

Wainoni Primary School

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27 November 2012

Kia ora Minister Parata

RE Wainoni Board of Trustees Response to Ministry of Education Proposal

The Board of Trustees has given careful consideration about the long-term future of this special place and the children and families to come.

The Wainoni School Board of Trustees has decided to unanimously endorse the current proposal in principle for the closure of five schools in the 'Aranui Cluster' and the establishment of an Aranui Community Campus by 2016.

The Board believes that there will need to be wide discussion with all stakeholders as to how the proposal could be given effect practically taking into account the consultation feedback received as a result of our dialogue.

We consider that various models of how the proposal could look in reality need to be advanced for discussion and consultation.

Above all the Wainoni School community wants to ensure:

1. Individualised learning pathways and strong support for every child, and their Whanau if needed.
2. That this new education setting is not too big or too broad that our tamariki will get lost within the system and their learning compromised.
3. Our tamariki have opportunities to build strong relationships that matter with people they know and trust.
4. That the very best things that we have in place now, can be carried through into our new learning environments.
5. We are partners in ongoing meaningful dialogue with us about the possibilities.

We look forward to ongoing meaningful engagement with the Ministry of Education to continue working through this Education Renewal process.

Yours faithfully

Yvonne Preece
Chairperson Wainoni Primary School Board of Trustees

Copy: Parents and community members of Wainoni School

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27 November 2012

Dear Whanau

Last night our Board of Trustees met and made the decision on the Education proposal from the Ministry of Education.

This decision was reached after looking at all of the information from the meetings held and feedback from our parents.

Please find the letter the Board is sending to the Minister of Education attached.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kym Wells', written in a cursive style.

Kym Wells

Principal

for the Board of Trustees



Wainoni Primary School Community Engagement Report

Submission to the Ministry of Education Proposal for Education Renewal

MENE SOLUTIONS LTD

November, 2012

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Wainoni Primary School Community Engagement Report

Submission to the Ministry of Education Proposal for Education Renewal

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1. Introduction

The purpose of this report is to capture the community engagement process and outcomes that were initiated by the Minister of Education's Rationale for Change relative to Wainoni School¹.

The process of engagement involved a number of interviews, conversations, surveys and stakeholder workshops for parents, staff, community, students and Board Trustees.

2. Executive Summary

2.1 Response to current proposal

The Wainoni School community:

1. Recognises the massive impact the Canterbury Earthquakes has had on Greater Christchurch, the school and community of Wainoni.
2. Acknowledges this most challenging context and the test this has been to school leadership, staff, parents and children whilst still focusing on student achievement.
3. The importance of Whanau atmosphere and the uplifting ERO report (6 Sep 2012)² that acknowledges the student achievement in the current context. In particular that the students are well engaged in their learning, lifting achievement and having closer relationships with other students and their teachers.
4. Notes the shocking and disempowering impact of the meeting on 13 September 2012 and the engagement process undertaken especially the lack of information and planning.
5. Realises that due to the impact on the Canterbury education network it is appropriate to review schooling provisions.
6. Are very sensitive to the human impact of the earthquakes especially on the many vulnerable families of the Wainoni Schools community who are fragile and struggling to manage the complex recovery of our community.
7. Is pleased with the level of engagement and diverse range of school and community stakeholders who have participated in the Wainoni School dialogue in the context of the broader conversation happening relative to the five schools in the 'Aranui cluster' and other related conversations including the New Brighton cluster.
8. Considers that this is a good level of engagement given the current reality of many parents and the constraints the school community is currently operating under. These constraints include; the timing (Term 4), the time frame and resources required to effectively engage with a diverse, fragile and vulnerable community.
9. Thanks the school and community stakeholders who have engaged in the Wainoni and wider 'Aranui Cluster' dialogue including, but not limited to; parents, grandparents, teachers, education leaders, Maori and Pasifika leaders, Early Childhood Education, Kohunga Reo, local government, health and social services.
10. Acknowledges the Minister of Education for granting the additional three month time extension and the reassurance that this is a genuine.

¹ <http://shapingeducation.minedu.govt.nz/wp-content/uploads/2012/11/Wainoni-School-Rationale-for-Change.pdf>

² <http://ero.govt.nz/index.php/Early-Childhood-School-Reports/School-Reports/Wainoni-School-06-09-2012>

11. Plea to the Minister of Education to partner with the school community so they feel empowered to identify and explore the options available. They also implore the Minister to listen to and value what is most important to the school community.
12. Acknowledge the reality that things will be different and want positive change as informed by evidence and research to ensure the best learning opportunities for our children and mokopuna.
13. Acknowledge the relationships and trust that exists with the numerous agencies whose people provide specialist services and support to our children. This is especially for the 43/103 (42%) students who have external support.

Initially there was a majority agreement from the school and wider community of interest to reject the current proposal.

The school and its community recognise that the Minister of Education, ultimately has the power to decide on the future of Wainoni School.

Regardless of whether a decision is made to close the school or not, the Wainoni School community wants to ensure:

1. Individualised learning pathways and strong support for every child, and their Whanau if needed.
2. That this new education setting is not too big or too broad that our tamariki will get lost within the system and their learning compromised.
3. Our tamariki have opportunities to build strong relationships that matter with people they know and trust.
4. That the very best things that we have in place now, can be carried through into our new learning environments.
5. We are partners in ongoing meaningful dialogue with us about the possibilities.

