Tomorrow's Schools Review Detailed Survey Report

Executive Summary

This report provides analysis of the 460 responses to the Tomorrow's Schools Review detailed survey. The survey is one of two that were available on the Tomorrow's Schools Review website[1], designed by the Independent Taskforce that conducted the review. The quick survey contained three questions and the detailed survey contained twelve questions. The detailed survey opened on 12 June 2018 and closed on 12 August 2018.

The detailed survey findings (in less detail):

Responses ranged from single words to whole paragraphs. Some responses include multiple ideas and comments that do not necessarily relate to the same theme in a topic. Therefore these ideas are referred to throughout the report as comments, ideas, or references.

Question 1

Question 1 related to the strengths and weaknesses of the current model of school governance: parent-based board of trustees (boards). This question generated the largest amount of coded ideas, 1,194 references were analysed in this report. The two largest topics that emerged were the capability and community representation of boards.

Many responses suggested there are boards that are successful in governing their schools, however the majority of respondents felt that the lack of capability within boards was its largest weakness. This included not having the right skills or expertise to perform the role in a variety of areas, such as educational knowledge of best practice, governance and management, and in specific areas such as finance, property, and recruitment.

The second most referenced topic included community representation, which was regarded as the board's greatest strength. The majority of respondents felt that the diverse range of skills and backgrounds of board members, communal and parental involvement, and collective ownership of the school were positive elements enabled by the board model. Conversely, approximately a quarter of respondents suggested the greatest weakness of the current model was that boards are not representative of their local communities. Respondents cited a lack of representation from minority groups, from those who are unable to serve, or those who do not feel comfortable doing so.

Question 2

Question 2 asked how to ensure that Te Tiriti o Waitangi is given active expression in all schools and kura. There were 721 references analysed, with Te Tiriti, te reo, and professional learning and development emerging as the largest topics. The majority of the 109 respondents felt that Te Tiriti should be given, or given more, active expression. Most respondents did not provide information, or were unsure how this could be achieved in practice. Similarly, the majority of the 89 respondents that commented on the curriculum felt that te reo should be taught in schools but were divided in whether this would be optional or compulsory and what school levels it should be included in. There were 92 respondents that also raised professional learning and development as a means to upskill our education workforce and ensure that Te Tiriti, Te Ao Māori, and te reo can be taught at a high standard.

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[1] https://conversation.education.govt.nz/conversations/tomorrows-schools-review/

Question 3

Question 3 related to how all schools and kura can be supported to meet the needs of all young people regardless of where they live. There were 837 references analysed, with schools, teaching, and learning support commonly mentioned. There were no notably dominant topics that emerged, rather, responses spanned across a number of sub-themes. Some of the most common ideas raised by respondents within these themes included: increasing support and funding for learning support provision for schools and families; increasing pay for teachers and providing quality ongoing professional learning and development, and ensuring quality standard of infrastructure and resources for all schools.

Question 4

Question 4 asked how to ensure that schools and kura work together for the benefit of children and young people in an area. There were 611 references that were examined in this question. Respondents primarily spoke about the importance of collaboration between schools in a general sense, and about Communities of Learning | Kāhui Ako as a collaborative initiative. The majority of respondents were generally positive about Kāhui Ako and its potential to improve collaboration between schools. Responses made a number of suggestions for improvements to Kāhui Ako. More generally, respondents felt that there needed to be more facilitation, time, and resources given to schools to support collaboration.

Other prominent ideas that were raised included competition between schools acting as a barrier that discourages schools from working together, and using the community as a mechanism to bring schools together.

Question 5

Question 5 asked how to ensure that enrolment zones are designed fairly. There were 493 references analysed within this question. Overall, respondents were divided in their opinions on enrolment schemes and zoning. Respondents that supported enrolment schemes and zoning often felt that they would prevent schools from turning students away.

However, those respondents that did not support enrolment schemes and zoning, gave a variety of different reasons. The most frequent reason given was that in some cases, the nearest school may not be the right fit for the student, given the unique culture of a school and the importance of the student fitting within the school environment. There is a common idea that these schemes continue to stratify and exacerbate race and class division, and that we should strive for all schools being of equal quality so children can attend their local school and mix with a diverse range of students. Additionally, some respondents noted that if there were no enrolment zones, families would not have to move in-zone and this would help alleviate the rate of flight.

Respondents tended to emphasise the importance of making every school equally desirable, regardless of whether they supported enrolment schemes or not.

Question 6

Question 6 asked respondents how the negative impacts of competition could be reduced. A total of 598 references were examined for this question, with mixed responses. This may have been due to varying interpretations of what competition is. Some respondents challenged the assumption that competition is negative. These respondents felt that competition can lead to better performance and quality, prompting schools and students to better themselves.

Other respondents gave suggestions to address the negative impacts of competition, including ensuring that all schools are of high quality and have enough funding, introducing stricter enrolment zones and practices, not publically comparing schools to each other, and through strengthening and making use of Communities of Learning | Kāhui Ako.

Question 7

Question 7 asked how encourage schools and kura could be encouraged to create partnerships and work together with their communities. There were 392 references analysed for this question. The overall sense from respondents was that schools and communities working together is beneficial, but that teachers are currently too time poor to build these relationships in a genuine, lasting manner. The most common suggestion to address this was to create a community liaison role. Respondents considered whether this would be voluntary, a parent, board, or community member role, and if the role would be across a number of schools.

A smaller proportion of responses felt that schools already do this well, or that schools should not be focusing on community collaboration at all.

Question 8

Question 8 asked respondents to suggest how we can provide diversity in our schooling types to diverse learners and their needs. This question was open to a variety of interpretation, with 577 references across a number of topics. The most common suggestions broadly fell under two topics; people and education delivery. Many respondents felt that in order to meet diverse learner needs, there needed to be genuine community relationships with accompanying feedback mechanisms. It was also suggested that the workforce needed to be more diverse, that there should be targeted professional learning and development opportunities, and that students should have exposure to innovative and evidence-based teaching methods.

Regarding education delivery, respondents suggested there be more funding for curriculum delivery, and to support innovative and collaborative teaching styles. A number of responses expressed views on different types of schools (i.e. charter schools or special character schools). Opinions were divided, with some respondents considering that schools should be inclusive as an underlying principle, while others felt that different schools were better suited for some students.

Question 9

Question 9 related asked how the student voice could best be heard and responded to. There were 502 references that were analysed for this question. Some respondents felt that this was unnecessary and that we should be giving attention to teachers', families' and whānau voices instead. However the majority of respondents felt that it was important to ensure that we listen and engage with students. Respondents also felt that it was important for schools and kura to follow through and respond to the feedback received. A variety of suggestions for doing so included creating surveys, face-to-face hui, and by using student representatives.

Question 10

Question 10 asked how schools could be encouraged to be future focused and innovative. There were 477 references that were examined for this question. Respondents gave practical suggestions, as well as high level system wide comments. The most common ideas suggested that teachers be given ongoing professional development to expose them to a

range of different teaching methods and ideas, and that it is ensured that technology in all schools is of a standard where teachers can deliver a quality digital curriculum and utilise new teaching methods.

From a system perspective, many respondents felt that it was the Ministry of Education's role to be at the forefront of education stewardship and to be working closely with schools and other education agencies in a coherent way. Further, there were a range of comments regarding students' capabilities and their progress and achievement. There was a sense of wanting to prepare students for an uncertain future, but no consensus on what the best way to do this was, or what and how to measure progress.

Question 11

Question 11 asked how the quality of individual schools and kura, and the schooling system as a whole could best be evaluated. Similarly to previous questions, 674 references were scattered across a number of topics. Prominent themes that emerged included comments about the Education Review Office (ERO), school assessment and measurement, community partnerships, and hearing student voice. The largest number of comments related to ERO, with just over half of these suggesting that ERO needed strengthening or improvements. Some respondents felt that broader evidence and data needed to contribute to more holistic and in-depth review, which is less of a tick-box and compliance approach. Approximately one-fifth (25 per cent) of respondents felt that ERO was performing well, whilst a further fifth (25 per cent) felt that ERO should be disestablished.

At a school-level, respondents felt that there should be more holistic measures of success that look at aspects such as wellbeing, as well as key competencies. Respondents also felt that family, whānau, and students should be engaged and asked for their opinions in order to gauge the quality of schooling and the education system.

Question 12

Question 12 asked respondents to suggest how education agencies could better support schools to meet the needs of all students and young people. There were 779 references examined across a range of topics. Many respondents felt negative about the education agencies, particularly the Ministry of Education. Education agencies were considered poorly performing, inflexible, and as needing to improve the quality of their services. There was a sense that these agencies are bureaucratic and concerned about compliance. Respondents suggested that there needs to be more coherency between education agencies and across government agencies, as well as working more closely with schools to allow for feedback and to build relationships.

Suggestions for improvement were given in a number areas, but the most common were ideas relating to health and learning support services. Respondents felt there needed to be more funding given to schools, particularly for learning support. Other suggestions included the provision of better paid and trained teacher aides in every class, and more health and wellbeing services such as social workers.

Methodology

The survey questions were designed by the Independent Taskforce (the Taskforce) that conducted the Tomorrow's Schools Review. The Ministry of Education designed the demographic questions and the Taskforce secretariat support were responsible for analysing and reporting the survey responses.

All data has been captured in an Excel spreadsheet that details all respondents' answers to the survey questions, as well as their demographic data. The data was then imported into the software programme, NVivo, where it has been coded into various themes for analysis.

Critical Grounded Theory was used to create a coding framework that was used on another Ministry-owned survey, the *Education Conversation | Korero Mātauranga*. The *Education Conversation | Korero Mātauranga* coding framework formed the basis of the framework used for the Tomorrow's Schools Review Quick and Detailed surveys. A sample selection of the data was coded to the Tomorrow's Schools Review Detailed survey framework. This framework was then refined for additional themes that emerged from the responses.

Responses ranged from single words to whole paragraphs. Some responses include multiple ideas and comments that do not necessarily relate to the same theme in a topic. These comments are also known as "references", and are used interchangeably in the report. Responses have been coded to their corresponding themes. Where there are multiple ideas or comments that relate to different themes within the same response, these have been separated and coded independently. Therefore, the number of comments does not necessarily reflect the actual number of respondents, however the numbers are not significantly different.

Where it was possible to predict a greater degree of granularity within themes, i.e. boards of trustees; roles and responsibilities, and capability, we have further modified the framework to provide greater specificity of analysis. For other themes, we did not pre-empt any additional sub-themes. Analysts created new sub-themes for larger topics, i.e. more than 200 responses, based on emergent, and/or recurring ideas. The coding framework is attached as Annex Two.

A sample of data was coded by multiple analysts and the coding framework was subsequently edited to ensure that the themes accurately captured the data. The analysts peer reviewed the coded data to ensure the robustness of the framework and to provide quality assurance. Comments are coded to all relevant themes, however analysts have restricted coding a comment to four themes or less to provide the greatest specificity within a theme.

NVivo was used to analyse the data. Responses in each sub-theme were aggregated to the "parent" theme to indicate the largest emergent themes. Matrix coding was used to analyse the largest themes by number of references for each question. Themes were then analysed and disaggregated into sub-themes, where necessary.

Limitations and caveats

There were a number of limitations that have been acknowledged by the analysts, and these will be taken into consideration for future surveys that may take place.

Generally regarding survey and question design, it may be useful to include brief definitions of terms, or rewrite questions, such that they are not misinterpreted by respondents.

The demographic question, "What is your connection to education?" appeared to cause some misinterpretation. Categories such as primary student or secondary student were intended to identify current primary and secondary students. Respondents who have identified as having a primary student connection have also identified as being in an age demographic that sits outside of primary student age range. This suggests that respondents have differing comprehension of the question. Respondents' age will be used as a proxy for identifying whether respondents are students. There is only one respondent that identified being within schooling age in the current study.

The question, "Do you consider yourself to have a disability or need extra support to learn?" was not included when the detailed survey was launched due to an oversight. It was added to the quick and detailed surveys during the week ending 3 August 2018.

Due to resources and time constraints, this report has the key themes and findings for the survey sample as a whole and analysts were unable to delve too deeply into differences by cohorts.
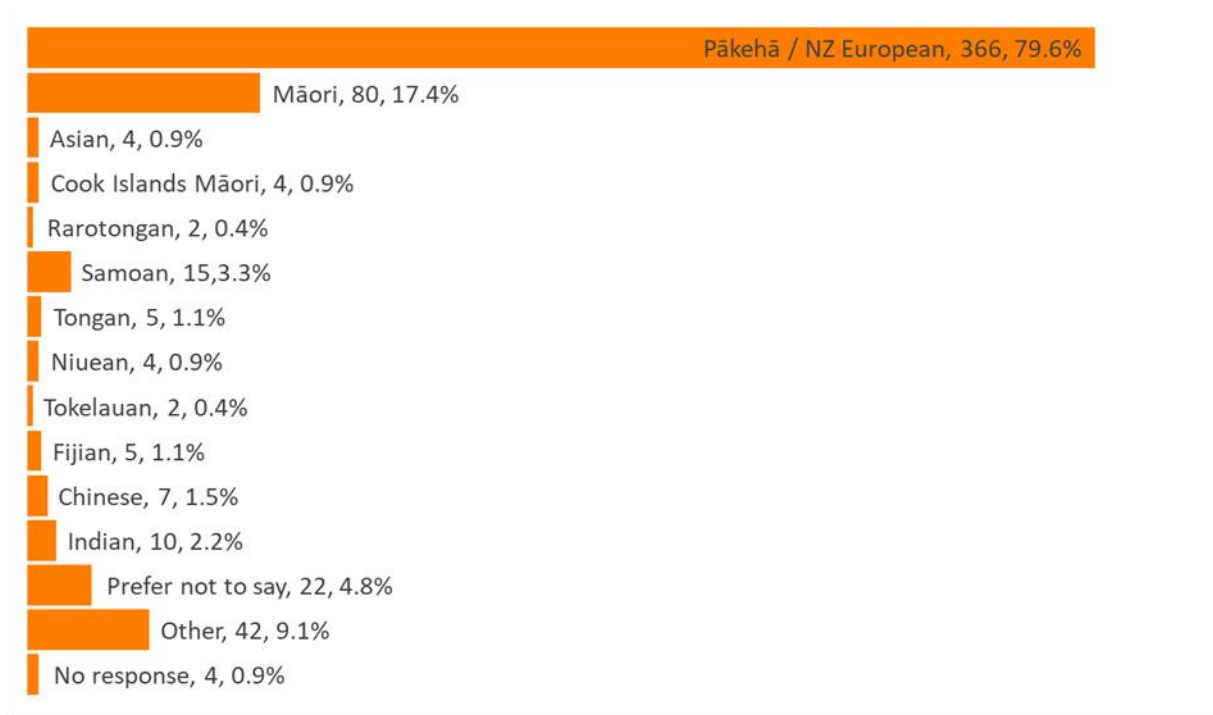
Demographics

Figure 1. Respondents by ethnicity.

Respondents were able to self-identify with multiple ethnicities. As Figure 1 shows, the Pākehā/New Zealand European cohort was the largest with 79.6% of total respondents. Tokelauan and Rarotongan represented the smallest ethnic groups with 0.4% of respondents. The "Other" category received a range of responses; the most frequent being Kiwi or New Zealander, Australian, and British.
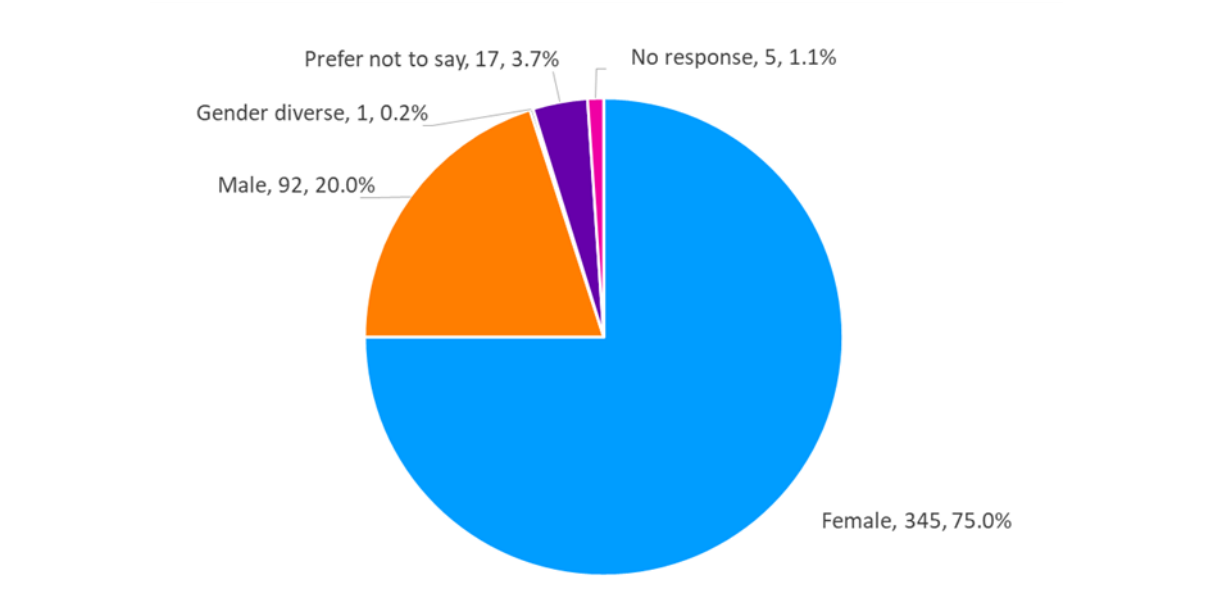

Figure 2. Respondents by gender.

As Figure 2 shows, majority of the respondents are female. The gender diverse population was the smallest, with only one respondent. There were 17 respondents who chose not to disclose their gender identity, and 92 respondents identified as male.

12 and under, 0, 0.0%
13 to 18, 1, 0.2%
19 to 24, 2, 0.4%
25 to 34, 46, 10.0%
35 to 44, 168, 36.5%
45 to 54, 137, 29.8%
55 to 64, 64, 13.9%
65 or over, 25, 5.4%
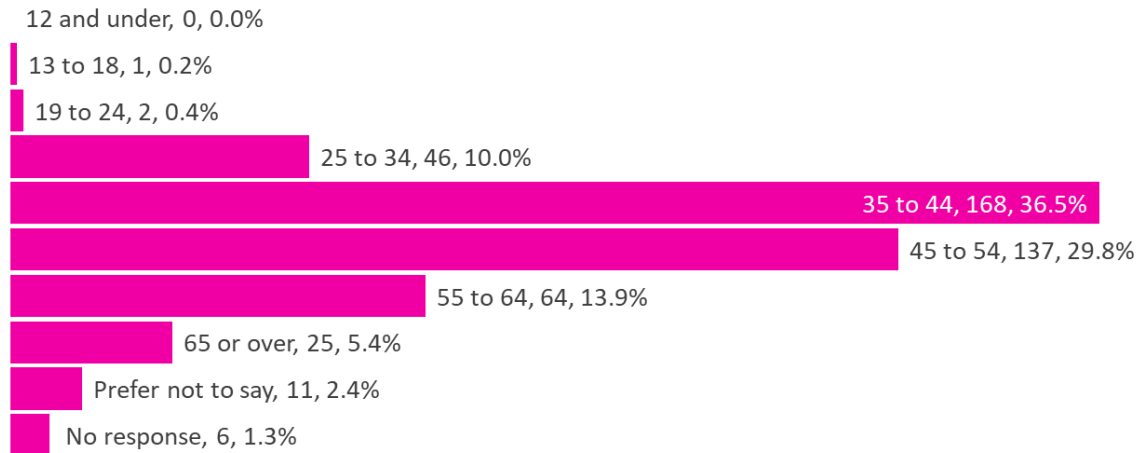Prefer not to say, 11, 2.4%
No response, 6, 1.3%

Figure 3. Respondents by Age.

Figure 3 shows the respondents' age. There were no respondents that identified as being 12 years or younger, and one respondent who identified as being 13 to 18. The largest cohort were aged 35 to 44, followed by respondents aged 45 to 54.

Primary student, 24, 5.2%
Secondary student, 19, 4.1%
Tertiary student, 32, 7.0%
Teacher (early childhood), 22, 4.8%
Teacher (primary), 97, 21.1%
Teacher (secondary), 71, 15.4%
Principal (primary), 38, 8.3%
Principal (secondary), 17, 3.7%
Parent (early childhood), 63, 13.7%
Parent (primary student), 194, 42.2%
Parent (secondary student), 118, 25.7%
Parent (tertiary student/left home), 50, 10.9%
Grandparent, 39, 8.5%
Employer, 30, 6.5%
Education administrator, 26, 5.7%
Teaching support staff, 25, 5.4%
Board of Trustees member, 86, 18.7%
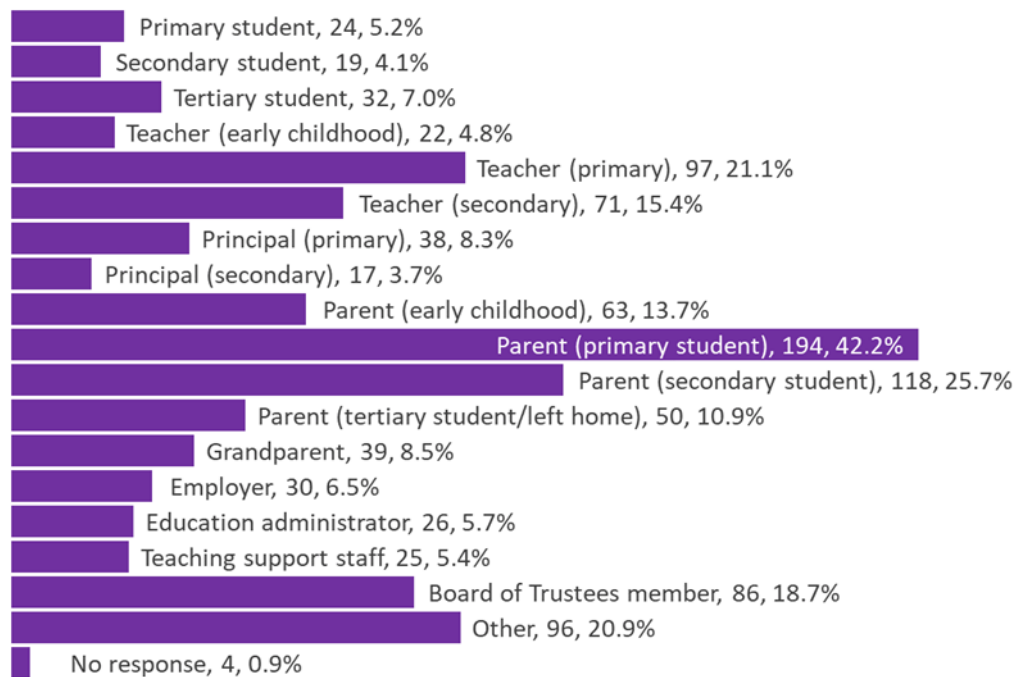Other, 96, 20.9%
No response, 4, 0.9%

Figure 4. Respondents by Connection to Education.

The question "What is your connection to education?" contained multiple options for respondents to self-select the options that best fit. Parents, teachers, and board of trustee members formed the largest cohort groups. As noted in the limitations and caveats, the number of primary and secondary students reflected in Figure 4 may not be a true reflection of the number of students that completed the survey. Within the Other category, there were

a range of responses, including (but not limited to) education consultants and advisors, school guidance counsellors, university academics, and community members and volunteers.
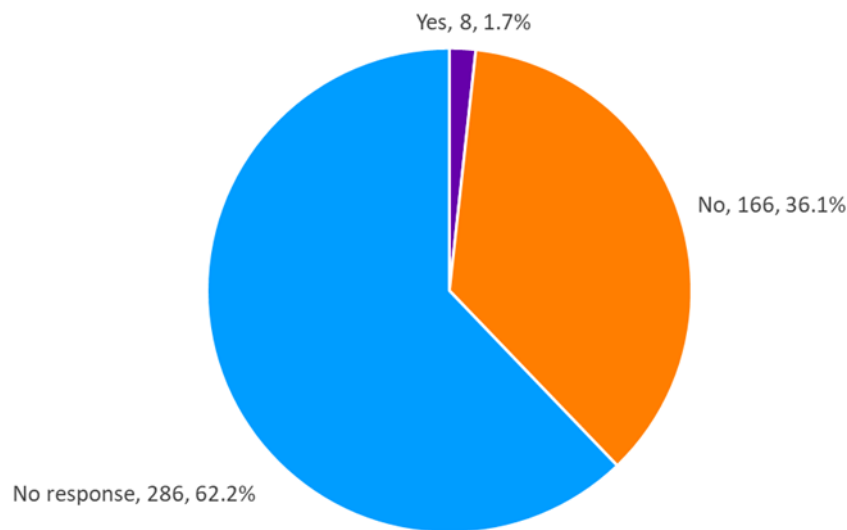

Figure 5. Respondents who have a disability or require extra support to learn.

As noted in the limitations and caveats, this question was included during the week ending 3 August 2018. As Figure 5 shows, over half of the respondents did not answer the question, which can be attributed to the late inclusion of the question. There were 8 respondents that stated "yes" in response to having a disability or requiring additional support to learn, and 166 respondents that stated "no".
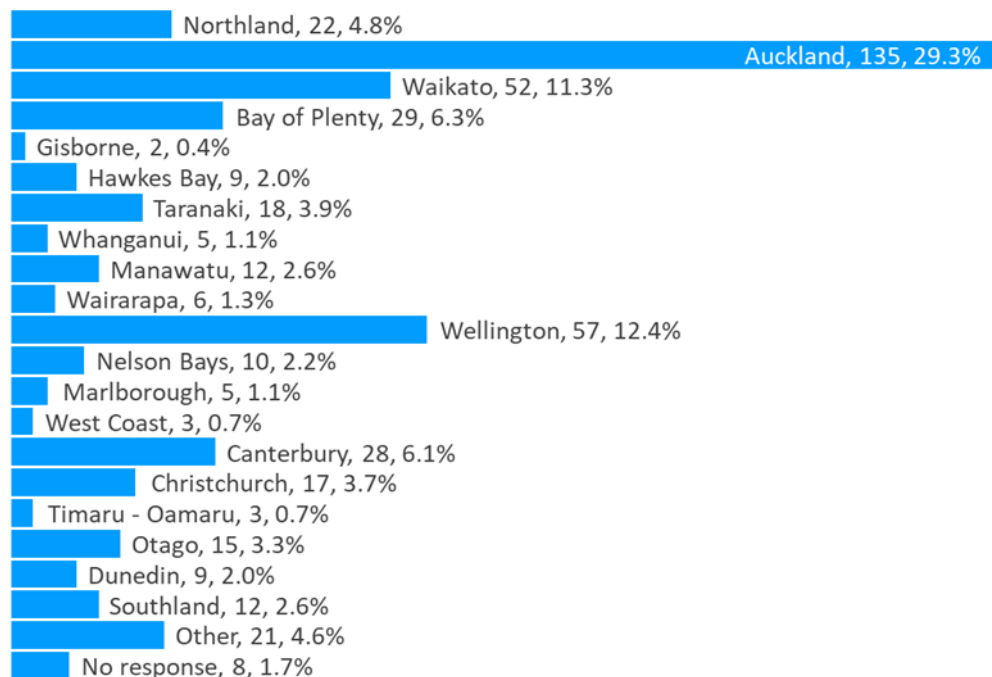

Figure 6. Respondents by Region

As Figure 6 shows, the majority of respondents indicated that they lived in the Auckland region, with 29.3%. Wellington and Waikato formed the second and third largest cohorts with 12.4 % and 11.3% respectively. Gisborne represented the smallest region, with two respondents forming 0.4% of the overall sample. Respondents within the "Other" category tended to indicate the region they lived in as well as provide the specific town or city. Therefore there is a degree of overlap with these respondents being counted twice.

Discussion

This section provides an analysis of the responses to each of the 12 detailed survey questions. It outlines the key themes that emerged most frequently for each question. Significant differences in themes for particular demographic groups have been identified where possible. Annex One provides a collection of quotes that give a range of specific examples and different perspectives from respondents.

Question 1 – What are the strengths and weaknesses of the current parent-based Board of Trustees model of school governance?

Seven overarching sub-themes were identified within the boards of trustees (boards or BOT) theme, and these are listed in the table below.

Themes	Total References
Capability	342
Community representation	311
Interpersonal dynamics	174
Responsibilities and roles	122
Boards of Trustees (general comments)	76
Support and training	69
Elections and appointments	53
Conditions	42
Other governance models	5

Capability

Capability was the largest sub-theme, with 344 references. It is defined here as having the skills, or knowledge to perform the roles and responsibilities of a board member. Within this sub-theme comments were split into either general (27), positive (54), or negative comments (251).

General comments

Twenty-seven comments were considered more general and it was unclear whether respondents considered the current parent-based model of boards of trustees as a strength or weakness. The predominant view was that the success of a board is largely dependent on the skills and expertise of the members that serve on them. Other comments suggested that it may be useful to include other experts to the board including educationalists, lawyers, and accountants.

Positive comments

There were 54 comments that considered the capability of board members to be a strength of the current model. Three broad topics were identified; the range of skills utilised, the "on the ground" knowledge that parents had of their schools and communities, and the overall commitment that parents had for ensuring their children's success. There were 27 comments that referred to the wide range of skills that parents brought to the table, this meant that *"diverse voices and experiences are utilised."* Four comments specified parent upskilling, becoming more knowledgeable in governance, and how schools are managed as a strength. Additionally, 17 comments suggested *"local knowledge, particularly of the school"* ensured that the decisions that were best for the school could be made without any central interference. This also ensured that the unique character of each school and community

could be preserved. The third topic included nine comments that stated parents brought *"genuine commitment to this task."*

One respondent commented, *"Strengths are that the school is governed by people with a direct knowledge of and authentic relationships within the school and its community. Schools maintain a level of autonomy and character that might be lost under a broader governance system. The board also has a very specific role prioritising the performance of that one school and losing that would be a negative. Any board that might look after multiple schools would end up having to prioritise some over others on specific occasions."*

Negative comments

The majority of comments for this sub-theme, 251 references, were negative, and saw the capability of board members as a weakness of the parent-based board model. A board that lacked the necessary skills to perform their role effectively were seen to be at risk of being misled by the principal. Inexperienced boards or those which did not have the necessary skills would not have the knowledge to ask the right questions or hold their school to account, and waste time on responsibilities such as finances, and not having enough time to focus on the strategic vision of the school. There were 124 broad comments, such as *"BOT members don't necessarily have the skills, experience and knowledge to carry out what is expected of them."* The remaining comments have been broken down further into three more specific topics: lack of skills in specific areas; educational knowledge; and in governance and management.

There were 37 references that commented on board members lacking skills in a variety of different areas. Most commonly referenced areas were finances, property, and recruitment. Other areas included disciplinary action, e.g. student stand downs or exclusions, learning support and neurodiversity, and health and safety. Three comments referred specifically to cultural competency and board members not being skilled in their Te Tiriti o Waitangi obligations, such that *"some Boards actively resist trying to get to grips with the issues."* One respondent commented, "*BOT members are generally not trained in school governance, financial, property or staff management. Therefore many decisions are beyond their capability. There is a high risk of things being badly managed, sliding unnoticed, or going wrong."*

Educational expertise was the largest topic that respondents felt board members lacked, 64 comments. These comments were general, suggesting that *"boards are made up of educational 'lay' people who largely have little expert or detailed knowledge of the education system."* Some were more detailed, suggesting that board members did not understand best pedagogical practice, or the requirements and expectations of teachers, and so effectively could not contribute. A lack of educational knowledge was also attributed to the increase in principal's workload as a result of having to upskill the board.

The third topic was the lack of knowledge and expertise in governance and management, 42 comments. The majority of these comments were general, stating board members were *"often unskilled and overwhelmed by governance."* Other comments suggested that being unskilled in governance was disproportionately more common in smaller communities or lower decile areas where there was greater difficulty in electing board members with greater expertise more generally.

Geographic location, including small communities, rural and small schools, and lower decile or socioeconomic areas was cited in 42 comments. Respondents stated schools located in these areas were disadvantaged because their pool of potential candidates for board membership was often smaller, and lacked the skills and expertise in the areas mentioned above. This disparity was seen to *"perpetuate inequity as higher decile schools have*

educated parents – like accountants and lawyers running budgets and doing the books, lower decile schools do not have access to such skills on their Boards."

The tenure of a board member was commented on by four respondents. The three-year election cycles, and this was highlighted for intermediate schools, were considered as a weakness due to a *"loss of knowledge and continuity,"* as well as *"starting from scratch and reworking over ground covered by previous Boards."* This meant that boards were less likely to upskill, or focus on long-term strategic visions for the school, and instead focus on smaller tasks until their term was finished.

Community representation

Community representation was the second largest sub-theme with 311 references on how well boards reflected the make-up of their communities. Comments were categorised similarly to the capability sub-theme, as either general (19), positive (212), or negative (82). There were a greater range of answers, particularly within general and negative comments.

General

There were 19 comments that were considered general, with respondents acknowledging that boards were often *"as diverse as the school body if a range of parents get involved."* Several respondents commented that *"the original thinking around local input was good,"* however for some communities, it is not working. There is an assumption that there are people in the community willing to undertake the positions, and are representative of a range of diverse groups.

Positive

The majority of comments in this sub-theme were positive, suggesting that community representation is working well for many boards. There were 212 comments that were broadly categorised into four topics including diversity of people and experiences, community and parent involvement, being representative of the community, and ownership.

There were 35 comments referring to the diversity on boards, such that there was a range of skills, experiences, and people that served. This strengthened the capability of the board and allowed for upskilling for members as well as greater networks to be shared across the school and community. Additionally, respondents stated that in some cases, for any skills or representatives that may be lacking, they used their resources to co-opt and ensure that there was ample diversity on their boards.

One respondent commented, *"Strong parental input and sense of ownership over what happens in the school. Some great support from skilled parents for schools that goes well beyond the PPTA model of the past that was largely just fundraisers. Parent representatives are upskilled about how schools work, genuinely impact on what happens in them and are empowered around their children's education. We really don't want to lose all this."*

Further, 69 comments suggested that the current model allowed for greater involvement from both parental and community perspectives. The majority of these comments stated that boards gave parents a voice and allowed them to have input into their children's education. This gave a sense of empowerment and was positive for their children's success.

Additionally, 45 comments referred to how well representative boards were of their communities. Respondents stated that this let boards set a strategic direction that was reflective of their communities, and let the unique character of a school develop. One respondent noted that *"this model allows for community environments and cultures to be*

reflected in how the school is organised and operates. There is no 'one size fits all' within this approach if the Board is truly reflective of their community and the needs of that community."

The largest topic that emerged, with 92 comments, was the sense of ownership that communities and parents had over the running of the school. This included a greater buy-in and responsibility from parents and community to deliver quality education for their learners. Many respondents suggested that the community were there for the "right" reasons, and they *"genuinely care about the wellbeing and achievement of* [their] *school."* They suggested that would be lost under a centralised board who may not be as invested. Further, there were 31 comments that related to the local knowledge and context that the community and parents possessed, suggesting *"there is expert community knowledge, understand[ing], and a grassroots response … you have community advocating for what they know their community needs are."* This was seen as a strength as respondents felt a local board is better placed to make decisions that meet their needs and reflect the culture of the community.

Negative

There were 82 negative comments, and the vast majority of respondents considered the largest weakness of the current model was that boards were not representative of their local communities. One respondent commented that *"a potential strength is the Board reflects the community but in reality this is never the case."* One respondent noted that the increasing number of out of zone enrolments meant that boards were no longer representative of their communities because the children did not reside in the surrounding area.

The largest reason cited for boards not representing their communities was due to a lack of representation from minority groups, and *"those who most need representation on the BOT are least likely to have it (those at a disadvantage). BOT memberships is limited to those who are privileged leading to exponential levels of marginalisation by those families who are disadvantaged."* A variety of reasons for being unable to serve were given, such as solo parents, parents with children who have higher needs, are not comfortable speaking in predominantly English, or work during the evenings. One respondent noted that *"school Boards attract parents who [are] able to contribute, what about the parents that can't, how are their children's interests represented?"*

Nine respondents specifically stated the lack of Māori representation on boards, *"Boards can be misrepresentative of Māori whānau and Māori communities, and can be underrepresented by Māori Board members."* Some respondents cited greater difficulty in being elected on boards as a Māori representative, *"You are not likely to be elected on and only a few Boards in our area have a Māori rep."* Similarly, two comments specifically referred to a lack of Pacific representatives on boards. Pacific people were often mentioned alongside Māori representatives, this highlighted a grouping together of two communities that may have a degree of overlap, however are not always being recognised as a distinct community.

There were five references that commented on a *"lack of representation for neurodiverse and disabled students, parents and teachers. Who speaks for the students who are most likely to be excluded, stood down, bullied and ignored in our schools."*

Six comments referred to smaller communities as having a *"small-town mentality"* where it can be harder for minority communities to be represented on boards. Reasons given were largely interpersonal in nature, such as people forming cliques and having implicit biases and conflicts of interests which are compounded in smaller centres where people know each other.

Respondents stated that as a result of not being representative of their communities, this leads to an imbalance of views, some voices that are not heard, and an implicit or unconscious bias when boards are making decisions.

Interpersonal dynamics

Respondents within this theme commented largely on the interpersonal factors that resulted in problems within boards of trustees. Nine comments were positive, suggesting that the relationship between the board of trustees and the principal resulted in positive outcomes for schools *"when it works."*

The majority of the comments, 165 comments, which referred to the relationship between boards of trustees, principals, and parents of students were largely negative. These have been broken down further into two broad topics, personal agendas (102), and relationship management (67).

Personal agendas have been generally described by respondents as a single member or multiple members serving on boards for self-serving reasons which may not necessarily align with best education practice or the best interests of the whole school. This was the largest topic within this sub-theme; with 63 comments suggesting that *"parents with their own agendas are a problem."* Additionally, nepotism or conflicts of interest, favouritism and bias, and manipulation were identified by respondents as specific examples where personal agendas are being pushed. Respondents (23 comments) suggested that many parents serving on boards of trustees were there for their own children's interests or were inherently biased, as *"they may only be thinking about more privileged kids rather than disadvantaged students in terms of uniform cost, equipment cost."* There were 11 comments suggesting there was a conflict of interest or nepotism; roles within the school were given to those who had a connection to board members. Conflicts of interest were most commonly used to refer to principals being full board members as well as employees that were head of management. Lastly, five comments specifically stated that either principals or board members manipulate other members in order to further their own interests.

Relationship management was the second topic identified, with 31 comments. This covered a broad range of interpersonal issues across principals, board members, and parents of students. It included bullying among members, more inexperienced members being "influenced" by more experienced members, and general personality clashes preventing change or critique. Additionally, one respondent suggested *"some parents [are] not wanting to make a fuss, or 'rock the boat' as we were told."* Some comments specifically referred to this being problematic in smaller towns and centres where *"the community is quite close knit."*

One respondent commented, *"Can be a high turnover especially at intermediates. Probably has contributed to greater variance between schools and schools needing commissioners appointed as it is quite self-referencing and difficult if the relationships break down."*

Within the sub-topic of relationship management, a further 27 comments directly referenced the principal taking over, or exerting too much power and influence over the board. One respondent commented, *"At present a dominating principal can completely control a board. I have seen one board meeting where the principal had opened all correspondence addressed to the board, vetted it, decided what needed to be seen by the board, then advised them how to respond to these remaining letters!"* The largest concern among respondents suggested that principals were responsible for providing information and data to the board to inform their strategic thinking, however this was at their own discretion. This can result in the principal taking advantage of less experienced or knowledgeable board members. Two comments specifically suggested that for Pacific board members and

parents, it can be *"difficult to question the principal."* It is important to note that the respondents of these comments did not self-identify as being from any Pacific nations, they identified as Pākehā/New Zealand European.

