He’s not against a tolerant, liberal Christian instruction that happens outside school hours, but says fundamentalist schools shouldn’t have a government stamp of approval.

Peter O’Connor says as well as being a threat to the secular nature of schools, charter schools pose a threat to a broad, humanist tradition of education, which offers a diversity of views and opinions – charter schools don’t have that requirement. “At the moment if you have a particular faith there are faith schools that you can send your children to, and that’s what you pay for. But this is taxpayers’ money for teaching creationism.”

**Knock on effect**

As well as being a wacky idea – giving people money to run schools for profit – it’s not going too far to suggest charter schools are part of a campaign to dismantle New Zealand’s public education system. They could have a domino effect – undermining or replacing state schools a few years down the track by siphoning off the more able or well-supported students from better organised families.

Existing schools’ rolls will fall, meaning fewer teachers, and fewer resources. The children left behind, whose parents aren’t willing or able to “exercise a choice of school” – or who don’t want their children to have a faith-based education – will be left in poorer performing schools that will enter a downward spiral of decline and eventually close.
**MY FAVOURITE EDUCATORS**

Award-winning actor Robyn Malcolm is a staunch believer in the top quality of New Zealand’s schools.

**R**obyn Malcolm is back on track to being New Zealand’s best-loved actress. Her latest show, Agent Anna, “rated its little tis off” when it aired recently on TVNZ. Robyn told EA, sounding for a moment like her Cheryl West character from Outrageous Fortune, Robyn found it almost impossible to get work in New Zealand when Cheryl West hung up her fake fur underwear in 2010.

But in the best tradition of theatrical comebacks, Robyn has shrugged off an ugly public stoush over “The Hobbit Law”, which coincided with the end of Cheryl, to bring in an audience of more than 400,000 for each episode of Agent Anna, a TV series about a hopeless real estate agent called Anna Kingston.

“I really wanted to play someone who was a complete failure – someone who didn’t have Cheryl’s iconic qualities. I wanted to play a bog standard, passive-aggressive, middle-class, frightened New Zealand housewife.”

**Knocked back**

The Agent Anna concept was Robyn’s own, and one that was initially “knocked back a couple of times.” But Robyn was determined to find work in New Zealand even if she had to make it herself. “It’s where I want to be.”

After the Hobbit stoush, where Robyn fronted an actors’ union campaign against the combined might of Prime Minister John Key, Sir Peter Jackson and Hollywood, she could only get work on movies and television series in Australia. She’s unsure whether the vitriolic personal abuse she sustained over the Hobbit affair led to the shortage of work offers. She also thinks people might of Prime Minister John Key, Sir Peter Jackson and Hollywood, she could only get work on movies and television series in Australia. She’s unsure whether the vitriolic personal abuse she sustained over the Hobbit affair led to the shortage of work offers. She also thinks people are only paid a huge amount of money – like lawyers.”

Her two boys are currently in years 3 and 5 in an Auckland school, and she’s effusive about their experiences. “They’ve been to three primary schools because we’ve moved around a bit. Each one has been wonderful.”

**National Standards**

“They’ve really enjoyed their teachers every year. Their strengths are recognised and they’re engaged. I don’t have any doubts about their intelligence, and all the rest, so at the end of the day I’m just really interested in how happy they are.”

She’s opposed to National Standards and links them to increasing levels of homework. “Amongst parents sometimes I experience more competitiveness. It goes hand in hand with helicopter parenting, of children having to achieve an enormous amount early on. I really don’t give a shit about that, I really don’t.”

She says childhood is so fleeting, and the idea of eight- and nine-year-olds working under mountains of homework runs counter to her idea of what childhood is about. “I’ve talked to my father a lot about this – about parents who drive miles from home to take their kids to a private school. But Dad says, and I agree – send your kid to the local school. Education in New Zealand is actually bloody good. New Zealand teachers are really, really good.”

