

The appalling condition of our State Education system

And...



How to be World Leading in just 19 Years

While improving significantly for every
cohort between now and then.

Time for Significant Change

Written by Alwyn Poole and Contributors

Alwyn Poole | Innovative Education Consultants | innovativeeducation.co.nz

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“

I challenge anyone to pick a better indicator today where the economy is going to be in thirty years than the education outcomes of the past and next decade. Education today defines the economy in thirty years. The school kids of today are the business owners and leaders of tomorrow. We are in trouble if you look at attendance and achievement.”

Cameron Bagrie

“

Congratulations Iddo on your twelfth birthday ... Succeed and excel in all you do. Just as father offers me advice, let me suggest something to you – learning is important above all else. The desire to study and acquire knowledge, to solve problems, to read and understand – these are the things that make a man great. At the same time you have to get along with the society in which you live – with your friends and most of all your mother and father. Be a good son and don't upset them.”

Yoni Netanyahu

“



They told me you missed school today
So what I suggest you just throw them all away
The handbags and the gladrags
That your poor old granddad
Had to sweat to buy.

**(Manfred Mann
via Rod Stewart)**



THE PURPOSE OF EDUCATION

Written by Martin Luther King. Jr.

It seems to me that education has a two-fold function to perform in the life of man and in society: the one is utility and the other is culture. Education must enable a man to become more efficient, to achieve with increasing facility the legitimate goals of his life.

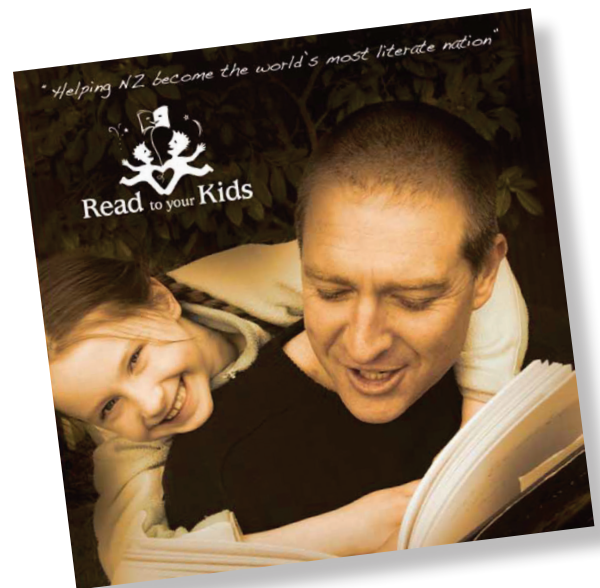
Education must also train one for quick, resolute and effective thinking. To think incisively and to think for one's self is very difficult. We are prone to let our mental life become invaded by legions of half truths, prejudices, and propaganda.

At this point, I often wonder whether or not education is fulfilling its purpose.

A great majority of the so-called educated people do not think logically and scientifically. Even the press, the classroom, the platform, and the pulpit in many instances do not give us objective and unbiased truths.

To save man from the morass of propaganda, in my opinion, is one of the chief aims of education. Education must enable one to sift and weigh evidence, to discern the true from the false, the real from the unreal, and the facts from the fiction.

The function of education, therefore, is to teach one to think intensively and to think critically. But education which stops with efficiency may prove the greatest menace to society. The most dangerous criminal may be the man gifted with reason, but with no morals.



I HAVE THE AUDACITY TO BELIEVE THAT PEOPLE EVERYWHERE CAN HAVE THREE MEALS A DAY FOR THEIR BODIES, EDUCATION AND CULTURE FOR THEIR MINDS, AND DIGNITY, EQUALITY, AND FREEDOM FOR THEIR SPIRITS.

MARTIN LUTHER KING. JR.

A FEW STATS FOR THE NZ SECONDARY SCHOOL SYSTEM

Highest v Lowest 20 Schools: UE for Leavers

Names	EQI	Roll	2021 %
Diocesan School For Girls	350	1617	96.6
Woodford House	396	354	96.2
Auckland International College	350	47	96
Rangi Ruru Girls' School	350	689	95.4
Samuel Marsden Collegiate School	350	451	95.1
Baradene College	372	1360	94.5
Chilton Saint James School	350	291	94.3
St Oran's College	378	491	94
St Cuthbert's College (Epsom)	350	1481	93.9
King's College	350	1163	93.7
ACG Strathallan	350	990	92.6
Springbank School	350	207	92.3
Iona College	394	315	91.1
Saint Kentigern College	350	2250	89.9
St Peter's College (Epsom)	386	1270	89.9
Columba College	390	582	89.4
Marist College	397	752	89.4
Carmel College	386	993	89.3
St Margaret's College	350	812	89
Hutt International Boys' School	365	472	88.9
Queen Elizabeth College	553	318	4.7
Huntly College	549	204	4.4
Piopio College	507	136	3.7
Murupara Area School	557	193	3.2
Haeata Community Campus	546	597	2.9
Flaxmere College	564	291	2.2
Northland College	554	317	1.7
Taumarunui High School	525	289	1.4
Whanganui City College	551	297	1.4
Raphael House Rudolf Steiner	402	311	0
Taranaki Diocesan School for Girls	462	112	0
Cheviot Area School	463	183	0
Chanel College	467	230	0
Murchison Area School	478	182	0
Rai Valley Area School	484	108	0
Coromandel Area School	504	238	0
Te Wharekura o Ruatoki	524	207	0
Opononi Area School	532	130	0
Broadwood Area School	555	100	0
Mangakahia Area School	559	93	0

13%

OF YOUTH NZ WIDE LEAVE SCHOOL WITH NO L1 NCEA.

13,200 HOURS FUNDED

– FOR NOTHING.

IT IS 33% OF MAORI MALES IN SOUTH AUCKLAND.



EARNING DIFFERENTIALS

Level 2 grads soon earn 2x no qual.

UE grads soon earn 1.25 x L2

Trade quals earn 1.15 x L2

Degree earns 1.2 x UE – it takes about 12 years to catch up due to extra years study:

“Students recognise that earning a degree creates great benefits for them and their families, and that’s why they are willing to take on an average of \$15,000 debt as they know they’ll earn \$1.3-\$4 million more over their working lives than a non-graduate,” says Chris Whelan, Executive Director of Universities New Zealand.

CONSEQUENCES TO INDIVIDUALS WITH NO QUALIFICATIONS?