Lastly, nine comments suggested there was a degree of popularity vote and "clique-y" behaviour amongst board members. Four comments indicated parents and board members did not challenge other board members or the principal as this may lead to unfair treatment of their child at school.

Roles and responsibilities

This sub-theme refers to the roles and responsibilities that are expected of boards of trustees. Comments within this sub-theme were more general and there was a greater range of opinions, *"Those who are involved get to plan and implement the vision and strategic goals of the kura – whānau, kaiako, ākonga."*

Seventeen comments referred to the governance and management aspect of the board's role. One comment suggested that board members are more likely to understand a governance role now than in previous years. The remaining comments all referred to the difficulty in differentiating governance and management, *"Governance versus management is a difficult concept – BOT are viewed as higher than the teachers and professionals in the job."*

Six comments saw boards of trustees as a strength because this allowed for faster decision making based on the needs of the school and did not need any input from the centre. Similarly, four comments supported having the autonomy to make decisions and having *"oversight of the vision and kaupapa of the school, acting as kaitiaki for the taonga which is the school."*

There were 13 comments that referred to the specific responsibilities of the board; the breadth and complexity of the tasks that are expected of boards is seen as a weakness. More specifically, management of finances, property, health and safety, and staff appointment were cited as responsibilities that may not be best suited to the board. This was due to a lack of expertise in a given area as well as being considered unreasonable given the lack of recompense for the workload expected. One comment suggested that finance, appointment, and property should be centrally managed, so the right staff can be employed within a school.

Boards of Trustees (general comments)

There were 76 comments that did not fit within the sub-themes identified. The majority of the comments were broad in nature, e.g. *"Reliant on the honesty of trustees."* Some more common ideas that emerged included a lack of transparency and information sharing, accountability, and the relative cost to run boards over other governance models.

Seven respondents referred to a lack of transparency and that the lack of information shared with parents who did not serve on boards. One respondent commented, *"Information in open meetings are not shown openly among those who are listening … lack of transparency on all correspondence ... parents' rights to listening in on board meetings."* A further four respondents stated that they did not understand the board of trustee system, and that information about the board of trustees model was not being provided to new families when their children start school. One respondent commented, *"As a migrant I do not understand the parent base BoT model…"*

Three comments stated that there were poor accountability mechanisms for boards of trustees, and that there should be an appraisal and review system for *"poorly performing school[s] … [and] their Board of Trustees."*

Five respondents commented that boards of trustees were "cheap" and some considered it as a model that saved central government money due to utilising the good faith of parents. One respondent commented, *"Governance, finance and property management gets done for free by parents, and the government only needs to step in with their own staff when things go seriously wrong. This is a high risk approach, and school performance is often well below where it should be long before the government finally step in."* Another emerging idea suggested that the current model was inefficient, that schools should not continue to reinvent the wheel, and that there could be a more efficient management of resource sharing and responsibilities.

Support and training

Support and training are defined as comments relating to upskilling or training opportunities for board members, and/or external help or support from organisations. Respondents generally commented on the training of board members, rather than support. Seven respondents stated that there was not enough support; specific examples given were through an abdication of responsibility from the Ministry of Education, or that board members had no support during times of need or crisis.

There were 31 references that suggested there should be more training given to board members. Respondents cited the training was currently insufficient, or that board members lacked the funds to be able to attend training, both as paid release time from work as well as the cost of the training itself. Additionally, respondents suggested that training be targeted toward areas such as governance, dispute resolution, and best education practice.

A further 10 comments suggested that training needs to be made mandatory, as currently there is variation, where *"some boards resist training opportunities; some boards grab as much training as they can."* One respondent commented, *"No baseline mandatory training - all self-driven by individual trustees/boards. This is incredibly concerning given the types of decisions that boards are responsible for e.g., Suspension meeting outcomes."*

Three respondents suggested that better, clearer guidelines need to be given to board members that outline their roles and responsibilities, and lines of accountability. The underlying sentiment was that *"they [boards] are only strong if they are a group who understand how the education system works and they have been given the proper training so they understand what their roles and functions are."*

Six respondents did praise the training and guidance given through the New Zealand School Trustees Association (NZSTA), and the Ministry of Education, in particular citing that *"NZSTA is an excellent resource for boards in the current model, especially if they are a largely inexperienced board."*

Elections and appointments

This sub-theme encompassed comments that referred to the way board members were elected. The 26 comments within this sub-theme largely focused on the difficulty in gaining enough trustees to stand for election. Respondents noted that *"in some regions, there are simply not enough volunteers."* This was cited as a difficulty particularly in smaller schools, and in rural and isolated areas. Other reasons given suggested the role was not desirable and those with the skills to perform the role did not have the capacity to participate. A further

two comments stated that there was little point in voting because there were so few people standing. One comment raised an issue that there was little information given throughout their community, and as such there were fewer people standing.

Nine comments referred to the popular vote, similarly to the "interpersonal dynamics" sub-theme. The underlying sentiment of these comments suggested that *"it could work better if parent and staff trustees apply for roles and go through a selection process, rather than relying on popular vote."*

Five comments spoke about the tenure of the position. These comments suggested the three year election cycle was too short; by the time board members were familiar with the position, an election cycle would take place, and the short tenure did not allow for continuity. On the other hand, some responded there were members that had been serving for more than ten years and the possibility that this could lead to stagnation. One respondent commented that serving a long tenure on a board was sometimes a necessity in rural schools because they are unable to fill the vacancy, *"so some parent reps are faced with YEARS on a BOT which can be a huge ask."*

Three comments were positive, and praised the democratic election process. One respondent noted that *"people who are genuinely committed to the school would stand for election."*

Conditions

Respondents within this sub-theme commented on the barriers that prevented them from serving on boards. Twenty-five references indicated the large time commitment as the largest barrier for participation on school boards. Respondents cited that it was difficult to find the time due to work demands or other priorities. A further 10 comments cited remuneration as a barrier, indicating the compensation for the effort required was too poor. Other barriers identified included the transport to meetings and having to arrange for care of dependents. One respondent commented, *"The increasing complexity of information which the Boards of trustees must contend with provides challenges for what are, however committed and professional they may be, essentially volunteers."*

Six respondents commented on the complexity of the role, suggesting that *"BOT members are concerned about the ramifications of some laws, e.g., H&S [Health & Safety] and being accountable if something goes wrong."* Further, there is huge pressure on boards to perform when their school may be in times of trouble or crisis.

Other governance models

This theme was to capture specific ideas respondents gave that offered alternatives to the current parent-based board of trustees model. Six specific ideas have been identified within this question and largely consist of: disestablishing boards for an advisory service; a cluster model with a single board overseeing many schools; and appointment of a commissioner or district education officer.

One respondent commented, *"Disestablishing boards and NZSTA and replacing them with governance/ advisory service overseen by regional MOE offices would be a better model for the future."*

Several respondents commented that expertise should be provided to boards when they were unable to find that expertise. This often included educationalists, lawyers, and those experienced in finance. An emerging theme suggested that parent views were important but

this may not be best suited to the current model of boards of trustees and the amount of responsibility they hold. One respondent suggested, *"The Ministry of Education should appoint a person with education/teaching background to be part of the board or better still, there should not be a board of trustees. A better model would be to appoint commissioners whom the Principals should be reporting to."*

The alternative cluster that was proposed was within the current Communities of Learning | Kāhui Ako cluster. One board would be responsible for 5 to 10 schools with a five year tenure instead of three. Another respondent elaborated further, *"I can see where an option of a joint board of trustees for more than one school could be valuable, especially in a rural area or in areas where there is little uptake from potential trustees, but I do not believe this should be compulsory. I would not like to see a return to a centralized system of governance such as the Education Boards of old. Local governance supported by good systems of adequate resourcing and support is still a desirable approach, in my view."*

Question 2 – How can we ensure that Te Tiriti o Waitangi is given active expression in all schools and kura?

Responses to giving active expression to Te Tiriti o Waitangi (Te Tiriti) were spread over a greater breadth of the coding framework than in the previous question. The table below shows the five emergent themes for this question. It is also important to note that there are varying degrees of overlap between topics and ideas within themes due to coding comments to more than one node (themes or sub-themes in the coding framework).

Themes	Sub-themes	References	Total references
Diversity		13	
	Māori	55	
	Te Tiriti o Waitangi	169	
	Māori medium	7	
	Biculturalism	19	263
Progress and achievement		2	
	Curriculum	64	
	Local Design	6	
	Te Reo	89	161
Community partnerships and whanaungatanga		47	
	Whānau and Family	14	
	Community	11	
	Iwi	29	101
Teaching		8	
	Capability	3	
	Pedagogy	4	
	Professional Learning and Development	57	
	Initial Teacher Education	22	
	Workload	3	
	Diversity	4	101
Schools		16	
	Boards of trustees	79	95

Diversity

This theme was the largest, 263 comments, and relates to our minority populations. These include people who identify as or are Māori, Pacific people, LGBTQIA+, disadvantaged and at-risk people, as well as migrant and former refugees. Access to education and barriers that prevent people from accessing education are included in this theme, however it was not an emergent theme for this question. The largest emergent sub-themes within this theme were Māori, Te Tiriti, Māori medium education, and biculturalism.

There were two ideas within the general diversity theme, favouring multiculturalism, and racism. Two respondents that suggested we have enough diversity within schools and do enough to reflect different cultures and Te Tiriti.

Multiculturalism emerged as a topic within both diversity and biculturalism; where respondents have commented on multiculturalism in relation to biculturalism, these have been coded to biculturalism. There were seven respondents that cited celebrating diversity within schools by allowing people of different cultures to express their traditions. This may be through foods, festivals, or dances, and otherwise exposing students to new experiences. Respondents felt that given the diverse ethnic make-up of Aotearoa New Zealand, many

cultures needed to be given consideration. One respondent commented, *"Personally as a migrant from a different cultural background I would prefer a multicultural approach to education rather than bi-cultural. I believe this would better reflect the real and current New Zealand and help children of today prepare for New Zealand of [the] future."*

The other emergent topic was racism, including unconscious bias. Though the comments were general in nature, the underlying sense was that *"racism is most definitely present, in all cultures,"* it must be acknowledged, and we must do something about it. Seven respondents spoke of racism and unconscious bias which was referred to as a specific example of racism, *"[E]nsure that deficit thinking about anyone not Pākehā is utterly unacceptable and something is done about it."*

Māori

This sub-theme captures comments that relate to Māori topics. There were 55 general comments, the largest emergent topics including the workforce, school culture, and the education system. There were 17 respondents who referred to the education workforce, suggesting there needs to be more representation of Māori people in general, on boards of trustees, as teachers, and as specialist teachers. Additionally, respondents felt that more education is required for the current workforce to be able to give active expression to Te Tiriti within classrooms. One respondent noted that we should not shame staff that have little knowledge of Te Ao Māori, *"[There] is a real racial sense of righteousness in all the schools I have worked in."*

Seven respondents that referred to the education system, suggesting that this could be mandated, or more centralised to ensure that schools can be held to account. Some respondents referred to policy that has already been developed, *"Quite of lot of policy has been produced e.g. Ka [Hikitia], but unaccompanied by effective mechanisms for implementation, review, adaptation, and monitoring of outcomes. The highly ineffective policy approach, under-investment and lack of accountability in early childhood/Kohanga reo education is also impacting on schools as tamariki arrive at school already well behind non-Māori peers."* One respondent commented that Te Whāriki gives better expression to Te Tiriti than the compulsory schooling sector.

Regarding racism, four respondents commented on unconscious bias within schools, citing that *"systemic racism reduces efforts by schools to support Māori students."* One respondent suggested that in order to address some of these issues, *"Leaders need to understand community, cultural diversity and their own 'silent biases' and many leaders need help to understand what it means for Māori to succeed as Māori. Break that down to the little steps and the close connections that can be made with when, learners and communities."*

There were four comments that were not supportive of Māori culture, these respondents felt that there was too much emphasis on Māori culture at present and that te reo should be optional to learn in schools.

Te Tiriti o Waitangi

This sub-theme is used as a "catch-all" to capture comments that refer to Te Tiriti and as such, it contains proportionally more comments than other themes due to the specific nature of the current question. These 169 comments are spread across a greater breadth, and contain some overlap with other themes. Comments were broadly divided into three categories, those in favour of more Te Tiriti expression, those opposed to more Te Tiriti expression, and general comments.

The majority of comments (109), suggested Te Tiriti should be given active expression in our education system, with many advocating for greater expression. There were 16 comments that supported doing more to express Te Tiriti but did not specify how (or specified that they did not know how to achieve this), *"By respecting New Zealand's history, cultural make up and being proud of who we are and where we came from."* A further nine comments suggested that more guidance on what this looks like in practice is required, and three comments suggested that expression is achieved by simply "living it". The remaining comments proposed ideas that fell into system level changes, or school level changes.

There were 12 respondents that commented on the workforce, ranging from *"hire people who are legitimately 'in the know' and not just people who tick boxes"* to frontline staff that are seen as role models. From a system perspective, respondents cited that the centre needed to provide more support and guidance to ensure that staff were able to effectively uphold Te Tiriti values. One respondent commented that *"it is important that this responsibility remains vested in the school. However, more central support for developing capacity in this area would be really useful."*

At a system level, nine respondents felt that there needed to be a shared understanding between all participants in the education system on the principles and values of Te Tiriti. Twenty-five comments spoke about the system in general, citing that upholding Te Tiriti values needs to be demonstrated from the centre as well as through our school staff. There were specific suggestions such as introducing a monitoring system that would ensure schools were meeting their obligations, mandating or developing policy options, and holding schools accountable and if necessary, disciplinary action for those that demonstrate behaviour contrary to Te Tiriti values.

From a school perspective, the predominant topic was school culture (17). Respondents suggested that Te Tiriti values can be embodied in school culture and modelled by every day practices such as daily karakia, ensuring visibility through posters, bilingual administration and documents. Another common topic was ensuring that Te Tiriti is included within all school charters, some respondents suggesting this be made compulsory. There were 13 references with an overall sense of, *"Teach it with passion and an understanding that it is about our values as a society and how we treat each other and the environment."*

There were 16 comments that felt that we did not need to do anything further to give expression to Te Tiriti, with eight comments suggesting that it was not relevant and another eight that suggested we already do enough. For respondents that felt Te Tiriti was not relevant, reasons ranged from not seeing it as important in relation to other subjects and, *"the reality is that despite the constant barrage of messaging from government about how important it is, it is basically irrelevant and of little interest or benefit to the majority of parents and students."* The other eight respondents that felt we already do enough within schools to give active expression to Te Tiriti were less negative. One respondent noted, *"I think the balance is right in most kura as we are. NEGS/NAGS seem to create clear direction. Whilst there is a need for Boards to be aware of CR & RP [Assumed: culturally responsive & relational pedagogy] issues, it does tend to fall more in the realm of operations and implementation than it does governance."*

There were six general references that commented on the current state, or offered factual statements rather than an opinion. One respondent commented, *"It is now there in the new Code and Standards for teachers and principals."* Additionally, two respondents stated that it was not their place to answer this question, *"I am not qualified to answer this. This needs to be answered through appropriate consultation with Māori."*

Māori medium education settings

This sub-theme relates to Māori medium education provision. There were seven respondents that referred to kura, with the prevailing sense being that there should be more full-immersion schools that are available and easily accessible to all learners. Additionally, one respondent cited that Māori-specific curriculum content is lacking, "*There is an alarming scarcity of specific curriculum resources for Māori, even in Kura Kaupapa.*"

One respondent commented, "*It should be the right of all children to speak te reo, at present this is massively restricted in practice since almost all schools only teach in English and schools make token gestures rather than implement Te Tiriti o Waitangi. This should be a right for all New Zealanders not just Māori.*"

Biculturalism

This sub-theme reflects comments on the partnership between Māori and Pākehā. Partnership in this context refers to the definition given in the New Zealand Curriculum[2], such that "*everybody has rights and responsibilities as citizens and that the Treaty affords Māori a dual set of rights as tangata whenua*" and acknowledging "*the special place of Māori culture within New Zealand (a multicultural society underpinned by bicultural foundations).*"

There were 19 comments within this sub-theme, two of which preferred a multicultural approach rather than a bicultural approach. The overall sentiment of the remaining comments suggest that there needs to be a value shift toward genuinely embracing a bicultural partnership that is "*true partnership, not lip service.*" This includes embedding it within the culture of the school and "*allowing [whanaungatanga], cultural diversity and empowering principles of te whāriki curriculum into kura. Ensuring that [tikanga] is not put [on] a shelf until ERO visit.*" One respondent commented, "*Active expression? I think it's more that the bicultural partnership should underpin everything that happens in a school, not just be pinned on the top with a convenient box to tick. Enough of the surface level rubbish. Let's live it.*"

Progress and achievement

The 161 comments within this theme include the curriculum and content taught within schools, as well as how and what we measure and consider as achievement. The largest sub-themes within this theme included curriculum (64), locally designed curriculum (six), and te reo (89). The two comments within this parent theme were general in nature, respondents suggesting that we ensure children are progressing and building on what they know, and by encouraging schools to have more autonomy in determining what school achievement looks like.

Curriculum

There were 64 references that commented on what we teach in school and where this should sit within the curriculum, as well as how we deliver the content we teach. The comments can largely be broken down into giving active expression Te Tiriti by teaching it within the curriculum (28), neutral or general comments on what active expression may look like (29), and we do not need to give more active expression or we already do enough (five).

The majority of the comments suggested that we give active expression to Te Tiriti by ensuring that it is taught within the school curriculum. There were 13 comments that Te Tiriti

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[2] https://nzcurriculum.tki.org.nz/Curriculum-resources/NZC-Updates/Issue-16-January-2012/Treaty-principles-Partnership

should be taught in the curriculum generally, and a further three comments stating it should be embedded throughout the curriculum, not as a specific subject. One respondent commented, *"Require that more of it is taught across the curriculum, in more of a natural manner rather than a token 'we have to learn a bit to keep everyone happy' attitude."*

The subjects that were most commonly brought up were history and Māori, which was considered as an all-encompassing label, including tikanga and te reo. There were 27 respondents who stated we should be teaching more New Zealand history, several respondents suggesting New Zealand history be taught over European history. There were four comments that specified more pre-colonial history and Māori history should be taught in schools, six comments specified Māori land wars, and six comments referred to Te Tiriti. The respondents' general sentiment was that *"we should treasure our indigenous culture as much as we would expect other colonised nations to respect and honour their first peoples. Tell the real story of our country, from as many perspectives as possible. Before and after European arrival."*

Regarding the delivery of the curriculum, ideas ranged from ensuring that we embed Te Tiriti within our charters and school curriculum, making it compulsory, and providing support and resources to help teachers to deliver this to students. There were nine respondents who stated teaching New Zealand history and Te Tiriti should be compulsory within the curriculum, *"Curriculum, charter, delivery, timetable and all process and practices need to be framed in Te Tiriti o Waitangi. The values and aspirations of the Treaty need to be shaped from the top and the bottom and sideways."* One respondent stated that this needed to be legislated, and three additional comments stated that the values of Te Tiriti should be embedded within the curriculum and teaching practice, not just *"used as token teaching so you can tick it off the list."*

There were five references that suggested experts or programmes be provided to support teachers to teach, particularly Māori culture, tikanga, and te reo where there are gaps in teachers' knowledge. Two comments suggested specific teaching content or texts to help give clear guidelines, *"If you're serious about this principle, then be absolute in providing content to follow so we can teach it, not try and justify that we have taught it when we don't have enough time."*

Lastly, there were seven comments that stated New Zealand history or Māori content should not be taught in a biased, "whitewashed" manner. For Māori history in particular, respondents stated this needs to be taught from a Māori perspective. Conversely, one respondent commented, *"Te Tiriti o Waitangi should be taught in the context of New Zealand history, but in a BALANCED way. It needs to be taught accurately, factually, excluding revisionist history and speculation, without the current bias or agendas behind it."*

Another respondent commented, *"The spirit of the New Zealand curriculum is not to be content-prescriptive, but if New Zealand content is not valued by white-centric teachers and middle leaders, how else can students experience it?"*

Locally designed curriculum

There were six comments which generally described the flexibility of a locally designed curriculum to reflect the cultural expression of a locality. Two comments stated that more support and guidance from the Ministry of Education would help schools to meet their Te Tiriti obligations. One comment suggested that it was equally as important to consider teaching about other localities in New Zealand, given the diverse range of variation between regions. One respondent suggested, *"Ensure Te Tiriti, Te Ao Māori, localised curriculum, historical understanding etc. taught and learnt throughout schooling. Schools to evidence*

this. This will mean iwi and whānau consultation and involvement will need to be more ongoing and authentic, with power shared."

Te Reo

There were 89 comments within this sub-theme. The majority of these comments were in favour of teaching te reo in schools (44). However, there were differing opinions on whether learning te reo in school should be optional or compulsory. Two respondents stated that learning te reo *"should be optional for the individual,"* 13 respondents encouraged learning te reo but did not state whether this should be optional or compulsory in the curriculum, and 31 respondents explicitly stated that we should *"make Te Reo Māori compulsory."* However, several comments acknowledged that we currently lack the teacher capability and resourcing in order to make te reo compulsory in school. Respondents also commented on the age that we should be introducing te reo in schools, three comments suggested from early childhood education, 19 comments suggested from primary school and commonly through to secondary schooling, and only one comment suggested introducing te reo at year 9 in secondary school.

One respondent commented, *"Start with te reo in schools – I am not in favour of compulsory te reo purely because it is not achievable at this stage – however there is not enough resource or support for te reo in mainstream schools. Teachers need to take more responsibility for teaching te reo and including mātauranga Māori in classrooms."*

Respondents also gave ideas and comments regarding how we teach te reo in schools. These ideas predominantly comprised of using te reo experts (who may not necessarily be teachers), upskilling our current teaching workforce, and providing resources and programmes to schools and teachers. There were nine comments that suggested using experts or qualified te reo teachers to teach te reo in schools. This would help expose students and teachers to te reo regularly and improve the standard and quality of te reo instruction *"so that the language is taught properly and not in an ad hoc manner by people who mean well but do not speak the language themselves."* There were 14 respondents suggested professional learning and development be given to teachers in order to upskill them. Respondents suggested that by upskilling our current workforce, this would give teachers the confidence to use te reo more frequently within their classrooms. One respondent commented, *"A lot of teachers I've talked to are actually afraid/nervous to use Te Reo because they don't want to do it wrong and come across as ignorant."* The third topic proposed included producing resources and programmes to schools and teachers where it would be more difficult to provide a te reo teacher.

There were 11 comments that stated te reo needs to be not only taught, but embedded within the culture of the school. This included having school signs and administration in both English and te reo, as well as teaching in both mediums, *"Make te reo Māori use as a communicative language a key focus for all schools with a strong emphasis on authentic partnerships with iwi at a local level."*

Community partnerships and whanaungatanga

This theme describes the relationship between agents within the education system, such as schools, the Ministry of Education, or the Education Review Office (ERO), with whānau and families, the wider community, employers and businesses, and iwi, 101 comments. The largest sub-themes for this question included partnerships with whānau and family, the wider community, and iwi.

Whānau and families

There were 14 comments relating to how schools should involve whānau and families within their children's education. Nine respondents suggested schools need to engage with the whānau and families of their students in an authentic and respectful manner. *"Higher expectations of 'partnership' on schools to ensure a whānau voice and input is caught, and an expectation that this is done respectfully and evidences in more than just ERO reports."*

There were three respondents that stated schools should do more to ensure that whānau and families understand what is being taught in school. This could be supported by offering courses to whānau and family, and one comment suggested establishing an *"active whānau group"* in order to foster *"active collaboration between school leadership and Māori whānau, hapū and iwi."* Conversely, two respondents noted expertise sharing was not simply one-way, such that whānau and family that could *"bring a Te ao Māori perspective"* and can offer teachers and staff support. One respondent noted that *"parents need to be advised of what teachers should be doing in order to support them from a culturally responsive perspective. Māori strategies need to be explicitly described and explained by the school in how they support students and their families."*

Wider community

There were 11 respondents that commented on the role of the wider community and how it can help give active expression to Te Tiriti. There were no overarching topics or ideas that emerged within this sub-theme. Some comments were general in nature, and often community was mentioned alongside whānau and family therefore these are similar ideas. Overlaps included the sharing of Te Ao Māori expertise from members in the community with teachers and staff, and recognising the status of tangata whenua and the responsibility of honouring the values and principles of Te Tiriti.

There were six respondents that broadly suggested schools engage with the community. Specific ideas included needing to attract the right attitudes from community members, giving cultural responsiveness training, and ensuring that any engagement was done so authentically.

Three references specifically related to the ways that communities can help give active expression to Te Tiriti. One respondent suggested creating a whānau committee comprising of community members, similar to another idea suggested in "whānau and families". There were two responses related to boards of trustees, one suggesting that there is Māori representation on the boards, and the other suggesting that boards be disestablished in favour of a Ministry-led governance model. One respondent suggested, *"By the MOE having a lead in governance – get rid of BOTs and replace with MOE panel and invited members of a community to govern the schools who would fairly represent iwi."* The final idea suggested schools and communities can encourage upholding Te Tiriti principles through community-based projects such as buildings, urban landscaping, and conservation.

One respondent noted their school already gives active expression to Te Tiriti, *"I think it is through current legislation and processes e.g. our board receives data on Māori achievement; Māori community is consulted in charter review and in special Māori hui; board have put Māori-specific goals in charter and annual plan."* However, it is important to note that the respondent indicated they identified as Pākehā/New Zealand European and not Māori.

Iwi

There were 29 references that gave similar comments to answers in the previous two sub-themes. Twenty-two comments referred to supporting schools to build genuine partnerships with their local iwi, and consulting their expertise to give active expression to Te Tiriti. One respondent suggested having *"partnership in governance at all levels – Māori children and whānau need to have a voice in decision making processes at all levels, and strong relationships with local iwi and consultation with tangata whenua are crucial."*
One respondent noted that *"having an understanding of any existing iwi engagement with crown would be helpful to know what the iwi perspective is regarding partnership with crown."*

Similar to the "Wider Community" sub-theme discussed earlier, six respondents suggested there should be greater Māori representation on boards of trustees. One comment stated it should be compulsory to offer a place on the board to the local iwi. One respondent suggested, *"Boards must undergo training to fully understand how indigenous rights must be honoured, relationships with local iwi must be made and one Board member should be elected to take responsibility for a portfolio of work to encourage Māori cultural knowledge in their school."*

General comments

There were 47 general comments that did not fit within any of the sub-themes identified. Only comments that were not discussed in other themes will be included. There were 15 comments that focused on the relationship between school and local iwi. Respondents felt that there should be *"support given to schools in establishing genuine relationships with tangata whenua."* One respondent commented, *"Understanding the unique status of tangata whenua and the roles, rights and responsibilities that come with the title for students, parents and the wider community honouring the principles of protection, participation and partnership."*

Teaching

There were 101 references which related to topics and ideas regarding teachers. The largest sub-themes identified included pedagogy (four), capability (three), professional learning and development (57), initial teacher education (22), workload, and diversity (four).

Pedagogy

This sub-theme refers to teaching practice. The four comments within this sub-theme suggest that best teaching practice in this context looks like teachers taking all reasonable steps to *"demonstrate respect for the heritages, languages and cultures of both partners to the Treaty of Waitangi"* and *"act in a manner that is consistent with the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi."*

Capability

There were three respondents that commented on teacher capability and their ability to give active expression to Te Tiriti. Respondents stated that presently, teachers do not have the necessary expertise and understanding of Te Tiriti. One respondent suggested teachers should demonstrate some empathy toward Māori before they are hired.

Professional learning and development

This sub-theme refers to professional learning and development opportunities on a range of topics for teachers. This was the largest emergent sub-theme, with 57 comments stating that giving teachers the opportunity to learn about Te Tiriti, te reo, and Te Ao Māori will help teachers become more capable and confident to apply their knowledge in the classroom.

There were 49 comments that spoke about giving teachers more professional training in a general sense. Respondents noted particular areas that required more professional learning, including te reo (15) and tikanga Māori (11). One respondent commented, *"Teachers need more education. Both in te Reo, and how to integrate Reo and tikanga into the class programme. Many teachers haven't had recent professional development in this. It also needs to be ALL schools – otherwise a teacher moves school and misses it."*

There were two respondents that specified culturally responsive teaching styles. One respondent commented, *"LOTS and LOTS of self-reflection needs to be part of staff's professional development in order to be aware of their own bias and stereotypical view. There needs to be an emphasis that being culturally responsive is a necessity for ALL teaching staff and teachers in training."*

In addition to the content of the professional learning, respondents also specified options for the delivery of the courses. Seven respondents suggested that training be compulsory for all teachers, whereas three respondents specified that this training be optional, *"but if it comes across as forced, expect resistance."*

There were five respondents that suggested courses become more regular, such that there is opportunity to continually build on knowledge, and a further two comments suggested that courses be instructed in *"concentrated PD blocks so it becomes more meaningful."*

Two comments suggested providing positive and encouraging professional development to teachers, which would give them greater confidence to use their knowledge in class. One respondent commented, *"Schools and Board should not feel they are being culturally 'beaten up', which is how much of the current PLD feels for teachers in particular."*

Initial teacher education

There were 22 references regarding the quality and content of initial teacher education. The majority of comments generally suggested that better initial teacher education is needed in order to give teachers the capability required to express Te Tiriti values and aspirations within their classrooms. Five comments suggested better quality training was needed around Te Tiriti and Te Ao Māori, and seven referred directly to better te reo quality.

Two respondents noted that in addition to quality teacher education, there needs to be some form of accountability to ensure that culturally responsive practice is carried through into the classroom and not simply a "box ticking" exercise for a teaching certificate. One respondent noted that *"with the huge focus on Cultural Responsiveness surely our understanding of what is required is filtering through to teachers. It is a requirement for our Practicing Certificate, so why are schools still not getting it?"*

Workload

This sub-theme refers to the amount of work required of teachers. Three respondents suggested that teachers' workloads do not allow them the capacity to prioritise engaging with whānau and family or actively taking steps to ensure they are giving expression to Te Tiriti. One respondent commented, *"I believe that at times when it may be overlooked it's only due*

to workload not a purposeful oversight."

Diversity

This sub-theme relates to the diversity of the teaching workforce. There were four comments that noted we should recruit a more diverse range of teachers, specifically those that identify as Māori. One respondent noted that recruitment of Māori teachers can be particularly challenging. Another respondent stated that we should *"employ [K]iwis not British teachers."*

General comments

There were eight general comments, which included ideas that suggested active expression of Te Tiriti is effected through the teacher's code of conduct and tātaiako and that we should hold teachers accountable for ensuring they uphold the principles. Additional comments stated that giving active expression, relies on the teachers and school leaders embodying and embedding it within the school culture. One respondent noted that while we may hold the values and aspirations of Te Tiriti, it is unclear what this may look like in practice.

There were two respondents that commented on the teaching workforce; one suggested it should be compulsory for allocated staff members to attend professional development courses in order to bring that knowledge back to their schools, and another suggested we ensure there is a te reo teacher in every school.

Schools

This theme is quite broad as it encompasses comments relating to school. There were 101 references, and the largest emergent sub-theme was boards of trustees (78).

Boards of Trustees

This sub-theme is an aggregate comprising of the topics that were discussed in question 1. There were 78 comments, with the largest emergent topics including support and training, community representation, and roles and responsibilities. Similar to question 1, alternative or other governance models are also included. There were seven general comments relating to boards that did not fit within the given topics; respondents believe that Te Tiriti should be given active expression but are not sure how to apply the principles in a practical sense.

There were 35 comments that formed the largest emergent topic, support and training for boards of trustees. Overall, these comments suggested that *"boards must undergo training to fully understand how indigenous rights must be honoured, relationships with local iwi must be made."* The majority of the comments referred to additional training and education that spanned across Te Tiriti workshops, te reo courses, and more generally, content that enabled board members to *"meaningfully support appropriate cultural contexts."* Seven respondents felt this training should be mandatory, and four respondents suggested that extra funding would be required, or courses should be made freely available. One respondent suggested *"mandatory training of boards as opposed to the current optional model."*

In addition to training, seven comments suggested boards required more support and guidance to ensure that they were upholding the principles of Te Tiriti. These respondents suggested exemplars and resources would give boards more clarity around how Te Tiriti can be effected in practice and allow them to tailor it to their communities. One respondent commented, *"Assist boards (and all New Zealand citizens) to understand what the phrase 'Māori achieving as Māori' actually means in practice. We know that students of different cultures feel they have to leave their own culture at the gate of the school, but not even*

Māori Board members can describe how things should be in order to enable Māori to achieve as Māori. This needs to be deeply understood so that the active expression of Te Tiriti o Waitangi is not given superficial lip service."

There were 20 comments that referred to having greater Māori representation on boards. These comments are largely general in nature, only suggesting that this representation be mandatory and that this will help give boards an authentic voice. However, it is less clear how this will enable boards to give active expression to Te Tiriti, one comment suggesting, *"Even when they do have representation, it seems insufficient to really make any measurable improvement in outcomes for Māori students."* One respondent noted that genuine relationships with local iwi groups may allow for greater board representation, however this may not be practical in all cases.

The smallest emergent topic related to the boards' roles and responsibilities. There were six comments that were similarly general, suggesting it should be a requirement of the board to ensure they are fulfilling their Te Tiriti obligations. One respondent suggested, *"One Board member should be elected to take responsibility for a portfolio of work to encourage Māori cultural knowledge in their school."*

There were three comments that suggested alternative governance constitutions and models. Two respondents suggested removing the current board of trustee system, in order to make it more professional due to the lack of capability and that this could create fairer iwi representation on boards. One respondent commented, *"In all kura where there are both Mainstream and Māori units that there should be co-governance … The only people who should decide what is best for Māori should be Māori. Period."*

General comments

There were 16 general comments, relating to school culture (six comments), and ensuring Te Tiriti is reflected in the school charter (four comments). The overall sentiment of these comments can be reflected by one respondent's comment, *"It should be in the fore of every aspect of the school. Tangata whenua and mana whenua relationships should be ongoing, nurtured and developed by the school."*

Question 3 – How can we ensure that all schools and kura are supported to meet the needs of all young people regardless of where they live?

Responses to how all schools and kura can be supported to meet the needs of young people regardless of where they live were spread across a range of themes. The table below show the themes that were identified for this question.

Themes	Sub-themes	References	Total references
Schools		28	
	Boards of Trustees	45	
	School infrastructure and resources	30	
	Enrolment and Zoning	25	
	Decile	38	
	Class size and ratio	42	
	Technology	15	223
Teaching		33	
	Capability	14	
	Pedagogy	10	
	Professional Learning and Development	28	
	Initial Teacher Education	17	
	Workload	19	
	Pay	38	
	Status	12	171
Learning support and disability		42	
	In-school staff	47	
	Services	23	
	Funding	57	169
Diversity		21	
	Access to education	36	
	Geography	43	100
Wellbeing and hauora		49	49
Community partnerships and whanaungatanga		35	35
Student-centred		32	32
Progress and achievement		31	31
Education workforce		27	27

Schools

This theme refers to topics and ideas relating to schools. This was the largest theme, with a total of 223 references, and six sub-themes emerging: boards of trustees (45), school infrastructure and resources (30), enrolment and zoning (25), decile (38), class size and ratio (42), and technology (15).

Boards of Trustees

This sub-theme refers to comments relating to boards of trustees, including alternative models of school governance. There were 45 references, with a number of topics emerging: general comments (12), funding (10), capability (7), and other governance (11).

The general comments included opinions on roles and responsibilities, appointments, and the support provided for boards of trustees. Two references suggested removing *"the majority of responsibilities from the boards of trustees."* These respondents felt that parents should be involved, however this may not necessarily be *"by putting them in the position of being trustees whose responsibilities become building projects, fixing smelly toilets, making sure the school has a sunsmart policy, and taking the builders to court when there is a leaky building problem."* A further three comments spoke about the appointment of board members, with one suggesting that there be *"an external member of the board not from the school."* Additional comments referred to support, such that *"there is a pool of people around that support schools/boards"*, or remote support such as online resources.

There were 10 comments that referred to funding in relation to boards of trustees. This included the amount of funding given to schools, as well as the funding model and the way in which boards were managing their finances. Respondents felt more funding needed to be given to boards to ensure that they could regularly provide professional development to staff, as well as maintain their schools. Further, there were five comments regarding the current funding model. Responses were mixed, with some suggesting that finances be centralised, *"I would like to see a review of how effective and efficient it is having each school individually controlling its own funding, I think this is a flawed model right from inception."* Other suggestions included providing support to upskill boards around financial responsibilities, or providing additional funding where professional skills are required.

The final emergent topic was around board capability. Seven references suggested that schools be able to seek external support and guidance where required, *"Positively help boards that struggle with the recruitment of quality staff, educate and upskill key roles like chair and finance – encourage successful boards to mentor struggling boards."*

There were 11 suggestions given for alternative models of school governance. Three respondents suggested that we remove the current parent-based model of boards of trustees, and return to a centralised governance model, *"Abolish individual BOTs and end the fragmentation of education and the inefficiencies in each school looking after finance and property. Consolidate back to regional bodies similar to the old Education Boards but without the nepotism and old boys network."* Another suggestion given by two respondents was to have regional or Communities of Learning | Kāhui Ako based boards that were responsible for a number of schools. This was cited as reducing competition between schools, and increasing the overall capability by increasing the pool of potential members. This was reiterated by another respondent who proposed *"increasing the use of alternative constitutions to provide more flexible boards."*

Two respondents suggested having professional governance, instead of relying on parents having the right skills. The final suggestion given cited, *"Boards should be answerable to an Area Committee so that the interests of all children are considered in every school. The Area Committee will have expert knowledge in the rights of children, disability rights, indigenous rights, [LGBTQ] rights etc. Each Board should have a disability and diversity representative, an inclusion representative and an indigenous rights representative so that all decisions consider the needs not only of the majority of children in a school but those children that are from minority groups, those that are disadvantaged or have specific cultural needs or accessibility needs. Parents should be able to take their concerns to the Area Committee who must provide non biased judgements on the treatment of children, with particular consideration for the rights of disabled children who are currently over represented in exclusion statistics and who currently have no recourse when schools are not meeting their needs or treating them in a discriminatory way."*

School infrastructure and resources

This sub-theme refers to all comments related to school property and infrastructure, and school resources. Among the 30 references, there were three emergent topics: school infrastructure and property (18), ICT hardware (three), and class resources (nine).

There were 18 references that related to school infrastructure and property. The majority of these comments were general, suggesting there needs to be more funding and resourcing to allow for *"better and well maintained school buildings."* Two respondents suggested that there needed to be *"investment in school property so schools can meet the demands of growing roles in a timely, well planned manner."* More specific ideas included giving schools easier access to school swimming pools, and centralising school property responsibilities, *"Fund all services and centralise the basic needs so across NZ you get the best deal on electricity, maintenance and such."* Three respondents noted the inequity in building quality, suggesting that "*buildings should be safe, mould free, warm and not leaky.*"

Three respondents commented on ICT hardware, suggesting there needs to be a degree of *"centralised provision of communication technology infrastructure*." One respondent suggested having *"a technology library where we could hire for a very low fee … as it is beyond most schools' budgets to purchase large sets."*

There were nine respondents who commented on classroom resources, suggesting that there needs to be equity of resourcing across all schools so they can deliver *"21ˢᵗ century teaching."* One respondent noted this should be future proofed, such that we are *"proactive not reactive situations."* The overall sentiment of these comments was that *"more funding is need to get more equitable access to resources in schools, no one should have to make do and no teacher should have to fork out money from their own pockets to subsidise a school's core business."*

Enrolment and zoning

This sub-theme refers to comments related to school enrolment and zoning. Twenty-five comments were predominantly directed toward zoning. Respondents were divided over whether schools should have enrolment zones. Nine references suggested zoning be removed, such that the *"socio-economic status of the area should have no impact of quality education and support should be put around these areas in order that children are set up to achieve."* These respondents indicate that families should have a choice to send their child to a school that best suits them, *"Every child should have the same opportunities regardless of where they live."*

Conversely, there were five respondents who felt zoning should be continued. Respondents who supported zoning also suggested that this would ensure students attend their local school. Seven references specifically suggested that all students should be supported to attend their local school, as this would *"ensure that schools had a diverse range of students."*

Decile

This sub-theme refers to comments made about the decile system. Decile ratings indicate the socioeconomic position of a school's student population relative to other schools.[3] They are based on the socioeconomic status of where their students live, not where the school is based. The Ministry of Education uses a school's decile rating to target funding toward state and state-integrated schools, such that a lower a school's decile rating, the more funding it receives to help their students overcome barriers to learning.

