

Engagements with Teachers and Teacher Unions

Notes from Tomorrow's Schools review regional engagements
July to September 2018

teachers

Tomorrow's Schools Taskforce Member: Mere Berryman

Location:

Attendees: Teachers nominated by NZEI and PPTA

Summary

- It feels like ideas and new approaches are forced on the school system without appropriate support, or planning or whether it's a coherent picture.
- Because of this, there were questions about whether the interventions or new programmes were well thought through or just tried as a potential silver bullet.
- NCEA was generally liked and any dissension was because there wasn't enough support or the intended flexibility wasn't put in place.

Detailed notes

- *What's working?*
- Likes NCEA the way it is, because it is flexible enough so that if teachers do it right, its good.
 - They thought that the concept of getting rid of NCEA L1 appalling. Focussing on literature and numerical is concerning. There are so many sides to learning and NCEA needs to keep that
 - Schools need to be more creative with timetables (etc) so that the best of NCEA can be realised
 - Most schools treat it as School Cert and Bursary – ie they're effectively still working with the old system
 - The flexibility of what is intended with NCEA is lost.
- But a counterview is that some subjects are still not ready for NCEA, eg science and maths. Those subjects need greater flexibility – NCEA does link up with the potential that the curriculum allows.
- A solution – we don't need 3 years of assessment. The standards it needs structure but it needs to be flexible – eg English is broad – but science/maths is very narrow. It needs the ability to teach a wide range of things in the subject.
- It fits with Tomorrow's Schools because it's not easy for schools to get the community voice in the school/curriculum. Ie, the Maori land history is not easily brought into teaching even though it's discussed a lot at students' homes. Eg farming - can't bring Maori farming practice into Years 11-13.
- The drama teacher enjoys the flexibility of the curriculum. She knows that she can make it appropriate for what she wants to teach.
- *What's not working?*
- **The Ministry.** Personnel at the Ministry changes all the time. Whenever there is a new initiatives and the research might support it, but the implementation is usually poor and resources aren't available.

- The Ministry needs to stick with something (for a long time, eg a decade) and if there are changes give a long lead in time (a couple of years)
- The Ministry is broken and needs to change. There is a lack of accountability – there should be a council (including education professional) that asks all the questions and test whether the programmes are good and appropriate.
- *So what would a structure look like that pulled it all together?*
 - NZ is an egalitarian society, but we have an unequal education system.
 - It's a very poor model for decreasing the imbalance in society. We've created poor schools. The schools that need good teachers, don't get them. The mechanism to bond teachers were too simplistic and so were rorted.
- We could do what we did for superannuation and take the politics out of it – Mere noted that the review is trying to do that. But they thought that we take the bad ideas (politically driven) eg Charter schools.
- The system needs to make sure there is 'best practice'
- National Standards took out the arts of the core subjects and so some schools/teachers didn't get that. Instead of just focussing on literacy and numeracy there are a number of things we want to cover, but there is clearly a hierarchy of subjects and the arts is a poor cousin.
- There is an issue that there isn't enough hours in the day to do all the things that are expected of them.
- The Ministry needs to set a clear vision for education
- **Boards of Trustee**
 - Guidance is required. Could there be set training – a course or online training that could be supportive of new BOT members. The course would need to be paid for by MOE (not the school) and the attendees supported in attending the course.
- **Maori educators.** Why don't we put Maori in charge of the Maori education system? The problem is that non-Maori is the majority and the Maori voice wouldn't be listened to
- Maori won't get involved in education because their personal experiences were so bad.
- The Ministry should have a policy document that is 'listen to Maori voice'. But the Maori voice is so diverse and there isn't just one voice. But the key issue is that it isn't listened to. [REDACTED] is 75% Maori but it's structured as a Pakeha school.
- *So what is the structure that could work?*
- The principal role is so big now. Principals need to do everything.
- But, if you get MOE to take some of the roles, it's a disaster. If local experience and knowledge could be used (instead of MOE) then that type of support would be useful.
- For example. Modern Learning Environments (MLEs) were put upon schools and they needed to agree to it so that they got the funding. Teachers weren't trained for it. The view was that MLEs don't support learning, so why are we bringing them in?

- MOE looks for easy solutions but any of the solutions need lots of support (which doesn't usually eventuate). We need to remember that there are no silver bullets.
- The support that the Advisory Service provided was good. The Advisory Service always ensured that they had the most recent practice. It gave relevant advice and PLD and it gave a wraparound service that worked. The businesses that come in now doesn't meet teachers' needs and they don't help.
- Bring good teaching practice into and out of the advisory service. It would be expensive but technology could help make it easier, ie develop the relationship and then use technologies to deliver from that point on.
- PLD is mainly focussed on big centres. It needs to be localised so that teachers in the region can get training (travelling is too much of a barrier)
- PLD micro credentials. So that it is acknowledged and has some salary benefits. There is financial reward. At the moment you don't get the \$\$ reward for doing it. (COLs was a bad attempt at it)
- Need to recognise all the things that teachers do - teachers put in a lot of work but it's not recognised.
- Retention is hard – only 4-5 years. If you like teaching as a career pathway you might get offered a dean or HOD. But there's no structured career pathway (these roles are quite often thrown at you) and so it's not really valued.
- We need to make sure that all teachers are qualified (including ECE). Secondary training is not very good – NCEA isn't taught at Training College.
- Special needs funding has been mangled. Do we really think that special education mainstreaming is the way to go? Does the research support it?

Nelson teachers

3 to 4.30pm, Monday 30 July 2018

Tomorrow's Schools Taskforce Member: Bali Haque

Location: Nelson PPTA/NZEI teachers meeting

Attendees: Teachers nominated by NZEI and PPTA

Summary

- Let teachers be the experts about what happens in schools
- The Ministry is continually pushing more and more things on teachers and schools. I am worried for young teachers... [they] are forced to be clones, operating at such a pace and intensity.
- Kāhui Ako could be involved in accountability/review processes. Since the Kāhui Ako have been introduced there is much less competition. However, Kāhui Ako don't work for all secondary teachers, need subject specific peer and Ministry support.
- PLD seem doesn't provide the type of PLD teachers require. We haven't had the external providers – I don't think it is the best spend – at our school we haven't had anything from millions of dollars of investment.
- Quality of principal appointments, appraisal and the quality of information they are providing the board needs to be looked at.

Detailed notes

BH - what are the 2 or 3 things that you would change? What is critically important to address?

- We are experts – but we just hear about the next initiatives and we are told to implement it – this is the next greatest thing – but I am the frontline, should know and have a say, not just be told – but then I get 5 mins training – then the next new thing is here. We don't implement well - do we, as experts, have a say on what should happen in schools – we are not unskilled, unqualified – this is a choice and a passion to teach – but my credibility is zero – everything just comes down on me.

BH – what would you change?

- It's coming from multiple places, NZQA etc. 7 orgs – perhaps 10 years ago things went through the Ministry and then to schools – now everyone contacts schools – there is no filter mechanism, i.e. Teacher Council, Arinui... I don't know where things come from – we are just told – this is the new best practice.
- I think it is healthy that it is not from one place – Kāhui Ako, boards, autonomy within schools – I think some of it has come from a good base and theory – if run well – I get the sense that we are being bombarded – at [REDACTED] we can't afford much – ie the modern learning concept – we spent \$65 and it works well – we didn't jump – we waited and learned from others mistakes.
- It is a mix, ie national standards – the speed was frightening – little account of teachers' voice or any research into brain development.
- I'm at the end of my career – I have experience, maturity and wisdom – I am worried for young teachers who don't have that, but are forced to be clones, operating at such a pace and intensity. I think the drop-out rate is due to the intensity – they don't have anything else to compare it to.

BH – system needs to be coherent – someone needs to know what is actually being put onto schools (across the agencies) – do you want more co-ordination?

- We want a filter – someone to prioritise, and it has to be an educationalist.
- Previous NCEA reviews didn't fix anything

BH - Principalship – do they need to be better trained to protect teachers?

- Yes – it's just a tick box exercise – ERO is coming – even if it is a good school we still have to show it, we have to comply [agreement in group about this statement].

BH – how would you redesign an accountability regime?

- It would be cool if the Kāhui Ako could be involved – not a scary external, one week, snap shot – this would be better but its more risky for Kāhui Ako members to do it [disagreement about risk]. Not necessarily a risk – maybe the ASTs could do it – spending time in classrooms – to work with you and get you to explain what you are thinking with your teaching practice. Need a Kāhui Ako without competition. [REDACTED]
- I don't think it would change, there would still be competition – boils down to individual schools – money, roll, numbers.

BH – if competition is negative – how do we address it?

- Funding salaries based on roll - there is complexity in the principals role – I can't compare the small and larger principal roles – I think it is harder at a smaller school – I'm a DP but I have no release time – I want to do a fine job with my children, that is my focus.
- I feel that in Nelson – it's not as difficult as other areas – at secondary – similar decile, relationships – less of an issue here.
- Since the Kāhui Ako have been introduced there is much less competition – however the links with other high schools have been cut off – because we are focusing on Kāhui Ako – used to have an advisor – not in competition across health teachers – used to have physic teachers days – now I only meet with one other teacher – the subject advisors roles at the Ministry have gone – we could pick up a phone – we have lost our advisor and added another layer of busyness.
- We were initially excited about Kāhui Ako – I thought it was to enhance relationships – we've had a Kāhui Ako day – but I haven't seen what they are doing – a lot of people getting a lot of money.
- I think it is a brilliant idea.

How is it going?