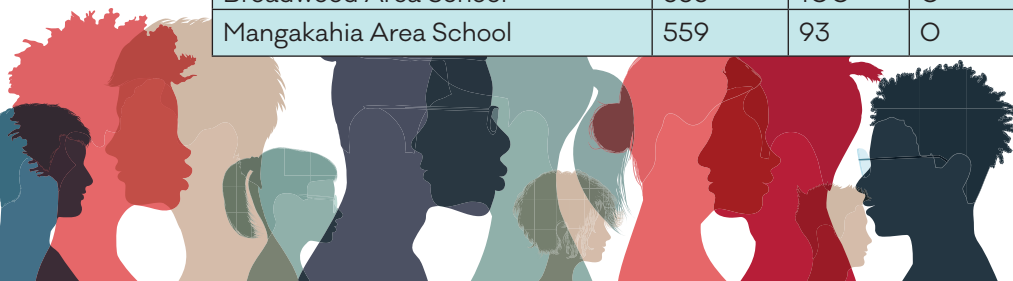
Rent a good home?

Save to buy a home?

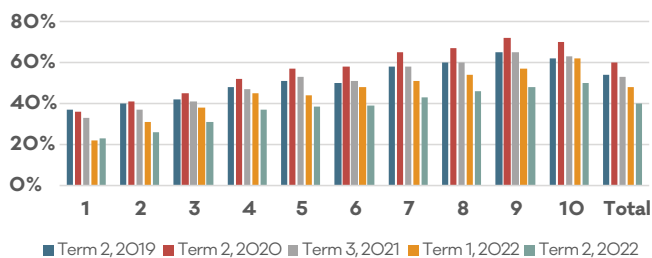
Take an OE?

Provide for a family?

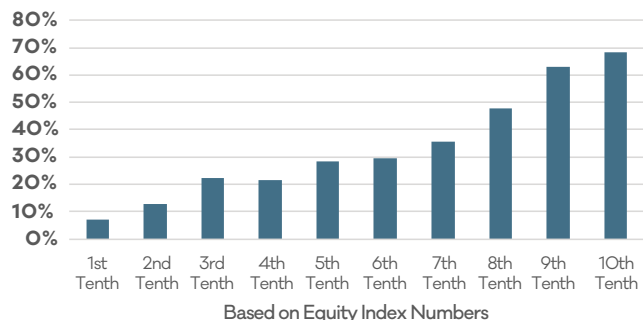
Benefits can – to a point – fill a stomach. Can they fill a mind and a spirit?