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[3] https://www.education.govt.nz/school/running-a-school/resourcing/operational-funding/school-decile-ratings/

There were 38 references within this sub-theme, respondents were divided on their opinions of the current funding system. Two respondents felt *"the decile system works well"*, whereas five respondents suggested we *"get rid of decile ratings."* Four respondents suggested reviewing the decile system.

Six comments suggested *"low decile schools still do not have the resources they need to accelerate well-being and achievement."* These respondents felt students in *"small, rural and low decile schools are particularly disadvantaged"* and *"resourcing of lower decile schools should be greater."* Conversely, there were six respondents who noted some high decile schools required more funding than their decile rating allows. Respondents suggested that *"inequality and poverty exists everywhere not just low socioeconomic areas"*, as there are families attending higher decile schools who cannot afford some resources, however the schools do not have the funds to support them. One respondent commented, *"In schools there are a mix of circumstances, and it is challenging to see those children being overlooked just because they attend a higher rated school."* These respondents, in addition to other respondents, indicated that they would prefer a funding system that is needs based, *"Put resourcing into the children who have needs, not into a rating system."*

Class size and ratio

This sub-theme refers to class size and the ratio of students to teachers. There were 42 references, all of which indicated that there needed to be smaller class sizes, or a smaller student to teacher ratio. Twenty-nine respondents suggested class sizes should be made smaller primarily through hiring more teachers. This was said to allow students *"to build a strong and robust relationship with their teachers and get the attention they deserve and input they need."* It would also allow teachers to meet all of their students' needs. The remaining 13 references commented on having smaller teacher to student ratios, one respondent suggesting an *"adult to child ratio of 1:12."* One respondent suggested that we *"assign a standard student equivalency score"*, where students with higher needs are given higher scores and the sum total of scores will determine how many children are in a teacher's class (see Annex 1 for more details).

Technology

Fifteen references commented on the role of technology, with a degree of overlap with other sub-themes. The overall sense was that digital technology should be available to every student, particularly those in more rural areas, *"Digital divide is one of the main issues for rural low decile schools."* Respondents felt it was beneficial for students to have the ability to communicate with each other, and access information that may not be readily available to them in their area.

General comments

There were 28 general references referring to a number of different ideas, including school types, and school size.

Comments referring to school type refers to the variety of schools within the compulsory schooling system, including Charter or Partnership schools or a correspondence school. There were eight references, the overarching sense of these comments were that there needs to be a variety in schooling as it may be *"unrealistic for schools to be expected to meet the needs of all young people."* Respondents suggested having alternative pathways available for all young people, such as apprenticeships, work experience, and vocational training. Regarding the delivery of education, respondents noted that correspondence and online-education can be used, however may only be suitable for a small proportion of

students' work. Other comments included having special education schools, community schools, and the view that *"Charter schools work."*

A further four references commented on the school size, suggesting it may be inefficient to have a number of struggling smaller schools within an area. These respondents felt that schools that have few students and struggle to recruit staff may benefit from working together and *"[merging] to establish ones that are more viable in terms of size."* Conversely two respondents felt that schools that are too large are *"simply too big and are stretched for resources whereas other schools have perfectly good facilities that are not being utilised."* One respondent commented that *"smaller schools are more caring of, and knowledgeable about, the students."*

Teaching

This theme was the second largest for this question, covering all topics and ideas related to the teaching profession. Of the 171 references, several sub-themes emerged: teacher pay (38), professional learning and development (28), workload (19), capability (14), initial teacher education (17), status of the teaching profession (12), and pedagogy (10).

There were 33 general comments, the majority of which suggested teachers *"are well supported and resourced."* One respondent suggested that we *"create an environment where staff can self-reflect and challenge personal judgement, bias and stereotypical views."* A number of ideas were given by respondents; creating assessment measures for teachers so individual student progress is taken into consideration, centrally controlling teacher postings, and *"having regional relief teacher registers so schools know who is potentially available fully registered teachers to call in to cover."*

Three references commented on teacher wellbeing, citing that teachers were stressed as a result of concerns such as workload and class resourcing.

Further, there were three comments on the diversity of the teaching workforce. Respondents considered diversity differently, suggesting teachers need to represent the *"communities in which they work"*, ensure it is a viable career option for men especially, and that we employ *"Kiwi teachers. Not foreigners that pronounce their vowels differently."*

Teacher pay

There were 38 comments within this sub-theme, all respondents suggesting that teachers should be *"properly paid"*, the majority suggesting that teachers be paid more. There were a variety of reasons given for paying teachers more. Respondents felt that financial incentives would encourage teachers to teach in rural and isolated areas, lower decile schools, schools that had greater needs and challenges, and hard to staff subjects. These respondents noted that some schools *"struggle to retain good staff who may be lured by more attractive opportunities/higher pay at higher decile schools."* Three references highlighted the rising cost of living, citing Auckland in particular, such that teachers must be paid so *"they can afford to live in all places."* One respondent suggested that an *"accommodation provision"* could be provided to areas where there is a need.

Another consideration that respondents highlighted were the retention of quality teachers and ensuring that teaching is an attractive profession. Four references suggested *"paying teachers appropriately so that good teachers are encouraged to stay in the profession."* A further seven references indicated that higher pay would encourage more people to become teachers, four suggesting that these people may be *"higher quality students."* One respondent also suggested we *"financially reward excellent teachers."*

Professional learning and development

There were 28 references relating to ongoing professional learning and development for teachers. Eleven comments were general, indicating that there should be *"quality professional development for staff."* More specific areas for development were provided; five references specifying learning support, *"All schools and teachers need special education training"*, and two references specifying culturally responsive teaching practice, *"All teachers should be exposed to Culture Counts through their teaching."*

Additionally, other areas mentioned by respondents included wellbeing, ensuring that teachers can *"meet the range of needs of students within schools"*, and *"better access to scholarships to upgrade teachers to masters degrees."* Five references suggested that these courses be provided or funded by the centre, citing that *"travel and relief costs are factored in, not only just the cost of attendance."*

One respondent commented, *"I've found support networks really vary and that it's often difficult to get inspiration and help as a teacher. My best [professional development] was driving for 3 ½ hours just to visit another school to see what they were doing. I'd like to see the culture of sharing more in NZ schools."*

Workload

There were 19 references, relating to the teacher's capacity to complete what is expected of them. Six comments were general, suggesting that we *"decrease workloads"* and increase funding such that *"our teachers are not overworked"* and *"the needs of children are met"*. The most common suggestion to decrease teacher's workload was to ensure that they had an adequate amount of non-contact time for assessing children, planning and preparing lessons, and upskilling so that they can meet all their students' needs. Respondents also suggested that the amount of paperwork and administration be reduced.

Capability

Fourteen respondents referred to teaching capability in the context of this question. The majority of these comments were general, suggesting the *"bar needs to be lifted higher"* and *"quality of teaching and learning needs to be a focus in all schools and managed in a professional way."* Two respondents suggested an appraisal system, such that peer reviews and critiques are given in order for areas of improvement. One respondent noted that this appraisal should be independently undertaken, and this would *"support quality implementation of effective research-based learning strategies."* Additionally, one suggestion included having performance based rewards, such that *"outstanding teachers get rewarded and recognised for their contribution."* Though several comments indicated that *"many teachers are not up to standard"*, only one respondent suggested that teachers who are not performing should leave the profession.

Initial teacher education

There were 17 references that commented on initial teacher education. Seven references were general, suggesting that there needs to be *"better teacher training."* One respondent suggested improving teacher training by including *"robust literacy and numeracy programmes, behaviour management, special needs approaches, the value of whakawhanaungatanga … there needs to be good teaching on inclusion and how this is achieved."* Two respondents commented on the entry standards for teachers, suggesting that the requirements to get into initial teacher education should be higher and teachers should require a Masters level degree. Additionally, respondents gave a number of areas for improvement. Four references specified learning support, including training in *"autism,*

dyslexia, dyspraxia and other neurodiverse conditions." Other areas included behaviour and intervention, and one reference specifically highlighted, *"Culture Counts."*

Status of the teaching profession

This sub-theme refers to how the teaching profession is perceived and its status. Twelve respondents suggested the teaching profession status needs to be raised, such that teachers are valued and well-respected. The belief was that this would entice more people into becoming teachers, as well as encouraging current teachers to remain within the profession.

Pedagogy

This sub-theme refers to methods of teaching practice. There were 10 references in this sub-theme which refers to teaching quality and methods of teaching delivery. Six comments referred to teaching quality, respondents noting the importance of quality teaching and ensuring that they are supported to deliver *"evidence based best practices"* that are *"evident in their classrooms."* One respondent suggested, *"Actively weed out [non-performing] teachers. Teaching quality is the single biggest factor in determining outcomes. A poor performing teacher that is allowed to continue does enormous damage."*

Respondents also commented on the method of teaching delivery. Four comments suggested using a diverse range of media, ensuring distance learning is accessible, and ensuring that schools are well-resourced to give an *"innovative"* range of learning. One respondent commented, *"Diversity of learning media BUT online-education is NOT the sole solution, it's only suitable for a small proportion of their work."*

Learning support and disability

This theme captures comments on students that require learning support or have additional learning needs. There were a total of 173 references, and a number of sub-themes emerged; in-school staff (47), services (23), and funding (59).

In-school staff

There were 47 references in this sub-theme that commented on support staff that work within schools. A number of topics emerged: teacher aides (33), special educational needs coordinators (SENCOs) (11), and resourcing (11).

The majority of the comments referred to teacher aides (33). Respondents were positive about the role of teacher aides within classrooms, *"I think the importance of good teacher aides is not recognised."* Eleven references stated there should be *"teacher aides in every class"* as well as a teacher aide for every child that needs one. A further eight comments suggested that *"teacher aides need to be properly trained"*, one respondent noting that *"you don't even need qualifications in this area."* Three respondents commented on teacher aides' pay, suggesting that *"paying teacher aides better, training them and having many more available would make a massive difference to those particular students."*

There were 11 references that commented on SENCOs, four of which were general comments which referred to having more trained SENCOs. Additionally, seven respondents suggested that there be a *"dedicated and well trained SENCO in every school."*

Resourcing is the last emergent topic within this sub-theme (11). This topic contains overlap with comments within the funding sub-theme. References here all suggested that additional funds should go toward in-school support staff, *"Schools identified as having large numbers*

of high needs children should not only have increased operation grants but also increased teacher and support staff."

One respondent commented, *"Improving funding, recruitment retention, and training for specialist support staff and curriculum advisers to schools and using these high quality and highly skilled professionals to support implementation of research-based strategies is essential and long overdue. These services need to start much earlier in the child's life – there is insufficient funding targeted at preschool education in comparison to later secondary schooling years."*

Learning support services

There were 21 references that commented on the variety of ongoing services provided within learning support. There were a number of general comments. Two respondents noted that access to learning support services needed to be easier, especially for those in lower socio-economic areas, *"Children at the bottom end of the socio-economic scale are twice penalised because they get even less of the limited assistance."* A further two comments suggested there needs to be less *"advising"* and more support that is *"tangible"* and *"meaningful"* for staff. Regarding services, three references noted that there needed to be *"wraparound services for our most vulnerable students especially those with special needs."*

Four respondents commented on the Resource Teachers; Learning and Behaviour service (RTLB) provided by the Ministry of Education. Opinions on RTLB were divided among the references, with two suggesting it needs to be *"ditched"* because *"it is ineffective and takes too long to actually help individual children"* and because some service was *"appalling."* One comment was more neutral, suggesting schools should have *"access to RTLB support."* There were suggestions for improvement; letting schools buy the services needed, and train teachers so that they are able to meet the diverse range of needs.

Other suggestions included ensuring there was additional help and enrichment given to *"gifted children"*, reducing the amount of time and administration required of principals to access additional support, and introducing a support network for teachers so they know who and where to get support from when needed. One respondent suggested that we *"have special ed schools and keep the high needs kids away from mainstream kids."*

Funding

This was the largest sub-theme within learning support with 56 references. The majority of these comments suggested that there needs to be more funding available for all students that need it, and this needs to be easily accessible, *"There are huge differences in the community resources and support that is available to a school by location … Students who desperately need support and often on an on-going basis cannot get it as they do not meet the stringent MOE criteria."*

Two common suggestions were implementing a funding model based on the needs of the child, and to centralise support staff funding. Respondents suggested that funding be provided based on a needs assessment, and that it be attached to the child, rather than given to the school. This would ensure that the funding follows the student, and is not used by the school for other purposes. One respondent suggested that *"funding should be tiered, with ranges of needs, similar to the new DSM 5 criteria for autism, ranging from mild to severe. This funding should be attached to the child, not the school, and reviewable … A child with autism may well have specific needs that will last right through school."*

In terms of support staff funding, respondents suggested that payment of support staff wages be centralised, and that we ensure support staff are paid more, *"We pay support staff*

an embarrassingly low amount of money." One respondent commented, *"Ensure adequate funding. Centralise Support Staff wages so they are part of the staffing entitlement. Overhaul the ORS funding system so that the criteria are reviewed. Make sure that funding for Special Needs actually matches the needs of the child and is paid at the top rate for support staff. Topping up wages is costing schools tens of thousands of dollars."*

General comments

There were 42 general comments that did not fit within the sub-themes identified, with three topics emerging: identifying student needs (11), specialist services (10), and the workforce (five). Among the remaining comments, there was a sense that there needs to be more support provided for schools and teachers so they are able to meet the needs of all their students.

There was a common notion that students with high needs require more support, and this subsequently takes away from teaching time that would be given to other students. Additionally, there were a range of comments that acknowledged different issues within learning support provision; students that are excluded from schools, teachers with a lack of knowledge around *"disability and neurodiversity issues"*, and some students' diagnoses require ongoing support and programmes that they may not receive. One respondent commented, *"We can no longer work in isolation due to the range and depth of needs coming into our schools … a more holistic approach to education, with local social support services working more closely with schools, offering their services to students and their families within schools who need it."*

Eleven references commented on identifying students' needs, four comments suggesting that it needs to be easier to access services that will identify any learning difficulties. One respondent suggested that more training needs to be given to teachers so they can better recognise the needs of all their students. Another respondent commented, *"This should be independent of the school and the school have no say. Once identified a support put in place. Often schools fail to identify due to lack of experience or simply not wanting to have it identified as it will be something to have to deal with."*

There were 10 references that commented on specialist services. Specialist services refers to specialised expertise regarding learning difficulties, including (but not limited to) educational psychologists, behavioural specialists, or other health professionals. References within this topic were general, suggesting that it must be easier and more affordable to access specialist services for assessments, diagnoses, and support programmes. Further, one comment noted that there must be greater resourcing for rural areas, which can sometimes see a lack of specialist personnel in an area.

There were five comments on the support staff workforce in general. These comments noted there needs to be *"sufficient support staff and resources, and [schools] have been given support where necessary to make good use of these."* One respondent commented *"there needs to be better central funding of resources and training for all teachers, [teacher aides], SENCOs, principals, and trustees. Currently there are too many inconsistencies and discrepancies in the level of skills, capabilities, dedication and commitment … this needs to change and the minimum threshold bar needs to be lifted higher than it currently sits."*

Diversity

This theme is similar to the previous question, referring to comments that relate to ideas or topics for our minority groups. There were 100 references within this theme, with two sub-themes emerging: access to education (36), and geography (43).

Access to education

This sub-theme refers to comments on people's ability to access education and the potential barriers that may prevent them from doing so. There were 36 references within this sub-theme with many respondents acknowledging that the factors that affect the ability of some children to access quality education are complex and do not have a simple solution.

The majority of the comments were general in nature, stating there needs to be additional funding and support to ensure that children's basic needs are met. Twenty-one references identified specific barriers to accessing education, including having school resources, uniforms, food, and transport to get to school. Additionally, respondents suggested that children should be able to attend activities, such as sports and school camps and outings. Funding was the most common suggestion for addressing these problems. Five references specifically cited that some schools have discretionary funds to provide for their students but that this is not available for all schools. Other suggestions included transport and funding for resources and food be provided for schools. Respondents also suggested using the community to help address some of these issues by carpooling, bringing extra lunches if possible, and donating old uniforms. However one respondent noted, *"This is a tough one, because ideally we would not have 'poor' neighbourhoods that needed extra support. However until we fix all our other social ills and inequities, we need to redress that resource balance - so funding is inevitably going to be 'unequal', but should be equitable. That is, all kids should be able to go on school camps and have regular swimming lessons, and they should certainly not have to worry about when their next meal is coming."*

One respondent commented, *"This is a complex challenge every day and there is not a simple answer. It's at the heart of children achieving their potential and having their human rights met. It's not simply about schools. Achieving this goal requires us to think especially about those children most at risk and those for whom school is not usually a place they enjoy or achieve fulfilment/identity. This means we need to better define the problem that results in some not having their needs met."*

Geography

This was the largest emergent sub-theme within the diversity theme, and refers to comments that relate to the geographic location of a school and potential impacts that may have on the quality of education. There were 43 comments, eight of which were more general in nature. The sense of these comments suggest that rural schools can be disadvantaged due to a number of factors and there needs to be *"equity across schools regardless of location."* One respondent noted, *"Small rural schools, once the incubator for so many innovative teaching developments are being choked out of existence."*

Three topics that emerged within this sub-theme included teaching (11), provision of support and services (nine), and transport (10). Eleven references commented on attracting quality staff in harder to staff, or more remote areas. The most common suggestion to address this issue was to provide incentives, such as increased pay for staff in these areas. Other suggestions included having scholarships that bond teachers to schools, and encouraging new graduates to move to more provincial areas. One respondent commented, *"Funding models for schools need to include a sabbatical for rural or hard to staff areas as they are often fulfilling roles additional to their own, e.g. rural principals driving school buses, maintaining property, additional learning support when staff are struggling."* Another respondent suggested, *"Rural secondary schools could have outreach teachers that work in feeder communities to ensure students have access to regular lessons in their own communities."*

Nine references commented on the provision of funding and support to rural areas. These comments were largely general, noting that there should be funding to allow access to learning support and services across all areas, *"One speech therapist for the entire West Coast of the South Island, 700km in length?"*

The final emergent topic referred to transport. Ten references highlighted the extra difficulty some students face to get to school, extracurricular activities, or professional learning courses. Respondents cited that the additional time and costs associated with travelling can affect a school's ability to attract staff or send their staff on courses. For students that fall outside of the school transport provision, this was cited as potentially unsafe when *"children are walking to school on a busy road with no footpath because they fall within the 2km radius, and yet are passed by several near empty school buses."* Another respondent questioned, *"How can our special needs students manage this safely and in a timely manner?"*

General comments

The remaining 21 comments were more general in nature. Four comments highlighted the emergence of our multicultural society, one respondent suggesting that we give more attention to English teachers to *"cater for the hugely diverse students in front of us."* These respondents felt that we should acknowledge and show respect to all cultures. Equity and inclusion were cited as principles that should be actively promoted within schools. Further, two references suggested schools need to be appropriately supported in order to meet the needs of all diverse learners. One respondent commented, *"Equity wise, I think it's been proven that the students who do the best at school will be the ones who fit the system best – so let's make sure that we can create systems that fit a diverse range of students rather than the one size fits all approach."*

Twelve references commented on topics related to Māori. There were five references relating to Pacific People, however these comments were always in conjunction with ideas relating to Māori. Five references noted the importance of creating culturally safe spaces within schools such that parents can feel they can engage with their school in a comfortable setting. Two comments suggested that there be more kura, *"There is not enough kura or spaces for the growing population."* One respondent commented, *"The continued marginalisation of Pacific and Māori students is due to ongoing lip-service and tokenism from successive governments and ineffective Ministry of Education, Education Review Office and other ministries."*

Wellbeing and hauora

This theme refers to comments relating to wellbeing and hauora, mental health, and home and community environment factors that may affect a young person's learning. There were 49 references, and three topics emerged: services relating to healthcare (20), family and home environmental factors (seven), and meeting basic needs (nine).

The remaining comments were general in nature, the overall sense of these references suggested that *"schools should be safe environments"* culturally and physically, as well as *"understanding the backgrounds of the ākonga".* Two references suggested that there needs to be *"more wraparound pastoral care support for schools".* A further two references commented on the agencies that support young people, including government agencies such as Education and Health. These comments suggested there needs to be *"greater communication between all relevant government departments, hospitals and schools."* One respondent suggested, *"[At] present, it appears that the Ministries of Education and Health do not work together to ascertain the ground-level need for supporting children and young people. An exercise in 'backwards mapping' from what the ground-level need is in schools*

(particularly from a mental health perspective) to create a more responsive system (and policy) that is well-resourced and flexible enough to cater for the needs of a diverse range of students is absolutely essential."

The largest emergent topic within this theme referred to services that should be provided. The 20 references referred to services that were relatively evenly split between physical health (12), mental health services (10), and support services (11). Respondents suggested a range of physical health services, including occupational therapists, dental nurses, health nurses and optometrists. Regarding mental health, there were 10 references that included guidance counsellors and psychologists. Support services were primarily social workers, this service was the most cited of all services that were suggested. Further, four respondents suggested learning support services such as SENCOs and speech language therapists, and three respondents suggested that there needed to be more wraparound services. A common idea about these services was that they must be located near, or on-site at schools for easier access. One respondent commented, *"Psychologists/social workers/counsellors must be located in schools, they can't be effective without first building relationships, and helicopter services that fly in, fix, and fly out aren't cost [or] time effective, let alone relational. This also relates to Treaty principals and Kaupapa Māori ways of supporting students, staff, whānau and community in culturally responsive and safe ways."*

There were seven comments which referred to family and home factors that may affect learning, the overall sentiment suggesting that we *"[ensure] that all families are supported so that their children can come to school ready to learn each day."* By contrast, one respondent suggested that we *"pin more responsibility on parenting."* Respondents felt that schools needed to be safe spaces for families, not only students, *"Where parents feel like they are an important part of their child's learning journey."* This included ensuring that schools communicated with families in a way that was appropriate, one respondent suggesting that *"they should always have a cultural advisor who engages the family first and who is present in any meeting unless the family don't want that support."*

Further, another respondent commented on the ability of parents to understand and communicate with schools, *"There needs to be a lot more consultation with the community in terms of communication with schools as well. It is all very well that we are moving into a digital age, but we need to think more about the parents who cannot afford Wi-Fi, or a device bigger than a cellphone to look at their children's school reports or notices on. A lot of parents may not be able to afford to take time off during the day to attend their child's parent teacher interview. Children may not be able to do their homework online but don't say anything to their teacher for fear of shame and embarrassment. Inclusion in schools should include parents too. Some parents who may not have been able to receive much education may not actually be able to read and understand school reports and notices."*

The last emergent topic is related to family and home factors, referring to meeting the child's basic needs. Nine respondents suggested that free breakfast or lunches should be provided to children, *"Firstly, make sure our children have a house and food – it is not possible to learn if you are hungry and homeless."* This would *"enable tamariki to be in the best position to be able to learn."* One respondent also noted that some students may come to school without the necessary equipment which would affect their learning.

Community partnerships and whanaungatanga

This theme, similar to the previous question, refers to the relationship between agents within the education system with families and whānau, community, and iwi. Of the 35 references, respondents commented predominantly on the relationship with family and whānau (20), and the wider community (14). One respondent commented on iwi relationships, suggesting that

schools and kura can *"ensure wider involvement in the community for the BOT"* by requesting support from *"elders from the local iwi."*

There were 20 comments regarding schools' relationships with families and whānau. Five comments were general, citing that there needs to be a *"relationship between parents and schools"* so they *"know who [their] students are and the family backgrounds they bring with them."* These respondents believe that schools and whānau can work together to determine any supports and resources a child may need. A further nine comments cited the importance of listening to parents and giving them the opportunity to have input. One respondent noted the Government should support parental engagement within schools as it is currently perceived that they *"dissuade them as at present."* The remaining six references suggested there needs to be a range of supports in place to ensure that parents understand and are able to better support their child's learning. Specific ideas included *"parenting education programmes in three phases – preschool, primary level development and early secondary level"*, and returning young parents to a family and whānau base where there is support available.

There were 14 references that specified building community relationships as important. Respondents noted that there was expertise within communities that can be utilised by schools, such as *"police, banks, churches, senior citizens, [and Royal Salvation Army's]."* One respondent noted that communities could have a larger role regarding truancy, *"In-school truancy officers who will know the kids and their whānau and can relate to them on a personal level."*

Student-centred

References in this theme relate to students and their voice, their capabilities, and transitions throughout their schooling. There were 32 comments that varied over a number of topics and ideas, the largest emergent topics being understanding students' needs (10), capabilities (eight), and having a student-centred culture (four).

Identifying and *"understanding the needs of the ākonga"* was the largest emergent topic within this theme. Ten references suggested that schools and kura can best support children and young people by identifying their individual needs, and providing support where it is needed. One respondent commented, *"I hear a lot of jumping around to the 'needs' of businesses who are complaining that the children have the 'wrong' skills. But what is the purpose of education? Is it to train conveyor lines of bodies for businesses? Is it to allow everyone to flex their brains to the max and realise how MUCH they can do and develop genuine flexibility?"* This sentiment was echoed by two other respondents who felt that education could be more tailored to the individual, such that their progress and achievement is not measured relative to others.

There were eight references that commented on student capabilities. Three respondents referred to the need for students to be able to read and write. A further three respondents noted that students should have a range of soft skills, including being *"critical and creative thinkers"* and *"compassionate and self-knowing."* Two other comments referred to skills that were not academic, noting that other skills such as life skills and sports were equally as important. Another respondent noted that *"there is good research on effective programmes to build children's executive functioning skills to improve learning outcomes, but there is minimal support to get these implemented in preschools and schools."*

There were four respondents that suggested there needs to be a culture that is student-centric. The comments were general in nature, *"Schools needs to be more flexible, diverse and work WITH and FOR children and young adults. Teachers should be equal to children and young adults and not seen as a hierarchical structure."*

There were a number of comments that did not fit within the identified topics. Some comments were general in nature, including students being happy when they are at school so they are engaged, seeing themselves as having potential to succeed, and not blaming deficits on the child. Others gave more specific comments, *"The core learning framework should centre around the Japanese concept of 'Ikigai-a Reason for Being' … they can engage in meaningful and purposeful learning experiences where they are having fun, have a sense of belonging and connectedness, are able to make choices, learn for mastery, and feel safe doing so."*

Progress and achievement

The 31 references in this theme relate to student progress and achievement, the curriculum, qualifications such as NCEA, and how schools use their student progress evidence and data. Three topics emerged within the comments: the curriculum (11), assessment and how we measure student progress (14), and qualifications (five).

There were 11 references about curriculum; six comments broadly describing what the curriculum should look like, and the remaining five comments gave more detail on the content of the curriculum. Respondents generally described the curriculum as needing to be content-rich and giving students a minimum standard of knowledge. They considered the curriculum should be strengths rather than deficit-based, flexible, robust, and delivered in a diverse range of methods that give meaning to students.

There were five references relating to the content that is taught to students. One respondent suggested that *"reading is the number one thing humans need to be good at"* because *"it's where the comprehension of all other subjects begins."* Another respondent noted history as important to incorporate within schools, *"Our wars within New Zealand and teaching about the wars that nearly wiped out our male population all our Māori battalion is gone now but they don't have to be forgotten."* Other suggestions included extending the Te Whāriki curriculum to the age of 7-8, such that there was a much higher degree of play-based learning, and teaching more basic life skills throughout the curriculum as *"some children may not get this at home."*

One respondent suggested that we *"centralise lessons in hard to recruit subject areas by providing lessons online, then supporting students to carry out their practical work in class instead of as homework."*

Assessment and measurement was the largest topic within this theme (14). There were two general references that suggested we need *"national syllabi and exams"*, and there should be *"consistency in the way assessments are carried out."* Another respondent suggested that *"the only way we will get equity is to revisit the ways in which we are treating, educating, understanding and measuring our young people, and to create a better system that is designed to suit them, rather than pursuing with trying to stuff brown kids in white boxes."* A further two comments suggested there should be *"clear minimum standards"* of *"expected education progression"* for students; with one respondent noting that these minimum standards should also be applied to inputs such as staffing and property entitlements, whereas the other respondent suggested these standards be tailored to the individual, with interventions in place when these standards are not being met.

The remaining five references suggested a shift away from the notion of achievement being measured through an academic lens, *"Identifying non-academic success measures that will be recognised within the education system."* Two comments suggested we *"celebrate progress in all forms"* and use a strengths-based assessment model. Another three references proposed using different methods to measure success and working toward

"developing thoughtful, well-rounded young people" as this would have *"flow on effects for grades, and youth mental health."*

The final three references commented on National Standards. These respondents did not see National Standards as positive, *"National Standards was damaging."* One respondent further clarified, *"The Ministry and government need to focus money on whole child education, not limited/small box/small minded outdated standards."*

The last topic within progress and achievement related to qualifications. There were five references, four of which referred to NCEA, and the remaining reference suggested that we *"go back to school certificate."* Respondents had differing opinions on NCEA, one commenting that *"the NCEA system either needs to be scrapped altogether or simplified"*, whereas another commented, *"Don't allow public schools to teach Cambridge instead of NCEA."* There were a variety of suggestions made to improve NCEA: lifting the standard of NCEA so it is similar to Cambridge and International Baccalaureate, taking away "NCEA league tables" so we measure progress instead of results, and using more than just NCEA to measure success.

One respondent gave a general comment that did not fit in with any of the identified topics, *"Children should be tracked through their entire education life from the start of primary school through to the end of secondary. This way the information on their learning, their strengths and weaknesses could be shared. Schools and agencies would also know which children to target with specific help. If it was tracked it would also identify who should have helped and if they don't hold them to account."*

Education workforce

This theme includes comments relating to staff working within schools that are not captured in the other themes, including administration staff and specialist teachers or advisors. As many comments often included support staff in conjunction with teachers, board members, and principals, there is a degree of overlap between some common themes. There were 26 references within this theme; eleven of which generally suggested there needs to be more or an adequate amount of support staff. Two comments suggested that support staff funding should be centralised *"so they are part of the staffing entitlement."* Other suggestions included seven references that we pay support staff more, four references citing the need to give all staff sufficient professional learning and development, and three references suggesting support staff be valued and well-respected. One respondent commented, *"Treat people working in education with respect and value their input into the education of tamariki in our country."*

Question 4 – How can we ensure schools and kura work together for the benefit of all the children and young people in an area?

Responses to this question were spread across a breadth of themes and sub-themes within the coding framework. The table below shows the 12 largest emergent themes for this question.

Most of the references were coded within the collaboration theme. Schools, community partnerships, system and agencies, and teaching were also prominent themes among answers to this question.

Themes	*Sub-themes*	*References*	*Total references*
Collaboration			
	Communities of Learning │ Kāhui Ako	96	
	Other collaboration	130	226
Schools		10	
	Boards of Trustees	17	
	Choice and competition	53	
	Enrolment and zoning	6	
	Other governance	11	97
Community partnerships and whanaungatanga		61	61
Education system and agencies		49	49
Teaching		41	41
Student-centred		33	33
Funding		31	31
Progress and achievement		17	17
Diversity		16	16
Leadership		14	14
Wellbeing and hauora		13	13
Learning support and disability		13	13

Collaboration

There were 226 references coded under the theme "collaboration", which refers to schools and kura working together. Perhaps unsurprisingly, given that the question asks how schools and kura can work together, this was the largest theme. The sub-themes within collaboration were Communities of Learning │Kāhui Ako (96), and other types of collaboration (130).

Due to the nature of the question, this theme was a catch-all for many responses to this question, and as a result there is some duplication with other themes and sub-themes. Only topics that are not covered under other themes or sub-themes will be outlined in this section.

Communities of Learning │Kāhui Ako

There were 96 references which mentioned Communities of Learning │Kāhui Ako. The main topics within this sub-theme were positive views on Kāhui Ako (43), negative views (23), the view that Kāhui Ako should be continued (22), and the view that it should be improved (30). There was a split in the sentiments expressed about Kāhui Ako. Forty three of these references were generally positive about either the impact or potential of Kāhui Ako to ensure schools and kura work together, although a number of these responses suggested

ways in which Kāhui Ako could be improved. In contrast, 23 references were negative about the impact or potential of Kāhui Ako. Five of these references suggested that Kāhui Ako should be removed.

Twenty-two references stated we can ensure schools and kura work together by continuing with the Kāhui Ako initiative. Some of these respondents also made suggestions for improvement.

Thirty references suggested Kāhui Ako should be improved. These references were a mix of respondents who were generally positive about Kāhui Ako but saw the need for improvements, those who were negative and were suggesting improvements, and those who did not express a general sentiment.

Suggestions for improvement included making changes to the roles associated with Kāhui Ako (six), for example introducing an "overseer" role or a role filled by a Ministry of Education appointment. Two of these references noted that they had struggled to fill the 'lead teacher' roles due to a lack of staff with the necessary capabilities.

Some respondents suggested that Kāhui Ako could improve by forming links with other parts of the community or the schooling system. Two references suggested that early childhood education centres should be part of Kāhui Ako. One reference suggested that *"schools and COLs could have a memorandum of understanding with local iwi and hapū as well as key community infrastructure like community houses, business associations etc."*

Five references suggested that Kāhui Ako should be given more funding to allow collaboration to be properly resourced. One respondent said, *"Fund others in the community to be part of this."* Three further references said that staff should be given more release time to be able to participate in Kāhui Ako.

Respondents that were negative about the potential for Kāhui Ako to ensure schools work together gave a number of reasons; five references commented that Kāhui Ako were bureaucratic or that participation was too time-consuming. One respondent described Kāhui Ako as *"too bureaucratic and too focussed on a few people getting particular jobs."* Two respondents were negative about the lack of flexibility within Kāhui Ako.

Three references felt that Kāhui Ako would not help schools and kura to work together because they had been forced upon schools from above. One respondent said, *Don't force it by trying artificial devices like COLs, they don't work."* In addition, seven references felt that Kāhui Ako were not a good use of money, *"COLs don't necessarily put the right resources in place and do require a large overhead."* One reference also commented that funding should be available for collaboration taking place outside of formal Kāhui Ako.

Other collaboration

There were 130 references which referred to collaboration outside of the Kāhui Ako model. The main topics within this sub-theme were coordination (33), giving staff time to work together (14), working together by sharing resources (11), setting shared goals (eight), communication (eight), relationships (six), and not forcing schools to work together (seven). Other views expressed included that schools are already working well together (13) and that there wasn't a need for schools to work together (two). Some of the references within this sub-theme had also been coded under other sub-themes, and will be discussed under these other sections.

Thirty-three references suggested that some level of coordination and facilitation would be needed to ensure that schools and kura work together. Specific suggestions included regular

meetings, networks of staff, and dedicated liaison roles. Most comments did not specify who would be responsible for coordinating this collaboration. One respondent suggested, *"Building regional networks for teachers from early in their careers and strengthening them through structured professional networks."* Three of these references suggested that forming hubs or clusters of schools would help schools to work together, *"Clusters can facilitate opportunities for shared learnings and shared professional development."*

Fourteen references said that teachers, principals and other school staff needed time to be able to work with other schools and kura. One respondent said, *"Time needs to be allocated and given for specific and targeted meetings and programmes."*

Eleven references stated that schools and kura should work together in the interests of students by sharing resources, including facilities and expertise. Eight references said that schools and kura should work together to set shared goals, *"Identify the key elements of what is considered a success for students and school community."*

Eight references noted that strong communication was needed for schools and kura to work together. On a similar note, six references spoke about the importance of schools and staff forming strong relationships in order to collaborate. One respondent said, *"Talk together to understand and care."* Seven references commented that schools and kura should not be forced to work together, *"Talk and listen to the sector and communities rather than impose solutions."*

Five references suggested students should play a role in enabling schools and kura to work together. One reference stated, *"Encourage student led initiatives that bring schools and kura together. The student leaders at our college have twice this year called together student leaders from other schools to build camaraderie, share ideas and work together. Building this into a more sustainable, resourced activity would increase the longevity and impact of the good relationships that this engenders."*

Thirteen references commented that schools and kura were already working well together in their area. Two references said that schools and kura didn't need to work together and should instead focus on their individual students. Two further references said that the focus should be on ensuring all schools are of a good quality before trying to get them to work together.

Other suggestions included educating staff on the value of working with other schools, using technology to facilitate working together, not over-relying on technology, having incentives to collaborate, sharing best-practice and building a collaborative culture. Two references also spoke about the need for working together to be flexible and to reflect the diversity of schools involved, *"Don't pursue a one size solution."*

Schools

There were 97 references coded under this theme. The sub-themes were boards of trustees (boards, 17), choice and competition (53), enrolment and zoning (six), and other forms of governance (11). There were also 10 more general comments which did not fit under any of the sub-themes.

Boards of Trustees

There were 17 references coded under this sub-theme, which relates to boards. Eight of these references suggested that measures be taken to improve board capability. Suggestions included professionalising boards (one) and providing trustees with more professional development (two). Two further references suggested that each school should

have a Parent Teacher Association which would be separate from the board. References were not clear about whether they intended that improved board capability would support schools to work together, or whether they were more focused on schools working in the best interests of their own students.

One reference suggested that boards needed to be given time to work together, *"Often board members do not have time for their own school's meetings, so do not have enough time to understand other schools in the area."*

Choice and competition

There were 53 references, which relate to competition between schools and the choice that parents and whānau have regarding which school their child attends.

The most prominent view expressed was that competition between schools is a barrier to them working together and therefore needs to be reduced, with 48 references sharing this view. One respondent commented, *"If we stopped using schools in competition with each other it would help. Sadly, while Tomorrow's Schools has brought about autonomy for schools it has also created a culture of competitiveness among schools, and this has been detrimental to collegial communities working together to provide the best for the children within a community."*

Some responses made specific suggestions as to how competition could be reduced. These included making changes to enrolment processes (eight), stopping schools from competing for funding (seven) and stopping making performance information about schools public (six).

There were a small number of references which did not fit with this view. Comments included that there needs to be an understanding of why parents are making the choices they do about where students go to school, that parents should be given more choice, and that schools should have a choice about whether they collaborate with other schools or not.

Enrolment and zoning

There were six references related to enrolment and zoning (which did not also relate to competition between schools). Two references suggested parents and whānau should have more choice over where their child goes to school. It was not clear whether they intended that this would help schools to better work together. One reference suggested zoning could support educational pathways, *"Sort out zoning so clear progression from school to school so they can work together at primary through to college."* One reference suggested dual enrolments should be allowed *"to give kura students extra options in secondary."*

Other governance

There were 11 references which made suggestions around other forms of governance for schools. All of these references suggested that there be shared boards for schools across a number of schools, an area or a Kāhui Ako. One respondent said, *"Another process could be to encourage more schools to consider a combined board structure which already exists in the system. This would be particularly helpful for small, rural schools, but could also help community-based approaches to schooling."*

One reference suggested that there could be one board for all secondary schools in an area, one for primary schools and so on, and that this would be in addition to existing school-level boards.