What matters for young children, she says, is who their friends are, their community, and their parents. As for Agent Anna, Robyn hopes the network will commission another series. “I think there’s some real legs on that character. There’s a bit more of a journey to go on with her – a lot more to explore.”

– Jane Blaikie

**Win one of three dvds of the Agent Anna series.**

**Giveaway**

Win one of three dvds of the Agent Anna series.

Email educationaotearoa@tnzi.org.nz with “Agent Anna” in the subject line.

[Image: Robyn Malcolm, as Agent Anna, with her children.]

**“To be a really good teacher isn’t that easy – it’s a highly skilled profession. I think they should be paid a huge amount of money – like lawyers.”**
Specialist education staff at the Ministry of Education, who work with some of New Zealand’s most vulnerable children, have settled their collective agreement after making a commitment to “work to rule”. This followed excessive workload issues dating back to 2008. The settlement commits to looking at workload. In Christchurch, Kaye Hyams tells EA why it matters so much.

• What is your background?
I trained as an occupational therapist intending to work in mental health but things didn’t work out that way. On reflection, I had young people with disabilities around me all my life – my mother was a volunteer at the local ECE kindergarten and my sister coached for the Special Olympics. A volunteer at the local IHC kindergarten and my disabilities around me all my life – my mother was

• What is your passion at work?
I love being with students in schools, especially students in mainstream. She particularly enjoys making the physical environment safe for students, with this gate and fence one example of her work.

• Could you describe the work of your MoE Special Ed Field Staff colleagues?
They would like an entire magazine! We have occupational therapists, physiotherapists, special education advisors, psychologists, speech and language therapists, Katakawanga, advisors of deaf children and a disability facilitator. Our core work is supporting school and early childhood staff working with students with special education needs to enhance their participation in learning. We also staff a number of initiatives such as Positive Behaviour for Learning (PB4L), Intensive Wraparound Service (IWS), JY and transition advisor.

“Work wouldn’t be possible without support staff in schools and ECE – they deliver the adaptations we make, under the direction of the teacher, and often have insight into the student that I, as a visitor, don’t have.”

• How has your work been affected by the Christchurch earthquake?
It has affected our families (who may be living in motels or the third house in a year), our school and centre staff (who may be in similar situations), and environment (portions or all of some schools and centres are unusable). People are tired, they are stressed. In some cases there doesn’t seem to be any end in sight to issues with insurance companies, including EQC (don’t even ask about my house!). People are sick of change and uncertainty and they are sick of being told they are resilient. As a result, fuses are shorter and we see this in both children and adults.

• How do you find working with support staff in schools?
Our work wouldn’t be possible without support staff in schools and ECE – they deliver the adaptations we make, under the direction of the teacher, and often have insight into the student that I, as a visitor, don’t have.

• How do you feel about working on mental health issues?
It’s an intense piece of work but deep, rewarding when you see a student able to access a part of the school where they used to require assistance, or when a family and school are reassured that the student is in a safe environment.

• Generally speaking, how well do we do special education in New Zealand?
I think we do well given our resourcing constraints. Special education falls under the state sector cap as we are not seen as frontline. This creates huge issues when staff leave or are seconded, as often we are not able to replace them.

• What is your work like?
For instance, if two staff of the same discipline are on parental leave and wish to job share one position when they return, they are counted as two employees under the headcount instead of one. This creates huge issues when staff leave or are seconded, as often we are not able to replace them. For instance, if two staff of the same discipline are on parental leave and wish to job share one position when they return, they are counted as two employers under the headcount instead of one.

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There’s a high-level conversation going on at the moment about the whys and wherefores of teaching science in ECE and primary schools, but at Karori West Normal School they’re simply measuring the water quality of the stream that runs through their grounds.

Teacher Rita Urry spent 2011 as a Royal Society Primary Science Teacher Fellow. For two terms she worked with a scientist from the Wellington Regional Council monitoring the environment. Back at school, her students have looked at trees around the school – what’s growing (natives or not) and how to encourage more birds.