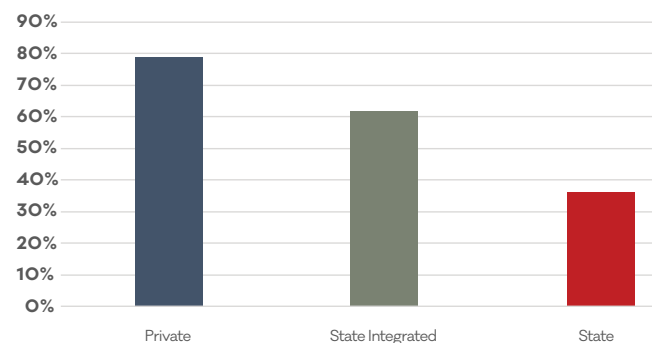
NZ School Attendance by Decile



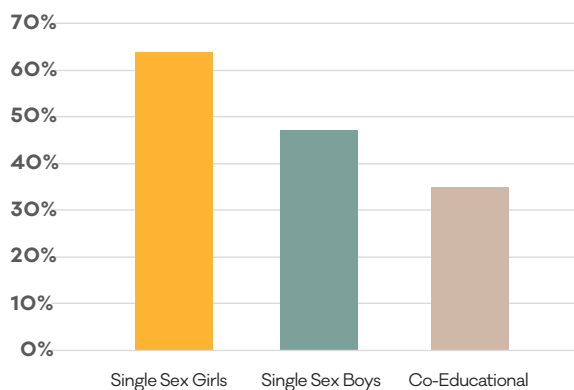
Transition to Degree Level Study 2020



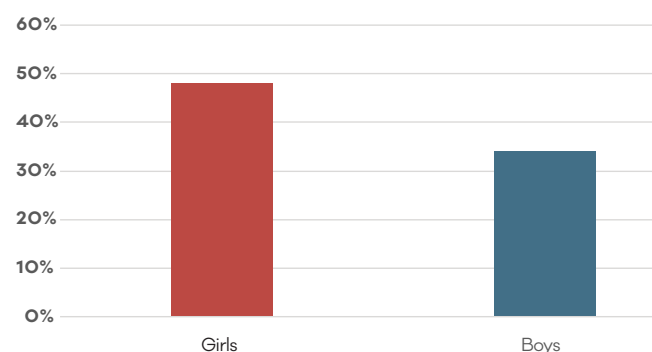
UE for Leavers by School Governance



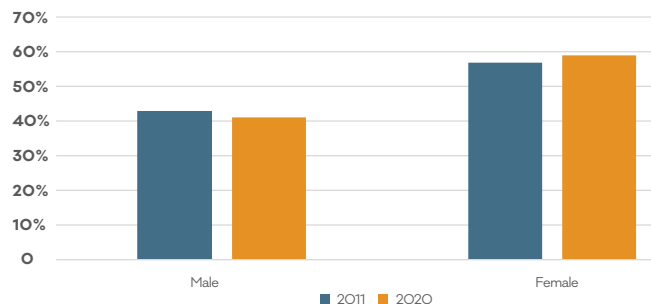
UE for Leavers by School Type



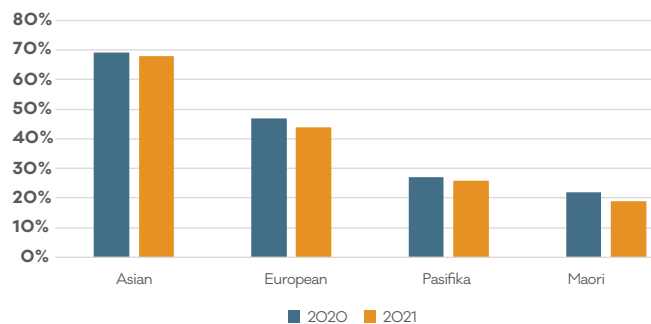
UE for Leavers by Gender 2021



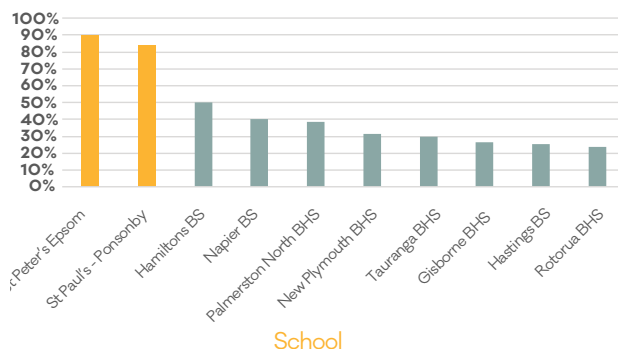
University Study by Gender



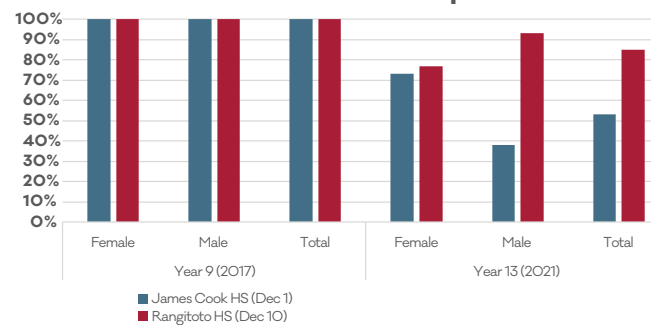
UE for Leavers by Ethnicity



UE for Leavers (2021) Saints vs Super 8



School Retention to 17 Compared



NZ Ministry of Education Purpose Statement:

“WE SHAPE AN EDUCATION SYSTEM THAT DELIVERS EQUITABLE AND EXCELLENT OUTCOMES.”

Equivalent to:

“I AM ACTUALLY A 6’10” EXCELLENT BASKETBALL PLAYER CALLED LE BRON JAMES.” Alwyn Poole

For detailed statistics on the NZ Secondary School system email: alwyn.poole@gmail.com

FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC - VIA LINKEDIN, ETC

ps - This is an accurate summary of the hundreds of submissions people wrote to me.

“

It is **simply intolerable** that any child can leave school after 13 years of compulsory education without being able to read English, write or perform basic numeracy skills – regardless of their family backgrounds, their equity rankings, their location or their ethnicity. There is simply no excuse and whoever is responsible in the system for the present outcomes should be accountable to taxpayers. It is also intolerable that good teachers are paid the same as bad and that long service is rewarded over quality. The best should be paid the most (and celebrated) and the worst should leave.

“

It **angers me** when I hear that schools are now having to feed their students breakfast and in some cases lunch as well because the parents “can’t afford to feed their kids.”

“

My daughter left high school teaching after 5 years. The school begged her to stay, on any part/ full time basis - but she just wanted out, in spite of enjoying the contact with pupils, and having a lot of success. The **bureaucracy was just too much.**

“

If the changes to the national curriculum continue in their current form, I think it highly likely that parents who can afford it will opt to send their children to schools providing a qualification such as Cambridge, resulting in a two-tier education system. **I do not see this outcome as a good thing.**

“

Te Pukenga started with big ideas now it is **being driven on money.** One example is sticking with Open Polytech as their distance provider. They have terrible completion rates and use a system they built themselves which, having used it as a student, is a dog.

By the time she was 6, my girl, who had been desperate to start school, was **deeply depressed and refusing to attend school.** The school was clear that it was all my fault for expecting too much from her and being a single mother. I took her to an educational psychologist who said she was bright and bored and needed to go up at least one year at school and attend One Day School.

“

My children went to Primary School in Wellington (decile 10) and the low quality of the teachers was made worse by the **lack of management** by the Principal. Maths was taught ad-hoc and the students were allowed to choose to ‘attend tutorials’ or not. The alternative was if they thought they knew the topic they were allowed to go on their device! How does a child know what they don’t know and secondly, surely an ipad is far more appealing than sitting and listening to a teacher.

“

I have over twenty years of experience in HR, so I have seen first-hand the results of **education decline** in the quality of “talent” coming through to large New Zealand employers from our declining education system.

“

I have taught for nearly 35 years much of it in rural schools with mixed age classes. My grandchildren have started their school lives and am **appalled at what I see.** They are properly fed, have regular bedtimes, very little screen time and good boundaries. They’re from a home rich in books/reading. Last year the oldest had only two readers sent home! He is now an independent reader and I’m satisfied that he is reading at the level I’d expect. At school he is not being monitored for comprehension or being taught. His story writing is poor as is his maths and handwriting. Junior school age kids need to be immersed in oral language, written language, reading, printing and maths. Changes are needed and very soon for we are short-changing our kids.

“

The main unions (NZEI and PPTA) are a menace, **filled with people who are seriously divorced from reality.** Most teachers do not work enormous hours each week, 40 hours a week is rare, it’s usually less than that, and while some do indeed work long hours they are not typical.

”



FROM SOME INVOLVED IN THE SECTOR

ps - I have abbreviated some but think that I have stayed true to their intent.

EXCELLENCE AND EQUITY

JOHN HATTIE (Legend in the field of education research. NZ's most undervalued "resource.")

- a. Recognising teacher expertise and structuring a career path for the best to stay in the classroom (a as per the NSEW initiative underway)
- b. Refocusing the concept of excellence towards EVERY child no matter where they start and where they come from, deserves at least a year's growth for a year's input
- c. Reinvigorate asTTle to help a) focus on growth to achievement (re informing about b) above), b) making it more accessible using modern tech, c) enabling parents access (it is already built in but rarely turned on) and more....
- d. ERO must focus on progress to achievement and not either or – I would bring back National Standards but this time with better resources to enable to evidence And ERO to reward schools with 4 – 5 year return visits if successful
- e. Form a coalition of schools that shine – and make this group hard to get into – I would have a group for decile 1-3, 4-7 and 8-10 and the principals learn to create policy, inform policy, and have more ground up policy development (or whatever replaced deciles to get schools with similar profiles of inputs).

LESS TINKERING – MORE ACTION!

DEBRA MASTERS (Senior Education Consultant at MastersED)

I don't see it as 'turning NZ schools around' as per your title. I see it as 'turning NZs whole education system around' - an even bigger challenge but maybe an easier one if we are prepared to be really bold.

We need to stop 'tinkering around the edges' by adding policies, reviewing policies, adding systems and changing systems. We don't need more PLD or different PLD or school based PLD - that is not our problem.

Our fundamental problem and challenge to be addressed is how the teaching profession views itself as well as how it is viewed by others. It is about how teachers value themselves as reflected by how they are acknowledged and rewarded (and trained).