General comments

There were 10 more general comments about schools that did not fit under any of the other sub-themes. Two references spoke about the importance of allowing schools to retain enough freedom to be unique and to reflect their special character.

Other comments included warning against making changes for the sake of change, and encouraging schools to identify the uniqueness of an area and celebrate this.

Community partnerships and whanaungatanga

There were 61 references related to the partnerships schools and kura have with their broader community. The main topics covered within this theme were close engagement with the local community (34) and close engagement with parents and whānau (22).

Thirty-four references commented on the importance of schools working with, and being closely engaged with, their local community. Some respondents spoke about the focus on the local community being a mechanism by which schools and kura could be unified, *"A coordinated approach at the local level to improve educational outcomes for all local children."* Other respondents spoke about the importance of engaging with all in the community, *"It's long overdue for every school and kura in an area to consult with everyone in the communities they are meant to be serving and not just employers, educators and parents."*

Four references suggested that working with local businesses could help schools and kura work together. Two references suggested that engagement with iwi and hapū could also support this.

Twenty-two references spoke about the importance of schools engaging with parents and whānau. Views expressed included parents taking more responsibility for their child's schooling, parents being more informed about school quality and parents having a greater voice and more involvement in their child's education. Many of the comments were not specific about how this would ensure schools and kura are working together.

Education system and agencies

There were 49 references relating to the broader education system and the education agencies within it. The main topics covered within this theme were having a middle layer (seven), the role of the Ministry of Education (the Ministry) in facilitating collaboration between schools (seven), the need for effective monitoring of schools (seven) and the need for quick intervention when a school is not performing (three).

Seven references suggested that having some form of "middle layer" in the education system could help schools and kura to work together. Specific suggestions included having overarching boards across areas, introducing "area committees", or reinstating district education offices. One respondent commented, *"Reinstate district education offices to lead this task and with resources and specialist teachers who can be shared by a number of schools."*

Seven references commented that the Ministry has a role to play in facilitating collaboration between schools. One respondent suggested the creation of Ministry-led focus groups for schools within an area. Another suggested that strong leadership was needed from the Ministry and other parts of government.

Seven references suggested there should be stronger or more effective monitoring of school performance, either by the Ministry, the Education Review Office or other stakeholders such as the community. One respondent commented, *"Good annual reporting to the Ministry. Good reporting to the community."* References were not clear about what schools would be monitored for and whether this would facilitate schools and kura to work together.

On a similar note, three references suggested the Ministry or another overseeing authority should be quicker to intervene in schools that are not performing. One respondent stated, *"An adequate overseeing authority who has the power to intervene when a regional office or school lets a child down."* Again responses were not specific about whether this intervention related to schools working together, or to individual school performance.

Other suggestions included education agencies working together more effectively (two), the need for there to be a shared vision for schools in the education system (two), the value of schools having the same culture (one) and the need for a bicultural education system (one).

Teaching

There were 41 references relating to teachers or teaching. The main topics within this theme were the role of teachers in schools working together (eight), professional learning and development (eight), sharing information about students (two) and the quality of teachers (five).

Eight references spoke about the role of teachers in ensuring that schools and kura work together. Suggestions included forming networks for teachers, facilitating teachers to visit other schools, and sharing teachers across multiple schools. One respondent suggested, *"Encourage schools to allow teachers to visit other classrooms and schools by making this part of on-going professional development expectations and by providing release for this."*

Eight references suggested professional learning and development could support schools and kura to work together. It was suggested that core modules could be provided for all teachers, or that professional development could take place for local schools in the same session.

Five references commented on the need for high quality teachers, *"By getting quality people into the system – people with skills, confidence and a sense of purpose"*. Responses were not always specific about how this would facilitate schools to work together, or how schools working together would support quality teachers. On a similar note, suggestions were also made about improving teacher supply, teacher pay, teacher wellbeing and teacher status, and reducing teacher workload.

Two references suggested schools and kura could work together by teachers sharing information about students, particularly at transitions.

Student-centred

There were 33 references relating to the student-centred theme.

Fifteen references spoke about the importance of schools and kura working together to support students to transition seamlessly between schools. Suggestions included taking the time to support transitions, facilitating visits, having a specialist transition coordinator role, and the importance of schools having good relationships across student pathways to support this. Four references also commented on the importance of schools sharing information about students to support transitions.

Three references suggested schools should work together to form initiatives or plans focused on students. One respondent commented, *"By developing a plan and a vision that focuses on the specific needs of young people in that area."* One further reference said that students (and parents) should be consulted in setting goals for the area.

Two references spoke about the capabilities that students need to develop, but did not discuss how schools working together could help achieve these.

Funding

There were 31 references which stressed the importance of funding in ensuring schools and kura can work together.

Eighteen of these references spoke about the role of funding in supporting schools to work together. One respondent stated, *"This kind of thing comes to clear mandate, funding and time."* Specific suggestions included funding centralised professional learning and development to encourage collaboration.

Seven references noted that funding is important to make sure that schools and kura are not competing, and are therefore able to work together. One respondent said, *"Funding models should encourage cooperation, not competitiveness between schools."*

Progress and achievement

There were 17 references relating to the content taught by schools and how student progress is captured.

There were eight references relating to the curricula taught in schools. These responses did not comment on how the curricula could ensure schools and kura work together, but instead suggested content that should be taught in schools, including that the curriculum should be diverse, include sport, and have high expectations of students.

Two references commented on the data that schools and kura gather and use, with one reference suggesting that schools having similar data and assessment systems could facilitate their collaboration. The other reference suggested that longitudinal data about students should be shared.

Other suggestions included reporting on the value added each school provides, focusing on learner outcomes rather than schools working together, and having high expectations for all students.

Diversity

There were 16 references relating to the diversity of students in the education system. Most did not explicitly comment on schools and kura working together. One reference spoke about the importance of creating a culture of unity, *"Create a culture of unity where no-one is afraid to bring up concerns. Too often it is a them and us culture with neither side ready to sit down and work together."*

These responses focused on the need for schools to support a diverse range of learners (including students from a range of ethnicities, from low socio-economic status backgrounds, and students for whom English is not their first language. Three references commented on the need for schools to be inclusive, with one respondent saying, *"By being truly inclusive and accepting that the diversity of society should be reflected in the diversity of the school community."*

Leadership

There were 14 references relating to the role of leadership in schools and kura working together. Six of these references spoke about the role of principals and school leaders in working together, with one respondent suggesting, *"Make incentives for principals to engage in this. What are their community building incentives?"* Another commented, *"Make principals and headmasters the leaders of professional dialogue in New Zealand – they are in their positions for a reason and should be trusted to represent the views of their respective communities."* One further respondent noted that principals needed to have time to collaborate with others.

One respondent suggested schools should share principals or boards in some areas while another suggested that supporting principal associations could help schools work together.

One respondent suggested that rather than focusing on schools working together, the focus should be on ensuring every school has a high quality leader.

The remaining references commented on the capabilities and behaviours of leaders that were not related to schools working together.

Wellbeing and hauora

There were 13 references relating to wellbeing and hauora. Eight of these references commented on the need for schools to understand the home environment of a student and take action to improve it, where possible. One respondent said, *"Understand the family situation when certain children are falling through the cracks and intensify recovery efforts."* Responses were not specific about how schools and kura could work together to achieve this.

Three respondents commented that schools should provide services that support the wellbeing of students, such as counsellors and therapists. Responses were not specific about whether these services would be shared between schools.

One reference said that schools should collaborate on the wellbeing of students in a particular area, *"Regular meetings of principals and key teachers in an area. Agenda looking at wellbeing of all students and social issues."*

Learning support and disability

There were 13 references relating to students with additional learning needs. Seven references commented on the supports and services that need to be available for students with additional learning needs. Specific suggestions included more teacher aides, SENCOs, health services and specialist teachers. One of these references said that schools should share resources to support students with additional learning needs, including sharing professional development to build the capability of staff.

There were four references relating to the inclusion of students with additional learning needs in mainstream education. Two of these references stated schools should be held to account for their inclusivity, to ensure that they do not turn away students with additional learning needs, whereas one reference said that students with high needs should be educated in specialist schools. The final reference commented that satellite units for students with high needs should be fully integrated into schools.

Question 5 – How can enrolment schemes be designed to work fairly for all children and young people?

Responses to how we can ensure fair enrolment schemes were predominantly concentrated within "enrolments and zoning". These references were recoded into three distinct themes: general comments (201), enrolment (90), and zoning (110). Similar to previous questions, responses in each sub-theme were aggregated to the "parent" theme to indicate the largest emergent themes. Schools (65) and Learning Support (27) were the next largest emergent themes, shown in the table below.

Themes	Sub-themes	References	Total references
General comments		84	
	Local school	38	
	Resourcing and support	30	
	All schools are equal	25	
	Flight and school perception	24	201
Zoning		59	
	Design	37	
	Out of zone enrolments	14	110
Enrolment		77	
	Cohort entry and enrolment intakes	13	90
Schools			
	Decile	21	
	Choice and competition	44	65
Learning support and disability		27	27

General comments

References in the general comments theme are those that did not fall into either enrolment, zoning, or schools themes, and expressed distinct ideas and viewpoints. Four overarching sub-themes emerged within these general comments: local school (38), resourcing and support (30), all schools being equal (25), and white flight and school perception (24). There were 84 general comments that did not fit within any of the identified sub-themes.

Local school

There were 38 comments which suggested that children and young people should be attending the school closest to where they live, *"Students should go to their local school unless there is a particular reason not to. All schools should offer a quality education."* Eleven respondents suggested that attending your local school should be compulsory or a right for students within an area, *"Tamariki have a right to attend their local school."*

However, for six respondents, this assertion did have exceptions; some schools were cited as having particular strengths in a given area, and that children should be given the right to attend the closest school, or the school that is best fit for them. In cases where students are struggling in their local school, it was suggested that these students be given the option to attend the school of their choice *"to receive a non-discriminatory education rather than suffering emotional harm at an unwelcoming school."*

One respondent commented, *"I am so torn on this. I believe that it should be required and adequate to go to your closest school – but then our closest school was so traumatic for our*

kid we home-schooled him for a year just to get him out of it until we could apply for out-of-zone ballots. It was actively damaging to him, yet I still feel guilty that we contribute to 'white flight'. It's not an ideal system, but I don't know what would be better."

Resourcing and support

Thirty respondents commented on the resourcing and support given to schools in the context of enrolment and zoning. There were 19 respondents who suggested we *"ensure, through proper resourcing that all schools are able to cater for their diverse communities and are good schools."* For two respondents, this referred to not allowing schools to grow (in terms of property) at the expense of other schools. Three respondents specifically highlighted that some schools *"appear ill equipped to manage"* to meet the needs of children who have special needs or require additional learning support. Two respondents noted that additional resources should be directed toward students through *"the same gear for kids regardless of their wealth"* and that *"food [and] transport is available to all students needing it."* The overall sense is that by giving schools the resources needed, they will be able to meet the needs of all students and provide equal education quality and opportunities, which in turn will encourage families to attend their local school.

There were nine comments which referred to giving schools greater support. *"Zoning as it stands works for successful schools but means our less successful schools get even less support, money and often parents who are able to support."* Five respondents suggested that this support be targeted toward less successful schools, ideas including these schools being partnered with more successful schools, and identifying factors of more successful schools and supporting less successful schools to replicate aspects of their models.

All schools being equal

This sub-theme emerged from the data relating to the idea that enrolment schemes are fair if all schools are considered equal, such that every school provides a good quality education and opportunities for children and young people. There were 19 respondents that spoke about schools being perceived as equal, *"It can only be fair if we endeavour to level the playing field between schools"*. For six respondents, equal schools referred to equal education quality and opportunities. One respondent commented that *"if schools were all inclusive and have the resources to cater for the needs of ALL children despite their needs we would not need enrolment schemes or charter schools."* This was reiterated by another respondent who noted that equity and equality are not necessarily the same, and there needed to be equitable resourcing amongst all schools. Four respondents made suggestions for improving the quality of struggling schools, *"the push should be to improve schools which are perceived as less desirable – this is the ultimate solution, so all schools are great for kids."* One respondent noted that we *"do not try to level the playing field out by pulling successful schools down through over draconian legislation and limitations."*

One respondent suggested that we *"change the way schools can structure their elitism. Poor school communities are disadvantaged immediately by enrolment schemes. Families and teachers are not attracted to schools in low socioeconomic communities. Invest in good teachers working in schools of low socioeconomic communities. Invest in diverse programmes and teaching in low socioeconomic community schools. Take the bias out of school zones by increasing education outcomes in lower socioeconomic community schools by developing specialist education in these schools."*

Flight and school perception

This sub-theme includes comments about flight and school perception. Flight is generally defined as the migration of one population from one neighbourhood into another that is

considered as more desirable. In this context, this involves families moving from their neighbourhood into another that has a more desirable school. There were 24 respondents that commented on flight and school perception, with a number of similar ideas. A common idea across comments suggested that where it is perceived that a school is better than another, parents will choose to send their child to that school. Nine respondents spoke about school perception, *"So many parents are misguided about what makes a school and it feeds into their racism and elitism."* There were a variety of factors given that respondents suggested contributed to school perception, including publication of school-wide achievement data, decile ratings, reputation, and *"the ethnic make up of a school…"*

For some respondents, there is the perception that schools in wealthy areas are "good" schools and schools in lower economic areas are attributed as "failing", quality is conflated with affluence. One respondent commented, *"They're poor – so they have to go to their local (often failing) school."* This contrasts with other respondents who suggest that *"schools should be rated on education outcomes not how much parents in the area earn."* One respondent noted that a segregation between *"the rich and poor"* has flow on effects, such that *"parents do not allow children to play with other children based on the uniform they wear because of the stigma that surrounds their school and area."*

There were 13 comments that cited families moving house to ensure they are in-zone. Respondents suggest that due to zoning, not all parents can send their child to the school of their choice, and will move into a neighbourhood where they are in-zone, cited as exacerbating the rate of white flight. Similarly to 'all schools being equal', respondents suggest that white flight would reduce if families perceived all schools as delivering quality education, *"Parents should not need to move house to guarantee a good education for their child when the education provider is the same country wide."*

Further, due to the rising demand of houses in areas with desirable schools, this pushes house prices up and not all families can afford to move. *"Zoning exacerbates this – wealthy families can afford to effectively buy their child a place in the school they want, by buying into the relevant school zone – poorer families don't, and will never be able to do this."*

One respondent commented, *"More community engagement is required in our schools. If you feel like your local school represents people like you, and you see success there, and you feel you belong, you will probably be happy to go there."* Another respondent also noted that *"to force kids into their local failing school is not going to build the school up."*

General comments

Broadly, there were 12 references that were positive, suggesting enrolment schemes were fair and working currently. *"They work effectively as they are."* Conversely, there were 10 references that suggested they were not currently working.

The majority of comments suggested a range of ideas and features of enrolment schemes. Respondents described ideal enrolment schemes as flexible, inclusive and accessible, and transparent. Nine respondents felt that it was important for parents and whānau to choose a school that was best suited for their family.

There were three respondents who wanted to remove all enrolment schemes. A further three respondents felt that the same model should be applied to all schools. Other ideas included having an appeals process for families, *"Appeals panel for children with special circumstances who don't get into a school."* Two respondents suggested having an online form or process to make it easier and more accessible for parents, and a further three respondents suggested that families interview with schools to help them determine if the school will be the right fit.

Zoning

There were 59 references within the zoning theme (excluding references within the sub-themes); referring to the geographical area and boundaries that form the catchments of students for schools. Two sub-themes emerged from the comments: the design of the zoning areas (37), and comments regarding out of zone enrolments (14).

Of the general comments that did not fit within a sub-theme, they could broadly be divided into those that supported zoning and those that did not support it. There were 28 references that suggested zoning was positive, *"All schools should be zoned"*. There is an underlying assumption that zones based on geographical area were the fairest way to create enrolment schemes, *"They are working fine now based on geographical commonsense."* Conversely, there were 18 references that suggested that zoning should be removed. Though there were a smaller number of comments, there were a greater degree of detail in respondents' opinions. Their reasons broadly suggested that zoning was a *"social filter"* that *"reinforces socioeconomic stratification and this in turn class and race division"*, and that the local school *"isn't necessarily the best school for the individual."*

Additionally, several respondents noted that zoning provided some difficulties for transient families in which it was important for there to be consistency and stability in students' education. *"With a transient population the ability for parents to maintain some [consistency] in schooling is more important than ever."*

One respondent commented, *"There needs to be more support for failing schools to improve so everyone can happily and confidently enrol their child at their local school. Too many are choosing a different school and abandoning their local school. Zoning as it stands works for successful schools but means our less successful schools get even less support, money and often parents who are able to support."*

Design

This sub-theme refers to comments on the geographical area of the school zone and who is responsible for determining the boundaries (37 references). There were 14 comments referring to area, *"Simple. They should be largely area related, with spaces for a few from outside the designated area only."* This was cited as preventing schools from manipulating the zones so it does not become a *"selection process"*. One respondent suggested creating regional zones, e.g. *"Waikato zone"* or *"Auckland great area."* Another respondent commented specifically on Māori students, *"Allow for tamariki Māori to enrol in schools within their iwi or hapū even if they are currently living outside of the school zone."*

There were a further six comments regarding the area of zones, these respondents suggesting that there be a degree of overlap between zones, such that there is more than one school within a zone. It was assumed that this would give schools greater diversity and degree of choice to parents and allow them to better choose a school that suited their child, *"Have more of an overlap between socioeconomic areas that feed into a school so that schools have a better mix of students coming from multiple backgrounds."* By contrast, two respondents specifically stated that zones *"need to be fair in size and where possible not overlap"*, though no reason for not overlapping was given.

Ten references also commented on who should be responsible for designing the school zones. Suggestions included the Ministry of Education regional offices, boards of trustees, or the Ministry of Education with consultation with local communities. Four respondents did not specify whom, but stated that it should not be the school's responsibility, *"Schools can't*

organise it to suit themselves, without consultation and genuine input from other schools impacted … Schools shouldn't be able to 'select' students."

Out of zone enrolments

There were 14 references that commented on out of zone enrolments. There were five comments that cited not allowing out of zone enrolments, *"Don't allow any out of zone enrolments."* Conversely, one respondent commented, *"Require schools to accept out of zone kids."* Five respondents suggested that out of zone enrolments needed to be limited and in-zone students given priority, *"Limit out of zone enrolments to support local community."*

Other comments included removing incentives for schools to accept out of zone enrolments, being critical of schools offering 'scholarships' to students outside of their school zone, and charging families with students who attend schools outside of their zone.

One respondent suggested, *"parents should be required to interview with the school in their zone first – before they can go to a school out of zone. They would need to provide valid reasons why they would want to attend a school other than the one in their zone – and the most valid reason would be that the school chosen for their child suits them better, and they have evidence to back up their claims."*

Enrolment

This theme captured comments regarding student enrolment and roll numbers within school. There were 75 respondents who commented on enrolment across a number of topics: general comments (19), guaranteed enrolment at local school (eight), capped roll numbers (11), enrolment criteria (six), and ballots (seven). Additionally, 'cohort entry and enrolment intakes' (13) emerged as a sub-theme with several different topics raised by respondents.

Of the 75 respondents, there were 76 references. Generally, respondents were divided on whether they thought enrolment schemes were fair and should be kept. Ten references were positive and suggested that *"current enrolment schemes are adequate"* and *"working as fairly as possible for all children and young people"*, whereas a further nine references conversely suggested that *"enrolment schemes are blunt instruments and archaic"*.

Other general comments included ensuring that every enrolment is considered equally and fairly, and the perception that enrolments are currently subject to fraud and there are no repercussions. One respondent suggested, *"Abolishing local discretionary powers to enrol or not enrol kids."* Three respondents noted that any enrolment scheme should be developed with the community in mind, that they should not be purely numbers based or designed without local understanding.

Similar to "local school", there were eight respondents that suggested students should be guaranteed enrolment at their nearest school, one respondent commenting, *"By ending this nonsense where families can be directed away from their local school on the basis of 'this isn't the right school' but not given any indication of what is the 'right' school."* Comments within this topic also suggested that enrolment schemes be enforced, with the underlying assumption that this would help prevent schools from excluding students. Additionally, there were seven further references that cited siblings of current or former students should also be guaranteed enrolment at a given school, whether they are in or out of zone. One respondent commented, *"I like that zoning encourages communities to stay together but makes it incredibly difficult for renters especially who may have to move often and therefore can't automatically have siblings at a school. Siblings should definitely get in no matter where you live."*

There were a number of topics that referred to the application of enrolment zones, including capping roll numbers, enrolment criteria, and ballots. There were 11 comments referred to capping the roll numbers at schools, such that *"no school should take in more students than they can handle"* and this would ensure that *"quality is maintained."* Three respondents suggested that priority for enrolments be given to New Zealand citizens first, and that we *"limit migrants with school aged children."*

There were six comments that suggested having *"clear guidelines"* and *"clear criteria that are easily available."* Alongside having clear enrolment guidelines, three respondents suggested giving parents support so that they can make an informed decision on a school that best fits their child. *"Online resources would be helpful for parents to check out a school that would benefit their child in their area … this could be added to the MOE webpage entitled 'choosing schools in this area'."*

The final topic within enrolments contained seven comments about ballots. Four respondents suggested removing enrolment schemes and having independent ballots drawn, *"Take away zones and use [a] ballot system."* Other suggestions included only having ballots for out of zone enrolments, monitoring them, and removing them or making them fairer.

Cohort entry and enrolment intakes

There were 12 respondents that gave 13 references within this sub-theme. These comments referred specifically to school enrolment at the new entrants level, with two emerging topics; cohort entry and the starting age of students. Cohort entry refers to students entering school as a cohort as opposed to individually when they reach school age level. Three respondents suggested intakes at the beginning of each term after the child has turned 5. Another four respondents proposed only one or two intakes during the year. Three respondents suggested having flexible enrolments and therefore having no set intakes throughout the year.

A further three respondents commented on the starting age, and the common culture in New Zealand that children tend to start school when they turn 5. Respondents suggested that children should be starting school when they are 'ready' and this may not necessarily be until they are closer to age 6.

One respondent commented on the pathways into special schools, *"The current enrolment scheme put in place for special schools … is meaning many new entrant children are being excluded because of no available places. [Parents] are being left with no choice but to keep their children in [early childhood education] and hope a place will come up the following term or pursue an option they are not satisfied meets their child's needs. This must be reviewed."*

Schools

Within the schools theme, there were two emerging sub-themes: choice and competition, and decile.

Choice and competition

There was a total of 44 references regarding choice and competition in schools. There were 14 references that commented on the role of competition in the context of enrolment and zoning. Respondents do not believe that competition between schools is positive as it promotes a culture of trying to outdo each other in order to appear as more desirable than other schools. It was suggested that this mentality discourages schools from working together, *"The key thing is for us to work to develop a system where all schools are good*

schools and reject the [competitive] based attitude that one school is 'better' [than] its neighbour." One respondent felt that competition between urban schools was positive, *"Inner city school[s] should be able to have competition because that's how the world works."*

The remaining 30 references spoke about the role of choice. Respondents felt that families needed to be able to choose the school that best suits their child, *"Allow parents and whānau the choice to enrol in a school that best meets their own needs."* With regards to schools, respondents felt that all schools should be supported such that the local school can become the school of choice for families. One respondent commented that *"there is tension between providing choice for parents and students, and ensuring good stewardship of the school network and infrastructure. Ultimately this [is] about having good conversations with all those schools and communities that are [affected] so people are in the loop as to what is happening and why."*

Decile

There were 21 references that commented on school decile ratings, similar to that in Question 3.

There were nine references that suggested decile ratings should be removed. The most cited reason for this was attributed to the misconception that the higher a decile rating, the better quality school (seven respondents). This puts a stigma on some schools and can sway families' perceptions about schools, with respondents' noting that this was damaging for schools. One respondent commented that *"decile does not equate to teaching quality. Decile drift has been real and damaging for schools. That needs addressing. Publishing NCEA data, again without any background stories about accelerated learning are incredibly unhelpful. Knocking this on the head is essential."*

There were four respondents that commented on resourcing for lower decile schools, such that this would help remove the stigma and all schools would be able to provide quality education. One respondent commented, *"Smaller class sizes for areas of lower socioeconomic status … In doing this teachers can implement support programs for students and allow better relationships with smaller class size numbers producing better learning outcomes."*

There were two general comments; one respondent suggesting that *"all students have access to great schools, regardless of area. Some of the best schools in the country are Decile 1 schools."* By contrast, another respondent disagreed, *"The schools in wealthier areas obviously have more resources and high quality environments."*

Learning support and disability

This theme relates to comments about students who require learning support or have additional learning needs. There were 27 references and two central topics emerged: inclusion (14) and resourcing (10).

Fourteen respondents commented on inclusion. Twelve comments cited that schools are turning away students with additional learning needs and there is a culture of discrimination. This is resulting in some schools becoming 'magnet schools', which are known for accepting students with high needs. Several respondents suggested enrolment zones should not apply to students with additional learning needs to allow them to choose a school that is appropriate for them and which makes them feel welcome. Other respondents suggested ensuring that all schools are non-discriminatory, with repercussions for those that are.

One respondent commented, *"Allow all children access to their local school or the school that is the best fit for them regardless of zoning. Our children with special needs are all too often met with the suggestion that their child should be enrolled elsewhere as their local school can't meet their needs. Mainstream or special needs school should be an informed parent choice, not one based on the lack of funding their needs brings into the school or the school's academic record. Not all children with high needs get ORS [ongoing resourcing scheme] funding and therefore have no choice but to attend mainstream school, sadly they have to do the rounds until they find one that will take them. Our children with special needs are a minority group that is discriminated against on a daily basis. Schools wouldn't get away with treating other minority groups the way children with an intellectual disability are treat[ed]."*

There were two additional comments that referred to inclusion. These comments suggested *"having limits on special needs per school and per classroom."* The underlying sense of these comments suggested that children with high needs were not suited for mainstream schools, *"I also find it amazingly clever that other schools actively suggest children better suited to other schools as these kids are a fiscal drain with extra non-funded support often being needed."*

The other emergent topic was resourcing. Ten respondents cited a lack of resourcing as contributing to some schools excluding students requiring additional learning support. Respondents suggested that schools be educated and supported to ensure that they have the capacity to provide the support that these students need. One respondent suggested that *"each region should have a staggered level of learning support provided through outreach centres, satellites and specialist schools. No school can turn down having a satellite and the satellite is fully incorporated in the school."*

One respondent noted the importance of identifying and diagnosing learning support needs, *"Early identification on learning disabilities – NZ schools are terrible in identifying learning disability early on so that kids don't get discriminated – training needs for staff."*

Question 6 – How can we reduce the negative impacts of competition between schools/kura?

Responses to the question on reducing the negative impacts of competition were spread across a breadth of themes and sub-themes. The table below shows the 11 largest emergent themes for this question.

Most of the references were coded within the "schools" theme, with large numbers of comments about enrolment and zoning and decile. Due to the nature of the question, a large number of responses were coded under "choice and competition" and there is significant overlap between this sub-theme and other emergent themes and sub-themes.

Themes	*Sub-themes*	*References*	*Total references*
Schools			
	Boards of Trustees	16	
	Choice and competition	173	
	Enrolment and zoning	59	
	Infrastructure and property	9	
	Decile	30	
	Class size and ratio	7	
	Class resources	3	
	School improvement	8	
	School type	7	
	Other governance	4	316
Collaboration			
	Communities of Learning Kāhui Ako	26	
	Other collaboration	58	
	Impact of competition	5	89
Education system and agencies		2	
	Ministry of Education	8	
	Education Review Office	11	
	Evaluation and review	54	
	Accountability	6	
	Ethos and values	5	86
Teaching		31	31
Community partnerships and whanaungatanga		18	18
Leadership		17	17
Student-centred		14	14
Wellbeing and hauora		8	8
Learning support and disability		8	8
Progress and achievement			
	Curriculum	7	7
Diversity		4	4

Schools

Comments within this theme all refer to actions relating to schools that could reduce the negative impacts of competition. The most prominent sub-themes focus on reducing the extent to which schools compete with each other, the processes by which schools enrol students and the categorisation of schools by decile. Other sub-themes covered include

school governance (both boards of trustees and other proposed forms of governance), and factors relating to the school environment (school buildings and infrastructure, school type, class resources and size, school improvement).

Choice and competition

There were 173 references relating to comments relating to the choice parents and whānau exercise in relation to the school their child attends, and the competition between schools encouraged by this.

Due to the nature of this question, which explicitly refers to the negative impact of competition, most responses referred to competition and therefore this sub-theme became a catch-all for most responses. This meant there was significant overlap with topics discussed under other themes or sub-themes. To avoid duplication, this sub-theme will only discuss the emerging themes that are not covered under other themes and sub-themes.

Responses to this sub-theme can largely be broken down into discussion about whether competition may be positive (40) and whether they had seen the effects of competition in their own community (11), a focus on lifting the quality of all schools (29), and specific suggestions about how to reduce competitive behaviours in schools (35).

Thirty-two references challenged the assumption that competition is negative, and instead suggested that competition between schools is positive. One respondent said, *"Competition is not negative if it results in raising standards. It will ask questions which need answers."* Two further references had mixed opinions on whether competition is positive or negative, *"Competition is a double-edged sword. On the positive side it forces all the schools to lift their game if they want to attract students but the negative side is that the competition is mostly for the kids whose parents have money, international students and kids who are very bright or good at school."*

A further six references suggested that competition is healthy, but were more focused on competition within schools between students (for example relating to sporting activities). One respondent said, *"My daughter has done competitions outside of school and there is no negative impact from losing, she's taught that it's about giving it a go."*

Eleven references said that they had not seen negative impacts from competition in their own experience, *"I live in a community where this is not a problem."*

Twenty-nine references suggested the negative impacts of competition could be reduced by making all schools high quality. One respondent commented, *"If all schools have great teachers and look after their students and teacher well, there will be less need for competition and more chances for schools and communities to thrive."* Two further references suggested that all schools should be made the same in terms of the qualifications they can offer, to reduce competition.

Five references suggested that competition should be reduced or removed, but did not give further details about how this would be achieved. Seven references felt that the negative impact of competition could not be removed or reduced, *"You can't. It's a fact of life. Put your money and your efforts into better funding for support staff and special education."* Two references suggested that choice should be removed, *"Shouldn't be able to choose with school. We have 'white flight' in our area, they skip a local school and go to a school primarily white. They have taken the richer, white families to a school where they have flash everything (donated by parents) and leave the local school struggling."* On the other hand, five references specifically commented that they were positive about choice, *"Parents make*

a choice based on what they believe is right for their children and we should celebrate and encourage this."

Seventeen references commented on the role of school funding in driving competition, with one respondent saying that *"schools are competitive because it's all about the numbers and funding."* Ten of these references said that schools should receive more funding so that they do not need to compete with other schools, *"By funding them properly so they aren't in competition with each other for numbers, good students for results etc."*

Other suggestions to reduce the negative impact of competition included preventing schools advertising and marketing themselves (four), stopping schools from offering transport incentives to attract students from far away (two), and the Ministry of Education better managing the school network (three).

Enrolment and zoning

There were 59 references relating to the existence and operation of enrolment schemes and zoning. Comments within this sub-theme can largely be divided into those that were in favour of tighter enrolment zones and greater restrictions on school's enrolment practices (21), those that believe that every student attending their local school would reduce competition (10), and those that believed that zoning should be removed altogether (five).

Eighteen references suggested that zones should be better enforced, or that students should not be able to enrol out of zone. One respondent said, *"Zone enforcement needs to be carefully controlled…they can't pick and choose."* Suggestions for enforcement included not funding out-of-zone students, removing travel subsidies or imposing payments on schools taking out of zone students. One further reference suggested that zones should be made fairer.

On a similar note, three references suggested that schools should be prevented from "poaching" students from other schools, *"They shouldn't be actively seeking students from other schools."* One reference suggested that schools who exclude students based on disabilities should be penalised.

Ten references suggested that all students should attend their local school, or that all schools should have zones, in order to reduce the negative impact of competition. One respondent suggested, *"Have a permanent home catchment area for every school."*

Three references suggested school rolls should be capped, *"If there is a top number of students each school is allowed in terms of enrolment quota then once they reach capacity the students will have to look elsewhere."*

One reference suggested there should be enrolment schemes for intermediate schools, perhaps recognising the impact they can have on the rolls of full primary schools. Two references suggested that enrolment zones should be determined by the community (rather than the Ministry of Education). One reference argued that enrolment schemes should be determined to encourage assimilation, not segregation.

On the other hand, five references suggested getting rid of zoning to reduce the negative impacts of competition. One further reference suggested that zones reduce choice, *"With zones being in place and it being unaffordable (in Auckland) to move house easily, there won't be much choice for most people).* One further reference argued that zones do not help reduce competition and instead the focus should be on supporting all schools.

Six references made generic comments about zoning, such as, *"Consider changing the zoning system,"* or simply responding by saying, *"School zones."* These comments were not clear about how they would like to see the zoning system used or changed to reduce the negative impact of competition.

Decile

There were 30 references relating to the decile system and its role in the impact that competition has on schools. The main topics were removing the decile system (14), the decile system creating inaccurate perceptions (14), and supporting low-decile schools (three).

One respondent commented, *"I don't believe the decile system has been a positive aspect as parents and the community often have not fully understood what this is used for and it has supported negative competition."*

Fourteen references suggested the decile system should be removed. One further reference suggested that decile ratings should not be published, and one further reference commented that the decile system creates negative impacts. Another reference suggested that rather than a decile system, there should be a move towards an "equity index" model.

Five references commented on the inaccurate perceptions that often surround decile ratings, suggesting that this can contribute to the negative impact of competition, *"The decile system has probably contributed to perception of what is a 'good' school."*

Three references argue that more support and funding needs to be given to low decile schools, whereas another reference suggested that it is middle decile schools that are often missed out.

One respondent suggested that schools should not be funded based on decile but on numbers of students and their academic ability.

Boards of Trustees

There were 16 references relating to the role of boards of trustees in reducing the negative impact of competition. The main topic within this sub-theme was improving the quality of schools through improving governance (13).

Eight references made suggestions relating to boards which would aim to reduce the negative impacts of competition by improving the quality of schools (by improving school governance). These suggestions included appointing more expertise to boards or reducing their responsibilities. Five references suggested the removal of boards of trustees, although it was not always made explicit how this would reduce the impact of competition, in some cases responses suggested that this could lift school quality, *"Get rid of the current board of trustees set-up and install a panel of professionals."*

One reference focused on the potential for the board role in strategic planning to reduce the negative impact of competition, *"BoT or school management would need to provide a robust report outlining future planning to show school capacity to recruit or cap student enrolments."* One reference suggested that boards should have responsibilities across multiple schools to encourage collaboration and reduce the negative impact of competition.

Infrastructure and property

There were nine references relating to how school infrastructure and property impacts on competition. The main topics within this sub-theme related to the impact that building quality has on a school's ability to compete (four), and those who prefer to choose for their child to not be educated in a Modern Learning Environment (MLEs, two).

Four of these references commented on a disparity in building quality between existing schools, and that this influenced parental choice and impacted on the schools' ability to compete. One respondent commented, *"Ensure all facilities are maintained at acceptable levels. There are currently the have and have not's – some schools are modern in environment and all space are usable and others are not."* Three references commented that the ability to secure building improvements is often influenced by the principal or by others with "strong personalities", suggesting this contributes to an uneven playing field for competition.

Two references suggested that MLEs are not favoured by parents and that they will therefore not choose a school where this is the learning environment.

School improvement

Eight references spoke about the importance of improving schools that are underperforming. Two of these references felt the Ministry of Education should support poorly performing schools to improve (although specific suggestions about how this should be done were not provided), whilst two references felt that underperforming schools could learn from successful schools (including through mentoring arrangements).

Class size and ratio

There were seven references relating to reducing the negative impacts of competition by lifting the quality of all schools through changing class sizes. All seven of these references suggested that smaller class sizes would be beneficial, with one reference suggesting that class sizes should be smaller in lower decile schools.

Class resources

Three references suggested the negative impact of competition could be reduced by making sure that all schools can access and offer consistently high quality facilities within classrooms.

School type

Seven references related to schools of different characters. Three of these references suggested that schools of particular character should be disestablished (charter schools, integrated schools, private schools, and area schools). Two references suggested the negative impacts of competition could be reduced by having more diversity in school type.

One reference suggested that rationalising the schooling networks (by removing some smaller schools) would reduce the negative impacts of competition.

Other governance

Four references suggested that other forms of governance could help to reduce the negative impacts of competition. These four references suggested that there should be combined boards (either for an area or for a whole Kāhui Ako).

Collaboration

There were 89 references relating to schools collaborating and working together and the role of this in reducing the negative impacts of competition. Comments within this sub-theme largely either related to existing initiatives for schools to collaborate (Communities of Learning │Kāhui Ako) or spoke about collaboration between schools more generally. Finally, a small number of comments were explicit about the impact of competition on school collaboration.

Communities of Learning │ Kāhui Ako

Twenty six references referred specifically to Communities of Learning │Kāhui Ako, the existing initiative which encourages schools to collaborate. Opinions were divided into those that felt Kāhui Ako were already helping to reduce the negative impact of competition (11), those that felt strengthening Kāhui Ako could reduce the negative impacts (11), and those that argued that Kāhui Ako should be removed (three).

Eleven references suggested Kāhui Ako are already helping to reduce the negative impact of competition (although two of these references felt that they could be further improved). One respondent felt Kāhui Ako had the potential to help if it was used as a mechanism to address differences between schools.

Eleven further references suggested strengthening Kāhui Ako to enable them to reduce the negative impact of competition. Three of these 11 references suggested that Kāhui Ako could be strengthened by each Kāhui Ako having a collective board. Other suggestions to strengthen Kāhui Ako included providing funding, appointing full-time staff to the Kāhui Ako or making participating in a Kāhui Ako compulsory.

Conversely, three references argued that Kāhui Ako should be removed. One respondent commented, *"Get rid of COLs and get schools to work together on strategic goals they value and believe in, not achievement targets."* One further reference suggested Kāhui Ako would not reduce the negative impact of competition.

Other collaboration

There were 58 references which all suggested that encouraging, supporting or mandating schools to work together and collaborate more generally (outside of existing structures and initiatives) would reduce the negative impact of competition.

Three references suggested structural changes were needed to support collaboration, for example combined boards or federations of schools. One further reference suggested that collaboration should be mandatory. Conversely, three references stated collaboration should not be forced, with one respondent saying, *"Being forced to work together does not always work – if there are existing/longstanding relationships that have been built then these should be respected, fostered, enhanced."*

Six references suggested that collaboration between principals and school leaders is particularly important. Two references noted that time is needed for collaboration, *"Give teachers more time to have professional development together."* A further two references noted that funding has a role to play in supporting collaboration, *"Start funding those communities in which the schools have already formed a cluster and are working alongside each other with a combined plan of action for the needs of their specific communities."*

One reference suggested collaboration could not take place because some principals and teachers are paid more to lead networks.

Impact of competition

Five references were specifically about the negative impact of competition on a school's ability and willingness to collaborate. One respondent said, *"Take the competitive element out of the model. If you want them to collaborate they will not if they are funded on the students they can attract."* Two of these references noted that it is the competition over funding and resources which presents a particular barrier to collaboration.

Education system and agencies

There were 86 references within this theme. These comments were grouped because they related to the role of the school system as a whole or the role of system-level agencies in reducing the negative impact of competition. Within this, sub-themes included evaluation and review of schools, the specific role of the Ministry of Education and the Education Review Office (ERO), the way that schools are held to account and the ethos and values of the education system.

Evaluation and Review

There were 54 references relating to how schools are evaluated and reviewed and the impact this has on competition. The main perspectives were that schools should not be compared publicly (two), that there should be less assessment of students (eight), and that felt schools should be evaluated in a more holistic way (12) or in a way that focuses more on progress (four).