- A lot of people don't know what I'm doing... appointments were very political.
- I think the intent was to improve collaboration – I was excited – but...
- I know 2 people working very hard doing a job that.
- In [REDACTED] – our Kāhui Ako is really good – as a junior teacher – last year our purpose was writing – `we worked on that in 4 teams – to trial and share new ideas – this year it is wider, it is frustrating – it is so basic – it is no good if it is not directly relevant to my classroom.
- I think there is a disconnect from what it meant to be, either from the Ministry or what we have made it into.

BH – Let's talk about PLD – how is it working?

- We don't have a voice – when I was a leader I asked my staff what they wanted.

If we introduced an advisory service for teaching? What would you want?

- I have great hopes now the focus has broadened.

BH – what does it look like?

- How is it going to work in my class – generally I can't make any sense of the PLD sessions I have been to – the ones run by Kāhui Ako people, senior leaders, external people.
- I want an advisor – I could ring up – I'm thinking of doing this topic – finds out if anybody else is doing it, provides research and sharing across the region – previously our advisor was based in Christchurch, taken away with Kāhui Ako – she would help us to share other teachers learning – it was secondary subject based.
- Most effective is whole school PLD or coaching – it needs benefit to the whole school – I trust that PLD providers are highly skilled – but...

BH - Who is on the advisory service?

- Seconded for 2 or 3 years – then back to school – a hub – with expert teachers.
- It is essential that the secondment is only for a brief time – but can't be too short.
- I have a subject association – ours is really strong – but not all schools or associations are.

What is your experience with providers – [REDACTED] ?

- Nearly all our PLD is in-school – lead by Kāhui Ako and senior leadership team.
- We haven't had the external providers – I don't think it is the best spend – at our school we haven't had anything from millions of dollars of investment.
- I would rather have subject specific PLD – secondary's have been asking for decades – practice workshops, getting with a group of people and marking – diverse people, big discussions.
- If teachers could be seconded out to have real world experience – senior biology – not just for 25 minutes – for a decent chunk of time away – to become an expert.

BH – MME are telling us that to upskill MME teachers the only way is to send them away for 10 weeks... Are you getting the PLD you need to teach the front end of the curriculum?

- We do in Health and PE – they are values based – I don't know in other subjects

BH – who should appoint principals?

- The Ministry [disagreement in group]- perhaps the board and an independent consultant – it has to be part of your local community – have to understand our school culture and way of being – it's a good idea – one board member had to get up skilled to do that. And a staff member have a say as well – great to interview – but a teacher has to ask those questions.
- Having a teacher on the board on the appointment process would be good.

If you had an advisor on the board for the appointment – what would happen if the board ignores its recommendations?

- I've been through numerous appointments – it has to be the board – they know the school – if it's a new board, then you need other school members – for every appointment we have employed a consulting principal – to act objectively and ethically – it is up to the appointments committee but it needs support. Most successful appointments we have gone to extreme lengths to get the involvement of the community in the appointment process.

Ok, on a system level – what about those boards that lack capacity? That will select those people that agree with them...

- If we mandate an advisor – an accredited panel.
- If you develop, you have to devolve – I think you have to have help.
- Could be an aspect of the Kāhui Ako.
- Same would apply for the performance management of a principal...
- Principal has a lot of influence over the board – and board cycles are too short to learn the job – needs more input into board – all information comes from the principal.
- There are small number of schools under statutory management – but the other group of schools that don't have interventions but need help...
- My experience of a poor principal appointment was that it was very hard for staff to tell anybody if the board won't listen, if the principal is a powerful person. Need transparency – we didn't know how to let the ministry know.
- Board can only make a decision based on what is put in front of them – an example is the budget – if you want to question things as board member it takes a long time.
- [Debate about the use of unions] Unions can provide advice – if you raise an issue – principals are really powerful. My union told me it could be problematic for me if I raised an issue.
- Poor communication, new principal with different cultural style.

What do we need to put in the system to protect children?

- So ERO, and the school can still get a good report even with a bad principal.
- It's (ERO review) of no benefit, but it is terrifying – it's a threat – but it causes us to check that I'm meeting the checklist.
- We got a 5 year review cycle – it was too long to go without an external influence – I appreciate that we have a right of appeal – in a snapshot you will never get everything that goes on in a school. I appreciate that we can challenge a report – they have respected and honoured our perspective.
- Some that are good want review more frequently – what about unannounced visits – I would like it – get a real pulse – now my appraisal is on paper – Ed Council – terrible appraisal – and the inquiry thing is terrible – google slide, who reads these things – I just want to teach – I want to be a really good teacher – preparing resources, not filling in forms.
- Reduction of criteria – mixed opinion – fine they focus on kids – before they had a focus on our growth (as teachers) as human beings.
- [redacted] reports [online teacher appraisal tool from [redacted]] is used to beat us up with – Principals as I'm not signing it and you can't teach – the structure doesn't work. I will leave teaching before I do it again –

some principals are using it as a threat – this is just to keep doing our job – appraisal and accountability is fine – it is just onerous.

- Be better if I could have a conversation – show us your data, what you are doing in your classroom.
- I want to say review is overdue – we don't know what is coming – don't know what we are educating our children for.
- I want real evidence that it is improving things for the kids – what is making it better for our kids
- Coherence – it all needs to fit together.
- Get teachers to be part of policy making.
- I neglect myself during the term just to keep going and recover in the holidays.
- When work is not necessary or effective – I feel the lack of trust – it is just box ticking – just compliance – in Finland all teachers are well qualified individuals.
- Don't ask us to work on stupid things.

Otago teachers

- 3.30 – 5.00pm, Tuesday 31st July 2018
- Location: Well South Board Room, Cargill House, 333 Princes Street, Dunedin

Attendees: Teachers nominated by NZEI and PPTA



Summary

- Schools don't have certainty about funding or staffing from year to year, which creates a considerable barrier to strategic, long-term planning of the school.
- The Tomorrow's Schools model is not without its positive features – such as increased opportunities for community involvement and the ability for schools to develop more of their own identity and respond to student differences.
- For some schools, the Board of Trustees approach to school governance creates challenges. In some communities, schools struggle to recruit board members with the right skills/expertise, and many school boards would welcome having some of their responsibilities taken off them (particularly property matters).
- The competitive dynamics created by Tomorrow's Schools has created many negative outcomes, such as schools spending considerable sums of money on school advertising (rather than on facilities to improve student outcomes), faking results and a lack of trust.

Detailed notes

- The current system creates considerable challenges for strategic/long-term planning. It's difficult for principals to be able to plan ahead for the future of their school when they don't have the certainty from year-to-year over funding, staffing etc. It's crushing the future strategic planning of schools.
- The idea of Tomorrow's Schools worked really well in many communities. It gave communities a voice and schools were able to choose their own staff and develop their own identity/flavour – but this also contributed to great inequity in the system. Not all BOTs have the right skill sets. Some schools have professionals (accountants, doctors, etc.) on their school boards, while others are run by parents who are very caring and supportive, but who do not necessarily have the right expertise.
- Some BOTs want some responsibilities/functions taken off them (particularly property management) so that they can focus on the curriculum.
- Schools differ in their 'flavour' depending on the communities. For example, some schools have a strong focus on trades and vocational pathways because that aligns with what works/what is wanted from the students in their communities. This variety is a strength, because different students do better in different environments. For example, some students thrive in a single-sex school while others do best in a co-educational environment. Students aren't a 'one size fits all' group and nor should schools be. Under

the Tomorrow's Schools model, schools developed their own identity and can create a real sense of their own character via their staff choices, curriculum offering etc.

- Tomorrow's Schools allowed schools to put their own school first. If the system was more centralised, schools are at the mercy of those who are on the decision making board (who are often from affluent communities). Tomorrow's Schools allowed for school boards/decision-makers who were elected in by that particular schools/community. Having school boards members looking out for their own school is a very positive feature. The current Boards are close to their school and their students, whereas centralised systems are too far removed.
- For schools/boards that don't have the right skills/expertise, the Ministry should provide them with information on how to get that expertise.
- There has been a lot of 'white flight' from low-decile schools since Tomorrow's Schools, particularly in Christchurch, which left these schools desolate. These schools struggled for years to be able to replace their boards and get the right skills. If a huge ask of parents to have the right skills (and time) to serve on the Board.
- Boards increasingly have more accountability/responsibility (for example, increasing health and safety requirements) – this is the stuff that could be taken away from boards to let them focus on education. Free up the school boards to give them more time to focus on the community/school culture/school values etc. Get rid of their management functions.
- We don't currently train principals enough for their management roles. Principals can be great educators, but terrible managers. There's an implicit assumption that the best teachers become principals – but then principals don't have the time to be educators, so their educational expertise is lost. Once they're principals, they essentially become marketing executives more than any other role – they don't have time for other things.
- Schools face huge competition (from other schools), which leads to a huge amount of money being spent on advertising. Every year, there's huge pressure on schools to attract students. Some teachers (especially in more 'niche' subjects, such as particular languages) are at risk of losing their jobs, which creates uncertainty and instability.
- Schools are faking results. Schools aren't interested in educating students – they just want what is best for student numbers. This has led to poor practices, such as pushing lower ability students out of school or even having teachers complete or alter student assessment items.
- In Germany, there's no school zones and all the schools are fine. That's how it should be. Zoning would remove the competition model.
- The neoliberal model of education was intended to make schools compete. This raises the question of how much waste and inefficiency is in the system.
- It's fine to have the voice of the parents and community, but they don't have the same professional expertise as the educators. There's a lot of tension between BOT/principals/parents because of this, leading to a lot of time wasted having to work through these issues. Experienced senior managers and principals are the best placed to make decisions about the school.
- The corporate board model doesn't fit well with all schools. We're not companies, we're communities. Parents/communities are (most of the time) just not equipped with the expertise and their involvement creates a whole lot of extra hassle for principals that they just don't need.