When we can find an effective way for teacher expertise to be truly valued then we will make real progress towards a quality education system. It's not about 'quick fixes' or politicians getting 'runs on the board'. It's about the teaching profession valuing itself and being valued through more effective training and qualifications as well as building a way for expertise to be duly acknowledged - minus the fear mongering that swirls around this type of proposal. It's been done in other countries - it's well passed time we overhauled our teacher training and found a way for teachers to be acknowledged as the wonderful professionals that they are.

That is the only way to lift our education system out of the doldrums.

Less tinkering and more action!

TWO ISSUES

DAVID HOOD (remarkable career in education including being CE of NZQA)

Issue one

- Recognition that poverty and culture/ethnicity are the main drivers of inequity.
- Accept that past initiatives have failed and most current initiatives will fail to address the problem.
- Ensuring every worker with a family takes home a living wage will do more to address the problem than making changes to the curriculum.

- The Ministry of Education to stop being the expert on all things telling schools what to do, but supporting schools in what they want to do in the ways of innovation and difference that will work.
- Make it much easier for communities including Iwi to establish schools of designated character under what was Section 156 of the Act (now 204) that are different from mainstream.

Issue two

- Stop the continued use of the pass/fail concept and thereby labelling students as failures because they have not attained a particular number of credits against an arbitrary figure of 80, even though they may have 'passed' a number of standards at that level.
- The record of learning should report on the standards achieved at each level.



FROM SOME INVOLVED IN THE SECTOR

TWO MAJOR THINGS THAT NEED TO CHANGE

JOHN MORRIS ONZM (former Principal Takapuna Grammar & Headmaster of Auckland Grammar, with seven years of the University of Auckland Council)

- NCEA is a dog and always has been. It is a flawed assessment system. It is interesting to note that since its introduction in 2001 our standing in international tests like PISA have plummeted and continue to drop. This is not a complete list of NCEA faults:
 - Undermines the coherence of individual subjects and the importance of integrating understanding.
 - Increases teacher and student workloads due to the introduction of a significant proportion of internal assessment in all subjects.
 - Encourages plagiarism, copying and use of internet sites that supply students with ready-made assignments and essays, because of the increased emphasis on internal assessment.
 - Removes comparability between schools.
 - Removes a consistent national standard and benchmark.
 - Complicates reporting to students.
 - Creates uncertainty in university entrance qualifications.
- The NZ curriculum has been corrupted. It is not a curriculum in any educational sense of the word. At best it is a local curriculum not a national one.
- It is devoid of knowledge. Since its introduction in 2007 our primary school international test results have also plummeted. It is no coincidence that these two “innovations” have contributed in large part to our lowering of standards and expectations. From our educational system being regarded as one of the best in the world, we are now amongst the lowest in the OECD.
- Government to recognise that the greatest asset in NZ’s education system is teachers, and thus design policies that attract the best and brightest into the profession. No education is better than its teachers.
- Government to admit that our primary school students are way behind their international counterparts in the three core subjects
- Government to accept that the plethora of education reforms implemented over the past 20 years, each intended to be the ‘silver bullet’, have exhausted teachers and yielded very little progress. Teachers have been, and still are, blown hither and thither on the tides of policy churn, and the students consequently suffer. We tend to mistake innovation for improvement.
- Government/MoE to realise that what makes a school successful are not the supposed “silver bullets” but what most teachers understand:
 - Strong educational leadership.
 - Specialist teachers.
 - Emphasis on the acquisition of basic skills and knowledge.
 - An orderly and secure environment.
 - High expectations of student attainment.
 - Frequent assessment of student progress.
- Increase the hours teacher trainees spend in training. Practicum hours are much lower in NZ than comparable countries elsewhere.
- Offer different routes into training. Teach First is a good initiative as is the work being done by Westlake Boys’ and other schools in providing teacher training on the job.
- Teacher appraisal is a bit of a dog’s breakfast at the moment. Research shows that teacher appraisal and professional development in NZ is rarely linked to student learning.
- Remove the step-lock pay scale for teachers and provide recognition for excellent teachers to stay in the classroom or mentor other teachers in their professional growth.
- Create a situation that “teaching is a job that smart people do..we need people drawn to the profession not because it is easy, but because it is hard” (Dylan Wiliam)
- Government/MoE to put some thinking into:
 - Entry into teaching and teacher supply.
 - The attraction and status of teaching; create a compelling and aspirational career structure.
 - Selection of potential teachers; make entry to teaching selective and post graduate.
 - Alternative routes into teaching.
 - Career development and remuneration; create an environment that compensates master teachers who continue to grow, evolve and perform.
 - Gender imbalance in teaching needs to be addressed.
 - Solicit teacher feedback and use it in decision-making.



PARENTS – CHILDREN’S FIRST TEACHERS

SUSAN WARREN (COMET Auckland - Te Hononga Akoranga’s Chief Executive since 2011)

I can tell you that those high-performing outliers in decile 1 to 3, the ones that are delivering results like a decile 10 school, are all special character schools of some kind – in fact almost all of them are either kura or Catholic Integrated schools.

So – if the wide disparities in achievement in Aotearoa are really all about poverty (and other factors that change with decile like parents’ qualifications), why do we see such a range of achievement within each decile, by school and by ethnicity? And what is it about so-called mainstream schools that isn’t working for diverse students – mainly Maori and Pasifika?

Evidence shows that parents and whanau can actually build children’s brains in the first 1,000 days just through talk – specifically, serve and return talk. Small children spend far more time at home than they do in early childhood centres, yet as a nation we invest almost nothing in supporting families in their important role as their children’s first teachers. We might think talking to babies and toddlers is automatic, but actually most new parents don’t know how important it is, or the types of talk that make a difference. This is not about telling people how to bring up their children – rather, it’s about strengthening the things they already do, within their culture and language, that help build babies’ brains in those crucial early years.

To me there are three keys that need more attention than they are currently getting and that explain a lot of the disparities we see in education results:

1. Quality of relationship between teacher and learner – respect, caring about the student’s learning, understanding them as a person including background and interests, having high expectations, absence of racism and other prejudices. This needs way more emphasis in initial teacher preparation and in-service PLD; and time allocated to getting to know students, understanding cultures etc.
2. Recognising students’ culture, language and identity and drawing on these things as strengths in students’ learning – in small ways (eliciting prior knowledge relating to culture/background, enabling use of first language in learning etc) and in larger ways (in particular, bilingual education – see note below).
3. Relevance and authenticity of learning – for example through social action projects in social studies, work experience with related skill learning in senior secondary (e.g. Youth Employability | Comet Auckland) or research projects that relate to community problems in science (e.g. Curious Minds South Auckland | Comet Auckland).