Twenty-one references suggested that schools should not be compared publicly (for example through league tables) in order to mitigate the negative impact of competition. One respondent commented, *"Removing the publication of results should improve this too."* Along similar lines, eight references argued that there should be less assessment of students, with some of these responses making reference to the removal of national standards.

Twelve references suggested schools should be measured and evaluated in a more holistic way that gives consideration to broader factors than just academic achievement, such as wellbeing and participation in a wide range of activities. One respondent said, *"Stop publishing all academic achievement data without focussing on other areas of skill."* A further four references suggest that school measurement and evaluation should focus on the progress made by students (or the value added by schools), rather than pure achievement. One comment noted, *"In making information public about school performance we need to be able to convey the concept of progress/value added rather than simply using unsophisticated comparators."*

Other suggestions included reviewing competing schools more often, focusing on results over an area, rather than at individual school-level, celebrating creativity, and placing less emphasis on NCEA data when attracting students to a school.

Ministry of Education

There were eight references relating to the Ministry of Education. Most of these responses focused on the Ministry's role in ensuring the quality of all schools.

Five of these references suggested that the Ministry should ensure that all schools are of a good quality and that poor performance is addressed, with one respondent stating, *"MoE appointed commissioners should be overlooking the affairs of all schools instead of BOTs … to ensure that schools progress/prosper in a consistent manner."* One of these references

suggested that the Ministry should have a role in making sure all schools are the same, offering the same curriculum and opportunities.

One reference suggested that the Ministry of Education should monitor the resources schools are putting into advertising and marketing. Another reference argued that the Ministry had enhanced competition by mismanaging the school network in one particular place, resulting in capacity being in the wrong places in the system, and there being *"haves and have nots."* One reference suggested that the Ministry could design consistent reporting for schools.

Education Review Office

There were 11 references relating to the role of the ERO in the impact that competition has on schools. The main topics within this sub-theme were ERO's role in supporting the quality of all schools (three) and comments relating to the public nature of ERO reports (three).

Three references indicated that ERO (or ERO guidelines) should play a larger role in supporting all schools to improve their quality (in order to reduce the negative impact of competition). One further reference noted the role of ERO in identifying schools that need support.

Three references suggested the negative impact of competition could be reduced by not making ERO reports public, *"Stop naming and shaming schools through public ERO reports."* Two references suggested ERO reports could be made fairer or provide a more rounded, holistic judgement about a school. Two references suggested that ERO should be removed altogether.

Accountability

There were six references within this sub-theme, five of which suggested that accountability could reduce the negative impact of competition by ensuring that all schools are of a high quality.

Ethos and values

There were five references relating to the ethos and values of individual schools and the schooling system as a whole. Comments included encouraging empathy, support, responsibility for the wider community, and preventing elitism.

Teaching

There were 31 references relating to the role of teachers and the teaching that students receive. The main topics within this theme were improving teacher quality in all schools (25), and the role that teachers can play in minimising competition (two).

Twenty-five of these references focused on reducing the negative impacts of competition by improving the quality of teachers in all schools. One respondent commented that *"if all schools have great teachers and look after their students and teachers well, there will be less need for competition and more chances for schools and communities to thrive."* Of these, three references suggested improving teacher quality by paying teachers more. Seven references suggested improving teacher quality through the provision of training (references were made to both initial teacher education and professional learning and development). Two references suggested teacher quality could be improved through collaboration between teachers and schools.

Two references indicated that teachers had a role to play in reducing the negative impacts of competition, with one respondent citing, *"Allow the teaching staff and school to decide on these issues rather than a national level."* Other references within this theme suggested that performance pay should not be introduced, that all teachers should be valued, and that the Ministry of Education should employ teachers.

Community partnerships and whanaungatanga

There were 18 references relating to community partnerships and whanaungatanga. These were comments relating to the way schools engage with their local community. The main topics were the importance of strong and meaningful relationships with the community in minimising the negative impacts of competition (six), the benefit of the community being about to hold schools to account for quality by "voting with their feet" (three), schools listening to parents (two), and the need to address how parents perceive particular schools (four).

Six references suggested that the negative impacts of competition could be reduced by schools and kura having strong and meaningful relationships with their community. Of these references, one response suggested this was because it could encourage children to go to their local school, *"Make it so that every kid wants to go to their local school because their local school understands them, understands their family and their needs."*

Three references suggested competition allowed parents to "vote with their feet" and that this should be a prompt to improve the quality of schools that were not favoured by parents.

Two references argued that schools should listen to parents more, "*By actually listening to the child and parents. Sometimes parent advocates are ignored because teachers [don't] comprehend that some students find schools difficult to fit into."*

Four references noted that the negative impacts of competition could be reduced by addressing how parents perceive particular schools. One respondent said, *"Educate parents around decile systems – a 10 does not make it a better school. Often decile 1 schools have the best teachers."*

The remaining three references in this category spoke about the importance of schools helping communities to thrive.

Leadership

There were 17 references relating to the role of school leadership (often principals) in reducing the negative impacts of competition. The main topics within this theme were ensuring consistently high quality school leadership (12), and the role that principal behaviour plays in encouraging competition (four).

Twelve references suggested the quality of school leadership, often specifically referring to the principal, can reduce the negative impacts of competition, by ensuring that struggling schools receive high quality leadership and that the quality of leadership is consistent across all schools. One respondent commented, *"Make necessary leadership and staff changes for schools continuing to fall below required standards."*

Four references indicated that the behaviour of a principal had an impact on whether competition exists, *"Although principals appear to work collegiately many just seem to be stroking their own feathers."* One respondent suggested that greater collaboration between school leaders could mitigate the negative impacts of competition, *"Bring school leaders together in each community and get them working together on things."*

Student-centred

There were 14 references that spoke about focusing on students. The main topics within this theme were reducing competition by all schools focusing on individual learners (six), making all schools good quality (two), and building resilience (one).

Six references suggested the negative impacts of competition could be reduced by placing a strong focus on the achievement and wellbeing of each learner, *"Focus on growth in achievement per student…a school that starts with a large proportion of students who are struggling to perform and helps them move to the next level is truly a successful school."* Two of these references also noted the need for sufficient funding to focus on learners. Two references suggested the negative impact of competition could be reduced by making sure that all schools are of a good quality, so that students will get a good education wherever they go.

One reference suggested that competition is positive because it helps children build resilience. It is likely that this respondent was referring to competition between students, rather than at school-level.

Wellbeing and hauora

There were eight references relating to the wellbeing and hauora of students in relation to minimising the negative impacts of competition. These related to supporting schools to address student wellbeing, including through pastoral care and services, providing services to support students in poverty and addressing bullying.

Learning support and disability

There were eight references relating to the provision of support for students with additional learning support needs. Five references suggested reducing the negative impact of competition by providing schools with the resources to be able to support students with additional learning needs and disabilities. Two references suggested that to reduce the negative impact of competition all schools should be inclusive, and that schools which exclude students based on disability should be penalised. One reference noted that schools differ in their ability to cater for students with additional learning needs due to funding, workforce availability and specialist support.

Progress and achievement – curricula

There were seven references relating to the curricula taught in schools. Two references suggested that the curriculum should be consistent in all schools and that this could reduce the negative impact of competition. Other comments included that all schools should adopt curriculum models that are popular with parents and that the national curriculum should stipulate specific content to be taught.

Diversity

There were four references relating to the diversity of schools and the schooling system. Three of these comments were focused on celebrating and encouraging diversity and encouraging inclusiveness. One comment was, *"Schools gain a lot by being able to celebrate their approaches and successes, just like any other organisation. Parents may be attracted to these approaches."* A further reference suggested that the system should *"allow iwi led initiatives."*

Question 7 – How can we encourage more schools and kura to work with local community groups and organisations?

Responses to how we can encourage more schools and kura to work with community groups and organisations were primarily coded in the "community" theme due to the nature of this question. The table below shows the largest emergent themes and their corresponding sub-themes.

Themes	Sub-themes	References	Total references
Community partnerships and whanaungatanga			
	General comments	14	
	Barriers to community engagement	61	
	Whānau and family	24	
	Iwi	4	
	Employers and business	14	
	Proposed ideas	92	209
Schools			
	General comments	41	
	Building relationships	50	
	Boards of Trustees	11	102
Progress and achievement		45	45
Teaching		36	36

Community partnerships and whanaungatanga

Comments within this theme referred to ideas and topics related to the community. Due to the nature of this question, some responses in this theme overlap with other themes and this has been noted where necessary. A number of sub-themes emerged: barriers to community engagement (61), whānau and families (24), iwi (four), employers and business (14), and proposed ideas (92).

Barriers to community engagement

Respondents suggested schools should not be engaging with community organisations, or gave examples of barriers that prevented schools and communities from collaborating.

Of the respondents who identified reasons why schools should not engage with community organisations, 13 references suggested that *"schools should be separate from most local community groups and organisations."* Specific reasons against community engagement included; schools have too much to do already, community engagement is the family's responsibility, and it is the school's role to educate. These reasons were also given by respondents that did not clearly articulate the idea that schools and community organisations should not collaborate.

School workload was the most common reason given by respondents. Fourteen references suggested *"schools have enough to do simply ensuring that a high level of education is provided."* Respondents did not want to place the *"added stress of more paperwork"* on teachers. Five comments suggested that it is the school's role to *"educate the pupils they have,"* these respondents felt that community engagement was not the teacher's responsibility. Lastly, three respondents felt it was the family's responsibility to engage their children with any community organisations, one respondent commenting, *"I take responsibility for my child to be connected to our community."*

There were 26 references that gave examples of barriers that prevented schools and communities from collaborating. The main barriers identified were teachers being time-poor and the administrative burden.

Thirteen references suggested schools and teachers did not have enough time for engagement. Respondents cited that time could be used to build relationships, explore how community organisations can best complement their teaching, and invest in joint community projects. A further eight references cited administration as a barrier, suggesting that we *"reduce paperwork and red tape for outside classroom education."*

Other barriers identified were a lack of money, lack of information, location, and local government. One respondent commented, *"Local government don't always see schools as central to developing a sense of community. When schools are short of resource and look to local government for any kind of assistance or collaboration, local councils can be resentful seeing it as the role of central government to support schools. There's a need for a common understanding of each other' roles but also for the opportunities of working together. Community groups space can be characterised by lots of good will and sometimes even resource although this is often locked up in short term, opaque contracts with different central government agencies. Curtailing the model of short term contracts for core services would enable more strategic and sustainable relationships."*

Whānau and families

This sub-theme relates to the relationship between whānau and family and schools. There were 16 references within this sub-theme covering a variety of topics.

Three references suggested using the Parent Teacher Association to build relationships with whānau and family, as they are well-placed *"to foster these connections and often do through their event and fundraising programmes, school community working bees and art projects."* Similarly, one respondent suggested that a charitable entity be created to support these relationships. This entity appeared to be comprised of members of the community, such as parents and board members, but was not affiliated with any particular school.

Other comments suggested that relationship building with whānau and family should be prioritised so schools can keep them informed of their child's progress, using whānau and families' knowledge and skills, and making school events more family-oriented.

One respondent suggested, *"We should co-locate health and social services and community groups with schools so that they can work together to care for whole families."*

Iwi

There were four references relating to strengthening the school's relationships with their local iwi. Suggestions included incentives for iwi, having iwi representation in Kāhui Ako, and finding opportunities to visit local marae. One respondent commented, *"Asking all schools to work collectively would be a huge ask without other interventions to support a collective approach. What we know is that iwi have influence on every part of Aotearoa. With this influence comes whakapapa connections and their ties to the land. By kura working closely with their iwi counterparts, allies can be formed. With this community engagement, lots of rich localised curricula opportunities can be created to support student learning that will enrich the learning lives of students overall. Trough using an Inquiry Learning lens to the teaching practice, with some effort working with iwi, it could take the learning beyond the traditional classroom and onto the marae, at our sites of significance, alongside our kaumātua. Learning possibilities within community can then be endless."*
Employers and business

There were 14 references that specifically commented on the role of employers and businesses. Eight comments suggested *"empowering communities and local organisations to get involved in school"* through *"[Education outside the classroom], workshopping within schools, offering community based programmes for secondary school students to experience more life skill based education."* There was a sense that more *"authentic partnerships"* are needed, and that *"schools can bring a new dimension to … business practice."* Comparatively, the remaining six comments suggested providing incentives for businesses to become involved with schools, the most common suggestion was by providing tax breaks.

Proposed ideas

There were 92 references that provided suggestions for supporting schools and communities to build and maintain relationships. These included: specifying a liaison person (26), using incentives (14), having an information database (14), workshops and networking events (12), community based programmes (five), feedback mechanisms (two), and resourcing (19).

Twenty-six references suggested a community liaison role be created, which would be responsible for helping schools and communities build and maintain relationships. This role was described as *"a coordinator who encourages, builds and oversees these community and school liaisons and relationships. This person could be from within the schools or community but must have a clearly defined role and responsibilities."* Respondents felt this would be beneficial to schools in particular, as teachers would not have any additional responsibilities.

Further, five comments suggested that this be a paid position. There were a variety of suggestions given toward who would be suitable for such a role, such as members of boards of trustees, parents, and members of the Parent Teacher Association. One respondent suggested, *"BOT should become the PTA group. Less money and only given for performance. The parents are connected to the school and this should be the area they are responsible for. Not for being part of running the school. This system does not work. Too many trustees are being relied on for making decisions that they know nothing about."* Some respondents also proposed having a coordinator that would be able work with a cluster of schools, rather than each school having their own liaison coordinator.

Fourteen references spoke about incentives for schools and communities to work together. The general sentiment for these comments suggested that *"we can't expect something for nothing."*

Further, there were 14 references that suggested establishing a community information sharing database that teachers could access. One respondent commented, *"I would like to see local community groups and organisations collaborate in an efficient way to present schools their profiles. It would be beneficial if this were done in a digital form, whereby organisations were able to keep their contact details and profiles up to date. As teachers, we would love to know what services we could call on to support families in need, so we can help provide students with a more wraparound support service."*

A further 12 respondents suggested face to face events to give schools and communities the opportunity to get to know each other. Suggestions included day trips for students, information evenings, and other organised events that allowed interaction to take place. A further five comments remarked on community based programmes that schools participate in, such as student armies and community outreach programmes. These comments were aimed toward student activity, and included community service, as well as skills-based programmes that gave students more practical learning opportunities. Respondents felt these were positive examples of schools and communities working together.

Two references suggested we *"provide feedback mechanisms where communities, students, parents [and] teachers can share their thoughts and views freely and are acknowledged so they are encouraged to participate in their community."*

Finally, nineteen references commented on managing resourcing for schools and communities. Ten comments suggested schools and communities should be given more funding to allow them to create partnerships. A further three comments noted that schools needed more time. Additionally, six respondents noted that there needed to be a community space for events, such as the school halls, with one suggestion being that clubs *"use the assembly hall for … free so they don't have to hire a venue."* Another respondent suggested there could be an *"exchange for some voluntary hours at school."* Two references suggested that schools be funded so there is space for schools and communities to collaborate, one respondent commenting, *"Ensure that all schools are funded to have a good hall or community facility so that the school is seen as the heart of the community."*

General comments

There were 14 references that did not fit within any of the other sub-themes identified, the majority of which were general in nature. Five comments stated that children and young people should be involved in their communities. This was captured by one respondent, *"We also want kids to be learning about, and contributing to, their community. We need to empower teachers, and give them time, to adapt to the curriculum to their local community and to make the necessary connections or introductions for their students."*

A further three comments suggested that it appeared *"like government abdicating its responsibility,"* and there is a reliance on the community to *"prop up the school because of a lack of government funding."*

Schools

There were 102 references relating to topics and ideas on community engagement from a school perspective. Many of the references fell within the "community" theme, given the nature of the question. Discussion of these references have been moved into this theme in order to prevent any duplication of ideas. There were three sub-themes that emerged: building relationships (50), boards of trustees (11), and general comments (41).

Relationships

This sub-theme captures comments on the relationships between schools and communities. Respondents commented on the relationships generally, as well as the process of building relationships.

Five comments defined the relationship as *"two way,"* as in there needs to be *"a genuine partnership between communities and schools, not one that is ancillary to the school's primary existence."* One respondent commented, *"Schools cannot function in isolation from their communities."*

There were 30 responses which suggested how schools and communities can build their relationships. Six references suggested schools simply *"reach out to their communities."* There were three references that suggested schools could model engagement strategies on other schools who were doing this well. One respondent commented, *"Look at schools/kura who have these successful models and identify what is missing at schools/kura that do not have this and support these schools with the tools to work through this."*

A number of comments talked about the willingness of community groups to collaborate with schools, and where the responsibility to form these relationships lies. While three comments noted that communities generally provided support to schools when invited, six suggested *"community groups and organisations need to be proactive,"* and reach out and support schools. These respondents felt that this question was phrased *"in one way expecting schools to drive the contact."* There was a sense that schools had a heavy workload, and community organisations could take some responsibility in building a relationship. Eight comments spoke to the willingness, or lack thereof, of organisations to work with schools. Two respondents noted that organisations were very willing to support schools, citing examples such as *"police and firefighters do come in and talk about safety."* However, there were five references that noted *"the hardest part is finding local groups and organisations willing to work with the school."* Respondents felt that many organisations their school had approached were unwilling to work with them. In addition, when the school called for volunteers for particular projects, they *"very rarely get a response despite us [the school] doing a lot of service in the community."*

The remaining 15 references spoke about the processes of building relationships. Six comments cited time as the key component to building a genuine partnership between schools and community organisations. Respondents felt that schools could be best supported by giving *"teachers and senior leaders and boards more time to build actual relationships. This is not work that can occur in a single meeting or hui, but has to be a long-term, community wide relationships, where everyone is invested in the local schools/kāhui ako."* Other comments suggested ensuring the relationships were *"authentic,"* where there was open dialogue and where both schools and communities were aware of each other's needs and expectations. One respondent commented, *"Boards need to be canny about getting constructive support without selling out to the highest bidder."*

Boards of Trustees

There were 11 references within this sub-theme that were not covered in other themes. Six respondents felt that it the board's role should shift towards becoming *"the voice of the community"* rather than *"focused on governance."* Three comments suggested that boards should be given support and training to ensure they can engage effectively with communities. A further three comments cited that best practice community engagement is driven by the principal and board, with two respondents noting that this fails when there is a *"bad principal and unskilled board."*

General comments

This sub-theme refers to comments that did not fit within any of the remaining sub-themes identified or were general in nature. The 41 references in this sub-theme cover a variety of different topics including: that schools current engagement with communities, schools as advertising tools, school culture, and rural and urban communities.

Twenty comments suggested that schools already engage with communities *"as part of their normal practice."* Additionally, five comments spoke to the consideration of schools' needs. These references suggested that schools be *"transparent about what kind of help they want,"* and community organisations need to *"offer what the school needs. Organisations are often keen to collaborate in a way that meets their needs, but not necessarily the needs of the students at that particular time."* Three comments suggested having community engagement put into school charters, and two respondents suggested schools be the *"central hub for all social, welfare, health, and [wellbeing] centre of the community."* Three respondents cautioned against *"schools becom[ing] advertising tools for commercial organisations."* These respondents felt that organisations should not collaborate with schools for the purposes of gain, monetary or otherwise. One respondent commented, *"I think this is*

important but not to commercialise schools. This is a message best delivered nationally as an aspiration of civic society. There is much satisfaction to be had in volunteering and/or donating and schools should be a great option. Having some proforma 'human capital' surveys that schools could use to assess the resources in their community would be great. Having advice on how to procure and sustain beneficial relationships would be helpful. Principals and teachers all have a role to play in engaging community groups and organisations but this needs to be in concert with each other, not in competition or opposition."

Three references suggested school culture was important with regards to encouraging schools to work with their communities. There was a sense that some schools could be considered too *"insular,"* and that *"they belong to the community not to themselves."* One respondent commented, *"Schools need to have a true open door policy that is part of the school culture. That invites community in. Our school does this superbly well but a new principal from a wealthier school was shocked by it because the parents in her old school never came in during school time but we do. In the class and out. It's very important that people know they're allowed."*

Five comments noted a difference in *"community interconnectedness"* between urban and rural schools, with community engagement not seen as an issue in small rural areas. Some respondents were of the opinion that *"in diverse, mobile urban environments families don't just use local groups and organisations, but have a whole city to choose from."* One respondent noted, *"It is simply reflective of how community minded the whole area is and this is deteriorating in today's world especially in urban areas. The problem is far wider than trying to just look at schools."*

Progress and achievement

There were 45 references within this theme, which related to the curriculum (26), and assessment and measurement (six). There was some degree of overlap with comments that were also coded in the "community" theme.

There were 26 comments regarding community engagement and its ties to curriculum and learning. Four respondents believed community engagement should relate to curriculum content learnt within their classrooms, and suggested that this may *"enrich learning for students."*

Sixteen references suggested changing the curriculum. There was a common misunderstanding about how prescribed the New Zealand Curriculum is, such that respondents cited that we *"free up the curriculum"* in order to make space for community engagement or *"make it part of legislation or curriculum."* Despite any misconceptions, respondents noted that community engagement provided a way to make *"learning more meaningful and purposeful"* and would lead to *"higher engagement rates."* Two respondents suggested formalising the engagement so students could earn credits toward NCEA, *"This can include gaining credits towards awards or qualifications as well as actual work experience (including industry partnerships) … These [ongoing community partnership links] can help build up a track record of the school being seen as actively working with community and not just seeking things from the community."*

A further five references specified having a flexible curriculum as important to *"connect the learning taking place within the school and contextualising it with local community groups and organisation."* One respondent commented, *"I think having the freedom of the curriculum being used as it is intended now that national standards have been dropped may see this happening organically without need for intervention."*

There were six references that suggested there was too much assessment in schools and that reducing the associated workload would allow more time for community engagement. Respondents felt there was too much pressure on principals and teachers to be *"constantly reporting back, adminning, or 'grading' students."* One respondent commented, *"Education needs to return to the concept of producing rounded people, not just stressed out students who are being assessed weekly and just need to keep getting excellences. Less assessment and more engagement with the real world would be a start."*

Teaching

There were 36 references within this theme. The two predominant ideas were that teachers' workloads should be reduced, and that teachers should be given more time to form community partnerships.

Fourteen references cited that currently *"teachers have enough on their plate without having to seek community organisations for input."* There is a sense that teachers are unable take on additional responsibility due to their heavy workload. Two respondents pointed to the additional administration burden of community involvement, such as health and safety administration.

Nine comments suggested teachers need more time to form relationships. These comments suggested we *"give teachers more release time."*

Other suggestions included ensuring that schools were adequately resourced to be able to go out into their communities, and encouraging community engagement in professional learning and development and initial teacher education.

Question 8 – How can we best provide diversity in the type and nature of schooling available to our increasingly diverse children and young people?

References on how to best provide diversity in the type and nature of schooling for our increasingly diverse children and young people fell within 10 main themes. The table below shows these themes and their corresponding sub-themes.

Themes	Sub-themes	References	Total references
Workforce			
	Teaching and pedagogy	36	
	Workload, pay and status	24	
	Professional development and training	45	
	Workforce diversity	39	149
Schools		20	
	Boards of Trustees	12	
	Choice, competition and enrolment	19	
	Class size and ratio	22	
	School type	45	
	Collaboration	10	128
Progress and achievement			
	Curriculum	49	
	Qualifications	6	
	Assessment and measurement	9	
	Evidence and data	4	68
Education systems and agencies		21	
	Funding	33	54
Student-centred			
	Holistic and values focused	11	
	Student voice and student led	8	
	Personalised learning	8	
	Student-centred education	8	
	Role of culture in education	5	
	Community consultation	5	
	General comments	7	52
Community partnerships and whanaungatanga		39	39
Diversity		37	37
Learning support and disability		6	
	Funding and resourcing	11	
	Improved access to staff	8	
	Specialist schools and units	4	
	Needs of every student	3	32
Leadership		9	9
Wellbeing and hauora		9	9

Workforce

There were 149 references related to how the education workforce can provide diversity in the type and nature of schooling. Within this theme there were four major sub-themes: teaching and pedagogy (36), workload, teacher pay and status of the teaching profession (24), professional development and training (45), and workforce diversity (39).

Teaching and pedagogy

In the teaching and pedagogy sub-theme there were 36 references, covering two dominant topics; more teachers (10), and pedagogy (26). There were five general references that related to asking teachers' opinions, letting diversity provision be led by teachers, and supporting teachers with accurate data.

Ten references identified the need to recruit more teachers to address the teacher shortage, and to better meet the needs of children in the classroom. Reducing the student to teacher ratio to better support learning was also mentioned in a number of references.

Twenty-six references indicated the importance of innovative pedagogy, which was evidence-based and responsive to the needs of learners, "*Offering different ways to learn … some kids really just learn with their hands and experiences.*" Additional comments included, "*Encourage and celebrate innovation in education. It may not work the first time but adapt and move until it does work … teach our teachers to teachable moment,*" and, "*Empowering teachers to work together in teams to alter their approaches to teaching and learning.*"

Workload, teacher pay and status of the teaching profession

There were 24 references in this sub-theme, covering three topics; workload (nine), status (seven), and pay (six).

Nine references stated that teacher workload needs to be reduced, "*Giving teachers more time to focus on their students as individuals, and encouraging them to share their culture.*" Some thought this should be achieved through, "*More support staff! More support for classroom teachers,*" and by, "*reduc[ing] unnecessary paperwork.*"

Seven references touched on the need to improve the status of the teaching profession, "*Make the teaching profession attractive for the working professional and respected once more. So young professionals will want to enter the profession (and stay).*"

Six references suggested teachers need to be paid more, "*Pay teachers better to attract diverse teachers to diverse schools.*"

Professional development and training

Forty-five references commented on the role of professional development and training to support not only primarily teachers, but also principals and other school staff. Forty-four of these references highlighted the need for more training, some noting that it should be better targeted at understanding and supporting diverse learners. A number of references also noted the need for this training in initial teacher education as well. Examples included, "*Ensure that PLD for teachers has a focus on diverse learners,*" and, "*Teacher training and ongoing PLD should include a multi-cultural lens, as well as opportunities to learn about your own biases and how to monitor these.*" One reference stated the current, centrally funded professional learning and development system needs to be disestablished, "*Get rid of centrally funded PD - so much time is involved and not all providers are great.*"

Workforce diversity

Thirty-nine references highlighted the need to increase the diversity of the teaching workforce. Some suggested this needed to begin by increasing the diversity of those accepted in initial teacher education programmes, by making it easier to recruit overseas teachers, and encouraging other professionals (trade staff etc.) to become teachers. Some noted that increasing workforce diversity would be challenging with the current teacher employment conditions (workload, pay etc.). One respondent commented, *"Make sure the teacher trainee's from different backgrounds are recruited into the teaching profession. This means lowering any financial barriers graduates might face, and give them good work conditions once they get their first teaching post."* Other suggestions were to *"get teachers from overseas filling the gaps in our schools,"* and, *"[foster] teaching as an exciting career for diverse ethnicity young people."*

Schools

There were 128 references in the schools theme. Within this there were five major sub-themes: boards of trustees (12), competition, choice and enrolment (19), class size and ratio (22), school type (45), and collaboration (10). There were also 20 general references that did not fit within these five sub-themes.

Boards of Trustees

There were 12 references that mentioned boards of trustees' role in supporting diversity. There was a range in opinion on how this could be done. Three references thought boards required more autonomy or be trusted to deliver for diversity, *"Allow school Boards to make the decisions that best reflect their schools makeup and needs."* While another two references commented that boards should not have so much control over the type of education and learning delivered, *"Stop allowing Boards of Trustees to choose a single religion to be taught."*

Three references thought boards required more training and support to adequately meet the needs of diverse learners.

Competition, choice and enrolment

Nineteen references related to competition, choice, and enrolment. There were three major topics in this sub-theme: make the local school the best school (seven), competition and choice (seven), and enrolment and zoning (five).

Seven references highlighted the need to make the local school the best school, *"If you provide quality local schools that children enjoy and feel safe [going to] and where parents want their children to attend … parents won't want to send their children to other schools out of the area,"* and, *"Families should not be expected to move to a certain area to obtain access to education for their child. We need a strong, equitable public education system of local schools [that] are inherently flexible within school walls."*

The seven references on competition and choice were divided on whether these had positive (five) or negative (two) impacts on diverse education provision. Responses in favour of competition and choice commented, *"One size does not fit all – choice of schools aids this."* References in opposition stated, *"Provision for diversity needs to be within each school not as choices between schools. Otherwise you are dividing and separating people rather than creating an expectation that no matter where a person lives our society will ensure equitable access to excellent schooling."*

The five references on enrolment and zoning suggested that zoning and enrolment schemes were not the answer and should be removed, *"Well enforced zoning will certainly not lead to diversity,"* and, *"Get rid of out of zone enrolments."*

Class size and ratio

There were 22 references in this sub-theme, all stressing the need to make classes smaller, *"It is not possible for one teacher to adequately meet the needs of 30 different learners in our day and age of huge diversity,"* and, *"Having better teacher to child ratios. Teachers that are able to know and understand the kids are better able to offer diversity and collaborative solutions."*

School type

There was breadth of opinions in the 45 references relating to how school type could support our diverse learners. Within these comments there were three dominant topics; Charter Schools (13), special character schools (nine), and comments on the diversity in school type (12). There were 11 general comments across a range of ideas, inclusion as a fundamental principle for the education system was identified by three references, *"Diversity is a hugely positive force when those diverse people work together, rather than silo off. The worst thing we could do would be to create lots of different schools for all the different types of learners we have. Inclusion should be the underlying principle."* Other ideas touched upon were the need for greater collaboration between different school types, the need for greater support for alternative education, and the need to only allow state schools. A further two references thought that large schools were damaging to learners and diversity, *"Very large schools can become places of anonymity for students,"* and, *"By not having huge schools."*

Of the 13 references on Charter Schools, nine references were in favour of the Charter School approach. Some of these references stated that charter schools should be brought back, *"Charter schools should be allowed as they do seem to be good for the kids that the mainstream fails."* Three responses were not in favour of the charter school model, *"We have too many schools in NZ. Abolish charter schools and do not subsidise private schools."* One reference commented there needed to be a hybrid of the charter and special character school and that this should *"give them the chance to risk and innovate for families that want different approaches. Learn from the successful models and replicate."*

All nine of the references on designated special character schools were supportive of these school types. Comments included, *"By supporting alternative education approaches… (e.g. Montessori or Rudolph Steiner),"* and, *"Allow more 'Special Character school[s]' that aren't based on religion but instead based on different theories of learning."*

There were 12 comments on the importance of providing a broad range of school types. Ideas ranged from more forest/nature, play-based and tinker schools, ensuring there is a range of school types in each geographic area and general comments like, *"Allow schools to develop unique strengths and philosophies that are available to all children/families to choose from."*

Collaboration

There were 10 references that directly commented on the role of collaboration between schools to support the diversity of education provision. Seven references identified the need for clusters or networks of schools, this was seen to provide a greater range of learning opportunities, share resources, and strengthen teaching and school practices. Some references suggested these networks should be geographically based. Comments included, *"All schools in a local area need to work together to provide diverse subjects and learning*

styles between them," and, *"Creating points of difference in networks of schools then share resources and even students."*

Three references commented on Communities of Learning, suggesting that they provided a mechanism and leadership structure to be responsive to local communities and share resources. Comments included, *"Strengthen COL to share resources and students/communities across schools to have equal access to these,"* and this is *"a question for the COLs. Gather your leaders together, and ask them."*

General comments

Within the general section on schools there was one dominant topic; teaching and learning (seven). There were also 13 general comments that did not fit neatly within particular topics. General comments included; changing the ability of schools to resist to change, providing good information to schools about societal change, strengthening the autonomy of schools, strengthening international partnerships between schools, and developing a better understanding of the impact of digital change on schools.

Seven references highlighted the need for changes to the type of teaching and learning in schools. Some references highlighted the need for greater flexibility and freedom in schools, *"More flexibility in how schools run ... including the recruitment of staff, if there is not enough registered teachers recruit creatively ie phd's and people with other relevant quals and experiences like IT or Te Reo."* Others mentioned the needs for schools to have a wide variety of programmes available to them to support their diverse range of children. Further references highlighted the need for schools to deliver different types of teaching and learning, "*More schools using play based learning and the outdoors… Find ways for the learning to be more child led and active, children teaching each other (the tuakana-teina relationship)."*

Progress and achievement

There were 68 references related to progress and achievement. There were four dominant sub-themes: curriculum (49), assessment and measurement (nine), qualifications (six), and evidence and data (four).

Curriculum

Within the 49 references in the curriculum sub-theme, 34 focused on the topic of curriculum content. Other topics had fewer than four references for each idea. These references included; the use of innovative and collaborative teaching styles, learning from the strands in Te Whāriki, providing consistent boundaries for the curriculum to be interpreted within, the need for greater funding to support curriculum delivery, and reviewing the curriculum every two to three years.

The curriculum content topic primarily identified the need to teach a broad content range (11). A number of references highlighted the need for curriculum content to reflect the learners*, "Ask the children what their interests are and incorporate this into the curriculum,"* and, *"In terms of curriculum design, it's a difficult question. How do you ensure the school curriculums are reflective of, and relevant to, their ākonga, avoiding a white-out curriculum that marginalises minority learners further, both in terms of content, learning contexts and pedagogy?"* Some references also highlighted the need for both breadth of content and also a focus on foundational skills (literacy and numeracy).

Five references touched on project-based learning, with four supporting it and one cautioning its role in diluting subject specific knowledge. Other references highlighted the

role of the social studies and history curriculum in supporting diversity. Five references highlighted the need for greater language and cultural learning opportunities in curriculum delivery. One reference praised the local curricula, while one reference stated that the curricula and New Zealand needed to have a more international focus.

Assessment and measurement

There were nine references focused on how improvements in assessment and measurement can support diversity. Three comments suggested we needed to start measuring across the breadth of learning. Two comments suggested there needed to be less assessment, *"Too much time is wasted on unimportant things."* Four commented on National Standards, with three stating its removal will support a focus on learning, and one stating that National Standards should be retained.

Qualifications

There were six comments related to how qualifications could support greater diversity. Five of these focused on making changes to NCEA to enable a greater focus on learning than gaining credits and to allow better planning across subjects.

Evidence and data

Four references identified the need to use evidence-based and data driven programmes and interventions, and international models of teaching and learning. One of these references cautioned to *"use research before rushing into new things,"* using the example of modern learning environments to illustrate this point.

Systems and agencies

There were 54 references in the systems and agencies in theme. There was one dominant sub-theme, funding (33). The remaining references touched on a range of ideas. Some focused on how all agencies needed to work better together, with five references identifying the need for improved health and social service involvement with education provision. There were also five references on the Ministry of Education, suggesting that the Ministry should be more responsive to and better connected with schools, iwi and communities. The need for the Ministry to strengthen and retain quality staffing was also identified. Three references touched on the need to look at the role and scope of ERO, and to make use of their work on inclusion. A further seven references identified the need to use evidence, data and research to inform changes in the education system for diversity, by looking both locally and internationally.

Funding

Thirty-three references linked funding to schooling provision for diverse learners. Thirty-one of these references commented there should be greater funding for a range of things: curriculum delivery, extra-curricular services and activities, school operations, equity based funding, increased staff pay, teacher aides, and reducing student teacher ratios. An example was, *"Ensure funding reflects the intent of education – more funding for actual curriculum delivery."* The other two references identified the need to use current resources better, *"Accurate prevalence and costings required to underpin policy and resourcing framework,"* and, *"Time and money invested WISELY; less BUSINESS-style thinking and more remembering we're dealing with PEOPLE, not PRODUCTS."*

Student-centred

There were 52 references in the student- centred theme; the seven largest sub-themes were holistic and values focused (11), student voice and student led (eight), personalised learning and meeting the needs of each unique learner (eight), student-centred education (eight), role of culture in education (five), community consultation (five), and general comments (seven). Nine general comments ranged from highlighting that children have different learning needs and that learning occurs in multiple contexts.

Holistic and values focused

Nine references highlighted the importance of holistic and values-focused education provision in providing diversity in the type and nature of schooling. These comments stressed the need for holistic education highlighted the need to extend learning beyond the classroom, *"Tap into life experiences and learning rather than just focusing on classroom learning."* The importance of fostering emotional literacy of children was also highlighted, *"Bring in holistic learning, especially around different ways children can communicate their thoughts and feelings."* The values identified as important were *"respect, honesty and kindness."* Another example included, *"Teach them what [it] is to be caring, kind, compassionate citizen of their community."* The need for programmes to support the development of resilience and empathy alongside diversity was also identified.

Student voice and student led

Eight references identified the need for schooling provision to be informed by student voice and to be student led. These comments supported student agency and student voice in curriculum content, *"Let the students take control of their learning."* It was important that student voice and agency was authentic, not just tokenistic, *"Encourage our students to speak up about their learning. Don't just listen to what they say and try and fit it into what you were doing anyway but use their words as direction for your teaching and learning programmes so they buy into it."* Another reference noted the importance of having student voice *"at all levels of decision making,"* and cautioning the system to *"stop underestimating young people and the value they hold to solving their own problems."*

Personalised learning and meeting the needs of each unique learner

Eight references commented on the need to personalise learning and meet the unique need of each learner. Respondents thought diversity could be honoured and embraced by meeting the distinct needs of each child, by teachers respecting diversity and empowering students to let their interests drive learning, and by recognising the unique potential of each child. One respondent thought children needed a *"real individual education plan … right from ECE."*

Student-centred education

There were eight references focused on student-centred education. This sub-theme was distinct from the student voice and student led sub-theme as it focused on making the needs and outcomes for children the central measure of all activities taking place in schools and the system itself. Comments highlighted that, "*Children should be at the heart of the issue and any systems should be designed around them … Relationships are key so the environment and system should always be thinking about the experience of the child and the experience of the teacher."*

Role of culture in education

Five references identified the role of culture in education. Four of these references highlighted the importance of valuing culture and gave practical examples of how this could be achieved. The examples were: creating space and time to enable children to share their cultures, cultural trips, and introducing *"intercultural competency"* as a sixth key competency in the curriculum. Conversely, one reference commented, *"[Don't] push other cultures on kids."*

Community consultation

Five references highlighted the importance of schools and learning being part of communities, and enabling community voice and involvement to shape a diverse and responsive education system. References suggested, *"Listen[ing] to the people who have the expertise in this within the wider community. Don't be afraid to continue the learning journey yourselves,"* and, *"By building a sense of community in both involvement and responsibility."*

Community partnerships and whanaungatanga

All 39 references in the community partnerships and whanaungatanga theme identified the need for stronger and more genuine relationships with community. Some thought this should be done by improving relationships with communities and families, strengthening feedback mechanisms and actually listen to, and making using of community feedback. Others suggested that learning could be community based, *"Creating locally based curriculum that are negotiated with community and include community as teachers and places to go out and learn in,"* and, *"Community learning opportunities, EOTC and cultural education, examples: Regional councils and river monitoring, planting programs."* Other references identified the need to use the experience and knowledge in communities to support learning, *"Ensure diversity in teaching/school staff and positive role models from around the whole community."* The importance of a diverse education workforce was also identified here, this could be encouraged through *"postgraduate diplomas in teaching for trade verified and certified staff, exploring ways to bring the community expertise in."* Iwi were also identified as a source of knowledge and connection for schools and learning, *"Opportunities for iwi to develop localised curriculum that can support the Marautanga."*

Diversity

This theme acted as a catch-all for general comments on diversity. As references were coded to multiple themes, this section only focuses on the ideas that have not been captured elsewhere in the report. There were 37 references within five sub-themes that had not been identified elsewhere in the report. These sub-themes were: do not focus on diversity (21), focus on inclusivity rather than providing for diversity (seven), provision for diversity is good enough already (five), and that there are risks in focusing on diversity (four).