“What we’re doing is far more practical than the old vinegar-and-soda experiments which just fizz away. Here, we’re solving real problems.”

In fact, Rita is putting into practice what the experts are currently saying – kids need context as well as content when it comes to learning about science. The experts, currently, are having a field day.

Sir Peter Gluckman’s report on science education released in 2011 seems to have got the ball rolling, and the Ministry of Education has commissioned reports on engaging the science community in schools – which is ironic given that the ministry used to employ teams of highly effective science advisors. A 2012 report from ERO urged teachers to do better with science.

And it seems that every scientist and their dog is ready to step into this perceived vacuum. Institutes, universities, research bodies, private providers – they’re all offering or developing education programmes aimed at the compulsory education sector.

Rita Urry says this is good news as many teachers simply lack the confidence to teach science effectively and more engagement with scientists does help. “The new teachers work really hard – with science tables and the like but you need to know how science works. Many teachers in primary have a literacy background and many of the new teachers have only done a one-year online training course where they had perhaps four or five hours of instruction on how to teach science.”

However, Urry believes this lack of confidence can be overcome. Teachers don’t need to be scientists – they just need to know how science works.

Urry has been working with NZEI, which is also stepping into the breach. A basic tenet of New Zealand’s highly successful post-war education system was that teachers were able to identify their own ongoing professional learning and development (PLD) needs and develop training to meet them.

In that tradition, NZEI’s new Centre for Educational Excellence is working with members...
“Science is such a valuable topic, but if we don’t get our children enthused when they are really young – before they’re ten – then it’s really hard.”

### Bridging the gap
In the meantime, Bull says, scientists and teachers speak different languages, and a real effort is needed to bridge that gap. But again, she repeats the idea that teachers don’t have to become scientists, but they do need to understand the nature of science. “Teachers do need to make a huge change in what they consider is important in school science. Teachers don’t need a whole lot of detailed factual knowledge, but they do need to understand what science is, what it can and cannot do, and what is valued in science. Teachers’ own educations will not have prepared them for this.”

The New Zealand Curriculum is clear that students must explore science so they can “participate as critical, informed, and responsible citizens in a society in which science plays a significant role.” That is, students may not be planning to be scientists but they do need the tools to be “citizen scientists” – whether in a traditional sense, such as in making or fixing things, or in a socio-scientific sense, such as being able to make informed decisions or being able to participate in a culture than values science.

How can teachers learn how to think like a scientist so they can be effective in their teaching with students?

### Resources
Here’s a selection of science resources and providers available to educators:

- Enviroschools
- Futuretech
- Auckland University’s LENS Science
- The National Science Teachers Roadshow
- The Open Polytechnic offers a science course for primary teachers
- Victoria University’s MacDiarmid Institute and Accent Learning
- The Royal Society of New Zealand
- Museums, zoos, planetariums and other science and technology centres
- Nature of Science curriculum resources
- Ministry of Education science PLD is now contracted out to Te Tiu Tupo, which runs a programme for Years 1-8 teachers
- Steven Sexton from Otago University’s College of Education has developed science resource kits for primary teachers
- New Scientists: Educating the next generation in science and technology. Read his paper at www.educationaotearoa.org.nz

### Enhance your practice with a Masters.

The introduction of the new 180-point Masters degree is advantageous to educators who want to contribute to their profession through higher learning.

Previously, the pathway to a Masters degree was a 120-point postgraduate diploma or honours degree, followed by a 120-point thesis. The introduction of the 180-point Masters means this two-step approach no longer applies. Instead of taking two years to complete a Masters it is now possible to complete the programme in one, or one and a half years.

Professional educators should choose a programme of study that is focused to your future career. For example, you may wish to focus on leadership in curriculum, pedagogy, or to develop other professional expertise, for example in professional learning. If you see your future in tertiary teaching and/or research, you should plan to go on to a Doctor of Education (EdD) or Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) programme.

For a full list of our focused programmes visit our website or talk to our postgraduate advisers.