Why bilingual education?

The single most important thing that the education system can do to address the disparities for Māori and Pacific students is to expand and properly support Bilingual Education (including kura, Māori immersion/bilingual units in mainstream schools, and Pacific bilingual units). There is a raft of evidence that quality bilingual education where at least 50% of instruction time is in the target language and where this continues for at least 6 and ideally 8 years, results in significant learning gains across the curriculum, in many cases entirely removing disparities by ethnicity and socio-economic background.

Even children who learn their heritage language at home need to have the opportunity to learn in and through their language at early learning and school, in order to build high-level concepts and vocabulary and in order to maximise the benefits of their language to contribute to their academic success. This requires a shift from teaching languages as subjects to using children’s first or heritage languages as mediums of instruction.

There is very strong local and international evidence for this change in approach because it achieves several goals more effectively – for students to be strong in both languages (i.e. bilingual), for students to be successful in their schooling across the curriculum, raising student attendance and engagement and contributing to identity and wellbeing.

SCHOOLS HAVE BECOME DISTRACTED

JAMES BENTLEY (Principal of St Peter’s College (Epsom

Schools have been become distracted from their core responsibility which is to develop and grow the skills, knowledge and learning of **all** their students. This is a result of constant Government initiatives which expect schools to help solve societal problems. Some may be necessary, but many are not. In the confusion, growth of learning is lost and that is why we wonder why our educational outcomes have declined over the past decade or so.

It is a curious point that many communities have no idea really how their local school is performing academically. The Ministry don’t seem to see academic outcomes as an important measure of how a school is performing and schools know this. Thus the incentive to raise outcomes is diminished. It is a sad fact that in many schools the 1stXV coach has more accountability for results than the Maths or English department.



FROM SOME INVOLVED IN THE SECTOR

ATTENDANCE IS CRITICAL AT ANY TIME

TREVOR MCINTYRE (Remarkable career in education – including being Principal of Christchurch BHS)

- a. MOE has good data about school performance across a range of indicators. Much greater emphasis needs to be placed on those schools who have high attendance rates, high retention rates, high academic achievement, successful placement post school. Those for schools and then for them to be resourced to share and promote what they are doing.
 - b. Poor performing schools tend to focus on the MOE PD flavor of the month which is mostly focused on the fringes and has a narrow focus.
 - c. The old mantra of the MOE that all schools are good and that a student can get a good education at any of them is exacerbating the inequitable outcomes that schools deliver.
 - d. Parental Choice – this is critical as it will drive change by the poor performing schools running out of numbers and closing, or it will drive change as numbers fall and schools’ panic. The MOE have always stated that they need zoning to best utilize the schooling network, but the network should be built with flexibility to meet the demand of families. The inflexible nature of zoning inevitably forces disappointed students into schools that they have no wish to be at. All families should have the choice between state co-ed, state single sex, designated character schools.
- The attendance, retention and academic achievements of boys is significantly better at boys’ schools; e.g. for those in the bottom quintile the male UE rate is 9% for co-ed and 37% for single sex. This data is so significant that to have a system that denies any boy, who wants to attend a single sex boys school to do so, is a very serious short coming.
- e. Give secondary schools more data about where their leavers end up - on where their school leavers are at 25. Parenting skills are important so that parents are strong mentors and advocates for their children’s learning. Schools should all have parent support coaches. Students thrive on consistency.
 - f. Emphasise student personal character development.
 - g. Demonstrate a purpose to learning and personal development ... make the links from school to later life.
 - h. Improve the quality of school leadership. Leadership is critical to create the culture and systems necessary for operating a successful school.
 - i. Attendance. This is critical at any time but even more so with the current data indicating very low full attendance rates.

GREATER SUPPORT FOR IWI/HAPU

NATHAN DURIE (co-founder of Manukura – arguably NZ’s best place of education)

In the area of Māori education or education for Māori, the need for greater support for iwi / hapu led initiatives to design and deliver options for this cohort are essential not only for those students and whanau who are directly impacted but also the capacity to create models / pedagogies / people who can then inform practice.

As you are aware I am beginning in 2024 to lead a philosophical and pedagogical educational adaption targeting Maori (not exclusively) boys at TIPENE (St Stephen’s School) This will be a multi-

faceted educational adaption, designed to address this very disadvantaged cohort in our current mainstream system. Furthermore, to re-invent how these historical (English) boarding school models operate to accommodate Maori and Maoritanga.

Schools under the Microscope – How do we turn them around?

The above topic (or the education sector) might be better served to place a microscope on successful models and promote these. The data that you present highlights some trends. Sadly, these

high performing schools are a minority, so the government will be obliged to manage the masses. Additionally, it serves the governments need to ensure we have fruit pickers and others to fill the potholes in the road. My scepticism about the literary and numeracy address, albeit well quantified, will only serve to ensure that Māori (boys especially) along with low decile school students are denied access to University. Would a quota system provide a more equitable outcome with a greater goal of creating opportunity within these whanau and communities?



MAJOR CONCERNS WITH THE 'CURRICULUM REFRESH'

Corresponding Signator
PROFESSOR ELIZABETH RATA
e.rata@auckland.ac.nz

The Rt Hon Chris Hipkins
Parliament Office
Parliament Buildings
Wellington 6160
cc. Hon Jan Tinetti

8 February 2023

Dear Prime Minister Hipkins,
We, the undersigned, draw your attention to two major problems in the Ministry of Education's Curriculum Refresh policy and in the associated NCEA qualification reforms. These problems were created during your tenure as Minister of Education and can only be solved by calling an immediate halt to the radical initiatives causing the problems. Because the matter is of such urgency, this letter is an open one and will be made public.

Prime Minister Hipkins, the Curriculum Refresh and the NCEA Reforms were developed on your watch as Minister of Education. It is, therefore, incumbent on you to repeal them before irrevocable damage is done to our country. As Prime Minister, you are certainly in a position to do so.

For more go to:
elizabethrata.com



BOYS' EDUCATION IN NEW ZEALAND

DR MICHAEL JOHNSTON (Senior Fellow, New Zealand Initiative)

Another educational disparity is that between male and female students. Data from the National Monitoring Study of Student Achievement show that the male median in both reading and writing is consistently lower than that of girls in both Year 4 and Year 8. Every year, girls get all three levels of NCEA, as well as University Entrance (UE), in greater proportions than boys. For example, in 2021, 58% of female Year 13 students attained UE, compared with 46% of male students. Nearly two thirds of New Zealand undergraduate university degrees go to women.