- Teachers who also have children at the same school can either vote (in Board elections) as a parent or as staff member – not both, which means that they have to relinquish their privileges in one role to favour another.
- There needs to be different structures to split the day-to-day management of schools from school governance.
- Some areas have 'zoning by mortgage' which you see reflected in real estate advertisements which highlight the 'exclusive' school zone of a property. This creates pressure on teachers in these types of schools, as they are expected to deliver a private school quality education within the public system – and this is what is needed for the school to attract international, fee-paying students.
- Funding needs to keep up-to-date with cost pressures.
- Some schools just can't raise the money for basic maintenance through fundraising. Fundraising within the schools' own community doesn't work if the school is in a low socioeconomic area. Low decile schools don't have the same opportunity to raise funds.
- Competition between schools has created a model of 'the customer is always right.' The expectations that parents have on schools has increased.
- ERO is supposed to guarantee that the quality of education at all schools is the same, but that is not the case. What's going wrong?
- Many schools have failing infrastructure, asbestos etc. Central funding for property does not cover what is needed. That's not a Tomorrow's Schools issue – it's a Ministry of Education issue.
- The inspector used to help and guide teachers, but that function was stripped out under ERO. In the neoliberal model, that was never their function. They just did the 'ticks and crosses' so that the market has information about the school. Schools feel like they are jumping through hoops, but ERO doesn't even tell them in advance what hoops it has to jump through.
- Schools are incentivised to hide issues from ERO. They're on their 'best behaviour' for ERO inspections. Anecdotal evidence of a principal who set up a minor flaw for ERO to find as a distraction.
- The Tomorrow's Schools model creates a lot of perverse incentives – it's a low trust model.
- The appraisal system for teachers is demeaning – appraisal is conflated with professional development. You get more out of teachers if you trust them. Teachers aren't typically motivated by money, but they're still expected to work under a business-type appraisal model.
- The decile system isn't perfect. It perpetuates the class system. There needs to be a way to support low socioeconomic schools, but you also need to support students from low socioeconomic backgrounds (or with learning support needs etc.) regardless of what school they go to.
- The three education entities – MOE, ERO and NZQA – seem to be in competition with each other. NZQA changes systems without the Ministry's involvement. The Ministry has got a lot smaller – they just dish out funding for buildings and not much else. ERO just dishes out criticism – but they're not helping. Where is the working together in these three institutions? The goals of these three should be the same – one goal, one plan etc. But each one just follows its own agenda, without regard for the other.
- No ERO team has time to unearth the real problems in a school. They're only there for a week. Schools can find their own problems – but they don't want ERO to know about them. ERO judges the school, writes a bad report and then leaves without helping. Schools' rolls fall and people may lose their jobs.

- ERO focusses too much on their narrow checklist, without regard for the circumstances of the school they're assessing. For example, ERO questioned a teacher on their Maori and Pacifica students – as it was on the checklist – even though there were none in the class, but she wasn't asked about what she was doing for the students with learning support needs. ERO also creates a lot of paperwork for teachers. Teachers have to waste time on this paperwork instead of working on their teaching/engagement with students. ERO are so far removed from the reality of what is going on.
- Teachers can't access the right PLD about technology. It is really difficult to find the right course in this area. Even when opportunities are available, teachers sometimes cannot even take up free opportunities to learn because they can't get the release time.
- Teachers with students with special learning needs don't have time to do justice to giving thorough attention to children with special needs (as well as all the other students in their class). Teachers haven't been taught how to adapt their teaching to be effective for students with particular learning needs. Teachers have to fill multiple roles – e.g. social worker, nurse etc.
- There used to be subject advisers for teachers to give them guidance. The best professional development can come from these subject advisers. But the professional development system is now privatised and is now given en masse on the latest idea in education. Professional development for educators has fallen apart. This is another example of where the Ministry has abdicated responsibility. The Ministry struggles to do this role, so they farm it out to others.
- Teachers know what they need to do better at their jobs. They don't just need advisers. They also need classroom resources. It should be unified so that everyone gets the same stuff.
- The further away you get from Wellington, the less you get. You don't get the same professional development opportunities in places like Dunedin, where there are not enough people to justify providing it. It's an equity issue. Each teacher is entitled to professional development but the mechanism to supply it to teachers of certain topics (e.g. technology) don't provide enough opportunities. It's also hard for language teachers to have peers in the same school, which creates challenges for moderation processes.
- NCEA doesn't match the curriculum and it causes huge stress. NZQA often creates standards that have nothing to be with the curriculum.
- New Zealand was previously doing well in international competitions (PISA etc.), but now we're not doing so well. Why do we need to compete with other countries anyway?
- Funding tends to go to the parts of the school that are visible/contribute to the public image (e.g. a high-performing sports team etc.). But it should be going towards the things that students need to becoming well-rounded global citizens.
- We're funnelling kids down to 5 or 6 subjects too soon/young. There's also too much competition in the system between students (e.g. prizes in prize giving from a young age). Students are just looking to tick the boxes rather than actually learn.
- Teachers have to deal with students with different needs, but there's not always the funding or resources. An example was given of a deaf child who was provided with assistive technology but they weren't allowed to use it outside the classroom, which made it impossible for this student to engage with outdoor learning sessions (which were common in this class). There's also an increasing problem with screen-addicted students who are effectively going through withdrawal symptoms when they're not in front of a screen for certain periods of time.
- Support systems for students with particular needs tend to be withdrawn once the child is 'up to standard' – even if that's not their full potential. Also, funding (when it is given) is not matched to the actual level

of need. There's also a risk of losing teacher aides as the funding for them isn't consistent each year – this also makes their employment situation precarious.

- There are a lot of children with extra needs, but schools are required to pay for their own teacher aides. Schools cannot spare money on other needs, such as property, because they have to pay for teacher aides. Yes, it's important that students with special needs are provided for, but at what point do the rights of the other 28 or so students in the class come in?
- There needs to be access to trained specialists for vision etc. at an early age, because these types of problems (if not identified and treated) impact on children's learning and behaviour. This isn't just about physical issues, but also mental health as well. When counselling services are able to be provided at a school, they're overloaded.
- The reality is that parents are 'opting out' more and more, but their expectations on schools is increasing.
- Even SENCOs have to fight the system for funding, so it must be impossible for parents. So many children are missing out because their parents don't know how to fight for them.
- Mental health issues are already emerging in primary school, but often the services aren't there to support the students. There needs to be integrated services but the competition nature of schools is killing the opportunities for the collaboration needed to create a community hub. Competition between students is encouraged as it's what they see in the system around them.
- There's a Treasury report citing concerns about the poor quality of school property stock. Schools are so busy spending money trying to attract students that the maintenance of school buildings isn't prioritised.
- Not all processes are competitive – for example, Communities of Learning. In spite of the competitive pressures in the system, the best professional development/learning opportunities for educators is when teachers from other schools get together to share knowledge. COLs are okay, but they need better structures. If you have a more collaborative model, you could have one specialist teacher (for a subject with low demand) teaching all students of that topic within a particular area.
- In the digital sphere of learning, you'd lose the social element of learning that is so much more than simply the raw content that's taught. How do we avoid losing that element when digital platforms are used?
- There's been a successive movement to make schools bigger and this means that student individuality is lost. It's great for economies of scale, but it doesn't encourage teachers to know their students. Smaller schools encourage a personalised system. Principals/teachers know their students. The Ministry of Education in Dunedin could merge schools in the area, but there would be real political/community opposition.
- Disruptive technology is on the horizon (e.g. automated teachers and sophisticated, responsive digital tools). Not just the online videos, etc. that we have now, but there will be truly sophisticated, smart digital teaching. This type of disruptive technology will create very rapid changes in education.
- Teachers have difficulties in accessing education based research. Schools are often not providing teachers with access to academic journal subscriptions etc. Teaching students have good access to this material via university facilities, but you lose access to university material once you graduate.
- The government provides funding for teaching technology in Year 7 – 10, but this money goes to the operational fund of a school and 'disappears' into the running of the school – there's no guarantee it gets anywhere near the technology department. In reality, technology is funded by the money given by the parents for these classes. The government money given to technology is being misappropriated and

not going on what it was intended for. BOTs aren't required to spend money a school is given for the particular purpose it was given for. Schools prioritise their funding in different ways. This creates disparities – not just for students, but for teachers as well.

- The funding streams work differently than it would under a business model. The funding system is broken.
- There are fewer university students training to be teachers – which is another sign that the system is broken. Furthermore, many New Zealand teaching graduates leave the profession within the first few years of teaching anyway.
- New Zealand punches over its weight (compared to proportion of GDP spent on education) and part of that comes from the contribution within the sector that is voluntary. If the system becomes even more low-trust than it already is, then you'd lose a lot of this voluntary contribution. Teachers would be more likely to just come and go to chase the opportunities that are best for them without any regard for their students.
- The appraisal system for teachers needs to go. Performance appraisal can add value if it is done well, but the reality is that it isn't being done well. Teachers do need to take some responsibility for themselves/their professional performance though. Other jobs hold employees account to their performance and that should be the same for teachers.
- In a high trust model, teachers would be able to ask for help. In the current low-trust model, however, any sign of weakness get to the media. Schools try to hide things, so rather than addressing issues early, problems are left hidden until things escalate to the statutory manager stage.
- There's a great need for support services (e.g. expert advice/liaison services) for schools that are struggling so that problems can be addressed early. There needs to be a way for schools to ask for advice/assistance without being 'punished' first.
- There's inconsistent messaging between what schools do vs. what they teach students in respect to asking for helping. Teachers/schools tell students it is okay to ask for help, but that's not the behaviour they role model.
- Societal structures are changing rapidly. Previously, failure in the education system was less of a problem as people could go on to meaningful, reasonably paid employment without needing school qualifications. In modern society, however, there's an increasing need to obtain qualifications to secure reasonable employment prospects, which puts greater pressure on the education system and the students in it.