### Many teachers lack the confidence to teach science effectively and more engagement with scientists does help. Teachers don’t need to be scientists – but they need to know how science works.
Obituaries

Dr David James Stewart
MA (Hons), BA, DipTchg
8/7/1925–24/12/2012

Elwyn S Richardson, OSO

David Stewart was a good and very gentle man. To be in his company was an absolute joy. These words were part of a eulogy given by fellow Te Ariki practitioner Kay Tester.

David Stewart was still deeply involved in Te Ariki, a professional development programme for principals, at the time of his death. A life member of NZPF and an NZEI Fellow, his citation described him as a leader in his field, highly respected by his colleagues and committed to excellence in educational administration.

Te Ariki pulled together many threads of his previous work. Kay Tester says he loved the energy and ideas that flow when like-minded people interact.

“At a time of life when most people would put their feet up, he managed to keep up an astonishing level of input to school and principal development. The web design, virtual learning communities and web diaries he developed specifically for Te Ariki were mightily impressive. “The supreme gift David gave us as educators was the desire to take up an intellectual challenge and make sense of complex issues – to see as an educational practice an intellectual activity, where original ideas can still be created and to build a culture in our schools like the one he developed with us. This was the essence of his Te Ariki project. The underlying assumption was that teachers enjoy working together and interacting with one another, so if we provide a context and a set of protocols supported by appropriate resources, we’ll get a higher quality of thinking applied to the work that teachers do.”

“He was absolutely true to his beliefs about education. In his view school and principal development had to be achieved through liberal and democratic means. “You could not be in David’s presence without experiencing a sense that all’s right with the world, and while there may be challenges, they are not insurmountable. His work, his thinking, and his writing were imbued with a strong sense of hope and of moral and ethical purpose.”

Writing about appraisal in 1997, David wrote: We need to address teaching as a form of intellectual endeavour as opposed to a collection of definable tasks, and devise methodologies which both increase teachers’ intellectual fluency and provide time, space and incentive for all staff to engage in critical reflection of their work.

Elwyn S Richardson was respected and celebrated. His integrated learning approach facilitated the growth of internal standards that were continually rising, as opposed to the externally imposed fixed standards increasingly common in schooling today. He was awarded the Queen’s Service Order in 1989 for his services to education, and received an honorary doctorate from Massey University in 2005. Asked of his advice for today’s teachers, he replied, “Read Dewey, then shove it. Seek joy in teaching. Search for wisdom and joy in the young. They may teach you to be creative if they find you are a worthy vessel.”

– Dr Margaret Macdonald

AUT will hold a symposium to celebrate Elwyn Richardson’s work in July. NZCER will this year publish a book based on Margaret Macdonald’s doctoral thesis Elwyn Richardson and the Early World of Art Education in New Zealand. Contact: margaretmac@stra.co.nz

above: Elwyn Richardson in his Oruaiti School classroom (c 1958)

resources...

• New fresh food guidelines

School lunch provider ealunch has teamed up with the Heart Foundation’s fuelled4life in a new scheme for non-packaged food. Fuelled4life manager Sally Hughes says the non-packaged food guidelines are useful for caterers because they rank foods as “everyday” or “sometimes” choices. Those interested in the scheme can contact lindsay@heartfoundation.org.nz

• Website for ECE learning stories

Storypark is a new web-based tool for early childhood centres and families to create and share ePortfolios and learning stories. It’s free to set up. Go to www.storypark.com

• A self-review tool to improve transitions

Carrers New Zealand has developed Career Education Benchmarks – Year 7 and 8 through extensive road-testing with over 40 schools across New Zealand. The benchmarks will enable a consistent national approach to career education, with the aim of better outcomes and more successful secondary school transitions.