The Ministry of Education simply does not care that our education system systematically under-serves the male half of the population. I recently wrote to them to ask them what they were doing to address the educational problems faced by boys in our schools. They replied that they are doing nothing and that they have no plans to change that. We know that the gap between the sexes in educational achievement can have nothing to do with socio-economic factors. That is because boys and girls come in equal proportions from all socio-economic strata. Whatever is causing the decline of boys' educational achievement relative to that of girls, is attributable to schools themselves.

School environments can make a substantial difference to boys' achievement. Boys in boys schools do systematically better than boys in co-educational schools, across the socioeconomic range and for all ethnicities. They gain all three levels of NCEA and UE at higher rates, despite a greater proportion of their assessment being externally assessed.

The problem is not taken seriously by the Ministry, very little investigation of its causes has taken place. They very often posit boys themselves as being the problem.

There are on-average developmental differences between boys and girls. Girls tend to develop the ability to control their behavioural impulses earlier. There are other on-average personality differences between boys and girls as well, and these also have implications for education. But the claim that boys' brains are just slower to develop is so unnuanced as to be inaccurate. Furthermore, and more seriously, that claim shifts responsibility away from schools themselves by implying that the fact that boys do less well than girls is attributable to their biology. If such a claim were to be made about Māori or Pasifika, it would rightly be dismissed as racist deficit theorisation.

Boys underachieving is not inevitable. Whatever maturational differences may exist between boys and girls, they are not cognitive in nature. Boys don't have lower average IQs than girls, and there is no evidence whatsoever that they are any less capable of conceptual understanding or information processing. Issues of impulse control and differences in personality can be addressed through the school environment. So, the onus is on schools, and the education system more generally, to conduct research on how best to educate boys and to act on the basis of that research.

Promising lines of inquiry would include the effects of lax school discipline, a lack of male teachers, demonisation of competitiveness, strong emphasis on 'collaborative learning', and a general lack of structured pedagogy. All of these factors might plausibly interact with boys' greater tendency to impulsivity to result in poorer outcomes for them. My intuition is that more structure, both in the school environment and in teaching, would go a long way towards improving things for boys and young men in education.

If we continue to ignore the problem of male educational underachievement, we will pay a heavy price in social problems in years to come. Our prisons are already full of illiterate young men.

10 IDEAS THAT WORK IN EDUCATION

KIERAN FOUHY (Former Principal of St Peter's (Epsom) and St Paul's (Ponsonby))

5 strands of Catholic Education.

1. Education is in the DNA of the 2000 year old tradition.
2. Catholic. Schools were started from a monastic tradition which held order, hard work and conformity as ideals.
3. There is a common good within Catholic tradition.
4. The Catholic tradition holds up the family as an ideal .. so enrolment of the family is important
5. My belief is that Education is a conservative function of society transmitting the past to future time.

Catholic Integrated schools are not all the same ... there are some that do well and some that should be closed. My points relate to my 50 years of schools. If I had one takeaway from being in classrooms in NZ...is that as a country we simply don't value education and teaching.

So ten ideas which relate to the DNA of catholic integrated schools and on how to value education in NZ

1. Ambition for all: Part of that common good I mentioned. The tragedy is we are discounting the kids in our schools. ..and we are lowering the bar so much that no one is ambitious. Schools are about equity, excellence, respect and responsibility.

2. Return to external systems forms of Assessment: This relates to integrity of operation and not all schools or teachers are professional. High stakes qualifications need external assessment. ERO needs to be strengthened into genuine qualitative audits.

Return to formal appraisal for principals and teachers.

3. Data as disinfectant: Data that asks the right questions - breadth of learning, depth of learning, teacher influence, school achievements.

4. Enrol the family: Bring the parents in to support their child's school, feedback weekly, expect parents to contribute time in their child's school.

5. Disorder to order - then reorder: Disorder in a school needs to be brought under control ... a disruptive student cannot stay in a classroom.

6. Return to 'ages and stages' curriculum: This is about structure of learning and the absence of it goes to the heart of purpose in schools.

7. Purpose (and aims) of education clarified: I suppose I am not the only NZer who finds the waffle factor huge in schools. Clarity of purpose must be restored.

8. Leadership is the heart of the matter: Change the principal and watch the educational outcomes change. We all know that good schools have good principals.

9. Intentional teaching at all levels of system: My experience is with boys who need constant feedback, constant expectations, constant input, constant encouragement to stay on task. Kids are bored of videos, computer scrolling, entertainment and meaningless credits.

10. Repurpose the ministry of education: I don't know why this Ministry exists and it's purpose. The Ministry if not accountable or responsive. There seems to be an expertise layer about schools missing in MOE.

THE PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY FOR EDUCATION LIES WITH THE FAMILY

ALA POMELILI (Maxim Institute)

Maxim Institute believes education is crucial to strong, flourishing New Zealand communities. Formal schooling is only one part of education which lasts a lifetime. Maxim believes the primary responsibility for educating children lies with the family. Schooling should assist families in raising their children to be contributing members of society, and should reflect the values of parents, families and communities.

Maxim holds that schooling will always involve the development of a student's character. Whilst education has a plurality of aims, in a world of growing superficiality, there is still a deeply formative and virtuous element to education that we mustn't forget. As Aristotle says, "Educating the mind without educating the heart is no education at all."