Twenty-one respondents thought a focus on diversity was not necessary. Some references debated whether there was more diversity today. Others thought that all children needed to be treated with respect, *"They are all children with needs including cultural recognition and acknowledgement."* Further references identified that diversity should not be the focus at the detriment of the majority, or that the focus should be on similarities rather than differences, *"Be realistic about diversity. Diversity is welcome but not at the expense of being unable to cater to the majority."* One respondent commented, *"You shouldn't. Learning to get on in the mainstream is actually important."* Three references commented the focus should be on New Zealand values rather than diversity. Others simply stated it was *"not necessary"* and that *"diversity in education is not relevant."*

Seven references commented that the focus should be reframed from providing for diversity to focusing on inclusive education, *"Diversity sounds like supporting division rather perhaps it is time that schools promoted cohesiveness and integration… Those countries with the most successful education systems have the most cohesive cultures,"* and, *"Wrong question. Do we need to 'provide diversity' or inclusivity? I'd strongly argue for the latter."*

Five references thought the current provision for diversity was working well already. Examples included, *"This is not a problem in our community,"* and, *"We have great options for doing this already in New Zealand. Have a look … to what the people are doing and you may be very surprised."*

Four references cautioned that a focus on diversity can often create or further entrench lower achievement expectations for students, *"We need to be careful not to use 'diversity' as an excuse for preventing young people from minority backgrounds getting the content that young people from white and Asian backgrounds in higher-decile schools get."*

Learning support and disability

Thirty-two references highlighted that Learning Support provision needed to improve to adequately support diversity in schools and across the system. There were four main sub-themes: funding and resourcing (11), improved access to well trained teachers, teacher aides and specialist staff (eight), specialist schools and units (four), and meeting the needs of every student (three). There were also six additional comments that did not fit neatly into the identified sub-themes. These focused on improved accountability structures, hub-based Learning Support provision, general comments about taking the steps to provide truly inclusive education, and involving iwi in developing education plans to meet the needs of all students.

Funding and resourcing

Eleven references highlighted the need for greater funding of Learning Support and wider health and social supports as a way of supporting diversity in schooling provision. Greater funding and resourcing would better support each child's learning needs, provide for more nurses, social workers and teachers' aides. Two of these references mentioned the need for greater ESOL provision and greater support for students from refugee backgrounds.

Improved access to well trained teachers, teacher aides and specialist staff

Eight references identified the need for improved access to well trained teachers, teacher aides, and specialist staff. Some comments touched on access issues and the flow on effect to all learners, *"Sufficient teacher aides to support those with learning issues is a big issue across NZ that needs addressing. In my son's Y5 class the teacher's time is take up 80% by one student with high learning needs, whereas there are 28 other students that also have learning needs."*

Other references noted that greater training would strengthen the education workforces' ability to effectively meet diverse learning needs. References highlighted ways for achieving this by, *"Increas[ing] teacher release time so that they can better learn about the needs of students with disabilities, neurodiversity and any other additional learning needs,"* and making sure that *"the appropriate training is given as compulsory to all staff including BOT, ie. autism, adhd etc. This should not be a choice of the principal or a matter of funding."* Compulsory *"inclusion and equity modules as part of all ITE programs and annual/regular PD for teachers"* were identified by one reference.

Specialist schools and units

Of the four comments on specialist schools and/or units, three references identified the need for specialist schools, *"There is the need for some specialist schools to meet needs that can't be met in mainstream."* One reference suggested that there needed to be *"more special needs units in more schools where children with the needs can go to receive specialised trained help with their specific needs and also spend time in mainstream classes."*

Meeting the needs of every student

Three references identified that the education system needs to meet the unique needs of every child. This could be achieved by creating *"plans for our students with Neurodiversity needs,"* and *"by ensuring every child/young person has access to any and all extra help they may need to achieve. By working with children/young people and their families to gain a diagnosis of learning problems at primary school level and putting in place the correct supports to allow the child/young person to achieve."*

Leadership

There were nine references that commented on the role of leadership in supporting diversity in education provision. These comments focused on improving the quality of leadership, and leading change at the management and governance levels. One reference critiqued the unchecked autonomy of principals and the impact of this on diversity, *"Stop allowing BOT's and Principals to live out their English public school fantasies through our children."* Another suggested this was not government's job, *"You can't. Principals do that, not the Govt."* Another suggested that, "*Professional leaders from schools are the best to lead the way. We need to listen to the leaders of the schools. Take away the parents. Give them a voice in another way if required. A lot of money is being given out to board members for doing very little."*

Wellbeing and hauora

There were nine references within the wellbeing and hauora theme. These identified that socio-economic factors impact children's ability to learn. References suggested addressing this by building positive school cultures, reducing bullying and providing support services that looked after the needs of the whole child (food in low decile schools, social workers, meeting health needs etc.). An example of these comments was, *"More support from outside agencies in school[s] and it being timely."*

Question 9 – How can schools and kura best hear and respond to children and young people's views?

Responses to how schools and kura can best hear and respond to children and young people's views were concentrated among a smaller number of themes and sub-themes than some previous questions. The table below shows the six largest emergent themes for this question.

Themes	Sub-themes	References	Total references
Student-centred		10	
	Student Voice	311	
	Capabilities	15	336
Schools		45	45
Teaching		41	41
Community partnerships and whanaungatanga		34	34
Education system and agencies		27	27
Progress and achievement		19	19

Student-centred

There were 336 references coded under the student-centred theme, with the vast majority (311) falling within the sub-theme of student voice. There were 15 references within the capabilities sub-theme, and 10 more general comments.

Student voice

There were 311 references within this sub-theme. The main topics were seeking the views of students (89), listening to students (84), and responding to student feedback (35). There were also suggestions about the method of gathering student voice, including surveys (60), student representatives (24), hui or forum (19), gathering online (14), gathering face to face (seven), through classroom activities (seven), and using trained facilitators (four). Other topics included supporting schools to respond to student voice (six), building a safe culture (nine), that schools are already responding to student views (11), and that student voice shouldn't be prioritised (28).

Eighty-nine references commented that schools and kura needed to seek the views of children and young people in order to be able to respond to them. One respondent stated, *"Ask them – children are not shy in sharing their opinions. If we really want to know what our kids think – that's all we have to do,"* while another said, *"Does anyone ever ask them? ECE and kohanga do this really well. Their voice should be compulsory as it is about them so they are a crucial part."*

Eighty-four references emphasised that schools and kura needed to really listen to the voices and views of children and young people. One respondent said, *"Listen without judgement. Actively listen. Focus on how it can work, rather than the obstacles,"* while another said, *"Listen … most often schools and kura hear what they want to hear from the students that have similar views to their own. In my experience when we present teachers and leaders with student or whānau voice they will discount it – if it is inconsistent with their experience and belief of what's going in 'their' school – they don't respond … they don't listen … they rewrite the narrative."*

Thirty five references stressed that schools and kura need to show that they are responding to, and acting on the feedback and views that they gather from children and young people. One respondent commented, *"I think the key is listening and then taking action so that the children see the value in actually communicating their ideas."*

There were a range of suggestions regarding how the views of children and young people could be gathered. Sixty references recommended the use of surveys. One respondent commented, *"The Wellbeing Survey is one way of collecting real evidence of students' feelings linked to their school experiences. Get feedback from each class, each subject, each year – we have built in student voice this year to our appraisal system for example. Talk about the findings from such surveys and feedback to the learners and talk about what changes/improvements etc were made based on that information."* Seven of these references specifically suggested that surveys be online, including using tools such as "Survey Monkey". One reference suggested the development of national surveys for all students in New Zealand. It was also suggested that students could complete exit surveys when they leave the school or kura.

Twenty-four references suggested schools or kura having student representatives was a good way to gather the views of children and young people. In a similar vein, 19 references suggested student councils or student panels were an effective way through which the views of children and young people could be heard, *"Our students have a student council, they are encouraged and given the opportunity to share their ideas and thoughts."* One reference suggested that the student council could interact with the principal or board of trustees to represent student voice.

Nineteen references recommended gathering student voice through hui or forum with students. One respondent commented that *"their voices can be sought within group discussions."*

Fourteen references stated that the views of children and young people should be gathered online (including references that suggested using online surveys discussed above). Other suggestions for online engagement included the use of social media. A further two references suggested technology could be used to gather the voices of children and young people.

Seven references commented that engaging with children and young people face to face was the best way to hear their views, *"Genuine community engagement has to be face to face and not (always) in school."*

Seven references suggested that the views of children and young people could be gathered through the learning taking place in schools. One respondent commented, *"Any projects the school is undertaking allow the students to have input and be consulted on (best practice) feedback loops, providing opportunities for citizen engagement and community/volunteer work."*

Four references stated that the use of trained facilitators or staff was important in hearing the views of children and young people. One respondent suggested, *"Trained staff who understand the value of children's' voice and have the skills to facilitate hearing them, a variety of ways to collect their views."*

Six references spoke about the support that schools and kura need to be able to gather and respond to the views of children and young people. Specific suggestions included the sharing of best practice, working with research experts and the Ministry of Education to create tools to gather student voice.

Nine references spoke about the need for schools to build a culture where there is space for children and young people to share their views, and where it is safe for them to do so. One respondent commented, *"Students need to have safe ways to give feedback on their teachers or they will say what they think teachers want to hear."* A further five references suggested that there should be opportunities for students to share their views anonymously. Other comments included the suggestion that an independent complaints board be developed, that students can share their views through their teachers, parents and whānau and through the use of teacher/parent conferences. It was also suggested that young people should have a say in their own Individual Education Plan or Individual Behaviour Plan. Finally, it was suggested that students should evaluate their teachers.

Eleven references stated that schools were already successful at responding to the views of children and young people. One respondent said, *"I thought that schools were generally accomplished at listening to children's views. The provision by T.S for a pupil representative on the BOT was a positive step. With far more 'openness' in relationships most teachers and principals are up to date with prevailing attitudes and views of the pupil population."*

Twenty-eight references suggested that it was not necessary to seek or prioritise the views of children and young people, either because they felt the views of children and young people were not useful or valid, or because they believed that other voices (such as parents, teachers or experts) should be prioritised. One respondent cited, *"I think we place far too much emphasis on children's views of education. We have people like John Hattie and Elizabeth Rata and a raft of professional, dedicated education experts all over the world who know education better than anyone else. Asking a child what his/her view of education is, is like asking me about the intricacies of the building trade on the basis that I might own a house or in the intricacies of medicine because I'm a patient."*

Capabilities

There were 15 references relating to the capabilities that students need to develop. Nine of these references suggested schools should build capabilities within students that will enable them to share their views and opinions. One respondent stated, *"Teaching higher order thinking more explicitly so children are better equipped to examine, explain and justify their views as well as listen to and consider the perspectives of others."*

Three references made general comments about the capabilities students should develop, with one respondent citing, *"Get them learning and develop a love of learning."*

Two references suggested children and young people do not have the necessary capabilities to share valid views, *"Children need to learn facts before they can have views."*

General comments

There were 10 more general comments. Three of these references stated that teacher relationships with students were crucial to responding to student views, with one respondent indicating, *"Every teacher needs to get to know, understand and love each student, learning what they want to learn and the way they want to learn it."* Three references spoke more generally about schools needing to be centred on students, *"Schools need to become student centred."*

Schools

There were 45 references relating to this theme. The main topics within this theme were the role of student representatives on the board of trustees (the board) (13), board responsibilities in acting on student voice (eight), and smaller class sizes (seven).

Thirteen references suggested schools could respond to the views of students by having a student representative on the board. One respondent said, *"All schools should have a student rep on board including primary."* One respondent cautioned that *"the student rep on a board of trustees is a difficult role for students to negotiate, and one where there needs to be more support and guidance for the student. The student reps also need to feel that their voice WILL be hard and acted on if they bring to light an issue which is of concern to many students."*

Eight references commented that it was a responsibility of the board of trustees to seek the voice of students and respond to them. One respondent suggested, *"Offer opportunities for student leaders to interact with the board (formally and informally) to share ideas and benefit from the opportunity to understand some of the underlying challenges that boards are dealing with."* Other suggestions included making it the responsibility of one board member to respond to student voice, providing training for boards to enable them to engage with their communities (particularly minority groups), or sharing best engagement practices. Seven references said that schools should have smaller class sizes, to enable teachers to focus on responding to the needs of all students. One respondent commented, *"Smaller class sizes might help teachers to listen and respond better."*

Other suggestions included the importance of building a school culture that enables student voice, making student voice a mandatory part of school self-review, and the importance of strong relationships across the whole school.

Teaching

There were 41 references coded under this theme, which related to teachers and teaching. The main topics within this theme were the need for teachers to have time to respond to student views (eight), the importance of teachers building strong relationships with students (eight), the role of teacher quality (four), training for teachers (four), and good pedagogy (two).

Eight references commented that teachers need to be given the time to respond to the views of children and young people, particularly by reducing their workload. One respondent said, *"Teacher training and workloads need to be better managed so that teachers are available to respond to student's needs."*

Eight respondents spoke about the importance of teachers building good relationships with students so that they are able to hear and respond to their views, with one respondent commenting, *"Every teacher needs to get to know, understand and love each student, learning what they want to learn and the way they want to learn it."* More broadly, five references commented that teachers in particular, need to listen to children and young people, *"Employ teachers that listen to their students and value their input."*

Four references suggested that the quality of teachers is important in schools being able to respond to the views of students, and four references suggested that training should ensure that teachers have the capability to respond to student voice. One respondent said, *"Train the teacher to embrace their inner empathy. Train the teacher to listen with their hearts to enable learning with heart and mind."* Two references commented that pedagogy must enable student voice, *"Encourage teachers to regularly use student reflection to help evaluate their programmes."*

Comments were split on whether teachers are already skilled at listening and responding to the views of children and young people, with two references suggesting that this is something that most teachers already do well, and two references suggesting that it is not currently done well.

Finally, four references suggested there needs to be greater emphasis on listening to the views of teachers. One respondent said, *"Talk to teachers more. They are at the chalk face and have an excellent idea of what is happening. At present new ideas are often imposed without a great deal of teacher/student input."*

Community partnerships and whanaungatanga

There were 34 references coded under this theme, which refers to the engagement between schools, parents, whānau and the wider community.

Twenty-two references spoke about the importance of schools and kura not only hearing and responding to the voice of students, but also hearing and responding to the views of their parents and whānau. One respondent said, *"Actively listen, and listen effectively to the children and young people. Also take into consideration and listen to the adults who support them."*

Additionally, 10 references suggested schools needed to listen and respond to the views of their community. One respondent commented, *"Get the school to be community focused and truly working in the community as part of the community."* One further reference suggested that the views of the minority should be prioritised above views of children and young people.

Two references spoke about the role of parents, whānau and the wider community in building student agency so that students are able to express their views. One respondent suggested, *"Developing the concept and value of student agency with schools, trustees and the general public in our communities."*

Education system and agencies

There were 27 references relating to comments on the education system as a whole, and comments on system-level agencies.

Seven references spoke about the role of the ERO in ensuring that schools listen and respond to student voice, suggesting that student voice should be more prominent or accurately reflected in ERO reviews. One respondent said, *"It's great to see that ERO customarily talks to students as part of their school reviews."* Specific suggestions to improve this included ensuring ERO talks to random samples of students (rather than them being put forward by the school), and ERO having access to all exit interviews at a school.

Three references suggested that the Ministry of Education should better support schools to respond to the views of students. Specific suggestions included the Ministry funding support from research organisations and providing sample surveys for students. A further four references stated that the Ministry needed to better respond to the views of children and young people, *"Schools can listen to their children but are limited in their actions by the Ministry. The Ministry themselves should be the ones surveying and responding to children's needs."*

Finally, three references suggested there should be better mechanisms for students, parents and whānau to make complaints about schools. One respondent said, *"We need feedback mechanisms and complaint options that are safe … particularly in smaller communities where links are numerous."*

Progress and achievement

There were 19 references that commented on the school curricula and how it is assessed. Twelve of these references commented that the content of the curricula could enable schools to gather and respond to the views of children and young people. Specific suggestions included teaching about government, history, the Treaty, religion, communication skills, and social sciences. It was also noted that the curricula needs to be flexible and diverse to be able to respond to the needs of all learners.

Two references suggested that assessments carried out in schools should be reduced, so that teachers have more time to respond to the views of children and young people. One respondent said, *"Reduce the assessment compliance on schools so teachers have more time to know the strengths and interests of their students and scaffold these to higher learning opportunities."*

Question 10 – How can schools be supported and encouraged to be future focused, innovative, and adaptive?

Responses to supporting and encouraging schools and kura to be future focused, innovative, and adaptive were spread throughout five themes. The table below displays the largest emergent themes and their corresponding sub-themes.

Themes	Sub-themes	References	Total references
Teaching		31	
	Professional Learning and Development	55	
	Pedagogy	24	
	Workload	26	
	Capability	14	
	Initial Teacher Education	11	161
Schools		43	
	Boards of Trustees	18	
	School Infrastructure and resources	28	
	Technology	36	125
Education system and agencies		67	67
Student-centred		27	
	Capability	38	65
Progress and achievement		5	
	Curriculum	39	
	Assessment and Measurement	15	59

Teaching

This was the largest theme for this question, with 161 references. Five sub-themes were identified: professional learning and development (55), pedagogy (24), workload (26), capability (14), and initial teacher education (11).

There were 31 references that did not fit within any of the sub-themes identified. Topics identified included general comments (15), teacher's pay (11), teaching diversity (three), and teaching status (two).

Fifteen references were general in nature and covered a wide range of different opinions. Two references highlighted the importance of collaboration between teachers and giving teachers the time and space to do so, *"Collaboration needs to happen at the time it is needed … not saving it up to work through on call back days."* A further two references commented on the roles and responsibilities of a teacher. One respondent noted that teachers spent *"too much time … dealing with poor behaviour, special needs children or on children that are not mature enough to even be at school."* The sentiment of this respondent suggested that a teacher's role is to educate, and this is *"lost on raising children."*

Conversely, another respondent felt that teachers should be mentors or coaches *"who guide learning, facilitate the discovery of new knowledge and skills."* Other suggestions included letting go of teachers that are not performing, instilling a culture of trust, and allowing teachers to express their views and opinions in a safe forum.

There were 11 references that all suggested that teachers should be paid more. Respondents suggested this would help recruitment in areas such as science and maths, as well as help to retain excellent teachers.

A further three references commented on the diversity in the workforce, specifically commenting on ageing teachers. There was an assumption that older teachers are less likely to adapt to change

Two references commented on teaching status, and ensuring that it is an attractive profession *"so that we have quality teachers in front of our classrooms."*

Professional learning and development

There were 55 references within this sub-theme. Thirty-nine comments were general in nature, suggesting there should be *"more funding in professional development"* as *"teachers need to be given the tools and opportunities to work smarter."* This included workshops, conferences, and the opportunity to learn from one another. Two references commented on the barriers that prevented teachers from pursuing professional development, suggesting the time and cover for classes can be difficult, *"especially in smaller schools."* A further two references commented on "The Mind Lab", *"Funding PD like 'The Mind Lab by Unitec' would be ideal."* The Mind Lab is a specialist education provider in digital and collaborative learning, and contemporary teaching practices.[4]

In addition, 18 references commented on specific areas of professional learning and development. Six comments suggested there could be more support and examples of innovative teaching practice provided, such that teachers would not be *"stuck in the old ways of teaching."* One respondent felt that *"this includes future focused leaders who have had experience in the classroom, including offshore experts."*

A further four references suggested that IT was an area that teachers needed to be comfortable using and confidently able to teach to. Other areas included development in inclusive practices, careers advice, human development, learning support and additional learning needs, and further university study. One respondent commented, *" At primary school in particular upskill teachers in subjects like science, te reo, computers/programming/technology so they are more confident in going forward in these areas, which are intimidating to those without a formal degree or background there but which will be valuable skills going forward into the future."*

Pedagogy

There were 24 references within this sub-theme. Generally, there were nine comments that suggested teachers needed *"more exposure to more varied programmes [and] ways of teaching."* A further four comments suggested teachers should be more *"open to experiment,"* and trying *"new ways of learning."* One respondent noted that when using new teaching methods, parents and caregivers could be used to help assess students' progress and success. Three comments emphasised having a *"very good grounding on the basics before they can innovate,"* A further two references suggested that schools need to stop *"jumping on the latest bandwagon"* which is not *"focused on school improvement."* One respondent commented, *"Embedding educational practice in a reflective and evidence based approach. Provide teachers with opportunities to engage in research, and explore more Kaupapa Māori pedagogies … collective perspectives tend to work for the collective as opposed to individualised ways of learning."*

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[4] http://themindlab.com/about-us/

Other suggestions included more project and inquiry based learning, play based learning. One reference suggested more game play based learning; which, as the name suggests, are games designed to help students learn.

Workload

All 26 references in this sub-theme indicated that teacher workloads should be reduced. Respondents predominantly suggested achieving this by reducing paperwork and giving teachers more release time. The underlying sense is that teachers do not have the time to *"prepare effectively to provide lessons/opportunities that do this [be future-focused]."* One respondent commented, "*By senior staff having more time so they can focus, innovate and be adaptive. I find this is constantly squeezed out because it is a fulltime job just fulfilling day to day requirements even though I am a big picture thinker. I have no choice but use holidays to address the above!"*

Capability

There were 14 references within this sub-theme. Respondents gave a range of opinions that suggested teachers need to have the skills that would allow them to be future focused and given the time and resources to do so. Future focused was interpreted as being *"adaptive to teach our children"* and *"creative in their delivery."* These teachers *"can relate to this new generation"* and are *"more tech savvy."*

Initial teacher education

There were 11 comments within this sub-theme. Three comments were general, suggesting that initial teacher education needed to be better. One comment suggested that initial teacher education on inclusive practice in particular, was inadequate. Four references suggested teachers needed to be exposed to more innovative and future focused teaching methods during their training which will help them to be brave and take risks. One respondent commented, *"We also need quality trainee teacher education that is greater than one-year in duration. If we are going to be future focused, innovative and adaptive we need quality people coming into our profession who have a depth of understanding and emerging good practice in relation to modern, future focused pedagogy. Modern research-based pedagogy is complex and requires a high level of theoretical and practical understanding."*

Schools

This theme was the second largest in response to this question. Of the 125 references, there were a number of sub-themes: boards of trustees (18), school infrastructure and resources (28), and technology (36).

Boards of Trustees

There were 18 comments within this sub-theme. Broadly, topics related to either the board's capability to perform tasks (12) or their roles and responsibilities (five).

Twelve references commented on board capability; the idea that boards need more support and professional learning and development in order to be more future focused. There were many general comments regarding support and professional development, suggesting that we *"give more support and professional development to trustees."* One respondent commented, *"At present the mechanisms for supporting schools to step up and innovate are entirely dependent on the attitude of the principal, who is often barely accountable to anyone but him/herself, because of the ineffectiveness of the BOT model."*

In particular, strategic vision was cited as an area that boards should be supported in. One respondent commented on strategic vision in conjunction with the three year term, *"It is critical where a Board/school can demonstrate capability for strategic visioning that this is recognised, supported. At the moment schools (because of MoE reporting requirements) operate in a 3-year annual planning cycle. It is very much one size fits all with little or no flexibility in form. Significant advantage could be gained from a move into a true strategic planning world where the vision is 10-20 years out so that property requirements can be appropriately timed with known upcoming student and teaching requirements and numbers."*

There were five references that commented on the roles and responsibilities of boards. Respondents suggested there needs to be fewer responsibility given to boards so they are able to focus their efforts toward governing and setting the direction of the school, *"If the MoE took over aspects of admin such as setting certain policies and procedures this would lessen the time BoT's have to spend tweaking and setting them and would free up time that they (BoT's) could spend planning educational experiences for their schools."*

One respondent commented, *"The MoE needs to remember that the BoT are primarily made up of volunteer parents, who usually have full-time jobs themselves and very often are only on the Board for a 3 year period. [Don't] weigh them down with admin. Make a Principal directly responsible for the their own management of the school and let the BoT get on with setting the overall direction such as being future focussed, innovative and adaptive, instead of being nothing more than an admin person."*

Additionally, one respondent proposed establishing a Whānau Advisory Group, *"Through communicating with the Board reps (both whānau and student), this is sometimes not timely to see issues or ideas come to fruition. Some kura hold termly syndicate hui which are extremely useful for this type of support by whānau however, like many kura, whānau presence is extremely limited for whatever reason? There needs to be alternative ways in which whānau can give feedback on a more regular basis that might require thinking outside the square, holding BBQ events, using time during galas to hold focus groups and gather information from whānau and the community, ways of collecting feedback via online surveys etc. What I think is necessary however is that this drive comes from within the community or kura, not from Ministry direct."*

School infrastructure and resources

There were 28 references that related to school buildings, infrastructure, and resources. There were four topics identified: school buildings (six), class resources (seven), modern learning environments (seven), and ICT hardware and networks (eight).

There were six comments regarding school buildings. These comments suggested that school facilities and buildings need to be updated and well resourced. One respondent suggested there should be *"mandatory playing areas designed via input from … specialists in each school."* Another respondent commented, *"The resources available to schools are so varied! We have to beg to get a spade yet some schools have a community garden up and running! We need time to learn on new tech and safe and accessible storage facilities for the equipment! Having someone able to manage the equipment. Solar panels in schools, gardens, recycling, outdoor nature play areas, community areas!"*

Seven respondents commented on classroom teaching resources, six of which suggested there needs to be greater resourcing and funding given to schools to allow them to be future focused. Two references specified expertise and specialists should be provided to schools. Further, one respondent commented, *"Open up classroom for self-directed learning."*

There were a further seven comments which expressed a range of opinions regarding MLEs. One respondent commented, *"Modern learning environments don't change educational outcomes but less stressed, more engaged teachers who can listen and respond to the needs of their students do."* Other comments suggested *"schools don't need to try too hard"* and we should *"stop forcing modern learning environment buildings on schools."* Some respondents felt MLEs to be a fad, suggesting that we shouldn't *"follow overseas curriculums/ideas/trends."* One respondent acknowledged that *"the new way suits some students [but] it does not work well for others."*

There were eight references commenting on the ICT network and hardware within schools. Overall, these comments indicate that there needs to be some investment in providing the technology and expertise to schools. Expertise in this context refers to *"a nationwide accessible ICT support team."* One respondent commented on "KAMAR", an administrative software programme which is designed to help schools, but which is not freely available to schools.[5] It was suggested that there needs to be a standardised networking programme available to schools *"better than KAMAR which is a terrible outdated system that runs terribly slowly on even the most powerful computers."*

Technology

There were 36 references that to the role of technology. There were a diverse range of opinions, as respondents were divided on whether technology usage was positive or negative in the classroom. Thirteen comments were more negative, suggesting that *"computers are not the be-all and end-all, thinking is."* The remaining responses did not indicate that technology usage was negative. These references were broadly separated into topics that reflected technology resourcing and capability. There were four general comments that did not fit within any identified topics. These comments included the Ministry of Education celebrating more success stories through social media, and taking school culture around technology into consideration.

There were 13 references that expressed more negative opinions about the role of technology in schools. Some respondents felt that we should *"minimise computers"*, whereas others felt more strongly, *"Ban electronic devices in the classroom unless it is to educate them as to how to use them properly and to programme them."* These respondents cited that technology *"should be a tool"* and *"not replace traditional learning methods"*, as *"what matters is people and relationships."*

There were 11 references that referred to technological capability, suggesting that staff are trained in new technology placed in schools so they are competent and confident in its use and are able to teach to it. One respondent commented, *"Giving the proper opportunities to all the staff and support staff to learn and implement new technologies and new techniques as necessary with the children they work [with]."* Further, there were three references that suggested having specialists within schools that were able to deliver the digital technology curriculum to teach skills such as coding, programming, and robotics.

Lastly, there were 10 references that focused on the resourcing aspect of technology. Nine of these comments referred to ensuring that schools were able to provide adequate technology for their students, *"Technology is a massive area and it isn't cheap! 1 item in a class of 30 is not acceptable."* Similarly, one respondent suggested that funding be available to assist families to *"get devices, [and] wifi."*

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[5] https://www.kamar.nz/costs

Further, one respondent spoke about technology provision in the context of learning support, *"Technology is becoming part of [everyday] life. Having access to technology and incorporating it in the classroom is a great resource. Some children find technology easier to use. Those children should be able to access assistive technology more easily. Schools should be able to access it more easily for the students that need it."*

Finally, one further respondent suggested technology could help schools to collaborate, *"Find ways for schools to better share new and innovative ideas using videos, planning examples, performances, photos, student voice, teacher voice etc. Have one centralised easy to use platform for these and offer incentives for schools to share."*

General comments

The remaining 43 references contained comments that were either general in nature, or did not fit within the sub-themes identified. There were 33 general comments, and respondents were divided in their opinions. Four respondents felt we should *"stop using tech and management-speak buzzwords like 'future-focussed' and 'innovative', which are meaningless."* Others felt that *"innovative and adaptive aren't the most important aspects of a school."* Conversely, other respondents offered various suggestions to support schools to be future-focused such as supporting schools by resourcing and reducing *"compliance, red tape and box ticking,"* and *"trust[ing] us to do our jobs."*

One respondent commented, *"Allow schools … the chance to take risks and to figure out what works for them. Hold them accountable, but also trust that they have the best interests of their people at heart and support them to get out there and do it."*

Three references spoke about competition between schools. Two of these references suggested competition was negative, citing that some schools may be *"trying to outdo each other with the stupidity of their uniform and expense of their marketing."* Conversely, one reference considered competition as positive, *"Encourage them to innovate and adapt. Allowing more differentiation and competition is the key way to drive this."* These responses suggest that competition is not viewed as inherently positive or negative, but that it depends on the context in which it is used.

Three references commented on the day to day business of schools. One reference commented on school starting age, suggesting children should start when they are 6 or 7 years old. The two other references commented on the timetable, citing that a more flexible daily schedule would give options for individual family circumstances, and give students more project-based learning time.

There were four references that commented on the decile system. Two comments suggested that lower decile schools should be given more funding so staff can attend workshops, and ensure that *"it's not just high decile schools that have the advantage."* One respondent commented, *"Removing league tables (NCEA results etc) and decile ratings takes the focus off stats (where they are compared to others) which could free up time in the curriculum to invest in innovation. However, we are a data driven society so removing them may not be practical."*

Education system and agencies

There were 67 references that related to the education system and the agencies within it. Three broad topics were identified: the education system (11), the government and related agencies (42), and general comments (14).

The education system

There were 11 references that commented on the education system and various functions within the system. More generally, respondents noted there was a *"failure of education stewards to work together in a joined up way"* and that *"the education system needs to recognise where they are failing and how they might change."* One respondent suggested, *"Allow for consistent feedback through professional development, surveys and workshops to engage all stakeholders (people from education, business and government) to all be on the 'same page' and genuinely talk to each other about their wishes/fears and aspirations for the future of education in New Zealand."* Another respondent suggested a middle layer between schools and the Ministry of Education, *"By having skilled and talented regional education boards that have such people 'on the ground' helping and working with/in schools."*

A further six comments referred to evaluation and review of the education system and schools. There were two references that suggested that there needed to be *"better monitoring of quality"* and stronger accountability. Respondents suggested: expertise be provided to schools to audit and assist them through next steps, a self-review template be developed for schools to reflect on their delivery of education, and we should ensure that ERO reviewers *"have been exemplary teachers and leaders who are able to acknowledge and celebrate innovation and adaptation."*

Government and related agencies

There were 43 respondents that commented on the Ministry of Education (28), ERO (12), and the role of government in general (two).

Ministry of Education

There were 28 references that related to the Ministry of Education. The majority of these respondents felt that the Ministry needed to be at the forefront of leading future focused education, *"The Ministry itself needs to be future focussed, innovative and adaptive – lead the change."* Some felt that this was not currently being done, suggesting *"cutting the bureaucracy"* and *"freeing up funding for resourcing schools properly."* One respondent commented, *"Dismantle [the] total ship wreck called the Ministry of Education. Re-staff it with a high percentage of teachers and Principals, who are rotated between their school and the MOE for two-year stints."* Respondents stressed that the Ministry should be working with more closely with schools, and be comprised of staff who have worked in schools or have experience *"at the coal face."* Suggestions included *"providing better quality leadership,"* ensuring that the Ministry liaises with other government agencies as necessary, and *"providing centralised support for facilities development, curriculum development, [and] social programmes."*

Education Review Office

There were 12 comments that related to ERO. Respondents were less clear about how ERO would support schools to be future focused and more broadly commented on the role of ERO. They felt that ERO should be used to support schools to be future focused, and ensure that schools are listening to staff, using good practices, and providing quality professional learning and development. Two references suggested ERO should visit schools with little or no warning, *"Higher quality ERO people and allow them to enter schools with minimal or no warning. Understanding that everyone does have bad days from time to time."*

There were three references that were more negative, suggesting that ERO should be reviewed or removed. One respondent commented, *"Even the ERO process … has been watered down to such an extent that it cannot consider a broad picture that encompasses*

the full teaching and learning environment, and offers a report that is bland and so generic it contains no feel of the school that has been reviewed – it has become meaningless."

The role of government

There were two references that referred to the government's role in education. Respondents felt that education is best steered by those with the knowledge, *"By politicians backing off, providing adequate resourcing and letting the great educators we have in this country get on with the job. We need great leaders and leadership, not people who politicise education for the power."*

General comments

There were 14 comments that were general in nature, or did not fit within the other topics identified. Respondents gave a variety of suggestions, including providing opportunities for overseas professional development for leaders and middle leaders, and using more inquiry and play-based learning. One respondent suggested that research and information be more widely available and distributed throughout the country, such that parents are more informed, for example, around policies and best educational practices. Three references suggested we incorporate overseas practices that have been shown to be effective, *"Countries with little immigrants and no colonisation may be different to NZ however it is important that we look at all options and decide what is best for us with good consultation with all parties involved."*

Student-centred

There were 65 comments within this theme. Student capability emerged as the only sub-theme (38).

Capabilities

The 38 comments within this sub-theme referred to the skills that we would like our students to have. These were broadly categorised into hard skills (12), soft skills (22), and general skills (four).

There were 12 references that commented on students developing hard skills, typically more academic subjects such as literacy, numeracy, and science. These respondents considered these subjects as the *"solid foundation of core education"*, and that these *"basics"* must be mastered before any further learning can occur.

Twenty-two references commented on soft skills and personal attributes. There were a variety of skills that were mentioned, the most common being resilience, creativity, communication, problem solving, and critical thinking. Another common suggestion was to foster a love of learning, so that students become lifelong learners, *"Focus less on teaching content and more on ways to learn, enjoyment of learning and the pursuit of knowledge."* Respondents felt that with an uncertain future, developing soft skills would enable students to be better prepared to adapt to future conditions.

The remaining four references commented on general life skills. These life skills included financial literacy (mentioned by three respondents), sex education, and digital education. Additionally, one respondent commented, *"We must make civics education compulsory to ensure young people will participate in local politics and community issues after they leave school. Civics education is necessary for a healthy democracy, too many school leavers do not even know the basics of our political system."*

General comments

There were 27 general comments remaining that ranged across a variety of different topics. The overall sense of these comments was that we should give the students' agency and preparing them for an unknown future, such that they are given a holistic and well-rounded education. Respondents suggested this could be achieved by hearing students' views, letting them lead their own education, and ensuring that their needs are being met. One respondent commented that *"our young people understand the future better than we do. Let the students choose their own activities and they will choose ones that are future focused."* Another respondent commented, *"Be open to all forms of knowledge … take them to places they wouldn't normally see in their [everyday] lives to help them get a more rounded view of the world."*

Additionally, one respondent raised the idea of self-identity, and commented, *"By first rooting them in the traditions and cultures of their own identity – whatever and wherever that may be. It is well known that a healthy identity is essential for a person to be emotionally adaptive at the very basic human level."*

Progress and achievement

The 59 references within this theme refer to the progress and achievement of students. Two sub-themes were identified: curriculum (39), and assessment and measurement (15).

Curriculum

There were 39 references within this sub-theme. This sub-theme contained a degree of overlap with the content in the student-centred theme, as what we teach students and what we want them to be capable of are intertwined. These comments broadly related to the content of the curriculum, suggesting that it needs to be holistic and linked to the real world, *"Keep up with societal market changes and how work is [changing]. Teach about money, business skills and importance of adaptability."* Further, respondents also commented on the current curriculum being *"antiquated"*, suggesting that our curriculum needs to be suited to 21st century needs. Conversely, several respondents noted students must be able to *"get the basics of reading, writing and maths"* before focusing on other areas. The sentiment expressed by these respondents suggested that *"they [students] won't be able to be innovative if [they] can't read/write or do maths."*

Assessment and measurement

There were 15 comments which gave a variety of opinions regarding assessment and measurement of students' progress. Five comments suggested there was too much testing within schools currently, and this needs to be reduced. One comment further elaborated, citing that this leads to teaching a narrower curriculum, competition between schools, and teacher and student anxiety. Three references suggested that *"overassessment culture has 'killed the creative development'"*, such that teachers are losing *"creative and joyful teaching"* and we should pursue *"more passion projects."* One respondent commented, *"Less compulsory testing and reporting, but this has to be balanced with the need to measure progress of students so schools can be held accountable for performance and as a means to keep parents informed of student progress."*

Further suggestions included ensuring that we are measuring the right thing, not publishing results, and reassessing the purpose of exams and entry criteria for university. One reference suggested moving assessment to a digital platform to give flexibility in testing administration. There were two comments that suggested having some set of national standards, or specific learning outcomes.

One respondent commented on NCEA, *"The other area that needs innovative practices to occur is the NCEA system – our teens are not set up for success and the measures of success do not count for what are the future focused skills and attributes that our kids are going to need … Social and emotional agility needs to be taught and valued by the public – as currently these areas can be seen as time taken away from 'real' learning. Creativity needs to be valued in our education system."*

General comments

There were five remaining general comments. These comments included suggesting that the education system needs an overhaul, and not forcing schools to comply with nationally set standards, *"How could anyone have thought something like National Standards would allow schools to be innovative and flexible?"*

One respondent commented, *"There is definitely a breakdown of connection between what educators know about learning and social beliefs about what good learning and educational success looks like. For example there is so much criticism about school [leavers'] literacy and numeracy levels – and yet some communities are so resistant to change because they need support to understand that we need to do things differently for our learners."*

Question 11 – How can we best evaluate the quality of individual schools and kura, and the schooling system as a whole?

References to best evaluating the quality of individual schools and kura, and the schooling system as a whole were spread broadly across the coding framework. The table below shows the five largest themes.

Themes	Sub-themes	References	Total references
Education system and agencies			
	Education Review Office	133	
	Ministry of Education	16	
	Government	4	
	Accountability and complaints	11	
	Evidence, data and capability	26	
	Evaluation and review	128	318
Progress and achievement		5	
	Curriculum	12	
	Assessment and measurement	86	
	Pathways to work or tertiary education	14	
	Wellbeing and hauora	25	
	Teaching	35	177
Student-centred		12	
	Student voice	40	
	Capabilities	19	71
Community partnerships and whanaungatanga		67	67
Schools		10	
	Boards of Trustees	9	
	Choice, competition and decile	6	
	School improvement and collaboration	16	41

Education system and agencies

There were 318 references in the education system and agencies theme. This theme has six dominant sub-themes: ERO (133), evaluation and review (128), evidence, data and capability (26), the Ministry of Education (16), accountability and complaints (11), and government (four).

Education Review Office

There were 133 references coded under the ERO sub-theme, within this there were four main topics: ERO works well as it is (24), strengthen/improve ERO (70), disestablish ERO (21), and general comments (18).

Twenty-four references were supportive of ERO and its current role in supporting school evaluation and review. Respondents felt that *"ERO is actually doing a pretty good job,"* by *"ensuring that schools are on track."*

Seventy references suggested that ERO needed to be strengthened/improved, with many of these references detailing how this could happen. Twenty-five references commented on the need for a more holistic approach to reviews, looking at a broader range of data and evidence, with greater depth and/or by avoiding a tick box approach.