New Plymouth Teachers

3.30 – 5.00pm

Tomorrow's Schools Taskforce Member: Bali Haque

Location: Blenheim Room, Quality Hotel, Plymouth International, New Plymouth

Teachers nominated by NZEI and PPTA



Detailed Notes

Bali: We don't have a generally agreed idea of how we're doing:

- Depends on what you're measuring.
- Equity between schools; conference in Queenstown; incredible schools; and then I came back; I just thought, our students would thrive if they had the resources the schools in Queenstown had.

Bali: One of the things I wonder about – is there a budget restriction; without a budget restriction; quite often we hear 'there's not enough money for that'; the other thing – the change in political parties – different goals; which has a ripple effect; is there a way to take this out of the political system? That's why we are an independent Taskforce; and talking to the opposition.

Bali: We're politically tribal; can't guarantee the next Government won't change it; but an opportunity to build something the next Government will want to carry on. Also, it's very likely it will be the subject of an election campaign – getting to 2020.

Bali: First comment around budget – there will be restrictions; in regard to that, that's life; our job is to make sure appropriate resources are allocated.

- I think for me, we had Collaborative Learning, and then nothing happened; if that was resourced properly that would have helped with some of the equity issues; individual personas come across; competition; the way society works.
- To work equitably and collaboratively, you need to drop some of the things to a community level, not just a schools level.
- It's everything, culturally; not just sport.
- I felt totally isolated when outside of New Plymouth.
- Our natural professional instinct is to collaborate for the kids; but this is cut through by the competitive nature of the model.
- Kāhui Ako is stepping in; we're building and working really hard as a collaborative; a lot is doing things together; we're fortunate and a small area; and I know there are difficulties in New Plymouth about building them; we've got that opportunity in [REDACTED] in our [REDACTED] group.

Bali: Kāhui Ako – could we multiply and develop as an antidote to the competitive model?

- We're lucky as we don't compete for students; so it's different.
- Natural inclination for Ako; the competition, the place where it hasn't happened, it's because of the competition.
- And the geography.
- Having your cluster geographically structured, it defeats the purpose as well.
- Boards – depending on where you are and the people you have in it.
- Enrolment schemes; the schools sandwiched between high decile/achieving lost out; the lower socio-economic group don't have the same levels of expertise to manage a school. While it was important to move away from the centralised system, it went too far by loading a lot of responsibilities onto schools – which could have been centrally managed.
- System leaders – think about the roles of Boards of Trustees; the system leaders within that network could help to support communities of schools.

Bali: Has the pendulum swung too much – thoughts?

- A small school – the Principal is responsible for everything; achievement; pedagogy; that stress for him is huge. The Board as well but a lot of Boards pay heed to what the Principal says; they have the financial portfolio but the Principal is on all of them.

Bali: The Principal has a lot of work to do; Boards have too much to do; what is the right function for a Board?

- Governance – in every school I've been in has been very hard to define governance and management – grey area/ strip; they may be educated but may not understand.
- Experience of trustees is 20 years out of date from when they were in the school system.

Bali: Quote about why you would give the trustees all this responsibility and pay them \$55 an hour.

- Having being on the board, the slowness of anything getting done; that takes up so much time at Board meetings.

- The other advantage of that sort of thinking; is you might start to see the issues of competition; the enrolment schemes; where the schools or principals are misbehaving; where things being done unethically.
- Also include other agencies.
- Our Board of Trustees did this three years ago; had a heavy business model; from a business stakeholder's perspective he's done a good job, but from a community's perspective, I don't know.

Bali: Definition of a community?

- So if we have individual schools as communities, we're still competitive; but we're still the same community. How do you separate that out?

Bali: If you have something at a higher level, could you start to do that?

- Competition thing – that business about setting up schools as independent entities; so that's what schools do.
- One student said – 'we should all wear the same uniform– our school won't like it but we would'.
- But then whatever happened to parent choice?
- The idea's great that you have everyone wearing a Taranaki uniform; but then if we're thinking about individual learners, then that will always negate that.
- Fluid process; always being checked.

Bali: Should Boards be appointing Principals?

- [Decision made by] parents of students in the school at that time; not necessarily looking at a broader level thinking.
- For anyone involved in people management should be certified with qualifications to manage people correctly; and should be looking out for a whole range of things such as bullying; and should be accountable for being good people managers; and that's from the top to the bottom.

Bali: Are you talking about the appointment process?

- Any people managers – actively involved in managing people.

Bali: So your board is responsible for the principals' appraisal. If you have a middle level they could take those roles on. How would you feel about that?

- Taranaki level – if they recruited all of the Principals; all aligned with the Taranaki community; a good representation of people from the community.

Bali: One of the options is the Ministry of Education; shouldn't they have a role?

- In a primary school context; the various schools I've been involved in, each Principal has been the leader of that school and leads the Board; lucky to have good strong Principals; if there's a tension between your Board and Principal is often disastrous.
- There are issues around who appoints the Principals and who appraises.
- **Not sure if we have equity there; as a Māori woman and very difficult to get to that next step against men; so that if we're going to appoint our Principals, certain things need to be considered for everybody; a more equitable process.**

- In Australia it's different in each state, but you go through a process with standards.
- Sole charge primary; you had to have a grading; to go up the chain you needed another grading; and then it was done; hard to say if it was good or bad, it was just what you did; helpful inspectorates; that went before Tomorrow's Schools came in.
- For the people who were Principals or DPs; you did your learning before you went into that role; you have to learn as you go.
- Principals – their job way too big; it's not the right model.
- That business about Principals doing too much and doing the wrong thing; property and finances.
- In Board meetings – trying to do things about student achievement; wheel in the Head of Department; so often the eyes glaze over a bit; what's the role there?

Bali: Is there a different model for leadership; a collaborative Principal model? Why does it have to be DP/AP/P model? Co-Principalship.

- Experience; having experience; often they're put in these positions with little experience; particularly in a small school.

Bali: Let's move on – advisory services.

- Minister Parata; new PLD model – ditching; Venn diagram of what was being demanded and what was being supplied; a lot of fantastic input including Cathy; talking about this stuff for a long time.
- Some things were picked out of a huge report.
- Variability of delivery; so they focused on a huge accreditation process [which hasn't been good].
- The bones of the proposal is there; trying to rebuild a spine of advice and support across the country; used to be the universities.

Bali: What does an advisory service and how is it different to what we have now?

- Coherence – wonderful curriculum document; but we've lost out coherence because of demands, eg, National Standards; we're not bottom up, we're reactive, working from the top.
- The whole business about curriculum design; NCEA; actually designing and developing – you have to do it yourself.

Bali: How would you design more support?

- Reading advisors, science and art specialists; teaching really strong; and now we've lost this.
- So many more courses and opportunities elsewhere, eg, in Auckland.
- Where is the subject-specific stuff? You have to do it yourself. **If I could find a video of a rock star saying what I'm saying then they'll buy into it.**
- Our role has become so huge – including as counsellors.
- I have no idea of what happens in a primary school.
- You need to go into a CoL!
- Resourcing – what's good and what's bad; to present something that's age-appropriate; all of that learning sits with a person; if they move on to something else it's gone; then someone else comes in and thinks 'how do I teach music to 5 year olds?'

- **Need something that's outside of the individual ownership – into the middle layer thinking.**

Bali:

- National curriculum gives us the scope and authority; your flavour; PLD providers need to know their learners in order to build that; I don't think they currently do, due to budget and time restraints.
- And because they don't know what we need, Principals and Boards are trying to tick a box, so 40 staff have to sit through a four hour course that could have been spent in better ways. Coming back to the competitive model and what we're being measured on.
- **– in Secondary – the only specialist PD we get is about Assessment; formal assessment; the only time we actually get some really solid subject PD is by our subject associations – who do this because they're committed to the rest of us, in their weekend and evenings organising things for us.**
- If we have an advisory service, we need it to connect up with these groups, who have the goodwill of the profession.
- Some of the best PLD that I've ever had; helped my maths teaching; from [REDACTED], but it was someone from my old school so there was a good relationship.
- A twitter group of PLD support has been tremendous.
- Having someone to call upon was invaluable; and don't have that now.
- **We had a guy, [REDACTED]; cost the school thousands; but school decided to put its eggs in that basket; fantastic; but does every school have the resource to do this?**

Bali: Appraisal.

- Why don't they get someone from the Taranaki whānau; go around and talk to the kids; and that's their job; rather than going round.
- **Our appraisal is based on a web appraisal process making money off us; tick, tick, tick and good luck if you've got a job at the end of it.**
- A really good enquiry cycle; but then what do you do with it? You get PLD.
- Outside of the appraisal process; hoops you have to jump through for teacher registration; these are ridiculous, particularly for part-timers.
- On the appraisal thing; the DP and Middle Managers going through; Principals should have to go through this 360 by the teachers; there's no mandated process.
- I'd like to see more secondment.
- [We had a] Pilot offering Senior Subject Advisors; the power of it was that they were current; providing really powerful support. Then when they went back, they were really invigorated by it.
- Reo teachers is another example. Need experts to oversee them; long-term relationships.
- An advisory service that sits Taranaki based; this might have people that broker professional development; and maybe secondment process.
- And importance of longevity; that contract model doesn't work.
- It works sometimes.