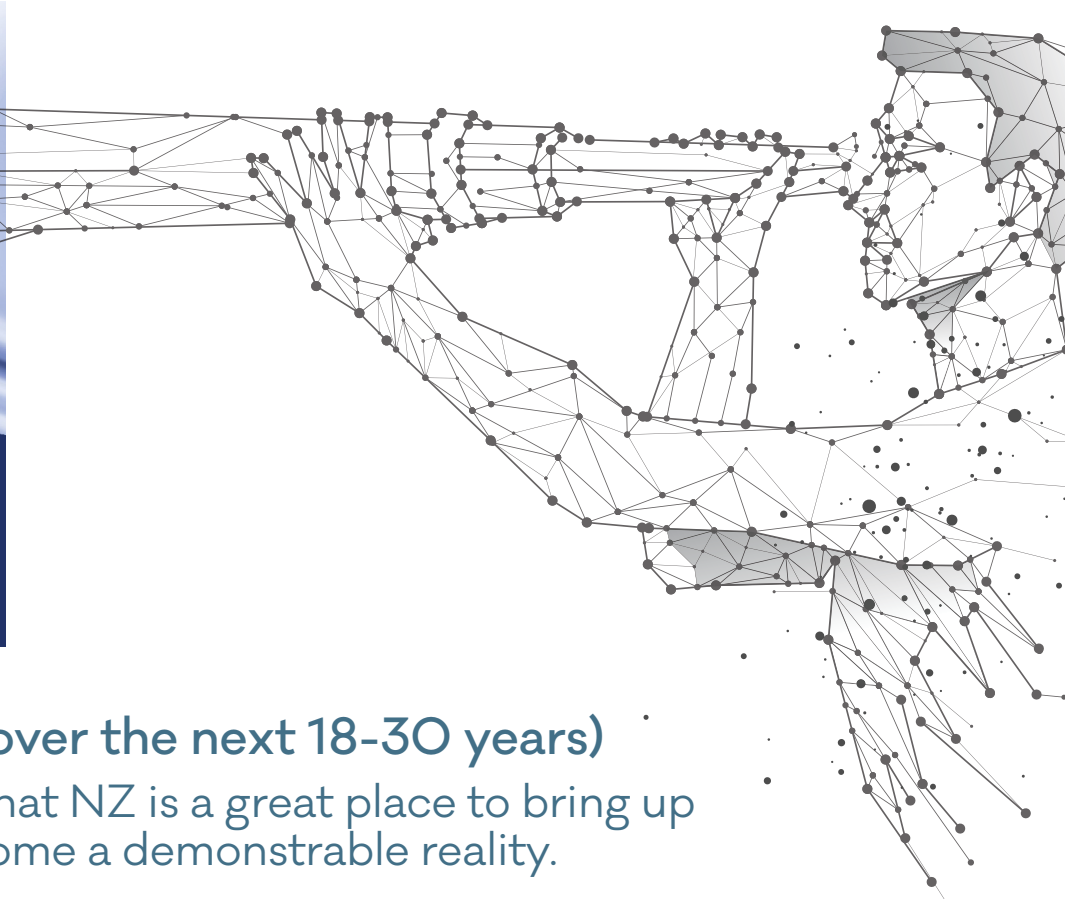
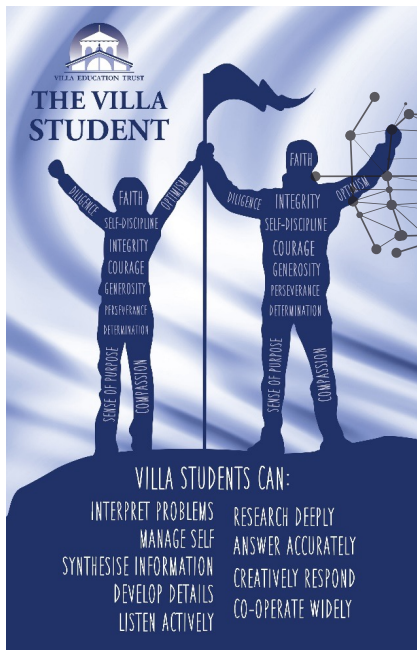
Maxim believes New Zealand's education system should use its resources and knowledge in the wisest and most comprehensive way possible. There has been an increasing tendency to remove decision-making from local communities and entrust it to a central bureaucracy. Maxim believes this is contrary to the principles of an excellent education system and holds that those with the most significant stake and the closest involvement should make these decisions; parents, principals, teachers and communities. Not bureaucrats.

Whilst there are a plethora of pressing issues in the education sector, we believe the following concerns need prioritising:

Teacher training: Investment in teacher training, be it in teachers' colleges to ongoing professional development needs urgent attention. It matters who we have in front of students. It matters how they are formed, trained and equipped. Why are we not investing in them?

E-learning: More pedagogical work is required around using digital technologies and e-learning tools and practices in classrooms. The compulsory education sector's response to pandemic disruptions highlighted the gaps in utilising e-learning tools and ways of delivering education online.

Pedagogy in schools: There is little questioning on pedagogy in schools. This is not to critique teachers and schools but expresses a genuine unease about the minimal accountability and questioning of the child-centred philosophies underpinning our national curriculum.



THE VISION (over the next 18-30 years)

That the platitude that NZ is a great place to bring up children would become a demonstrable reality.

That the first 5.75 years of life for every child would be exactly what neuro and developmental science says they ought to be.

That we would be a nation known for absolutely outstanding and highly valued parenting and that it would be ubiquitous.

That every school leaver in New Zealand would;

- have been cared for in their homes and schools in the best ways possible to have them moving into adult life with confidence, aspirations, strong and positive values, and resilience in terms of mental health.
- have the ability to communicate with, relate to and care for other human beings.
- have developed a high-quality set of learning skills and a full understanding of the, at times arduous, process of becoming good at a skill (see Matthew Syed's Bounce)

- have developed a deep and broad set of knowledge and interests – being LITERATE.
- be free, deep, creative and critical thinkers.
- have genuine qualifications that allow them to move into further study, trades, or employment with prospects of promotion and higher levels of remuneration.

That all of our “schools” (forms of education may change) would be of high quality, well lead and expertly staffed by people who love kids and see their job as a mission/calling.

That the government involvement in Education would be highly functional, fully accountable and recognize their true as servants to the taxpayer/families. That there would be a consistent, well researched, approach that does not get swept with by ideologues and every passing trend/crisis.

Alwyn Poole



Adding more people causes problems. But people are also the means to solve these problems. The main fuel to speed the world's progress is our stock of knowledge; the brakes are our lack of imagination and unsound social regulations of these activities.

The ultimate resource is people—especially skilled, spirited, and hopeful young people endowed with liberty—who will exert their wills and imaginations for their own benefits, and so inevitably they will benefit the rest of us as well. **Julian Simon**



PROPOSALS

Alwyn Poole: With credit to many

1: A Crown Agency for "Parenting" to provide information to make New Zealand the very best parenting country on the planet,

Including "Project 5.75": Ubiquitous education and support for pregnant women/partners re care for their child in-utero. Huge information/support programmes to counter FASD and other harms.

Massive parents as first (and most important) learners and teachers programme age 0 – 5. Including health, reading, numeracy, movement, music, languages. See David Eagleman: *The Brain* e.g. "If developing brains are not given the proper "expected" environment – one in which a child is nurtured and looked after – the brain will struggle to develop normally. ... Without an environment with emotional care and cognitive stimulation,

the human brain cannot develop normally The brain can often recover, to varying degrees, once the children are removed to a safe and loving environment. The younger a child is removed, the better his recovery."

Language in the home is absolutely key. Many, many words and conversations and words that are positive!

Information and encouragement for parents to remain fully invested in the education of their children throughout the schooling year.