events

• Money smarts movie-making competition

The Commission for Financial Literacy and Retirement Income and BNZ are co-sponsoring a new competition for Year 7 and 8 students. Entrants make a movie about being smart with money – this could be anything from detailing how to live on a budget, the price of a pet or saving tips. Movies can be made on a phone, camera or laptop and students, teachers and the school can be in to win some great technology prizes. Entries close 16 August 2013. Go to http://www.moneysmarts.org.nz/

• Free NZ Sign Language classes for schools and early childhood centres

To celebrate New Zealand Sign Language (NZSL) Week on 13 – 19 May, Deaf Aotearoa is offering a free, age-appropriate 45-minute NZSL Taster Class by a trained NZSL Tutor, using fun, interactive lesson plans and Deaf Aotearoa resources. Classes are limited, so get in quickly at www.nzslweek.org.nz. Those who miss out can still learn NZSL via an Online NZSL Taster Class, at www.nzslweek.org.nz (See also our Giveaways page for NZ Sign Language DVDs)

• Free financial literacy workshops

The 2013 Financial Literacy Summit will be held in Auckland on Friday 14 June, with related workshops the day before. You can attend both the summit and a pre-summit workshop, or choose just one event. Registration is free. The conference expects to attract over 250 representatives from the finance sector, state sector, policy officials, academics, savings industry, not for profit groups, business and community group leaders, financial educators and teachers. It is co-ordinated by the Commission for Financial Literacy and Retirement Income (formerly the Retirement Commission)

• Lecture series explores how maths helps solve problems

Ten mathematicians will speak in 10 locations over 10 months for the Royal Society of New Zealand’s 2013 Mathday Series. Royal Society Chief Executive Dr Di McCarthy says mathematicians’ expertise in modelling and problem-solving makes their work relevant to everyday life, and maths underpins nearly every field of scientific enquiry from medicine to weather systems.

research

• Study of Indian education in New Zealand

A Massey PhD student is researching how Indian immigrant children fare in New Zealand’s early education system, and how well teachers accommodate minority cultures. Former Indian ECE manager Vijaya Tatineni’s research, involving nine immigrant families, will explore Indian childrearing practices and values, and how parents want their children to be taught.

This year has been designated the Year for Mathematics of Planet Earth (MPE2013). Visit www.royalsociety.org.nz/10x10 for a list of speakers, venues and dates.

A big hand for Children’s Day

Footsteps and Postering Kits, and local Poster Care Support associations, celebrated National Children’s Day on 3 March with a trip to Rainbow Springs in Rotorua for more than 200 children and carer families. The children painted their hands to contribute to a giant hand painting.

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Back to the future: time to revisit Tomorrow’s Schools

A powerful new book says that, after two decades, the Tomorrow’s Schools model has developed flaws that need to be fixed.

Vital Connections: why we need more than self-managing schools

Dr Cathy Wylie, NZCER

New Zealand teachers have been working for 24 years with continuing shake-ups of our school system. What has been the real effect of ‘Tomorrow’s Schools’? Has the professional wisdom of teachers been enhanced? Has the learning of our children improved? What fresh approach is needed now to meet current expectations of schools?

Dr Cathy Wylie, chief researcher for New Zealand Council for Educational Research, (NZCER), explores these questions in depth, and offers recommendations for where we might go from here. Her story is based on robust evidence from a number of long-running and rigorous research projects, and is illustrated by interviews with many people who have been involved over the years with our education system, including this reviewer.

Connections eroded

The key idea explored in this richly packed book is that too many connections for learning and support across our education system have been severed, eroded or thwarted, and that gains in student achievement will increase only when vital connections are recognised and built up.

Many examples of lost connections are discussed throughout the 10 compelling chapters. One is the loss of a body of experienced and knowledgeable education professionals, who, until 1989, came from teaching positions into permanent roles as inspectors and advisers, cross-fertilising new knowledge and ideas.