- **Kura Kaupapa Māori— I think we're in a totally different boat in [REDACTED]; tamariki coming from all over; the sorts of things everyone in this room are facing are different for us. Re Kāhui Ako – our next KKM is 1 ½ hours down the road.**
- Unless you collaborate with likeminded schools, community is different.
- PB4L and [REDACTED] trying to cross over and do those sorts of things are near-on impossible.
- The way this pamphlet is translated doesn't mean the same thing for us; it's actually iwi; we use these words for different things here.
- The governance model is completely different.

Bali: Final advice?

- Go for it! Make change!

Bali: Themes across the country – the winners don't want to change things; the task we have is to weave our way through this; not necessarily one size fits all.

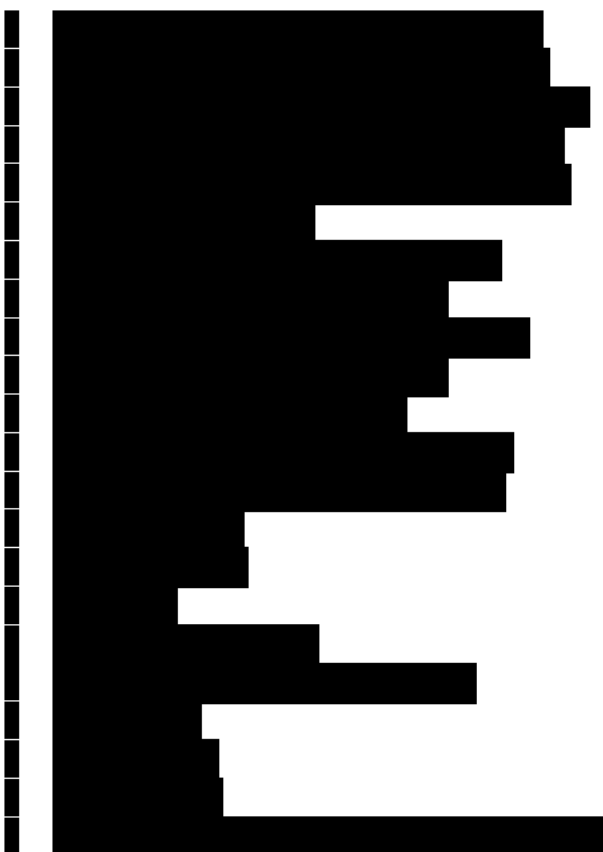
- Isn't that why it shouldn't be an election issue?
- Go far not fast.
- **One thing we haven't mentioned a lot here is the kids; perhaps the have-nots have access to a mentor throughout their schooling; and have the opportunity to follow them through. It doesn't have to be the same person, but by the time they get to high school they may have just caught up,**

Hamilton Teachers

3.30 – 5.00 pm, Wednesday 22nd 2018

Location: [REDACTED] Hamilton

Attendees: Teachers nominated by NZEI and PPTA



To accommodate the larger size of the group and ensure that everyone had a sufficient opportunity contribute, this session was conducted in a somewhat different format. Rather than the standard approach (of having a single group conversation recorded by the Secretariat), the attendees of this session broke out into three groups and brainstormed their contributions on paper. This was followed by a brief summary discussion at the end of the session. Some schools also provided additional material that they had prepared in advance of the session, which has been included also.

Summary

- The group articulated both strengths and weaknesses of the Tomorrow's Schools model, based on their lived experiences of the schooling system.
- Generally speaking, the group expressed a favourable sentiment about features of the Tomorrow's Schools approach that enabled greater community involvement and the empowering schools with greater autonomy to be responsive to the needs and aspirations of their students and local area.
- On the other hand, there were elements of the Tomorrow's Schools approach that have been looked upon less favourably, such as the competitive dynamics between schools (and the detrimental impact

that this has had on collaboration), concerns about BOT capability (including the disparity of BOT capability between schools) and funding issues.

Detailed notes

What's working well in the current system?

General:

- ERO provides feedback “so that we can feed forward.”
- The students!
- Teachers at the coalface are “working smarter and harder”. They’re “caring, compassionate and collegial” and will go the extra mile.
- Kāhui Ako has allowed for administration to be streamlined within groups of schools.
- Ability to use money for identified school needs
- Some shared responsibilities (e.g. discipline/financial)
- That the principal and staff are on the BOT
- Very accountable
- Some schools have good cultural competency.
- The curriculum document, as it can be tailored to meet each school's needs.

Greater school autonomy:

- Greater self-governance under the BOT model
- It's a lot easier to get general school maintenance done, as schools no longer have to ask MOE first.
- Schools are able to choose their own professional development programmes rather than having it controlled by government officials. Schools can choose professional development opportunities that are relevant to what the school needs.
- Schools are empowered to choose their own staff.
- Tomorrow's Schools has allowed some schools/kura to develop in a way that is reflective of their community – but only if they had sufficient resources and support (either from the Ministry or from the community itself).
- In theory, schools/kura can make decisions for the best of their community (“although this would probably be the same under any system”).

Community input:

- Greater opportunity for community input and the structure enables the needs of the community to be addressed reasonably quickly.

What's not working well?

General:

- Greater community input has led to a culture of accountability and a lack of trust in teachers.
- There is significant variation in achievement across schools.
- There's too much red tape to get things done for new classrooms.
- Need to be cognisant of evidence-based research regarding the teaching of literacy – i.e. bridge the gap between research and practice.
- There are too many initiatives. Things get started, run for 2-3 years and then the funding stops and the initiatives fall over. Need to try having one idea and keep it going.

- It's not clear what the purpose of COLs is. It's very disruptive to schools and it's very difficult to do.
- Class sizes
- Young people are increasingly addicted to technological devices and having the 'bring-your-own-device' policy is encouraging their addiction. It's very distracting. Teachers are vulnerable to having students recording them using their phones.
- There is too much assessment and NCEA is very inconsistent.
- "Are ERO/MOE/NZQA/Education Council supporting kura to create better outcomes, or just the magnifiers of what's not working?"
- A low trust model
- It's not saving money as expected
- Lack of collegiality
- Senior management appraisal system
- COLs – What are they doing? Time frame?

Competition:

- Increased competition between schools.
- Increased competition has led to competition for knowledge staff and BOT members.
- Competition doesn't work – It has broken up the collaboration between schools.
- It set up competition – there's no reason to work together because a school or Kura may lose students, teachers or funding.
- Competition has had a negative effect on collegiality

Boards:

- Boards often lack an understanding of the teaching system and the demand that teachers face. We have enthusiastic amateurs in charge of our schools.
- 20% of schools have dysfunctional governance. A school can have a dysfunctional principals and BOT and there's no connection with the government. The MOE needs to have a connection with each school.
- The only way to challenge a BOT is via the ombudsman.
- BOTs and principals have too much power.
- There's a body of work mainly done by principals because of the lack of 'school' experience.
- Many board members don't have the base knowledge of the school system, jargon etc. They join the board, get upskilled and then leave.
- BOT remuneration is a token payment for the amount of work.
- The BOT sets the policies, but then the principals is accountable (sometimes personally, such as in the case of health and safety).
- BOTs often lack the necessary skills to run these large entities with huge budgets.
- People on BOTs often have their own agendas.
- BOTs – Who is on them? What skills do they have? The appointments process?
- RTLBs are divorced from the BOT – there's no connection between the two.

Funding:

- Inconsistent funding – "Over the years, funding has been up and down with Tomorrow's Schools". There needs to be a strong, robust formula to calculate what schools need.
- Funding for special needs support needs to be broader to include children with dyslexia and other specific learning needs.

- Some schools are falling apart because building maintenance is not fully funded. Why does a school have to raise money to contribute to a building that is required, such as a gym? Surely this should be fully funded by the government.
- Principals can re-direct funds and be secretive about what they're doing with the money. There needs to be full transparency.
- Independent/private schools shouldn't be funded by the taxpayer.
- Resource distribution within deciles/community pool of resources. Deciles do not reflect the community in all cases.
- The decile system isn't equitable for students

Education workforce:

- There's a need to look at the number of support staff that are in schools with some of "our most tricky students". There never seems to be enough time to share around with all the needs that are there.
- There's no professional development for teachers – "that's not good enough." There's also no management training for deputy principals and principals. There's no professional development for people rising through the ranks – the only qualification is the Masters of Education.

What could be changed?

General:

- Have less paperwork.
- Support schools in thinking through the appraisal system.
- Need robust professional development for teachers and leaders, and they need to have the time to engage with it.
- Develop a higher trust model.
- Have more skilled education representatives.
- Introduce an educationally based advisory service so that skills are more linked and they're easier to access.
- The business model of schools – removing competition would breed collaboration amongst schools. Bring back zones.
- More levelled exemplars to boost teacher capability/understanding.
- The whole ERO process/how it is done needs to be changed. For example, they need to provide feedback directly to the teachers themselves, rather than just passing it on to senior management.
- Increase funding so there are more resources (particularly to have equitable environments and better ICT) and more time to teach.

Support services:

- Have mental health workers in every school.
- Bring back agencies to deal with truancy and other issues (e.g. mental health etc.).
- The support system network (to deal with wider social and health issues) needs to be there, but it should be separate to schools.
- Have wraparound support. Have a base for nurses, WINZ, social workers, community constables, GPs etc.