14 2. Split the collective contract in two and super-fund/incentivise teaching in High EQI Schools

- Provide Principals in those schools with a Business Manager to take care of resourcing, contracts, etc – allowing them to fully focus on academics.
- Trust these Principals with significant incentive payments to attract and keep great teachers.
- Limit class size to 15.
- Help the families – provide uniform, stationery and IT and don't ask for donations.
- Make every year urgent in these schools but also have a 19 year plan so that by the end of that these young people, who will go on to parent the next generation have education levels, that don't offer up an excuse for our school system.
- The secondary teacher shortage is qualitative as well as quantitative. To attract great degree graduates and second career people they must be paid to train as it is no longer tenable to have them without a year of income in a high employment economy and with so many international opportunities.

3. Be honest about results

Be honest about results but also provide the value added/progression measures. It is not that difficult. We are about to publish a "league table" that covers metrics for every high school. It is not "name and shame". It is to provide information to every tax-payer, parent, Principal, BoTs, teacher, etc – about the inputs and outcomes of every secondary school. On that basis they can make their decisions.

4. Rename UE

Too many Principals/teachers use it as an excuse when they state – "University does not suit our [BROWN] kids". Keep the purpose of the qualification but elevate it as the true level of high-school graduation and extract the excuse aspect. Possibly NCEA* would work.

Achievement gaps between rich and poor exist throughout the school system, but are widest at tertiary level. For example, at NCEA Level 2 there is a seven percentage point lag between the pass rates of low- and high-decile students, by the time pupils take University Entrance, that grows to 44 points. Similarly, while only 17 per cent of low-decile students go to university, 50 per cent of for high-decile students do.

The largest chasm, however, is in second-year university courses with limited numbers and high entry thresholds - degrees which also lead to the highest salaries.

Data sourced from six universities shows while 60 per cent of the almost 16,000 students accepted into professional law, medicine and engineering in the past five years came from the richest third of homes, just 6 per cent came from the poorest third.

If you only include decile one schools - the most disadvantaged - that figure drops to just 1 per cent.

For example, Victoria law school took just eight decile one students. Otago law took three. And of 2000 total entrants, Canterbury engineering took just a single decile one student in five years.

Read Kirsty Johnston's article here:



5. Emphasise Inputs

- Simplify the NZ curriculum (and dump the current “refresh”). Align it with the international highest standards.
- Attendance, retention until at least 17yo, parental engagement. Make this data publicly available in real time. There is no possible justification for the attendance data to be voluntary and for the national statistics to take up to four months to be made available
- Purpose, inspiration and role modelling is vital.
- Teacher quality is hugely important. Emphasise it, incentivise it, talk about it always – not just as one person compared to another but in terms of each teacher becoming better by the day.

6. Have a superb Designated Character School policy/process (Not Charter Schools)

This would allow for schools to develop that suit the non-cooker cutter kids. Make approval independent of the “network” and aside from Ministry officials. Lock in Registered Teacher, OIA, NZC requirements. Include high quality Virtual Schooling (e.g. Mt Hobson Academy Connected) for students who are geographically or temperamentally.

7. Drain the swamp

The Ministry of Education has gone from 2,900 to 4,000 bureaucrats in the last three years. This has been inversely related to school achievement. We only have 420 high schools and many of those are only semi-relevant to the Ministry being Private, State Integrated or DCS. The Ministry must get out of the way of success. Find the right people to lead the Ministry. The current leaders are simply not competent. We need to fully repurpose the Ministry toward actually serving children and families.

8. Deal quickly and effectively...

...with the Unions demands after the next election. They offer nothing helpful to the dialogue so throw them a bone and walk on.

9. Have input and achievement goals for every high school

There is only approx. 410. Negotiate for improvement every year and make data fully available to the communities and nation.

10. Mimic Success

Work out the schools in each EQI range that is excelling and make them “lighthouse schools”. Manukura, St Paul’s Ponsonby, McAuley High School, etc.

11. Encourage public discourse from all of our school Principals

I was told by a Deputy Secretary of the Ministry of Education that their main priority was to “protect the Minister”. That is abject nonsense. There is so much IP and experience held by our 2,600 Principals. Encourage them to express their views. From Matthew Syed in his outstanding book Black Box Thinking:

“Studies have shown that we are often so worried about failure that we create vague goals, so that nobody can point the finger when we don’t achieve them. We come up with face-saving excuses, even before we have attempted anything.

We cover up mistakes, not only to protect ourselves from others, but to protect us from ourselves. Experiments have demonstrated that we all have a sophisticated ability to delete failures from memory, like editors cutting gaffes from a film reel—as we’ll see. Far from learning from mistakes, we edit them out of the official autobiographies we all keep in our own heads.

Everything we know in aviation, every rule in the rule book, every procedure we have, we know because someone somewhere died. We have purchased at great cost, lessons literally bought with blood that we have to preserve as institutional knowledge and pass on to succeeding generations. We cannot have the moral failure of forgetting these lessons and have to relearn them.”

12. Move away from the ‘stop kids falling through the cracks’ mentality

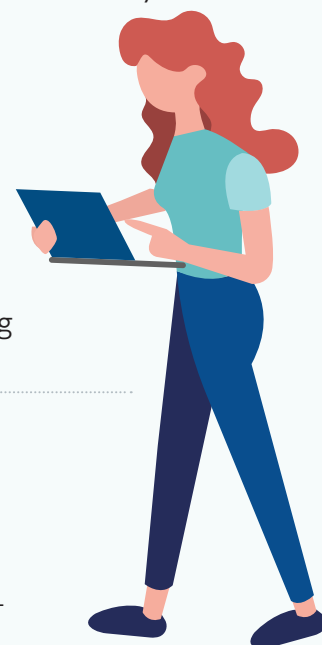
If you don’t fall through the cracks you are still on the ground floor.

NZ kids need aspiration, and they need to have leaders! It is the best time ever to grow up and this should be the Da Vinci generation. They have to be led out of the fog of fear.

We need to respect and love intelligence as much as brawn. If the All Black coach loses a game or two the nation goes nuts. The Minister and Secretary of Education can oversee HUGE systemic failure and very few appear to give a big rat’s backside.

13. “Provide high quality afterschool care”

...in keeping with Harlem Children’s Zone who look after all children from 7am – to 7pm (when needed).





EVERY STUDENT

— can develop —

EXCEPTIONAL SKILLS

AND

KNOWLEDGE SETS

— with —

**expert teaching, coaching, mentoring,
significant purposeful practice and**

**OPPORTUNITIES TO
EXPRESS THEMSELVES**