Local knowledge gone

They knew their local schools, communities and teachers. They worked closely with teachers introducing new ideas for learning and teaching, and sustaining networks across schools with professional relationships between teachers. Not being on short-term contestable contracts, these advisers and inspectors could work over time to support teachers embarking on changes. They worked with the teacher organisations, teacher educators, researchers, and with experienced professionals across what was once termed the Education Family. Not only did Tomorrow’s Schools disestablish these connecting roles, but further obstacles to working together arose from the competitive environment encouraged among stand-alone schools.

Tomorrow’s flaws

Each chapter delves deeply beyond the evidence of what happened, to how and why the fundamental flaws in Tomorrow’s Schools have emerged. Dr Wylie’s thoughtful analysis then leads to constructive suggestions for systemic infrastructure changes to bring back coherence to our fragmented school system, restore professional strengths and leadership, re-establish respect and trust between schools and the Ministry of Education, and integrate these with new knowledge about ways children learn. She recommends ongoing joint work with the teaching profession’s representatives in key policy areas.

What to do differently

I encourage teachers, with your varied experiences, to think well about the issues and the ensuing recommendations of this book, to talk with parents and colleagues, asking, “What could we do differently now to make the most of self-managing schools?” We need to stimulate debate that policy makers will take heed of, about ways our New Zealand education system could develop to better inspire and support the learning of students, teachers, and communities.

Ruth Mornsell has been a primary teacher, teacher educator, and education researcher.

“Too many connections for learning and support across our education system have been severed, eroded or thwarted.”

– Cathy Wylie

Best new books for kids

My Happy Place

Ed. Melissa Mebus

$30 paperback

More than 80 famous, and not-so-well-known, New Zealanders, including Joy Cowley, surgeon Swee Tann, and BMX racer Sarah Walker share happy stories about childhood. But the real stars of the book are the primary school children who have transformed the adults’ words with their art. Fundraiser for KidCan.

Ben & the Icky-Ooky-Sticky-Smick

Sally Sutton & Gary Venn

$30 hardback

Ben’s lost his icky-oinky-sticky-smick and he’s determined to find him. No other bug will do. None of his family will help until Grandad (who looks a bit like a bug) comes to visit. A set of classroom ideas available. Ages 4-7.

Shot, Boom, Score!

Justin Brown

$19 paperback

A fast and funny story about sport, bullies and responsibility from a local TV and radio host who also wrote the Mike Cool-as-you-like stories. Ages 8-12.

Remember that November

Maumahara kī tera Nōema

Jennifer Beck & Lindy Fisher

Māori edition Kawata Teepa

$20 paperback

A beautifully illustrated and poignant story that contrasts the events of November 5 featuring Guy Fawkes and the gunpowder plot in London with the invasion of Parihaka by British soldiers on the same day in 1881.

Pandemic (My New Zealand Story)

Sally Stone

$19 paperback

The 22nd title in this popular “factional” series tells the story of Freda Rose, aged 11, in 1918.

The Ferniehirst Haunting

Duanuku Pulse

F T Champion

@F T Champion

The 22nd title in this popular “factional” series tells the story of Freda Rose, aged 11, in 1918.

War stories

Discovering Ian Serrallier’s The Silver Sword in the library at Waimea College in the mid-1990s turned me into both a reader and fan of twentieth-century world war history. It is often an interest in war that can lead boys to reading both fiction and non-fiction, with one of those categories contrasting the events of the wartime experiences of her father as a 12-year-old in Poland and the Soviet Union. (Teaching notes are available on http://www.scholastic.co.nz/Resources/Notes/A-Winters-Day-in-1939.pdf)

A new book well worth being used as a teacher read-aloud in years 6-8 is A Winter’s Day in 1939 by Auckland author Melinda Smyrnakis, a novel based on the wartime experiences of her father as a 12-year-old in Poland and the Soviet Union. (Teaching notes are available on http://www.scholastic.co.nz/Resources/Notes/A-Winters-Day-in-1939.pdf)

To walk a while in the shoes of those who have experienced war is to never want to experience it yourself.