Governance:

- Scrap BOTs and bring back a professional body to support schools.

- At times, the community does not provide individuals with the required skills to run an effective board. How can we create effective governance for schools when BOTs have to come from within the community?
- Have principals and a number (2/3) of staff representatives on the board.
- The skill level of BOTs should be equitable. Have an expert on the BOT.

School property:

- There needs to be a separate system to deal with school property.
- Remove administration (e.g. of NCEA fees) and property management to a central entity.
- Property should go back to a centrally funded model to free principals to focus on “education stuff”.

Teacher training:

- The teaching degree needs to be more robust so that graduates are better equipped and have more practical experience.
- Need to have a selection process into the programme.
- Tutor teachers – PCTs are so dependent on this as a good mentoring programme.

Other general comments

- Tomorrow’s Schools has had a huge impact on how schools are resourced. The formula for funding is outdated and restricting.
- Schools have a limited influence in respect to meeting every aspiration of every child. “Sometimes we lose sight of the individual and are driven by a class expectation to have every child achieve the same way. When there are so many ways to feel success, we have limited our student’s passions and potential.”
- Increased competition to have “bums on seats” is economically driven, not with our children in mind. “We lose sight of our true purpose and instead are restricted by what money and resourcing can provide.”
- In terms of school governance, BOTs have a tendency to cross into management and leadership issues, due to a lack of knowledge and understanding of the complexities involved in the day to day operations of a school. This approach is exceptionally counterproductive and invariably leading to other issues. Although the model had merits in its inception, in 2018 the current model has created a power imbalance which has ramifications for effectiveness. It does not fit the changing face of education in New Zealand. “The needs of our students absolutely outweigh the antiquated requirements of a historic approach.”
- Lack of transparency and networking between agencies and schools continues to be an issue and it forces schools to deal with societal issues. Schools are increasingly expected to take on more and more responsibility for the care and wellbeing of students. “At times, these issues become greater than our capacity and or capability,” in that the core business of a school is teaching and learning. When a school’s finite resources are exhausted, and expert agencies are sought to support a school, agencies provide a myriad of barriers for their involvement, which often means delay. “To top that off, until government agencies and community groups become synergised with schools, we will continue to work at the bottom of the cliff and sweep up the failings of this flawed model. Schools have become the conscience of New Zealand society.”

- “Our accountability is NCEA, within the hegemonic model of preparing students for further academic study.” However, there is increasing pressure to improve outcomes for students to be global and productive citizens too, and yet school success continues to be measure through the narrow lens of NCEA.
- Why do we have boards filled with people who have actually never taught and who have a limited understanding of schooling and curriculum? Should we be looking at alternative models where specialists are employed to serve on multiple boards? How does this model work elsewhere in the world? Where is governance working well and how is it working? What can NZ take from these models?
- “One of the best ways to meet the needs of every child is to allow teachers to teach.” Therefore, having less paperwork and less irrelevant meetings so that teachers can get on with their core business.
- There’s a disparity between the facilities at new schools compared to older ones (e.g. built in the 1960s/70s). “Parents are going to pick the nice new one.”
- Modern Learning Environments – “If you’re going to bring it in, do it in every school. Don’t drip feed.”

Staff from State Integrated Schools in the Auckland region

14 August 2018 | Facilitator: Cathy Wylie | No Secretariat

Nb the Tomorrow's Schools Review Secretariat was advised that the attendees at this session were

Primary – positive is the flexibility what we teach and how

Parental ownership is high, enrolling the family rather than enrolling students

In Auckland, local community proud of its schools

Board has vested interest in the school, real ownership. Mostly works, depends who is on it.

Where the model isn't working, where boards aren't effective, could you have more flexibility, an opt in model to school board, wouldn't want to kill it where it is working. Could have professional boards to assist schools in trouble. Boards control staffing now, big risk if it meant regional MoE had more say.

Principal appointments – every board should use an advisor – retired or current principal from outside the region, so terrible decisions aren't ever made. Need someone who has an overview of the school and the issues that impact on the school. Boards can rush decision, or say 'x will do' – and jeopardise the school for the next 10 years.

Some roving leadership group?

Q relationship with board – if employed by board, not completely independent.

Get a WoF before you become a principal – in old days the grading system had some of that – not that want to go back to that! Aspiring principals was good.

Only job board should so is select principal. The other jobs – we already do.

MoE is dysfunctional. – I've been a principal for 30 years, 1 MoE adviser spoke to me in that time – a network manager 3 years later get email saying he's off, and thanks for the great talks – well there weren't any.

MoE people keep changing, there's a disconnect.

You have to go to 3 different websites – NZQA, MoE, ERO to clarify what you should do.

Ministry answers to the Minister, not schools. Don't ask or care about the impact for schools.

(principal who had spent a few years with Ministry) – the quality of people they can attract is not good enough – salary levels, all Acting, don't feel valued, it was a depressing workplace. Good if could second principals or DPs – often the Ministry people don't know a lot of stuff.

Trying to find out what you're eligible for in \$, building – couldn't find anyone at MoE to advise, rang 3-4 principals and got information from them instead. Ministry should come to you first.

People they assign to you – they cant sign things off – so it has to go to the top for sign off.

Some have been brilliant, but exception.

Need something like inspectorate, use people with lots of knowledge and experience, and have more throughput.

Potential benefit for FTP – current programme depends on mentor availability. Know one FTP whose mentor is so busy running own school they have never met – so she's left to work things out herself.

Integrated schools – good that decision on enrolment remains with the principal.

ERO is a very adversarial model. Schools that perform very well, they blow up minor things. Example – high suspension rate one year because of drug bust – they looked just at numbers rather than situation.

Contract a principal from outside the region to sit on the review team.

If they valued principals as professionals, there would be more emphasis on self-review.

ERO says they are not really doing an inspection. And they could do it in their office – they just focus on the paperwork. ERO review quality in terms of how much you can photocopy for them.

Some reviewers have been sacked as principals.. so what credibility do they have?

Lack of clarity about what they are auditing – is it exam results, building good men, keeping kids off the streets – attendance rates, retention rates, results – has to be meaningful measures.

Some of the worst schools have got 5 year reviews, and their results are shocking.

5 year reviews – can be big bone of contention between schools; and the 1-year bootcamp model – need different support.

One principal talked of his low decile school getting a 4-5 year review return, school not far away getting a 1-year – but he did not get an increase in numbers – racism... the parents continued to turn away to the whiter school of poorer quality.

Better to have an annual audit, scaled down. Ministry should be across your school anyway, come in with ERO.

Current ERO approach is not conducive to improving practice. Compare with appraisal, working with good goal setting, then 'have you done what you said you were going to do' – work with mentor, that model should apply to all schools. Otherwise won't get schools out of the compliance loop. And this way you work on things early on, so things don't mount up and become a big avalanche.

ERO could become advisory – their reports are so bland now, they don't set up a plan with you. Verbal reports can be good, depending on the review team, if someone has an axe to grind.

Board important to provide the extras, the cocurricular programme that really pays off in educational outcomes – music, sports, cultural, the reason why some kids come to school, stay engaged. In secondary schools takes \$ and to find teachers to coach – or bring in coaches. Effective boards drive that big time. If centralized, that would collapse.

Roman Catholic church a good example of centralized decisionmaking – lacks the nimbleness, ability to change quickly. If centralized to Ministry, everyone would be put in the same box.

Need to have stability through government changes, rather than 360 degrees turn. Longer term direction more helpful.

Boards:

Hard to attract people onto boards in low decile schools. \$ needs to be increased to get really good people. Hard if you are working 2 shifts - \$55 is not enough to make it worthwhile for you to give up a night shift.

Two main reasons people come on boards – to sort out the principal (then they realise they can't), or genuinely want to help the school. Boards have too much say – time spent on the colour of the umbrellas, or should something cost \$6 rather than \$8. Have no idea of governance.

Student rep is token - wrong token, should be focusing on developing student leadership. Important to hear students, but this role is not effective, and sometimes difficult.

Biggest problem is that board members aren't skilled enough, haven't got the right expertise, very few have worked in schools – so the principal is the lynchpin of everything. It's never the quality of a board that defines the quality of a school.

Principals are not just senior teachers as MoE and PPTA seem to think.

Element of distrust in system.. why is this review happening? Being done to put everyone in a box? All competition is not bad, put up as strawman?

NZQA shares the data and allows creation of league tables.

Issue of the rugby schools stealing talent..

Every school competes on results ... but schools are not equitably resourced. Got to have level playing field.

Big risk of decile segregation – in ideal world would go to local school. Maybe have enrolment zones where have to have minimum of 15% Māori students?

In West – 5 year ERO reviews, good exam results, yet white flight to city – school with 95% Māori, Pākehā won't go there – it's institutionalized racism.

Or see 'bright flight' within Māori.

If you go to mandatory zoning, more will go to private schools.

Among Catholic schools there is a collegial understanding, won't take students who would have to drive past another Catholic school to get to your school. Relies on the principal.

Ideal to have a sense of the common good.

Maybe have a governance model of one board for the integrated schools of an area, and think about specialisms – eg music, performing arts, science.

Change structures – have senior secondary, kids changing at year 11 after year 7-10 junior college, instead of year 9

Feel MLEs are being foisted on schools – they have safeguard of their proprietor – but parents vote with feet. 2 in this area (Ponsonby) staying as are, not growing their roll, have wait lists.