One respondent commented that *"the ERO process… must offer the opportunity to consider the holistic picture that encompasses the full teaching and learning environment… It must consider the property offerings as teaching and learning spaces along with the way the school is future planning and managing opportunities to grow individual students… An output of the process should be that the report really captures the feel of the school that has been reviewed and is meaningful to its community."*

Another respondent commented, *"ERO needs to look into school operations more deeply and look into complaints and concerns of [students'] parents and teachers at a school rather than overlook these. Currently ERO conduct a very superficial and tick box assessment the school… and all the minority issues and individuals are overlooked and ignored."*

Nine references identified the need to involve a wider range of stakeholders in the review process. Voices most commonly identified in these references were students, parent, and community voice.

Eleven references identified a number of areas of improvement for ERO staff. These included improving the capability of ERO staff, the continuity of reviewers, and the need to second principals/school leaders into ERO roles in order to strengthen ERO, schooling improvement, and leadership capability. One respondent suggested, *"I think mandatory secondment into ERO for principals is a great way for principals to build their capacity by getting out and having to critically think about different approaches to running a school."*

Ten references suggested that ERO reviews should occur without warning, such that the current practice mean that some schools act like a "model" school during review, and return to standard practices once ERO have gone. One respondent stated, *"When ERO go in to review I think they should be random reviews, not planned, so that the get a real look at the school, not the polished version that the school has had time to prepare and put on. If the school is great – there should be no issues with a surprise review."* It was also suggested that ERO should be able to talk to whichever parents or students they wanted to talk with, rather than those selected by the school. Two additional references commented on the need for reviews to occur with greater frequency, and not allowing a 5-year review cycle.

Eight references highlighted the need for ERO itself to be reviewed, either as a one-off process or regularly.

Nine references thought the role and focus of ERO should be altered to enable it to provide greater guidance and support to schools, "*ERO should also go one step further and become a really positive force for collaboration and change. Rather than just ending with a report to a school, it could provide guidance, and recommend it to, other schools, leaders or initiatives that it knows have proven to be strong in the areas identified as needing development."*

One respondent commented, *"Very few schools feel safe with ERO in, likewise with NZQA, and the reviews become a source of stress and [an] act of compliance which means little except beating the system. If we instigate an evaluative service that combines feedback and feedforward with PLD and an advisory service we will go part way to restoring the balance."*

A further five references identified the need to strengthen relationships either between ERO and the Ministry of Education, or ERO's relationship with schools. In contrast to a more

supportive, relational approach, three references highlighted the need for ERO to have a greater degree of independence and more accountability to ensure recommended improvements in schooling are acted upon.

The seven general comments stated that ERO already does this or just *"ERO"* or *"ERO reports."*

Evaluation and review

There were 128 references in the evaluation and review theme. This theme acted as a catch-all category. This section will only analyse five references (of the total 128) that have not been captured elsewhere in the report.

Two of these references identified the need to return to the old inspectorate system. One reference identified the need to evaluate the school using a bicultural framework. One identified the stated that review processes need to spend longer in watching teaching practice in individual classrooms. One stated that the system and evaluative processes need to *"refuse to be cowed by vested interests protecting teachers and schools that offer reasons not to be measured."*

Evidence, data and capability

There were 26 references that referred to evidence, data, and capability. The dominant topic, with 17 references, was the need to make better use of data. References suggested this could be done by a stronger focus on data on priority learners, ensuring data is used in a timely manner, increasing the breadth of data used by *"broadening the criteria for quality and success,"* and by applying this data to support *"better use of data across agencies, better planning, budgeting, development and allocation of resources for schools teachers and students."* Two references identified the need to look at life-long outcomes and to conduct longitudinal studies to understand individual student development and outcomes. Three references highlighted the need to use international tests to benchmark achievement.

One reference highlighted the need to collect better data for learning support students to understand unmet educational and health needs, and to understand which schools do not have a representative population of students with learning support needs and other high needs indicators.

One reference identified the need to reduce the variability of student progress and achievement data between schools, *"I discovered this when one of my children left the school, and his new school had to give him extra help in class in maths, reading AND writing!!! I had been under the impression that he was doing really well at school, but the data the previous school had was completely false. The testing was completely inaccurate. When I questioned the BOT, it was brushed aside. I never got any answer, other than, the new schools testing was different and it was usual for a child's results to change when they were tested at another school as not all testing systems are the same."*

Ministry of Education

There were 16 references referring to the Ministry of Education (the Ministry). These references covered a diverse range of ideas with only one distinct topic; better access and use of data by the Ministry (four).

There were four references that suggested the Ministry strengthen its use of data. Respondents suggested there is a focus on priority students, and that it is important for data to be made available and accessible in a timely fashion. One respondent suggested using

measurement systems that have worked well in the past. Another respondent noted the need for the Ministry to *"continue to analyse data (but not make it public) but allow schools to explain their data so issues such as transience, absenteeism, high numbers of children with special needs can be better addressed/targeted instead of data being the sole judge of school effectiveness."*

Ideas presented in the other references covered the need to increase the capability and education specific knowledge of Ministry staff, strengthening regional and local Ministry offices, the Ministry actually listening and trusting schools and teachers, making schools more accountable to the Ministry, giving the Ministry more funding, and strengthening the ability of the Ministry and ERO to work together in the review process.

Accountability and complaints

There were 11 references that spoke about accountability and complaints. Seven references identified the need for a better accountability system, commenting that there needed to be greater clarity in the performance standards across all levels including *"education outcomes, financial management, property management, cultural/social responsiveness."* Other ideas included a focus on student progress, and on *"measure[ing] the progression of individuals over time with teachers having multi-year accountability – basically look to Finland and how it is done."* Some thought the Ministry should have more power to hold schools to account, while others thought *"we should remove Ministry of Education accountability measures, such as approval of strategic plans, PLD proposals etc to allow for truly self-managing schools."*

Four references directly identified the need for changes in the complaints system, recognising the need for transparency in complaints processes (this included the publishing of complaints data and there handling at school level), making complaints processes accessible to parents and children. One reference stated that *"there must be provisions for an INDEPENDENT education disputes tribunal where students and families can go to get fair and timely resolutions where their rights to inclusion, equity and excellence [are] upheld."*

Government

There were four references focused on the government's role in best evaluating the quality of schools and the education system. One reference commented on the need to *"take the politics OUT of the education system,"* another commented on the need for government to trust teachers. One respondent noted that the review agenda depends on who is in government. The fourth reference suggested that an expert needs to address this, not political parties.

Progress and achievement

There were 177 references on the theme of progress and achievement. Within this theme there were three dominant sub-themes: assessment and measurement (129), teaching (39), and curriculum (10). There were also five references that generally commented on progress and achievement.

Assessment and measurement

There were 86 references in the sub-theme of assessment and measurement. Response covered three main topics: measuring achievement (37), broader measures of success (47), and general comments (38).

Measuring achievement

Within the references on measuring achievement, 15 references highlighted a preference for national standards. Six references indicated a preference for exam based measurement and two commented on the need to have measurements that can be compared internationally. Two references commented on the need to measure core foundational skills, *"The best indicator of whether or not the schooling system is working, is what percentage of school-leavers can spell, read, write and do basic maths."*

Four references highlighted frustration with NCEA, particularly the publishing of league tables, the limitations of only using NCEA to measure outcomes, and the pressure placed on students by the NCEA assessment approach. One further reference on NCEA supported standardised assessment but suggested NCEA needed compulsory components to deliver core subjects like maths and English.

Broader measures of success

Forty-seven references focused on the need for broader measures of success. Of these most indicated a general need for a greater breadth of measurement across key competencies, wellbeing and lifelong learning. Comments included, *"We need to measure if some schools are better preparing their students for life beyond school. We want people to be lifelong learners so essentially their journey not end at the end of year 13,"* and, *"By measuring attendance and engagement as well as holistic success in different aspects."* There was considerable overlap between the ideas presented in this topic and in the capabilities sub-theme in the previous section, *"Seriously: we do need to come up with some more holistic measures of school excellence – perhaps pro-social student behaviours, community engagement, student wellness, perhaps a student happiness quotient, reductions in bullying."*

General comments

In the 38 general references, nine references stated that there was too much assessment occurring and that this had negative impacts on both student and teachers' wellbeing and outcomes. In one respondent's view, the education system needed to take responsibility for the high level of stress placed on students by continual assessment and New Zealand's high youth suicide rate. The remaining references were more general ideas, but indicated that there needed to be some type of assessment and measurement, *"By the quality of learning results and the assessments from the teachers."*

Wellbeing and hauora

The 25 references in this section all touched on the need to measure wellbeing and hauora to understand the quality of schools and the education system as a whole. While some responses differentiate between schools and education system as a whole, most did not. There was also significant overlap between the ideas in this sub-theme and the broader measures of success topic in the assessment and measurement sub-theme above. Comments included, *"Look at child poverty, social issues, youth suicide, the bullying culture, racism, sexism these are the measures of our education system,"* and, *"Wellbeing of the children will be the best indicator of a quality, learning rich environment."*

Some comments focused on the importance of the culture and feel of the school, *"It's whether or not the school has the right feel and if students are comfortable and happy at school,"* and, *"It's not about results, or anything like that. It should be about how the students and the teachers feel about being at school. How happy and satisfied students are with their learning."*

Pathways to work and tertiary work

There were 14 references that identified the need to look at school leaver data and outcomes to understand school and system performance. Comments ranged from generic wellbeing and engagement indicators after schooling to supporting better links between schools and tertiary providers and employers and judging the system on the provision of viable post-school opportunities.

Teaching

There were 35 references to the teaching sub-theme covering four main topics: teacher voice (12), supporting teachers (nine), trusting teachers to teach (six) and teacher wellbeing (four).

Twelve references focused on gathering feedback from and listening to the teachers' voices. Nine references focus on providing better support for teachers thereby lifting the quality of teaching. This included improvements in initial teacher education, *"Better coaching and appraisal system of teachers,"* professional development and learning, and in the classroom and school environment. Other comments included*, "Teachers are key. Support them really well, be sure the ministry truly understands the reality in classrooms then provision them accordingly,"* and, *"The first thing to do is to decide what a good student looks like. Then having realised it is impossible to measure by any kind of test or assessment give the teacher training schools more money to train teachers to a high standard with high professionalism and with high expectations of young people."*

Six references identified the need to *"trust that teachers are doing their jobs without needing to prove it every step of the way."* Four references identified the need to support teacher wellbeing, noting that the continual assessment of students has an impact on teacher wellbeing and that *"teachers need the time, energy and space to be able to truly develop their craft."*

One further reference identified the need to strengthen our understanding of quality teaching and suggested *"a return to a teacher grading system."*

Curriculum

There were 12 references in the sub-theme of curriculum. Three references identified the need to measure progress and achievement against the curricula; commenting that we should *"consider ways to measure the skills related to the values and key competencies in the NZC"* and *"by student outcomes across all curricula."*

Three references identified the need to have core content that is taught to all students within the curricula, "*Have a core national curriculum that as a cohort all students will cover. Means no student will miss out regardless of what school they attend. Outside of this allow some individuality to meet their [students'] special character."*

One reference commented on the need to extend the breadth of the curricula. One respondent commented on the need for ERO to evaluate the suitability and diversity of a school's curriculum.

Student-centred

There were 71 references in the student-centred theme. The two largest sub-themes within this theme are student voice (40) and capabilities (20). There were 12 general references which did not fit within either of the main sub-themes.

Student Voice

There were 40 references within this sub-theme. Thirty-eight of these references commented on the active need to ask children and young people their views on their learning and school. The majority of these references simply stated there was a need to ask, listen and talk with students, *"Ask our children, give them a voice,"* and *"ask students if they are happy and how school makes them feel."* Ten references indicated this could be done by surveys or by evaluation forms.

Twenty-two of these references also highlighted the need to ask parents, whānau, communities and teachers what they thought as well as students. Parents and whānau views were frequently commented as important alongside student voice, *"Children and parents should have greater opportunity to feedback their experiences to ERO and the Government."*

Most of these 40 references did not indicate who should be asking students their opinions or how that information should be used to improve the quality of schools or kura or the education system.

Capabilities

There were 19 references that focused on the types of capabilities that students should gain from schooling in relation to what school and system evaluation should focus on.

Six references commented generally about the types of capabilities required, mentioning the need to create lifelong learners and productive members of society, as well as the need to measure schools by the quality of the students they produce.

Eight references focused on the need to measure the "soft skills" students gained. One response commented that *"the measure of a system is the measure of the person coming out of the system. Are they confident, adaptive, motivated, enterprising, innovative, willing to take risks…do they have a sense of connectedness, are they having fun…? Have they found their Ikigai? [Japanese term meaning 'reason for being'] Once you define what you want to measure, then you can develop a tool to do so."*

Two references focused on the need to improve the "hard skills" students were gaining in school. One response stated that, *"Children need to be able to read, write, spell and do basic maths. Child assessment is absolutely essential".*

Three references commented on the need for both soft and hard skills.

General comments

Of these 12 general comments, 11 references focused on the types of student-centred measures that should be focused on in evaluating schools and the system. Respondents felt that it was important to focus on the whole student, their engagement with school, their work, their learning, their home life and their happiness. Two of these references commented on the importance of measuring life-long outcomes, commenting, *"By looking at the long-term life outcomes of children and whanau and community. Considering happy, well-rounded children as a success in itself."*

Community partnerships and whanaungatanga

The 67 references in this theme primarily identified the need to engage with and ask the views of parents, whānau and community to gauge the quality of schooling and the

education system. Most references generically stated that this was important, suggesting there should be *"more community involvement and feedback and vice versa from schools to community."* Other suggestions included that we *"ask the parents for once,"* and *"listen to school communities. If the school community tells you there are some issues, believe them."* Some references noted the importance of understanding students in the context of their cultures, their parent's expectations for their learning and in the context of their community.

Schools

There were 41 references in the schools theme, with three emergent sub-themes: boards of trustees (boards, nine), choice, competition and decile (six), schooling improvement and collaboration (six). There were also 10 generic references in the school theme that reflected the importance of understanding what quality schooling looks like. These references suggested that *"the health of the school is reflected in the health of the community."* One respondent commented, *"What do popular schools offer that others don't."*

Boards of Trustees

Eight of the board-focused references highlighted the need for greater support for boards, and greater accountability for board performance. Suggestions ranged from improving the boards' role in the coaching and appraisal of teachers and principals to standards for boards to adhere to. One of these references indicated that there is a need for a different type of governance model, *"We need a system that SUPPORTS schools – local boards which are closely in touch with all schools, and checking in the quality of their teaching and student achievement so that they can provide MORE support if it's needed to create high-quality teaching and learning."*

A further reference indicated critiqued ERO's interactions with boards and advocated for *"ERO in a positive format like the old inspectorate where you respect and value what they have to say because it is based on sound knowledge. Not interview the board for an hour and announce how amazing they are."*

Choice, competition and decile

Six references commented on choice, competition, and decile. Respondents noted that roll growth or decline is an indicator of quality; suggesting that competition was either good or bad, and that student progress and an understanding of the poverty issues schools are managing are essential in judging quality.

Schooling improvement and collaboration

Schooling improvement and collaboration had 16 references. Six of these references were generic in nature; highlighting the need to use quality data, learn from schools that were producing positive results, and strengthen and target support at struggling schools. One comment also noted accountability, *"We cannot keep making excuses for schools that are under performing."*

A further 10 references focused specifically on collaboration. Three mentioned the need to strengthen the Kāhui Ako model and use it as a mechanism for self-review and accountability, and five references mentioned the need for school-to-school support, improvement, and peer review, *"By increasing the opportunities for schools to visit others and sharing of ideas"* and *"maybe cluster schools could peer review."* Two commented on the need to understand and support the collaborative behaviours of children in schools.

Question 12 – How can Government education agencies better support schools and kura to meet the needs of all children and young people?

Responses to the question on how education agencies could better support schools and kura were spread across a breadth of themes and sub-themes within the coding framework. The table below shows the 11 largest emergent themes for this question.

Themes	*Sub-themes*	*References*	*Total references*
Education system and agencies		63	
	Ministry of Education	30	
	Education Review Office	8	
	NZQA	3	
	Government	14	
	Interaction between agencies	29	
	Evidence, data and capability	13	
	Evaluation and review	14	
	Accountability	11	185
Learning support and disability		18	
	Workforce	75	
	Services	29	
	Funding	49	
	Needs identification	12	183
Teaching		18	
	Capability	7	
	Pedagogy	9	
	Professional Learning and Development	25	
	Initial Teacher Education	13	
	Workload	22	
	Pay	18	
	Status	6	118
Funding		96	96
Schools		24	
	Boards of Trustees	17	
	Infrastructure and property	14	55
Wellbeing and hauora		42	42
Community partnerships and whanaungatanga		31	31
Progress and achievement		27	27
Student-centred		19	19
Collaboration		13	13
Leadership		10	10

Education system and agencies

This was the largest theme for this question, with 185 references, which is unsurprising given that the question explicitly refers to government education agencies. Comments under this theme largely fell under the following sub-themes: the Ministry of Education (30), interactions between agencies (29), government (14), evaluation and review (14), evidence data and capability (13), accountability (11), ERO (eight), and the New Zealand

Qualifications Authority (NZQA, three). There were also 63 general comments which did not fit under any of the sub-themes identified.

Ministry of Education

There were 30 references relating specifically to the Ministry of Education (the Ministry). The main expressed was that the Ministry should improve the quality of its services and staff (15), with a number of specific suggestions for improvement given.

Twenty-one references were generally negative about the capabilities of the Ministry. Fifteen of these references suggested the Ministry could better support schools and kura by improving the quality or extent of the services it offers or the quality of its staffing. Comments included that quality of advice from the Ministry was poor or variable, that the Ministry was often inflexible, and that the Ministry only provides support when it's too late. One reference also suggested that the Ministry should be more effective and efficient, *"Decisions are slow and funding is being wasted."* Another reference suggested that the Ministry be more innovative. One reference went so far as to suggest that the Ministry should be removed.

One reference suggested staff from schools could be regularly seconded into the Ministry to ensure *"they have the practitioners viewpoints at the policy setting and operationalising tables."*

Two references suggested that the Ministry could better support schools and kura by having clearer and more effective mechanisms to respond to complaints, with one respondent saying, *"Tomorrow's Schools ensure that complaining to the Ministry will get you exactly nowhere."* A further two references suggested that the Ministry should have more powers to direct schools, with examples given relating to the Ministry not having the power to direct schools to implement recommendations, and work with other agencies around particular students with learning support needs.

Interaction between agencies

There were 29 references relating to the way that the education agencies interact with each other. The main topics within these sub-theme were better collaboration (20) and information sharing (five).

Twenty of these references suggested that education agencies needed to work more collaboratively in order to have a unified approach around supporting schools and kura. One respondent suggested, *"It would be good if all education agencies (government and otherwise) were unified in their approach, and that all external parties going in to serve a school knew about each other and if the school could be strategic in their deployment of support."*

Five references suggested that education agencies should share information about schools and students. One respondent suggested, *"Have a software system that all parties can access and enter data so information is shared with all parties."*

Government

There were 14 references which commented on "government" as a whole, rather than specific education agencies. The main topics within this sub-theme were trusting schools to make decisions (four), de-politicising education (three), and government experience and understanding of education (two).

Four of these references commented that government should trust schools to make the right decisions, with minimal central control. One respondent suggested that the government *"keep their hands off and look to strategic direction not micro management."* One of these references suggested that central government input should be minimum with most support for schools and kura coming from local education boards.

Three references commented on the need to de-politicise education, with one respondent saying, *"Education needs to stop being a political football and vote grabber – policy needs to be far reaching and not around a 3 year cycle – it needs to be based on research and best practice – grass roots up!"*

Finally, two references were of the view that those in government making decisions about education should have in depth understanding and experience of education.

Evaluation and review

There were 14 references relating to education agencies supporting schools and kura through evaluation and review. Eleven of these references suggested that education agencies should monitor the progress and performance of schools more closely and effectively, with one respondent saying, *"Monitor progress so students can get some opportunities in rural and area schools."* By contrast, two references were negative about the impacts of education agencies monitoring schools, *"Monitoring and measuring performance and outcome is taking too much time from good performance."*

The remaining comment in relation to this theme suggested that education agencies improve the Hautū self-review tool for schools.[6]

Evidence, data and capability

There were 13 references relating to education agencies better supporting schools and kura through the use of evidence and data.

Six of these references suggested that education agencies should be more grounded in evidence and research, including considering evidence from other jurisdictions.

Four references suggested that education agencies should hold more central data about students. Two of these references suggested this could help schools to share information with other schools more effectively, with one respondent suggesting, *"Set up a data base; where information can be shared through all the learning institutions, ECE, kuras, primary, secondary and tertiary education. Wrap around other services in this data base like health care, mental health services, Oranga Tamariki."* One further reference suggested that education agencies could support schools by improving the mechanisms through which they collect data form schools.

Accountability

There were 11 references coded under this sub-theme, which refers to the education agencies role in holding schools to account, as well as the mechanisms by which the education agencies are held to account.

Five references suggested government education agencies needed to better hold schools, kura, and other parts of the education system to account. One of these references specified

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[6] http://www.education.govt.nz/assets/Documents/School/SchoolsBulletin/RegNewsWaikatoHautuSelfReviewTool.pdf

that RTLBs should be better held to account, while another commented on the need for parent and community voices in accountability mechanisms. One reference suggested there should be greater accountability within schools, so that boards and principals can hold teachers to account.

Three references commented that there should be an independent mechanism for parents or others to make complaints about schools or other parts of the system.

Two references suggested education agencies could better support schools and kura by intervening when required, with one respondent stating, *"Get out of the way of governance entities that are performing and intervene earlier when indicators of failing are clear."*

Education Review Office

There were eight references relating to ERO and how it could better support schools and kura. Three of these references suggested that the role of ERO needs to be reviewed or overhauled, with one respondent stating, *"Perhaps fully restructure and rethink that somewhat adversarial approach and design a mentor based approach."* One further reference suggested that ERO should be removed altogether.

Four references suggested that ERO is not currently measuring the right things in schools, with one respondent citing, *"ERO reports are not helpful and actually don't tell the full story of a school."* One of these references suggested that the terms of reference of ERO reviews should be broadened *"to include physical learning and teaching related facilities."* One further respondent suggested that ERO reviews should be made more rigorous.

New Zealand Qualifications Authority

There were three references relating to NZQA and how it could better support schools and kura. One of these references suggested there should be a review of how NZQA is funded. Another reference suggested that NZQA is likely *"trying too hard to measure something that is not really relevant."* The final reference noted that NZQA culture is focused on compliance, resulting in bureaucracy.

General comments

There were 63 comments which did not fit into any of the other sub-themes. The main topics were close engagement with schools (18), better quality staff and services (11), responsiveness (seven), accessibility (five), reducing bureaucracy (five), and giving schools space (three).

Eighteen references suggested government education agencies could better support schools by listening to them more or by engaging with them in a way that made sure the agencies fully understood them. One respondent stated, *"Senior advisors should be in their schools at least 3 or 4 times a term whereas you often only see them once a year."*

Eleven references suggested that education agencies could better support schools if the quality of agency staff or the services they provide were improved. One respondent cited, *"Have personnel who know and understand. People who can listen. People who are responsive to need."*

Seven references suggested education agencies needed to be more responsive to the needs of schools and kura. A further five references commented that education agencies needed to be easier for schools and kura to access. On a similar note, five references also

suggested education agencies should reduce the amount of bureaucracy that schools have to navigate.

Finally, three references suggested education agencies should leave schools alone unless their help is requested. One respondent commented, *"Stay away from them and let the schools request aid when and if desired."*

Learning support and disability

There were 183 references relating to how government education agencies could support schools and kura through the provision of learning support. The most prominent sub-themes focus on the workforce responsible for providing learning support (75), funding for learning support (45), learning support services (29), and identifying the needs of students (12).

Workforce

There were 75 references which related to government education agencies supporting schools and kura through the staff that provide learning support to students. Responses to this sub-theme can be largely broken down into commentary on teacher aides (36), SENCOs (six), RTLBs (nine), and other specialist workforce roles (24).

There were 36 references commenting on the provision of teacher aides being a way in which government education agencies could better support schools and kura. Of these, 23 references said that there should be more teacher aides in schools, with some respondents suggesting there should be at least one teacher aide in every class. One respondent commented, *"If we could have more teacher aide hours then our teachers of certain classes would be less stressed."*

Eight references suggested teacher aides should receive more training or be more qualified. One respondent commented, *"Invest in teacher aids with training…more equipped to enhance learning for all children with special needs, not just the very disabled."* On a similar theme, one respondent suggested teacher aides should not be supporting students with additional learning needs, *"We need to get away from a system where the hands-on teaching of children with disabilities is often being done by the lowest paid, least trained member of the teaching team."*

Four references suggested that teacher aides should be paid more, with one respondent commenting, *"Teacher aide staff should be trained properly with qualifications available to allow them to earn a decent wage."*

Six references suggested every school should have access to a SENCO, with two of these responses indicating this role should be full time. One respondent said, *"There needs to be a job created within each cluster that is a full time SENCO. This person gets paid to be a SENCO, and attend IEP meetings, and visit with children, parents and schools, and know about all of the funding."*

Nine references made comments about the provision and quality of RTLBs. Four references suggested that government education agencies should provide greater access to these staff, with one respondent saying, *"Government education agencies need to provide adequate resources to cater for the real needs of children – resources would include…RTLB."* One reference was positive about the quality of RTLB while three references were negative, with one of these suggesting the staff would be better utilised as teachers. One reference commented on the importance of sharing information with RTLB staff, *"Sharing data between agencies and modernising methods of reporting to services like RTLB is also important."*

Twenty-four references suggested government education agencies could better support schools and kura through the provision of other specialist staff providing learning support services. Ten references suggested government should provide greater access to education psychologists, eight references noted the need for greater access to speech and language therapists, four references commented on access to social workers, and three references wanted greater access to public health nurses in schools. Most respondents commented on the need for the provision of multiple types of specialists, rather than referring to just one.

Funding – Learning Support and Disability

There were 49 references which commented on the provision of funding for learning support. Forty one of these references suggested that there should be more funding provided to allow schools to support students with additional learning needs. One respondent said, *"More financial support. Trying to get ORS funding is getting harder and harder but it seems the number of kids that need it is going through the roof. Getting sufficient resources to those in need is the key even if it costs."*

Ten references commented that schools and kura would be better supported if they could access learning support funding more easily.

Learning support services

Twenty nine comments related to the services provided to support those students with additional learning needs. The main topics within this sub-theme were access to services (eight), the timeliness of support (three), greater support services (eight), and the Ongoing Resourcing Scheme (ORS) (three).

Eight references suggested education agencies could support schools and kura by making existing services easier to access, with one respondent commenting, *"The system is over complicated. Quite simply if a student is struggling or needs support, the school should be able to ask for that help and it is given. No need for ten different application forms or needing to know which professional to turn to."*

A further three references commented that support should be more timely, *"Give timely services – we should not have to wait 18 months to have a cognitive assessment done on students."*

Eight references suggested there should be more support services for students with additional learning needs. Some of these comments were fairly generic, *"Support learners with difficulties,"* whereas others gave more specific suggestions, such as support being more consistent on an ongoing basis, *"Be more than just there for a one off meeting especially with high behaviour needs, do not implement anything without first getting feed back."*

There were three references relating to ORS. Two of these references were negative about the service relating to this funding, with one respondent saying, *"ORS team who decide applications need to change, their culture … They are system focussed not child focussed and the categories are not flexible to children. The support to apply and go through an appeal is discouraged."* One reference suggested that education agencies *"Have templates and checklists for transition to school for ORS kids. Have additional support for schools who have never had an ORS child."*

One reference commented on Ministry learning support services, suggesting, *"Ministry services around special needs really need to improve. At the moment it is a very hands-off approach. There is an expectation that Ministry staff can dump information on teachers and*

walk away, when teachers are already stretched to the maximum. Ministry staff should be deployed into schools for periods of time to really lend a hand."

Finally, one reference commented on the need for agencies to work together to support students with learning needs, *"Work as a united entity. It is incredibly difficult for schools to know where to turn to seek support."*

Needs identification

There were 12 comments, which related to the process of identifying students' additional learning needs. The main topics within this sub-theme were early identification of needs (six) and timely identification processes (two).

Six references suggested there should be a focus on identifying needs earlier on in a child's life. Specific suggestions to achieve this included all children being screened for phonological awareness upon entry to school, all children having a behavioural optometrist test (how the eyes process visual information), paying closer attention to the views of teachers and principals, and making it compulsory for children to be tested for behavioural issues if a teacher requests it (regardless of parental views).

Two references suggested the process of needs identification should be quicker, with one respondent commenting, *"It takes so long to get support for students that do not meet ORS but have high needs."* A third reference suggested it should be less bureaucratic, *"Reduce ridiculous application procedures."*

One reference suggested education agencies should *"loosen the belt on criteria and give teachers and families the opportunity to say they need help, without jumping through hoops to get it."* Another reference commented on the role of other agencies (beyond schools) in needs identification, *"Schools are able to refer children to a wider scope of agencies who are able to identify learning/behavioural challenges."*

One reference commented on the need for teachers to have the capability to identify needs, *"Teachers have very little training in spotting students with dyslexia."*

General comments

There were 18 references that did not fit under the identified learning support sub-themes. There were seven references relating to the inclusion of students with additional learning needs in mainstream schooling. Five of these comments suggested that the inclusion of these students in mainstream schools can put additional pressure on teachers, particularly due to a lack of support, with one respondent saying, *"While I do see benefits for special needs children to be education within the system, how many of our teachers are actually trained in this area, putting more and more pressure on them. Already these problems are sighted as a reason to leave teaching, or not want to train!"* Two references suggested there should be alternative schooling options for students with additional learning needs.

One respondent commented on the importance of agencies and services sharing information in order to support students with additional learning needs. Another reference suggested that education agencies should support schools by providing parents with more information and support, *"More importance should be placed on IEPs…There needs to be a lot more information given to parents about help available in education for their children."*

Teaching

There were 118 references, which related to teachers or the teaching and learning that takes place within schools and kura. The main sub-themes covered were teacher's capability

(seven), pedagogy (seven), professional learning and development for teachers (25), initial teacher education (13), teacher workload (22), teacher pay (18), and the status of the teaching profession (six). There were also 18 more general comments which did not fit into any of the sub-themes.

Capability

There were seven references relating to the capability of teachers. Four of these references suggested that education agencies need to better support schools and kura by raising the standard of teachers working in schools. One respondent commented, *"Try to recruit the brightest and best to be our future educators."* One of these references suggested the standard of teachers should be improved by requiring all teachers to have a Masters degree.

One reference suggested education agencies should use the expertise of teachers with experience supporting students with high needs.

One reference suggested that teachers needed to be able to relate to students.

Pedagogy

There were nine references relating to pedagogy, with each reference relating a different topic or view. Suggestions included supporting teachers to teach students with dyslexia, to adapt pedagogy for students with a range of learning styles, to teach in a more inclusive way and disseminating information on evidence-based practice.

Professional learning and development

There were 25 references relating to the ongoing professional learning and development opportunities available to teachers. All of these references were of the general view that education agencies could better support schools and kura through the provision or funding of professional learning and development.

There were a range of views about what professional learning and development should focus on, with suggestions including supporting students with additional learning needs (seven), inclusion (four), diversity (two), Te Reo and other languages (two), mental health (one) and phonological awareness (one).

Four references commented that education agencies could support schools and kura by making sure professional development was adequately funded.

Initial teacher education

There were 13 references relating to the training that teachers complete before they begin their teaching career. Many respondents made broad comments relating to "training", without specifying whether they were referring to initial teacher education or ongoing professional learning and development: in these instances comments have been discussed in both sub-themes, meaning there is some overlap between the two categories.

Seven references made suggestions about topics that should be covered in initial teacher education, these included: inclusion (two), diversity (two), learning support (one), phonological awareness (one) and the curriculum (one).

Four references suggested the quality of teachers produced by initial teacher education should be lifted, with one respondent stating, *"Ensure the quality training of students training to be teachers. Ensuring that training teachers are actually committed to teaching."* One

further reference commented on the role of tertiary providers, *"Attract more teachers to the job through invigorating tertiary providers in Education."*

Finally, one respondent commented, *"Bring back bonding so rural schools are supported and that if bonded their training is free as it always used to be."*

Workload

There were 22 references relating to the workload of teachers. All of these references suggested government education agencies could better support schools and kura by reducing the workload of teachers. One respondent commented, *"The main thing Government can do to better support schools is improve the conditions teachers are working under. Teachers are expected to do more paperwork than one should ever have to do. Teachers are at school hours before children and don't leave until after 5 or 6 on a normal day, this doesn't include extra curricular expectations like staff and board meetings, sports teams/coaching/organising etc, attending events on a weekend, report writing, marking, planning, parents teacher interviews, school fundraisers, events such as productions."* Seven of these references were specific that workload should be reduced by removing some administrative requirements on teachers, *"Paperwork is detracting from time teaching, planning and getting resources."* Three references suggested teachers should have fewer contact hours and more release time.

Teacher pay

There were 18 references relating to teacher pay. Of these, 16 references suggested that education agencies could better support schools and kura by paying teachers more. One respondent said, *"Better salaries to stimulate more interest in the profession."* One reference suggested introducing performance based pay, while another reference suggested that students could pay back university costs by teaching in schools.

Status of the teaching profession

There were six references relating to the status of teachers. Five of these references suggested education agencies should lift the status of the profession by better valuing and respecting teachers. One respondent commented, *"Teachers and schools need to be respected and valued."* The remaining reference commented that the status of the profession and associated workload currently puts people off from becoming teachers.

General comments

There were 18 references related to teachers which did not fit under any of the other sub-themes. Nine of these references suggested government education agencies could better support schools and kura by listening to the views of teachers, with one respondent commenting, *"By listening to the teachers and principals. They are the ones "in the trenches" dealing with every day issues and celebrating every day successes. If the Government isolates itself from the everyday life of the schools they will have a disconnected sense of reality. The only way to get a true litmus test of a school's success is to be connected with the teachers and staff, listen to them, acknowledge them and respond accordingly."*

Two references suggested education agencies should trust teachers more, while three references stated agencies should give teachers more support, including making sure they are working in supportive environments. One reference suggested that education agencies should be removed and the money be used to fund more teachers. One reference suggested there should be more monitoring of teachers.

Funding

Funding was a prominent theme in response to this question, with 96 references relating to this topic. The main views expressed under this theme were the need for schools and kura to have more funding (69), generic comments on funding (13), that funding should be made easier to access (five), and that funding should be more linked to the needs of students (five).

The majority of responses related to this theme (69) suggested education agencies could better support schools and kura by providing them with more funding. There was a sense that many schools and kura are underfunded currently. One respondent suggested, *"Better funding of schools, especially when it comes to attracting better qualified teaching staff and better resources to teach the pupils with, such as better text books."*

A further 13 references commented that education agencies could better support schools and kura through *"funding"* but did not explicitly say that the agencies should provide more funding, although this may be a reasonable assumption to make.

Three references commented that schools and kura should be provided with more funding so that they did not have to rely on parental donations, with one respondent stating, *"By truly supporting schools to provide the free education required by Section Three of the Education Act. For years we have allowed government underfunding to be subsidised by parental contributions."*

Five references suggested agencies should better support schools by making funding more linked to the needs of students, *"Fund schools and students on a needs basis not a tick box criteria where kids don't always fit."*

A further five references stated funding should be easier or quicker for schools to access, *"Get rid of the ridiculous system for applying for PLD support."*

Three references said that education agencies should make funding more transparent, *"More funding. More checks and balances to see if services are being provided. Get feedback from the community, industry, parents, learners."*

Schools

There were 55 comments which referred to schools. The main sub-themes were comments relating to boards of trustees (17) and property and infrastructure (14). There were also 24 general comments.

Boards of Trustees

There were 17 comments about how government education agencies could better support schools and kura which related to boards of trustees (boards). The main topics expressed within this sub-theme were debate about whether boards should continue to exist with their current responsibilities and commentary about the support boards receive.

Three references commented that boards should be removed, with one respondent stating, *"Take away BOTs. They are not performing well. Place that money into the school for special needs."* A further three references suggested reducing the responsibilities of boards of trustees, *"Stop BOT and principals being responsible for finance and property (make that MOE responsibility) – get curriculum to be a main job/focus of everyone at the school – less other distractions such a finance and property."* One further reference indicated that boards (and the principal) currently have too much power.

Conversely, one reference said, *"Let schools and school boards make the decisions that best fit the needs of their students."*

Two references said that education agencies could better support schools and kura by supporting and resourcing boards of trustees, *"Continue to support boards, and trust and resource them to plan for the future."*

One reference suggested government should be more involved in school governance, while another reference suggested accountability processes for schools, including boards, should be improved.

Infrastructure and property

There were 14 references, which commented on the physical school buildings and the responsibility for maintenance and development. The main views expressed within this sub-theme were that responsibility for property should be held more centrally (four), the need to improve school buildings and infrastructure (four), and MLEs (three).

Three references suggested responsibility for school property should be centralised, rather than being the responsibility of individual schools. One respondent stated, *"Centralise the managing of property so that school managers can focus on managing the education aspects of the school."* A further reference suggested funding for property should be centralised.

Two references commented on the important role the physical school environment plays in teaching and learning. Four references suggested education agencies could better support schools and kura by improving school buildings.

Three references commented on MLEs. Two of these references suggested that education agencies should stop building MLEs, while the other reference suggested the MLE models should be reviewed.

General comments

There were 24 further references relating to schools which did not fit within the other sub-themes. These comments referred to the importance of listening to the views of schools (six), of trusting schools (four), of agencies and schools and kura working closely together (five), and suggested that agencies could reduce bureaucracy for schools (three).

Six references spoke about the importance of education agencies supporting schools and kura by listening to them and their views. One respondent suggested, *"Listen to what the schools and their communities have to say about their needs and offer appropriate resourcing to address these needs."*

Four references commented on the importance of education agencies trusting schools and kura, *"Government agencies must be able to work closely with schools in supportive ways. A high trust model is needed here so that they can step in when a student needs support, or the school needs support to ensure the learning of other students is not compromised."*

Five references commented on the need for education agencies and schools and kura to work closely together, *"Work more collaboratively with schools with our students at the centre of decisions…not formulas."* Two references spoke about the need for education agencies to intervene in schools when performance drops.

Three references suggested education agencies could better support schools and kura by reducing bureaucracy, particularly around school management. One respondent suggested agencies could provide support, *"By cutting red tape around school management restrictions."*

Wellbeing and hauora

There were 42 references which commented on the health (physical and mental) and wellbeing of students and staff in schools and kura. The main topics covered were suggestions that government agencies could better support schools and kura through providing health and wellbeing staffing and services (34), suggestions that government agencies should support schools and kura by addressing poverty (five) and providing support and education for parents (four), and suggestions that there should be closer interaction between agencies supporting schools and kura (three).

Thirty-four references suggested government education agencies should fund or provide more health and wellbeing services (including the staffing needed to deliver these services). One respondent said, *"Children and young adults need health care and increasing mental health and wellbeing support. More and more of school staff time is being taken up by issues that have in the past been dealt with by parents and whānau within their community."* Of these references, eight suggested there should be greater provision of social workers in schools, seven suggested there should be more counsellors, and four references suggested there should be more nurses in schools.