– John McIntyre

childlkbxmp@xtra.co.nz
Safe Sound Indicator

Two of these brilliant devices to give away. Safe Sound Indicators have been developed by the National Foundation for the Deaf as an aid to regulating classroom noise – and preventing hearing loss in children and their educators. They basically function as a small "traffic light" in response to nearby sounds. The light moves from green to amber to red as noise levels increase to 90 decibels – when it’s loud enough to cause hearing loss. The Safe Sound Indicator teaches children to regulate their noise levels when they see the light go red they know to quieten down. NZFID says this helps improve concentration and learning. More information at www.nzfd.org.nz

Books for educators

A set of books for teachers to indulge in some learning of their own.

- Awesome Forces – The Natural
  Hazards that Threaten New
  Zealand, ed. Geoff Hicks and
  Hannah Campbell, Te Papa Press
  • Just Draw It! The Dynamic
    Drawing Course for Anyone with
    a Pencil and Paper, Sam Pyasena
    and Beverly Philip, New Holland NZ
  • Grammar Rules – Writing with
    Military Precision, Craig Shivres,
    New Holland NZ
  • The Young New Zealanders’
    Guide to Entrepreneurship –
    Inspiring Stories, Great Advice,
    Dr Ian Hunter, Hunter Publishing

Giveaways

Win these great prizes. To enter, email your name and address to educationaotearoa@nzei.org.nz by June 18, using the headline of the prize in the subject line. Send separate emails for each prize.

Sign language DVD

May 13-19 is New Zealand Sign Language Week and your school can learn how to "sign" New Zealand’s national anthem, God Defend New Zealand, with this DVD from Deaf Aotearoa New Zealand Tangata Turi. The anthem is presented in Te Reo Māori, English and New Zealand Sign Language. Three copies to go. www.deaf.co.nz

Sir Edmund Hillary and Jean Batten

Two great books about two fabulous New Zealanders – these are aimed at children aged 4-7 years, but will also appeal to older children and adults. They're designed to encourage young readers to dream big. Ed Climbs a Big Hill explores Sir Edmund’s boyhood dream to climb the biggest hill and how he set about it one step at a time. Jean Dreams of Flying is the inspiring tale of how the young Jean overcame the mocking of her brother and friends to fly high, literally. Both are by new writer and publisher Dreydon Sobanja who has overcome a few difficulties himself – he was named as a ‘Contact Inspirational Kiwi’ at the Whangamata Triathlon in 2011. Penguin Young New Zealanders’ Guide to Entrepreneurship

How to be part of fuelled4life:

Sign up online at www.fuelled4life.org.nz

Win one of three dvds of the Agent Anna series starring Outrageous Fortune actress Robyn Malcolm.

Fuelled4life is a free, practical tool giving schools a head start in providing healthier options.

Based on the Ministry of Health’s Food and Beverage Classification System (FBCS), fuelled4life classifies foods and beverages according to their nutrient profile into two levels, everyday and sometimes.

Food companies register products with fuelled4life that meet the nutrient criteria. They are listed in a buyer’s guide and also on www.fuelled4life.org.nz. For people involved in selecting foods and drinks for menus, fundraisers and special events, fuelled4life identifies the healthier options.

Sign up to fuelled4life and receive the buyer’s guide, newsletters with tips, recipes and resources and be eligible to attend workshops and expos.
In 2013 Capital E's Creative Technology team is on the go and throughout terms 2 & 3, the city is our studio! Our latest programmes use mobile technology so you can film, edit and present on the move. Document expeditions from anywhere in the city, connect with your ancestors and their journey to Whanganui-a-Tara / Wellington all with our Capital City Connections programme in collaboration with the Museum of Wellington City & Sea, Carter Observatory & the City Gallery Wellington. You can even film the lions, meerkats and chimps on location at Wellington Zoo with the all-new Zoos Noos programme! Make sure to be first on the scene as we take our tech out to the Capital.

For information call 04 913 3742, email capitalebookings@wmt.org.nz, or visit www.capitale.org.nz

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