Central CoL some are in is unfolding. 12 RC schools – has potential but too many rules around the CoLs.

Concept terrific. Good to have dialogue, links with colleges to get consistency of data, OTJs, transition children, shared PLD.

Good if can have homegrown, from bottom up.

Almost need education to be politics free. Need certainty of the direction, that it won't change in 3 years.

Engagements with support staff

Notes from Tomorrow's Schools review regional
engagements **July to September 2018**

NZEI Support Staff Meeting

3.30 – 5.00pm, Tuesday 14th August 2018

Tomorrow's Schools Taskforce Member: John O'Neill

Location: NZEI Office, 4 Bond Street, Grey Lynn, Auckland

Attendees:

Summary

- Support staff roles are low-paid, with low job security and minimal (if any) opportunities for formal training and development. Support staff would welcome the opportunity for higher wage rates, more secure employment conditions and the chance to engage in professional development opportunities like teachers do.
- Despite the role that they play in promoting literacy (and being a safe place for some students), library resources are continuing being cut, making it difficult to provide adequate library services for students.
- Migrant teachers should be given a proper induction process, so they're familiar with Maori and Pacific culture and can pronounce Maori names and places.
- Many common issues around learning support were cited – including difficulty securing funding, shortages of specialists such as speech language therapists and that the 20 week RTLB period was often insufficient to address the complex needs of the student.

Detailed notes

- Libraries in schools are disappearing, especially in primary schools. School librarian roles are being disestablished (especially to free up money to fund more teacher aides) and then library resources aren't properly cared for – and then we wonder why students are struggling with literacy? Often, librarians are the ones engaging with students' literacy outside the classroom.
- An anecdote was given of an 11 year old who was using a laptop in the library, where the librarian noticed that she was struggling a lot with using the mouse which was preventing her from being able to properly use the laptop. The librarian noticed the student was left-handed and that she was clearly struggling to do her work because the mouse was positioned to the right. She taught the student that mouse could be positioned on the other side of the laptop and showed her how to do this – and, after this, she was able to do her computer work with much greater speed and accuracy. Although she was 11 years old, this was the first time anyone had told her she could reposition the mouse – and it was the librarian (rather than the teacher).
- Library resources keep getting cut. Schools are trying to encourage students to read but there's just nothing to support that. Funding is limited. You need someone to be staffing the library all the time, but you just can't. It's just not working. There are a lot of children with social issues and the library can be a safe place for them to go. But some schools can't keep it open all the time because they don't have the people to staff it.
- If there's a trained, qualified librarian and funding to get the right resources, then students at that school will achieve more, even at a low decile school.
- Library funding is limited and requires someone to coordinate it. This requires the school to have the time to monitor and administer it.
- A lot of schools have a BYOD (bring your own device) and a lot of learning on the computer. Because of all this screen time in the classroom, many students don't like to read on their devices because they do it all day, so they want to read a book in hard copy.

- Reading in a library is a great sharing activity. Chromebooks are great for the classroom, but it's still great to have teachers taking kids to the library to read to them.
- Teachers have to do budget applications just to get books for the library. Sometimes books are donated to the school, but they're often "rubbish" and can't be used. Sometimes you can get community grants, but they're just for buying books – not for staffing expenses.
- School libraries should have a specialist librarian. Schools also need other specialist teachers in topics such as Te Reo, music etc.
- Technology capability is hit and miss. When doing ITE, you have to specifically opt in to be taught this in teacher training.
- School principals are often recruiting from overseas. An example was given of a school where the principal goes to the UK every year to recruit teachers. They're fine teachers, but they're not given enough training in Te Reo – even just enough to be able to pronounce Maori names. What is being done for teachers coming in from overseas to assimilate them into our society? Migrant teachers get an induction, but it's not clear how much of it relates to New Zealand life etc. This is going to become even more of an issue in future. Give migrant teachers basic Maori and Pacific language training. It's part of coming to New Zealand. They should also be taught about etiquette for engaging with Maori and Pacifica families. For some people coming into New Zealand, they have no idea.
- The accents of migrant teachers can also be a problem. With some accents, our students can't hear it or pick up on it, even if the teachers have the knowledge.
- In some schools, teachers get an induction program when they join the school, but the support staff don't. There's no equity in that. An example was given of a SENCO who developed an induction programme for teaching assistants, but normally it's just 'learning by doing' and learning from each other. Induction programmes vary from school to school, which comes back to the idea of support staff being a very ad hoc role. Support staff are typically hired on short, fixed-term contracts as schools don't know if they'll have the funding for them the next year.
- There's no training or handover for support staff. Support staff have a nice sense of community amongst themselves – they have their own bubble, but no one else ever tells them anything. Is having low paid, transient support staff with precarious employment positions best for our children?
- There's not much available in terms of courses for teacher aides. When they exist, it often has to be done in their own time (and at their own expense) – and often it means nothing in terms of extra pay.
- There's no equity. There's no professional development funding for teacher aides like there is for teachers. There's no one to release support staff so they can't get release time.
- Teacher aides know that when they're sick and can't come to school, someone is going to be suffering/have a bad day at school.
- Once you hit the top of the scale, there's no more room for further pay. Even if you've got all that extra experience after decades in the role, there's no recognition for that. Experienced senior support staff can be getting the same pay as less experienced, new staff.
- There's a mentality of telling support staff "You're lovely...you're angels....we couldn't do it without you" – but you're not paid well.
- Administrative/support staff do a lot of functions that are outside their job description. There's huge variation in what a job description for the teacher aide role looks like.
- Support staff don't have a formal appraisal system. There may be an informal 'tick box' exercise at the end of the year with no real weight to it, but there's no real feedback. Teachers have one, but support staff don't.

- There's no respect for support staff. It's not a question of values, it's just that schools don't think that support staff want anything more or want to do training etc. Support staff are held to the same professional standards in terms of their language, dress etc., but they're not treated as equals.
- Support staff want to help students learn, just like teachers. They're passionate about what they do, and love what they do. But there are sacrifices involved in terms of money.
- Librarians and science technicians have a network/organisation, but they do it for themselves and their involvement is often in their own time. There's no workforce planning by the government for these types of roles either.
- In some cases, librarians get some funding from the schools to attend conferences etc., but sometimes they fund it themselves. Teacher aides get nothing.
- There's no provision in Communities of Learning for teacher aides. They simply don't exist in the COL system. There's no mention of the people who support those who learning needs. If they're putting money into COLs, why not involve support staff? Why not use it as a way to coordinate training for teacher aides? Train up teacher aides so they can build up their skills and go with the child through the school system as they progress to intermediate etc. There needs to be a recognised position in COLs for teacher aides.
- Provide funding and a permanent role for teacher aides. The funding of teacher aides should sit outside of the school. Teacher aide funding should be based on need, not just on how much the school can afford.
- There are more children at school these days with behavioural and learning support needs. Funding to support these students is very hard to get and its never full-time coverage – not even for ORS children, so teachers are left struggling for part of the day. And some children get nothing.
- Previously, schools had very close relationships with RTLBs, but this has been lost in the various restructures. Currently, RTLBs have only 20 weeks to work with the school and child. They meet the families, tick the boxes, provide a couple of recommendations (which are often things that the teacher has already done) which very rarely actually help, and then 20 weeks is up. They pass on the "bundle of goodies" and leave. It's the same with speech language therapy. You only get 20 weeks and then the child is supposedly fixed and you've got to reapply.
- It can take a very long time to get access to the Ministry's support/funding for severe and challenging behaviour. Schools have to wait months to get funding, even in cases of major violence. An example was given of a school that had to wait eight months to get support to deal with a very violent child at the school, because the Ministry was constrained by funding/staffing cap.
- Support for students with learning support/behavioural needs should be centrally funded and based on the role size and the level of need of the students at that school.
- Hong Kong has a learning assistant in every classroom up to about Year 3 and it's a big help. The first thing many teachers want is another adult in the class, especially when class sizes are so big – particularly in modern learning environments. It's very difficult to safely conduct a practical lesson in science with 32 students and just one teacher – it is safety risk, particularly when using Bunsen burners etc.
- There needs to be an opportunity for support staff to have a secure tenure. It would also be good for support staff to have training during the holidays, so then they could get paid during the holidays. When teachers are having teacher only days, why can't teacher aides get professional development at the same time?
- Include teacher aides in the planning at the beginning of the year. Get together with the teacher aides and let them be a part of syndicate planning etc. Often, teacher aides aren't told what the plan is until

they're into the term. Letting teacher aides be part of the planning system would help them feel valued and feel like they're part of what they're doing.