Five references suggested education agencies should provide more support relating to mental health, with one respondent saying, *"My recommendation would be that where there is a diagnosed mental health condition, CAMHS clinicians should be able to liaise with MinEd (actually often they do) and/or a school around recommendations to alleviate distress for the child. Recognising that Min Ed have additional expertise, they could perhaps have a role to amend a recommendation from another agencies that was not working. Min Ed have much expertise in functional analysis and behavioural interventions in schools, but at present no power to insist that an unhelpful approach by a school … cease."*

Five references suggested government education agencies could better support schools and kura by taking action to address poverty and improve the home environment for students, recognising the impact this has on learning. One respondent cited, *"Government can work to change the social environment so that less children are living in poverty, poor or no housing, parents working insecure jobs."*

Four references related to the role that parents and whānau have to play in students learning, suggesting that education agencies could better support parents to fulfil this role. One respondent suggested, *"Let's try and figure out how to educate our parents of new born babies to care for their children's teeth, not just accept its okay to be admitting 3 year olds to hospital to have their rotten teeth removed."*

Three references suggested that more interactions between education agencies and other social and health agencies would help schools and kura, with one respondent stating, *"Wrap around services that communicate effectively with each other to help the child and families to help with the issues and try to prevent them happening with the younger siblings."*

Finally, two references related to Oranga Tamariki. One of these references suggested that Oranga Tamariki should provide more support to schools and kura, while the other suggested that Oranga Tamariki improve their processes to make them more effective.

Community partnerships and whanaungatanga

There were 31 references coded under this theme, which relates to how education agencies, schools and kura engage with the broader community. The main topics within this theme were engagement with parents and whānau (20), with the broader community (seven), and with iwi (three).

There were 20 references relating to parents and whānau. Eight of these references suggested that education agencies could better support schools and kura by listening to the voice of parents and whānau. One respondent commented, *"They need to listen to parents/caregivers and respond accordingly to the individual needs of the child/young person and their family in a timely fashion."*

Five references suggested education agencies could better support schools and kura by supporting parents and whānau. Specific suggestions for this support included providing *"accurate information and advocacy services,"* making support for parents easier to access and independent of schools, and supporting parents to prioritise and budget.

Four references suggested agencies could help parents and whānau to be more involved in their child's education, with one respondent commenting, *"Teachers need to form better contacts with parents too so that quick access is provided to parents when learning and behavioural difficulties arise."*

There were seven references relating to engagement with the wider community. Four of these references suggested that agencies should facilitate greater community involvement in education, with one respondent saying, *"By encouraging schools to be innovative thinkers in doing what is best for their community with community support and knowledge."* One of these references suggested community forums should be set up to support engagement with the community.

Three references commented that education agencies could better support schools and kura by listening to community voices, *"Listen to what schools and their communities have to say about their needs and offer appropriate resourcing to address these needs."*

Three references suggested that education agencies could better support schools and kura through engagement with iwi and hapū. Suggestions included marae and hapū involvement in delivering educational programmes that reconnect Te Ao Māori and iwi involvement in curriculum design.

Progress and achievement

There were 27 references relating to the content taught in schools and kura and how student progress and achievement is measured. The main topics covered in this theme were the curricula taught in schools and kura (21), and examinations and testing (seven).

There were 21 references which commented on how government education agencies can better support schools and kura through the curricula. Five of these references were general comments which suggested that curricula was a mechanism through which agencies could support or exert influence. Amongst these more general comments there were suggestions that there be higher standards across the curriculum and that the national curriculum provide more consistency between schools, with one respondent saying, *"Consistency in curriculum delivery and technology provided in schools."*

Eleven references suggested government education agencies could better support schools and kura by ensuring that the curricula covered specific topics or areas. Suggestions

included cyber safety, religion, creationism, fitness/physical education, financial education, and a greater focus on Te Ao Māori. There were also suggestions that the curricula should make sure there is a strong understanding of reading, writing and arithmetic, and that the curriculum engage children *"by recognising and incorporating their strengths and interests."*

Six references suggested government education agencies should provide schools and kura with more support around curriculum design and delivery, with one respondent stating, *"Provide principals with access to regular funded professional development in curriculum design, data analysis and teaching practices."* One of these references suggested that the crown should invest in iwi to *"provide opportunities to design iwi-centric curriculum for all NZ learners."*

There were seven references relating to examinations and testing in schools and kura. Three of these comments related specifically to NCEA, with one of these suggesting that NCEA should not be changed, another suggesting that NCEA be changed to reduce the amount of time teachers spend assessing, and the third reference suggesting that NCEA is optimised for teenage girls but not teenage boys.

Two of these references suggested that education agencies could better support schools and kura by requiring less testing, with one respondent suggesting, *"Have less focus on assessments giving time for teachers getting to know their students."*

There were two references which suggested that exams were a mechanism by which agencies could support schools and kura, with one respondent suggesting that schools should be *"compared against national external examination results."*

Student-centred

There were 19 references coded under this theme, which covered responses focused on students, particularly around student capabilities and behaviours and voice.

Four references commented that education agencies could better support schools and kura by listening to the voice and views of students. One respondent suggested, *"Government education agencies need to listen to and acknowledge the voices of the customers of education…they need to listen to and acknowledge the voice of children and parents."*

Six references suggested government education agencies should provide more support for students. Two of these references were general comments about support for students with high needs, *"Acknowledge the high needs of some children and the difficulties some teachers face to support learning."* The remaining four references made suggestions around improving the support provided to students at transition points, with some references identifying that transitions between schools can be a time when support is stopped and information is not shared. One respondent said, *"Support that is withdrawn on transitions is also very difficult. Student needs don't change just because they progress to the next school."*

One reference commented on the uniform approach taken to starting school, suggesting a more tailored approach was needed, *"It needs to be made easier and more natural for children to transition into school when they are developmentally ready, not just based on age. Many children need more time at home and in early childhood settings if they are to meet their potential in school. And cohort entry is not a good choice for most children with delays as it does not help the teacher learn the specific developmental needs of each child."*

Four references commented on the skills and capabilities education agencies and schools should be supporting students to develop. These included resilience, empathy, critical thinking, and more generally preparing students for success.

Collaboration

There were 13 references relating to collaboration within the education system, with a diverse range of topics and views covered under this theme.

Four of these references spoke about Communities of Learning. Two were positive about Kāhui Ako and suggested that education agencies should support schools and kura by encouraging participation in them. Conversely, one reference was negative about Kāhui Ako and a further reference suggested they should be removed. One further reference did not explicitly mention Kāhui Ako, but did indicate that schools shouldn't be forced to work together in clusters.

Three references commented on the importance of agencies working together and being "joined-up" in their approach. One respondent stated, *"Communication and joined up services with transparency and sharing to stop kids falling through the gaps."*

Two references spoke about the importance of agencies and schools and kura working closely together, with one respondent suggesting staff from the sector should be employed or seconded into agencies to ensure agencies have a good understanding of schools and kura.

Leadership

There were 10 references relating to school leadership. Four of these references suggested that government education agencies could better support schools and kura by listening to the voice of principals, *"Listen to current principals (not just the few who get selected for advisory groups).* Two of these references made general comments about providing support for leaders (such as *"advisors for leaders").* Two further references commented that agencies could better support schools and kura by monitoring the accountability of principals, with one respondent stating, *"Principals have too much ownership in the school. I understand they are the CEO, but even a CEO needs to be held accountable."*

One reference commented, *"Allowing a leadership based culture to develop."*

Annex one – Quotes

Q1. Boards of Trustees

Support and Training

"Accountability can be achieved through tweaking the layered approach that is already in existence - the need to provide evidence of code and professional standards to the Education Council, through appraisals which could be submitted to an outside agency - possibly the education council and through ERO reviews. If a strategic timeline was in place there could be alternate requirements between these agencies working together... or even via MOE. I can't think of any other profession where people with no professional training can be in charge of someone's career. A bad experience can be damaging to a career and may have little to do with their competency. Likewise schools will have a greater layer of protection by requirements of accountability to an agency with professional knowledge – therefore knowledge of what to look for."

"Also a weakness for BOT is unless the trustees have a child that has some kind of disability, they are not always aware of the struggles they can face in school. There may be policy for priority learners, but there are no actual specifics or guidelines or processes on how inclusion should actually look, and trustees have to take a principals word on if outcomes are actually being achieved.

Boards need more professional development and support around best practise on inclusion and outcomes for priority learners. They need to actually be a true priority, not just numbers on a principal's report."

"I wonder if the ministry is better to acknowledge this lack of expertise and clarify that boards should focus on employment, health and safety and property (leaving student achievement to the principal and ministry oversight), OR make it explicit that boards should be more hands on, asking questions about the goals, evaluation, content etc. If opting for the latter, it would be helpful to have specific examples, such as those listed above, spelt out as areas the board can delve into. It could help for boards to have an external advisor to contact about education matters. Otherwise they are reliant on the advice of one principal and the reality is that opinions differ about many education matters."

Capability

"I am not convinced that so many small school boards can do the job well. There is not much incentive to act locally while thinking regionally or nationally. Fewer boards taking responsibility for the governance of clusters (not necessarily Kāhui Ako) may provide stronger support and governance and a less parochial approach than there appears to be currently."

"They don't know what they don't know. Being educated in the current learning framework as a parent and as a teacher, the structures in place are tacitly accepted. Challenging the core framework and the reason for education requires broader contexts and a willingness to try new approaches to learning."

"It's confusing. We don't know who is on a BOT and what they are really like. You could vote for someone who actually may not understand disability and neurodiversity and care more about prestige. Students and parents have no power and can be excluded easily from a school. If you have an invisible disability like autism you are at high risk of exclusion."

"Because of the shorter time parents make themselves available for being elected or co-opted, a strategic view can be wanting. It is common for parents on Boards to focus on smaller areas with a management issues - which sports teams, cultural groups get to have what uniforms. The answer is not just to provide more training. Turnover and time required mitigates against training being the way to build the capacity required. Keeping a Board informed of an increasingly complex education landscape when education is not an area of expertise is challenging. Unrealistic expectations from a few parents of their school has led to an increased tendency to litigious behaviour and spurious or vexatious complaints. There is no middle ground or body between Board and Ombudsman that operates effectively to protect schools from the worst of the disruption and interference caused by this behaviour. Board members usually lack the legal knowledge to operate unaided in this space. Aid can be is expensive, time consuming and hard to find - and frequently unsuccessful where a complainant does not wish to achieve resolution."

Conditions

"To enable high quality BOT members to serve more than one term, acknowledgement needs to be provided in a similar manner to jury service (I take AL from my job every year to fulfil BOT requirements (esp when ERO visits) - not a sustainable model for me. I will be leaving after 9 years but feel the many hours are mostly volunteered (not covered by the meeting allowance which would pay for 3-4 hours pa of my time at my professional charge out rate)."

Interpersonal dynamics

"Too often, Board members are parents and thereby have a conflict of interests in their role. They often don't understand the difference between management and governance; many Board members struggle to discern the difference between their influence over the school and their bias as a concerned parent This undermines the professional status of teachers and Board members behave towards teachers as if they are their employees. I recently attended a Board meeting at my school (which are actually open to the public) - later at a parent / teacher interview - this individual stated, 'oh you're the guy who 'gate-crashed' our Board meeting.' Fortunately, his son is relatively happy in my class otherwise I would have felt highly compromised by the whole situation. Board members also have undue influence over principals. This conflict of interest troubles me. In fact, prior to completing this survey, our principal (I would suggest under the influence of the Board) published a piece in the newsletter that stated: 'Suggestions that more centralised control of schools will bring better outcomes for students are wrong and need to be challenged.' In that respect, our public institutions are actually propagating a particular slant on a public review thereby compromising the outcome of the review itself. This is an example of the extent to which we Tomorrow's Schools fails to actually a robust, impartial form of education and instead creates a tangled web of vested interests that makes teaching a very unsafe profession."

"STA also have no real teeth when to comes to toxic Board members - I was a secondary school BOT chair and had an extremely toxic parent rep who effectively held the whole BOT to ransom, eventually even the Ombudsman was involved - there is no mechanism for dealing with that, you cannot even insist that a BOT rep sign a code of conduct."

"In situations such as suspensions and complaints parents (with personal bias) are judging the professional judgement and actions of a principal and staff."

"Often BOT aims are contrary to staff ethos and there is a direct mismatch in the decisions made. This is partly what determines the limitations placed on teacher creativity and the constant extensions being applied to teacher workload to submit data, reports, advertising, fundraising and all manner of extras that don't trickle down to our tamariki."

"Having appointed the principal, the board could do very little other than agree to what he or she suggests. Without a background in education, what right have they to question the principal's ideas? The legislation seems to create potential for conflict by saying: 'board has complete discretion to control the management of the board as it thinks fit' and the principal 'has complete discretion to manage as the principal thinks fit the schools days to day administration' subject to "the board's general policy directions". Does this mean the board has in put on e.g. subject matter (e.g. focus topic for whole school year); 'clubs', ability grouping, appointing the principal appraiser (sure - done by board but, as for many topics, on recommendation of the principal - how would the board know who to appoint?), principal KPIs, evaluation methods used, mixing year levels...? The vagueness could be the most practical wording in that it allows a board with a competent principal to be 'hands off' while a board that recognises the need can choose to be 'hands on' but, for laypeople it remains unclear what we can do beyond checking the finances, maintaining property and appointing staff as needed. How does the board meaningfully focus on student achievement when the means of deciding what should be achieved, by whom and how is outside our area of expertise?"

"BoT's are only given the information that Principals are willing to share - it is easy to manipulate the decisions made. The delineation between Governance and Management rolls can be blurry and Principals can make BoT members feel unable to comment on areas that perhaps they should.

BoT members are parents so can feel that their children will be unfairly treated if they challenge management"

"Boards can be manipulated by the principal. When my special needs son was illegally stood down from a mainstream school I was told the Board (implying the board as a whole) wouldn't allow him at school until the crisis team had visited and they had been given no date for that. When I bumped into a BOT member at the local shops 2 days after the incident, he knew nothing of the incident, let alone what was supposed to be a BOT decision. I had been lied to by the principal, not been offered a chance to meet with the board and at the BOT meeting that week the board were cautioned against talking to me and have never spoken to me about the incident which was preventable in the first case. Is this really the way children with special needs and their families should be treated in the mainstream???

The fundamental weakness is that a group of volunteer parents is expected to hold ALL legal responsibility for their school, on a shoestring budget controlled by the Ministry of Education. This responsibility creates an instant conflict of interest when issues arise. At present, there are almost no checks and balances on the decisions made by a Board of Trustees particularly by the Ministry of Education AND the Education Council.

For instance, when a student is harmed at school through teacher conduct, the Board is liable for that harm. A prudent Board would seek legal advice and get an independent investigation conducted to avoid their obvious conflict of interest. However, budget constraints mean that boards have been conducting their own internal investigations, often encouraged to do so by the good private entity, the NZSTA, who offers their 'advice' without any accountability.

These 'sham' investigations mysteriously find their employee, and THEREFORE themselves, not liable. The Education Council not only defers to the Board has an employer, but refers any complaints about a teacher, back to them for investigation instead of investigating themselves. This enables the 'cover up' behaviour.

The same situation occurs with student or staff bullying. I have no doubt the self-governing school system, is why this is a national problem both in the classroom and staffroom. If your child is bullied by the child of a board member, you have no hope of having it addressed. Let's be realistic, who runs the school, the Board or the Principal? But who holds legal responsibility? The Board. The only positive is that the local community has some say in how their school is run. However, reality is that many Board members have little to no contact with their school community or the issues in the school (any information being tightly controlled by the Principal). In our bad experience with a school Board, they refused to accept multiple parent complaints. They then tell ERO how wonderful their school is - with an empty complaints register."

"The BOT isn't for the teachers - I work in a system where should you mention anything to BOT and they bring it up - you will ultimately be ousted and the senior management will bully you - because you've made them look bad."

Elections and appointments

"Weaknesses: Having people step up to stand in elections - it's a big commitment and people are often too busy, especially people with necessary knowledge and skills who are often busy working so do not have time to give to a school and, therefore, do not stand in elections. The randomness of the selection process which means some parents are on Boards who do not have insight, strength of character or skills to make necessary big decisions or make their points of view heard and count. Board members become disinterested after a period of time. The fact that parents often stand for Board elections because they want to see changes - they become disillusioned when these changes to not happen. Principals have too much influence on Boards because Board members often do not have educational backgrounds and do not understand how schools/MOE works."

"One weakness I have experienced myself is that employees of the Ministry of Education are not allowed to sit on school boards, regardless of their role. This meant that I, as a support worker for children in early childhood centres, could not sit on my children's high school board. I failed to see what the conflict of interest was in this and I think it excludes a lot of people, who have a particular interest in education."

"Staff should be excluded from these roles - other than if formal representative. Our children's school in Wellington has 3 families on it which have links to paid employment within the school. I'm concerned as to the lack of independent & suitably qualified representation on the Board."

Other governance

"The ongoing failure of Māori students … and students from low socioeconomic communities is directly related to BOT governance structures."

Q2. Te Tiriti o Waitangi

Progress and achievement

"There has been a fortune put into the Māori language and history in the last forty years and it has not had a huge impact. Maybe we should not push so hard which can create resistance. Kapa Haka is excellent though often at the expense of language and maths which are essential subjects for all. The emphasis could be on integration of all in the best interests of all rather than selective apartheid. Respect needs to come from all sides."

"The spirit of the NZ curriculum is not to be content-prescriptive, but if New Zealand content is not valued by white-centric teachers and middle leaders, how else can students experience it? There are schools where students learn about Tudor England for weeks on end but end their schooling without ever learning about the Land Wars, or Parihaka, for example."

"Let's make Māori language and NZ history compulsory from primary – that should soon sort it out. Our history is recent and yet still skewed by it's largely Pakeha authors – we have a chance to correct that because a lot of our history is still in living (and/or recorded) memory."

"It should be the right of all children to speak te reo, at present this is massively restricted in practice since almost all schools only teach in English and schools make token gestures rather than implement Te Tiriti o Waitangi. This should be a right for all New Zealanders not just Māori. As a Pakeha family we have been lucky enough to enrol our son in a full immersion te reo unit at [redacted], however there is limited to no availability at intermediate or high school level on Auckland's North Shore to continue being taught and speaking te Reo Māori in school except as a subject. Not even the state run normal schools implement best practices and make provisions for children to learn and speak te reo in school. There is interest and need at our primary school for more than one immersion classroom as there are waiting lists of children wanting to learn and be taught in Māori but no funding available to facilitate this."

"Te Tiriti o Waitangi looks like a school that has Māori language being used by administration staff, teachers, in posters, in formal community letters. A place where iwi are welcome in the school, [Whānau] walking around the school."

"I think that needs to be led through MOE in consultation with iwi across the country. There needs to be discussion, resourcing and somehow a commitment to raising understanding of Te Reo, tikanga and accurate history right across the country."

Teaching

"Principals and teachers have extensive professional development in Te Tiriti o Waitangi. As a teacher and RTLB I had Te Tiriti o Waitangi PLD every year … so that is 20 years plus the training you get to become a teacher. Te Tiriti o Waitangi training in education is great and more than what you get in other industries … the problem is application of the knowledge."

"Also Te Tiriti o Waitangi PLD should be tailored to the level of competency of the teacher – I have asked for this but declined … I have had to sit through 20 years of level one Te Tiriti o Waitangi workshops … presented by tauiwi … when I ask for PLD by Māori at a level beyond introduction – I am seen as a trouble maker."

"Providing quality professional development in te Reo language acquisition for all teachers. In Wales the language revitalisation programme started with compulsory professional development for teachers so they had the skills tools and confidence to teach the language."

"Provide greater training for all teachers in NZ history and in tikan[g]a Māori. Provide immersion Te Reo courses where teachers are released from teaching for say a month or two for full-time intensives. This could be targeted to younger teachers who are more likely to develop fluency or to those who already have some knowledge of Te Reo."

Diversity

"Finally the support for and provision of kaiak[o] Māori has to be improved. There are too few directly involved in schools that need the most support and it's been that way for too long. Ov[e]r 90% of Māori learners are in mainstream schools so this part of the sector again has to be a focus for improved resourcing and outcomes if you really want to make a change. Another version of Ka Hikitia or a revised Tātaiako document will make little difference if insufficient resourcing is provided at the local level and around the small steps that need to be taken. It's easy to set a strategic goal or an achievement target but to shift school culture on a daily basis is a deeper challenge. Fostering kapa haka or marae visits doesn't deliver in the little moments every day for all. Teachers need to know more about how they live bicultural across the day, from greeting to farewell, through reading lessons, incidental interactions, teachable moments, selecting examples to explore in learning, fostering students self-agency (SDL etc.) – all this and more need to be the small steps that add up to a bicultural learning environment and school community and from there, a Treaty partnership is more likely to naturally occur.

We need to think carefully and openly about why we have made such limited progress. Look at the success stories but don't simply try to replicate these in other contexts – get to know the features of other contexts that present barriers to success and address these.
As a teacher/principal in South Island schools, myself and many of the staff I worked alongside lacked confidence at times and took some superficial steps but didn't really grasp an understanding of 'success as Māori.' There was a will but a lack of knowledge of the things that matter most. Māori staff members were a small minority.

For schools this is often about having the courage to ask those most directly affected and to take some of their ideas and run with them.

This is a hearts and minds challenge that we all need to be on board with across society. Partnerships across all sectors of society are essential to achieve the bicultural goals we set."

"Living the principles... the 3 P's
Partnership, Participation, Protection.

This needs to be throughout the whole school curriculum, culture and management.

Partnership in governance at all levels- Māori children and whānau need to have a voice in decision making processes at all levels, and strong relationships with local iwi and consultation with tangata whenua are crucial.

Participation at all levels- valuing the contribution of Māori to our schools, creating schools within which Māori have a deep sense of belonging and worth, relationships with Māori whānau and the wider community, welcoming and embracing Māori and their world view into our schools, encouraging and empowering Māori to succeed as Māori, proud of who they are.

Protection of nga taonga Māori- Māori world views, tikanga, and te reo Māori need to be included in our schools throughout curriculum, teaching and management structures. Te ao

Māori holds a lot of wisdom which can benefit us all, Māori and non-Māori. Let's turn to our Māori communities and invite them to teach us how to ensure the survival of Māori culture and language by embracing it and utilising these taonga in our schools."

Q3. Geography

Community partnerships and whanaungatanga

"By the school building relationships with families and the school [being] a community hub."

"Better monitoring and accountability towards stakeholders. Currently schools can do what they want and they never care about the students and family voices. Establish annual feedback surveys done by MOE in all schools so students' parents and teachers can all voice themselves and share their thoughts safely, without any reservations and this data can be used to measure the various aspects of the school such as learning environments, inclusion and equity, wellbeing and safety, communication and complaints processes and systems. The data can be shared by all agencies to make the most effective use of it and plan for identified needs and supports required."

Teaching

"All teachers should be exposed to Culture Counts through their teacher training. I believe this will help set the foundation for delivering quality learning opportunities to meet the needs of all learners whilst providing effective teaching practice for Māori also. In my view, this approach should be considered for those with disabilities also, those who are currently disadvantaged like that of our Pasifika nations."

"Assign a standard student equivalency score, where an average student scores 1. A standard class of 24 average students would have a teacher, teaching a class with a total student equivalency of 24. However those students with higher needs have a higher score representing the added workload a teacher has in meeting their needs. Therefore a student with a severe behavioural needs may have a score of 24, meaning they have one on one tuition, in an area with moderate needs means most of the students in the class may have a score of 2 and the teacher has a class of 12 (but still teaching a class with a total student equivalency of 24). Overall it would mean all teachers would be teaching to a similar workload based on needs of their class and each student would get the time and attention they need from their teacher. Currently the 'all students are equal in the class' model is not working nor realistic, some students require more teacher attention than others."

Schools

"The Principals and Boards of Trustees are 'on the ground' and have intimate knowledge of the students in their school. Therefore they and their schools or kura can be supported practically by having resources and funding released to ensure all children's needs are met - particularly those with learning difficulties, ESOL students etc. They also need support in the sense that they know that 'someone has their back'. Schools, and particularly Principals, need to know that they're not alone on this journey. Managing a school is no easy task and the more support that Principals and their staff receive from the MoE and their parent-led Board, the more confidence they'll have in knowing that their children's needs will, indeed, be met. 'It takes a village to raise a child'."

Diversity

"In my case my 7 year old is feeling insecure, quite frankly he needs more time at home. I would like to have him at school 3 days a week and home schooled twice away. The principal and teachers are on board with this idea however this is not allowed through ministry of education and I find this quite appalling. At the end of the day we are trying to build up self confidence in my son and the system does not allow for it to be done. It's

appalling he can go to 2 different schools at the same time but not part home school part school. This needs to be reviewed."

"Well me as a individual I think yous have failed a whole lot of people including myself my schooling failed because I didn't have the right help we all have a right to education? But do we really when I got kicked out of school I went and applied at 2 other schools in my area and both got denied due to previous history which I think is in its self wrong and that's where a lot of us have been failed it's algood saying there's help for us but where is it when we need it? Or do we question the people running the school?"

"Resourcing is a major issue - both in terms of staffing and materials. That also means addressing the issue of inequity - in some schools parents can afford to send their kids to school with iPads, and teachers are using a range of innovative pedagogies. However, in other schools, teachers are providing pens and books for the students out of their own pockets, and they are focused on teaching very basic skills."

"The fact is that schools which cater to our poorest students have much greater challenges than schools which cater to our more affluent students."

"Basic needs met regardless of which school you go to. Every child has lunch (provided at school if needed), uniform, gets to be involved in sport, camps etc - regardless of their families financial situation. I understand that schools have access to different grants or funds etc for cases of hardship but access to these can be through arduous processes and may differ school to school. Some schools manage hardship well and some don't - this means needs are not met equally opportunity to access an education is not equal either before a child even sits down to open their book."

"NZ has become a multi-nation country and therefore to truly meet the needs of all these children, we must acknowledge and work with each of the ethnic groups' cultures if we're truly going to make a positive difference to their learning. However Māori student population are often considered under-achievers and therefore, as the indigenous people of this country are, they are given higher priority."

Q5. Enrolments and zoning

General comments

"It would be great if schools with specialisations could be matched more closely with children with specific skills and talents – so that very athletic children can gain admission to schools with intensive sporting programmes, that children with language ability can gain access to schools offering many languages, kids with a love of science get into schools with [the] best science programmes and teachers, or music departments etc. More customised connections between schools and [children] in each 'area' so there is flexibility to allow for best fit locally with the closest 4-5 schools."

"I think it is a really tough one, our school has just gone through the process of getting an enrolment scheme out in place, because we are way over our numbers based on the size of our school. However I don't believe that you should be able to say no to students no matter where they are from. I don't think it is a good idea at all."

"Enforce zoning? Unsure, it is a tricky question. It is clear from our local situation that people will uproot their entire family and shift to get a child into a particular zone. Then a couple of years later they move back to their original address and all the siblings get into the school because the older sibling is already there. This is only generally an option for rich families, and this is not a good thing.

More community engagement is required in our schools. If you feel like your local school represents people like you, and you see success there, and you feel you belong, you will probably be happy to go there.

It is unsustainable when you have some schools getting bigger and bigger and others stagnating and they are proximal to each other.

Alternatively scrap zoning and see whether it eventually evens out? Probably not!"

"All children should go to school in the area where they live, instead of seeking a 'better' education in another area. If parents are concerned about the education their children will receive at the school in their area, then they could actively participate in the wider school community to bring up the level of education, rather than send their children elsewhere."

"I am so torn on this. I believe that it should be required and adequate to go to your closest school – but then our closest school was so traumatic for our kid we homeschooled him for a year just to get him out of it until we could apply for out-of-zone ballots. It was actively damaging to him, yet I still feel guilty that we contribute to 'white flight. It's not an ideal system but I don't know what would be better."

Q7. Community partnerships

"How can we encourage local community groups and organisations to work with schools and kura? In particular to offer what the school needs. Organisations are often keen to collaborate in a way that meets their needs, but not necessarily the needs of the students at that particular time."

"Give teachers and senior leaders and boards more time to build actual relationships. This is not work that can occur in a single meeting or hui, but has to be a long-term, community wide relationships, where everyone is invested in the local schools/kahui ako. Encourage them? Give them time and resource. Release schools from the rigid, bell-driven, time-bound, 8-3.30 day, and all the ensuing paperwork. Actually value and invest in community and relationship."

"Look at schools/kura who have these successful models and identify what is missing at schools/kura that do not have this and support these schools with the tools to work through this. It takes time, it does not happen overnight. Organisations want to work with schools/kura – networking is key."

"Schools are already proactive in this. I would like to see local community groups and organisations collaborate in an efficient way to present schools their profiles. It would be beneficial if this were done in a digital form, whereby organisations were able to keep their contact details and profiles up to date. There would need to be different sections – free + cost services. To make it onto this list they would need to go through a police check to ensure the services they provide are legitimate. As teachers, we would love to know what services we could call on to support families in need, so we can help provide students with a more wraparound support service."

"Why? What are you expecting them to do with local community groups? In diverse, mobile urban environments families don't just use local groups and organisations, but have a whole city to choose from. The community interconnectedness is necessarily very different in rural and small centres."

"Ensure that all schools are funded to hav4e a good hall or community facility so that the school is seen as the heart of the community."

"The danger is that schools become advertising tools for commercial organisations. If commercial organisations are willing to participate in the life of a school without the monetary payback then that's fine."

"We also want kids to be learning about, and contributing to, their community. We need to empower teachers, and give them time, to adapt to the curriculum to their local community and to make the necessary connections or introductions for their students."

"By making the school the Central hub for all social, welfare, health, and wellbeing centre of the community."

"Have a coordinator who encourages, builds and oversees these community and school liaisons and relationships. This person could be from within the schools or community but must have a clearly defined role and responsibilities. Provide feedback mechanisms where communities, students, parents [and] teachers can share their thoughts and views freely and are acknowledged so they are encouraged to participate in their community."

"It shouldn't be up to schools to seek out partnerships for mutual benefit. I think the community should be doing more to support their schools, and be less concerned with getting something in return. It's a school, not a marketing opportunity after all."

"Schools cannot function in isolation from their communities."

"Schools need to have a true open door policy that is part of the school culture. That invites community in. Our school does this superbly well but a new principal from a wealthier school was shocked by it because the parents in her old school never came in during school time but we do. In the class and out. It's very important that people know they're allowed."

"This needs to be driven by the parents and teachers from the school. Support should be [given] to the PTA groups that exist in most schools. These people could be funded depending on the number of events they organise for the local school. This is where you should be using the parents from the community. BOT should become the PTA group. Less money and only given for performance. The parents are connected to the school and this should be the area they are responsible for. Not for being part of running the school. This system does not work. Too many trustees are being relied on for making decisions that they know nothing about. Principals should be working with other professionals when they are dealing with school decisions not parents."

"Local government don't always see schools as central to developing a sense of community. When schools are short of resource and look to local government for any kind of assistance or collaboration, local councils can be resentful seeing it as the role of central government to support schools. There's a need for a common understanding of each others' roles but also for the opportunities of working together. Community groups space can be characterised by lots of good will and sometimes even resource although this is often locked up in short term, opaque contracts with different central government agencies. Curtailing the model of short term contracts for core services would enable more strategic and sustainable relationships."

"I think this is important but not to commercialise schools. This is a message best delivered nationally as an aspiration of civic society. There is much satisfaction to be had in volunteering and/or donating and schools should be a great option. Having some proforma 'human capital' surveys that schools could use to assess the resources in their community would be great. Having advice on how to procure and sustain beneficial relationships would be helpful. Principals and teachers all have a role to play in engaging community groups and organisations but this needs to be in concert with each other, not in competition or opposition."

"It is simply reflective of how community minded the whole area is and this is deteriorating in today's world especially in urban areas. The problem is far wider than trying to just look at schools.

Annex 2 – Coding Framework

Parent node	Child node	Grandchild node	Great-grandchild node	Definition
1. Student-centred				
	1.1. Student voice			Hearing from the students and their voice
		Ask them, listen, follow through		
		Unnecessary or negative		
		Method		
	1.2. Capabilities			The 'things' we want our students to be/have/do
		1.2.1. Hard skills		
		1.2.2. Soft skills		
		1.2.3. General skills		
	1.3. Transitions			Transitions for students between schools, different year levels
2. Progress and Achievement				
	2.1. Curriculum			The content taught in schools, including subjects
		2.1.1. Local Design		Locally designed curriculum
		2.1.2. Te Reo		Students learning Te Reo in school
	2.2. Qualifications			Includes NCEA and other qualifications at all levels
	2.3. Assessment and Measurement			How we test and measure students' progress on various domains
	2.4. Evidence, data and capability			How schools use their data and evidence, and their capability to do so
3. Wellbeing/Hauora				
	3.1. Services and Pastoral care			Services provided, e.g. nurses, social workers in schools (SWiS) etc.
	3.2. Student wellbeing			
		3.2.1. Mental health		Services, comments, related to mental health – includes guidance counsellors
	3.3. Home and community environment			Things happening outside of school
4. Learning Support and Inclusive education				
	4.1. Workforce			
		4.1.1. Specialist services		Staff specialist support, e.g. educational psychologists, speech therapists etc.
		4.1.2. In-school staff		Day to day staff, e.g. RTLB, SENCO and Teacher Aides
	4.2. Services			Programmes or initiatives for LS, e.g. positive behaviour support etc.
	4.3. Funding			Funding specifically for LS, e.g. ORS
	4.4. Needs identification			Comments related to the identification of disabilities and learning support needs
5. Community partnerships/Whanaungatanga				
	5.1. Whānau/Family			Comments relating to whānau/family involvement in education, relationships between schools and whānau
	5.2. Wider Community			Community involvement in education, including how schools engage with their communities

	5.3. Employers and business		Involvement in education from employers and businesses
	5.4. Iwi		Iwi involvement in education
6. Early childhood education			
7. Pathways to work or tertiary education			
8. Teaching			
	8.1. Capability		Having the skills and expertise to perform the tasks
	8.2. Pedagogy		Best teaching practice, includes teaching quality
	8.3. Professional Learning and Development		Professional learning and development, mentoring, support networks that improve a teacher's ability to teach
	8.4. Initial Teacher Education		Teacher training programmes and teacher training providers
	8.5. Workload		Having the time and capacity to do the work
	8.6. Pay		Salary, allowances, holidays etc.
	8.7. Status		How the teaching profession is viewed
	8.8. Career pathways		
	8.9. Wellbeing		
	8.91. Diversity		Diversity of the teaching workforce (diversity of teaching styles goes to pedagogy)
	8.9.2. Teachers' voice		
9. Leadership			
	9.1. Principals		
		9.1.1. Responsibilities	
		9.1.2. Capability	Having the skills and expertise to perform the tasks
		9.1.3. Pedagogy	
		9.1.4. Professional Learning and Development	
		9.1.5. Workload	
		9.1.6. Pay	
		9.1.7. Status	
		9.1.8. Career pathways	
		9.1.9. Wellbeing	
		9.1.91. Diversity	
	9.2. Leadership across school		This relates to leadership roles/those leading within a school who are not principals
	9.3. System Leadership		Other leaders in the education system
91. Other Education Workforce			Those who work in schools who are not principals, teachers or learning support staff (e.g. office staff)
	91.1. Pay		
	91.2. Workload		
	91.3. Capability		
	91.4. Status		
92. Schools			
	92.1. Boards of trustees		

		92.1.1. Responsibilities and roles		What is required of boards, the responsibilities that sit at board level, the role of boards (e.g. comments about whether they should exist)
			92.1.1.1. Feedback and communication	
		92.1.2. Support and training		Human support, help or guidance, NZSTA, advisors etc., and training or upskilling
		92.1.3. Capability		Skills and expertise to perform the tasks, includes comments about strengths or weaknesses in board capability
			92.1.3.1. Positive	
			92.1.3.2. Negative	
		92.1.4. Community representation		How well the Board reflects the community
			92.1.4.1. Positive	
			92.1.4.2. Negative	
		92.1.5. Conditions		Remuneration, workload
		92.1.6. Interpersonal dynamics		Relationships between members, e.g., "personal agendas"
		92.1.7. Elections and appointments		The election process, difficulties getting members
	92.2. Choice and Competition			
	92.3. Enrolment and zoning			
		92.3.1. General		
			92.3.1.1. Local school	
			92.3.1.2. Learning support	
			92.3.1.3. Resourcing and support	
			92.3.1.4. All schools equal	
			92.3.1.5. White flight and school perception	
		92.3.2. Enrolment		
			92.3.2.1. Starting age and cohort entry	
		92.3.3. Zoning		
			92.3.3.1. Design	
			92.3.3.2. Out of zone enrolment	
	92.4. Infrastructure and Property			Comments about who has responsibility for property should not sit here (instead go in 92.1.1, 9.1 etc. depending on comment)
		92.4.1. Buildings		Classrooms, includes playgrounds and pools
		92.4.2. ICT network and hardware		School networks and hardware
		92.4.3. Modern Learning Environments		
	92.5. Decile			
	92.6. Class size/ratio			
	92.7. Class resources			Relates to resources that are not buildings or ICT hardware
	92.8. Technology			How technology impacts on student learning and teaching
	92.9. Day to Day business			Includes uniforms, transport to school etc.
	92.91. School Improvement			Schooling improvement activities that occur within schools

	92.92. School type		Includes alternative education, charter schools, special character schools, intermediates, single sex, co-ed etc.
	92.93. School autonomy		
	92.94. Other governance		
93. Collaboration			
	93.1. Communities of Learning |Kāhui Ako		
	93.2. Other collaboration		This includes formal and informal clusters, cooperation
	93.3. Sector		Collaboration between schools and other sectors – e.g. schools and healthcare services, social services
	93.4. Impact of competition		Impact of competition on collaboration
94. System and Agencies			
	94.1. Ministry of Education		
	94.2. Education Review Office		
	94.3. NZQA		
	94.4. NZSTA		
	94.5. Education Council		
	94.6. Government		
	94.7. Interaction between agencies		Refers to agency level interaction
	94.8. Evidence, data and capability		How the system collects data and their capability to use it
	94.9. Evaluation and Review		Refers to evaluation and review at system level (comments about evidence and data use at school level are in 2.4)
	94.91. The middle layer		Anything relating to an entity that might sit between schools and central government
	94.92. Accountability		
		94.92.1. Complaints, disputes, feedback	Comments about complaints processes
		94.92.2. Interventions	Includes both statutory and non-statutory interventions
	94.93. Ethos and values		
95. Funding			A catch-all for all comments regarding funding, these are to also be coded elsewhere if possible
96. Diversity			General comments about diversity
	96.1. Māori		
		96.1.1. Te tiriti o Waitangi	
		96.1.2. Māori medium	Anything relating to Māori medium schools
		96.1.3. Biculturalism	Comments about equity in the relationship between Māori and Pākeha
	96.2. Pacific people		
	96.3. LGBTQIA +		
	96.4. Disadvantaged and at-risk		At-risk students are at high risk of disengaging, or have disengaged with the education system. At-risk provision/education settings are key interventions for these children and young people and include alternative education, Activity Centres, support for teen parents, and Te Kura
	96.5. Migrant and refugee		

	96.6. Access to education			
		96.6.1. Geography		Anything related to the locality of a school, rural, isolated etc.
		96.6.2. Other barriers		Includes access to basic needs, social and emotional needs, and feeling secure in order to reach equitable outcomes
		96.6.3. Financial barriers		
97. General Education Workforce				Comments that do not specify a particular group of people, for those that specify many groups – this must be coded to all of those groups
98. General comments				Comments that are very general or less constructive
	98.1. Good quotes			
	98.2. Miscellaneous			Any comments which do not fit elsewhere in this framework – this section will be periodically reviewed and new nodes may be created
99. Questions				
	99.1. Q1 BOTs			
	99.2. Q2 Te Tiriti o Waitangi			
	99.3. Q3 geography			
	99.4. Q4 collaboration in an area			
	99.5. Q5 enrolment			
	99.6. Q6 reduce negative effects of competition			
	99.7. Q7 working with community			
	99.8. Q8 diversity in school type			
	99.9. Q9 student voice			
	99.91. Q10 Future focus			
	99.92. Q11 Evaluation and review			
	99.93. Q12 agencies			