- Some schools are now employing teacher aides that have university degrees, but they're not necessarily better than others.
- Teacher aides need to have a mentor. It's important that new teacher aides can learn from experienced teacher aides who've 'been there.' There are some pockets of supportive practice – but this isn't widespread.
- The starting rate for support staff is minimum wage and only progresses to just over \$20 per hour. Even people without degrees can earn more than that in other jobs without any experience.
- Support staff get small pay rises than teachers do – and they got 0% for several years for a while.
- The Ministry conducted surveys of teacher aides/support staff and has been quite surprised by the information that's come in through these support staff interviews and what people in these roles actually do.
- Support staff don't get paid during the holidays. When holiday pay is paid in a lump sum, it's taxed at a much higher rate. There needs to be something done about that in the tax system. When you annualise your pay, it ends up being so low each fortnight that it's demoralising. But if you don't do that, you get paid in the first week of December and don't get paid until mid-February. It would be good to have other ways of spreading it.
- In the holidays, support staff often have to take a second or third job, but sometimes they have to get assistance.
- In rare cases, some support staff are able to work for part of the holidays. In some cases, they're given discretion over some weeks, but this is rare. The working time during the holidays is because they're catching up on the tasks that they are not able to get done during the limited hours they get to work during the term time. Others aren't so lucky – they just have to catch up during the weekend.
- Often the role of a teacher aide is reactive, especially in primary school. You can't plan for this – thing just come up. By the time the end of the week comes, you haven't had the time to get to everything, so there's catch-up in the evenings and weekends.
- It's great being flexible, but at the other end of the scale, it's hard to work with.
- Teachers get release time, but support staff don't. There's a fanciful idea that teachers do all the planning and just tell support staff what to do, but that's not what happens in practice.
- Teacher aides have skills they've picked up that they aren't paid extra for or that aren't necessarily formally recognised.
- Teacher aides often have to be part of meetings after hours which they're not paid for (such as being part of the meetings with MOE support staff). Being at these meetings is crucial to be able to support the child, but the TAs aren't compensated for this. Often TAs know the most about how that child gets on at school, but their input isn't always valued.
- There needs to be structured professional development that grows on itself so we have trained teacher aides.
- There needs to be a complete review of funding for children with learning support and behavioural needs. There's a lot of children who need support who miss out. The threshold seems to be getting higher and there's a lot of demand. An example was given of being denied an interim response request in July, because the money had already run out.

- An example a school with 750 students, but no full-time SENCO, even though the part-time SENCO is very busy. SENCOs need to be trained for the role. They may be great, but it doesn't come with a manual. There used to be a 10 week SENCO meeting/training at Massey, but there's no government provision of training for SENCOs, or any sort of formal network. They're on their own, doing the best they can. This forces SENCOs to prioritise only very highest needs/worst cases.
- There are shortages for occupational therapists, speech language therapists, educational psychologists etc. and sometimes you have to wait over a year just for the provision of basic special accommodations at school. The wheels turn so slowly and it's tiring having to follow up all the time. Also, the regional OTs, speech language therapist etc. are overworked – they should have smaller territories. The territories stay the same, but the population has gone way up, especially in the Auckland region.
- The earlier the intervention, the better the outcome, but the gap is getting wider. Students are having to wait longer and longer to access help. Primary school is when “if it's going to happen is it's ever going to happen.”
- When a child move school, the relevant information that a teacher needs isn't transferred with them. There needs to be a proper way to pass this one so that it's not lost. If teacher aides were paid during the holidays, they could take care of this transition. They could also help with school transition visits which are important for a smooth transition from ECE to primary school, especially for anxious children.
- It would be nice if teacher aides could poach some knowledge from primary and secondary teachers. That's where the case for having teacher aides involved in COLs comes in – there could be a lot of learning.
- It would also be good if teacher aides could access ECE resources. For example, you can have a student with a chronological age of 8 at a primary school who is functioning at the level of a two year old – It would be great to be able to access ECE resources in cases like these.
- Being a teacher aide is a lonely job. You don't have time to communication with other teacher aides or teachers. Teacher aides don't have a chance to engage with others going through the same experience.
- What does early intervention look like? It's rare that you get to see it in practice. Even if the ECE provider has been doing some early intervention work with the child, you don't actually see it – you just get the file, if you're lucky.
- Even when a student manages to get access to support for a certain thing and then they resolve that particular issue, they lose their funding, even if they still have other additional needs.
- [REDACTED] has a unique governance model which has a separate Maori BOT (in addition to the standard BOT).

Christchurch Support Staff meeting

- 5.00 – 6.30pm 31 July 2018
- [Tomorrow's Schools Taskforce Member: Bali Haque](#)
- [Location: Papanui High School](#)

Attendees: 10 support staff

BH – Introduction and scope

What needs to change to make your jobs easier and to help schools deliver for students? How would you redesign the system?

- Central funding for support staff – I hate competing against loo paper – when budget is tough – principal takes hours from support staff to pay for other things.
- There are two roles in a school – the business side and the curriculum side – too much teaching staff time is used for business tasks – when you hear there is a shortage of teachers – teachers come out of classrooms – struggling to find backfill. It is really important to have a support staff representative on the senior leadership team.
- Admin side and boots on ground (teacher aides) – different challenges.
- Snr admin staff – we don't have a teaching degree and there is a culture that we cannot do it – we are not qualified. There is a snob factor, I can look after something, but there is a snr manager looking over my shoulder. My job to pass info down to support staff, and to ensure they are looked after – it is a struggle. There are jobs in school we are could do, doing the relief, does that have to be done by a teacher.
- Teachers don't need to do certain things – admin tasks.
- Novopay – we do the staffing – varies and is dependent on school size – no financial benefit from doing it – relief and timetabling – constantly advertising
- It's a cultural thing in schools
- Relief teachers are just babysitting – I could be used to provide relief – but it is tied into legal issues – but I know the kids.

BH – would you put into the system a micro credential – so you could do relieving etc...

- It might backfire, we cost less, and the legal ramifications.. Class numbers and have to be under a registered teacher.

BH – shortage of teachers – people to support teachers in a professional way

- I work in the withdrawal room. It is the last port of call before being kicked out – they are there for punishment or safety. I provide all my own resourcing, the students never come with work. I create my own resourcing and I buy my own things – these are kids who don't get along with a teacher – I get the kids they can't deal with – and I get paid terribly – I want the pay and the respect – the culture in schools is poor
- Part is with the senior leadership team – I listen to their things – but they walk out while I am talking in meetings – not interested in anything to do with support staff.

- Teachers stand and wait to give uniform passes – teachers’ aides could do this. Teachers’ aides do a lot of mediation – because we take the time to know the kids. Respect from other teachers – they won’t listen because we are only admin – but we know how it works and we can see things and we’d like to be able to do more.
- The para-professional idea – can do the stuff that would reduce teachers workload and it might be cheaper
- Teacher aides get the students who are really struggling – the too hard students – you create the programme – you create the resources – some teachers are good, some are not. On a separate programme – that teacher aide teaches the same topic, kid is included in topic.

BH – So getting teachers to use support person properly...

- There is no standard answer to this is what a teachers aid does – sometimes I took class and the teacher worked one on one – let the teacher go – I can do the roll etc... we could be utilised better.
- Definitely a lack of understand at secondary school – with principals – things have to change – prof working prog – how can we develop teachers to understand that teacher’s aides have their own standards
- Teachers need to understand it is there job to manage behaviour not the teacher aides. Some cannot control class – our skill set – we are the relationship builders – we are with these kids for a larger proportion of the week. When the teacher is being horrid – we are the safe person – the teacher can see you as a threat.

BH – how is ORS funding working?

- ORS funding not always with the one student – I work in the LS department (behavioural) – students bring their teacher aide with them.
- It is run very differently in each school
- Different labels – so people everywhere understand – board tops up funding – because not enough money from Ministry – ORS doesn’t cover our hourly rate. You have teachers trying to run financial stuff.

BH – So it is a win win if support staff are doing more. What about the idea that every school should have a business manager – how does that work in primary?

- Principal is a manager not a teacher – 15 classrooms – smaller schools have more admin tasks. I feel like a secretary I have to fix everything – everybody goes to X. We provide a lot of support. We check everything in the office.
- I’m the Office Manager – I do first aid, reception, roll, absentees - it quicker to do it yourself, I fix the toilets etc..
- Business manager in every school – snr leadership team – without voice – nobody there for them. I get pushed down in meetings, I walk out in tears.
- They expect us to work unpaid – whanau meetings and an hour meeting each week. We got a new boss who had heart failure that we were not getting paid – you have to protect the people at the bottom
- Appraisals – I’ve had one since 2006. Most have it every year – however I can’t be honest because I’m scared of losing my job – I feel vulnerable about hours – now it has changed a week before I came back – and at end of year you are without a job.

- Status – would a teacher deal with that vulnerability – well, some teachers are on fixed term. Principals get the notice in October – so you should know if have hours.
- Teacher aides paid term time only – over turned this year – get paid for a whole year – Principals say it is your union that has to fight – but our senior leaders should fight for us – they don't know how tough it is – there attitude needs to change.
- It comes down to job security and respect – attitude – most important – status in the workplace and feeling respected. A teacher said to me “you're nothing but a glorified parent help”.
- This year has highlighted – you can't just hire anybody – the job is too hard – we hired a nurse, she quit, she says it is too hard
- Need a minimum qualification for teacher aide
- I have no qualification – but I have had 3 senior leaders who have left me to deal with the child – but I have the skills and know what to do – just having qualifications doesn't mean you are any better
- Teacher aides who have been teachers or ece have been the worst at their job – life skills that is what you need – I have had kids, I'm realistic – qualifications are great but... Teachers aides should be able to get them if they wish – but I don't think I need one.
- We had a young male TA who was useless – but they take care of him to because they need male numbers.
- Support staff need to be recorded – quality assurance across the country – professionalism
- first aide, blood, sick – teachers won't do it – fronting parent conversations...
- vulnerability – systems and structures – we are so under staffed – mentoring, induction, PLD. There was family violence training at the school and we were not included – we are the ones who pick up on it – at a staff meeting for wellbeing, we didn't get to go because they don't want to pay us – it is disheartening.
- job security and central funding
- another layer of para-professionals
- teacher aides working for years you have the curriculum knowledge – kids come first
- Innovative learning environments – para-professional role, we have a TA per area. It has taken me 2 terms to feel part of the team, but the 3 teachers I work with are brilliant. This year – I was given a beautiful card for my birthday for the first time in many years. 75/80 kids down our end – the kids come to me.