There are a significant proportion of those engaged who are unsure or who agree with the current proposal and as the discussion has proceeded people have shown openness to exploring new opportunities that may become available for our tamariki and Whanau in a community campus.

The Board of Trustees has given careful consideration about the long-term future of this special place and the children and families to come. Through this consideration it is our unanimous decision to endorse the current proposal in principle.

We look forward to ongoing meaningful engagement with the Ministry of Education to continue working through this Education Renewal process.

3. Rationale for Change

The Rationale for Change³ was received by the Principal and Board of Trustees (BoT) on 12 October 2012. The rationale cites six areas that provide reasons for a merger: Land; Buildings; Indicative Ten Year Property Costs; People; Student distribution patterns and Population change.

In answering the question of why is change needed the Rationale for Change asserts that:

"A strong education network is vital for the renewal of greater Christchurch.

The extent of damage and ongoing impact of people movement in the wake of the 2010 and 2011 earthquakes mean it cannot be restored to the way it was.

We need to accept in areas that have been depopulated we will have to do things differently, which will inevitably mean some changes to services. The viability of existing individual schools and increased demand for new schools are a key consideration going forward.

The earthquakes, while devastating, have provided an opportunity beyond simply replacing what was there, to restore, consolidate and rejuvenate to provide new and improved facilities that will reshape education, improve the options and outcomes for learners, and support greater diversity and choice.

Education renewal for greater Christchurch is about meeting the needs and aspirations of children and young people. We want to ensure the approach addresses inequities and improves outcomes while prioritising action that will have a positive impact on learners in greatest need of assistance.

With the cost of renewal considerable, the ideal will be tempered by a sense of what is pragmatic and realistic. Key considerations are the practicalities of existing sites and buildings, the shifts in population distribution and concentration, the development of new communities and a changing urban infrastructure.

Innovative, cost effective, and sustainable options for organising and funding educational opportunities must be explored to provide for diversity and choice in an economically viable way.

Discussions with schools, communities and providers within learning community clusters have and will continue to be key to informing decisions around the overall future shape of each education community. Ways to enhance infrastructure and address existing property issues, improve education outcomes, and consider future governance will form part of these discussions that are running in parallel to consultation around formal proposals."

³ <http://shapingeducation.minedu.govt.nz/wp-content/uploads/2012/10/Wainoni-School-Rationale-for-Change.pdf>

4. Response to the Rationale for Change

4.1 Strong Education Network

The Wainoni School community and other community stakeholders':

- Accept that the 'economic' cost of renewal across the network will be considerable and that ideally this will be tempered by a sense of what is pragmatic and realistic.
- Understand and acknowledge key considerations, practicalities of existing sites and buildings, damage to housing, the shifts in population distribution and concentration, the development of changing urban infrastructure.
- Recognise that innovative, cost effective, and sustainable options for organising and funding educational opportunities must be explored to provide for diversity and choice in an economically viable way.

4.2 Integrated Recovery and Transition

The Wainoni School community and other community stakeholders':

- Want to stay engaged in meaningful dialogue to ensure the best learning and life outcomes for children and families.
- Prefer enhancement of current education (including Early Childhood Education), health and social service provision.
- Recognise the importance of schools to the social and cultural health and wellbeing of our Wainoni and other communities.
- Acknowledge that the health impact⁴ of both the earthquakes and our post-disaster recovery are real and the risk of further harm is minimized, mitigated and managed carefully.

4.3 Physical Infrastructure

The Wainoni School community and other community stakeholders' prefer:

- New and improved Modern Learning Environment (MLE) buildings that would provide an opportunity for enhanced learning and choice for future generations of learners at Wainoni.
- That MLE buildings are informed by evidence research.
- The school and wider community to be engaged in the design process for any such MLE buildings.

4.4 People

The Wainoni area has had some short-term loss in population and expects to have an increasing roll over time. Wainoni School is a local school serving a local community with a significant identity and culture.

The social, cultural and community wellbeing of the Wainoni School community is intricately linked to the local area and these considerations must be weighed strongly.

⁴ Refer Appendix 3 CDHB Community and Public Health Response and Appendix 4 CDHB Literature Review

Educational outcomes must be balanced with achieving positive life outcomes and this requires integrated thinking and decision-making.

4.5 Teaching and Learning

Wainoni School has a documented and recognised approach to education that is addressing inequities and improving outcomes while prioritising actions that will have a positive impact on learners in greatest need of assistance.

Wainoni School is committed to ongoing dialogue with other schools within and across its learning community cluster. It is committed to ongoing partnerships with government agencies, community organisations and providers that the school considers to be critical to both successful learning and community outcomes.

4.6 Future Governance

Wainoni School is open to exploring future governance models that will contribute to more integrated leadership leading to better outcomes for students and their families.

5. Wainoni School Community Background

Wainoni School is a year 1-8 state co-educational primary school situated in Aranui with a decile 1 rating. As of July 2012 there was a role of 94 students. The ethnic breakdown of students is:

- NZ European/Pakeha 36
- Maori 40
- Pasifika 17
- Asian 1

Wainoni has a history of transiency.

The most recent Education Review Office (ERO) report from 6 September 2012⁵ observed:

- Students talking about their progress and achievements in relation to the National Standards
- Teachers sharing intended learning with students and what they needed to do to be successful
- Confident students who like to share their learning with each other and support others with their learning.

ERO recognises the current context that:

“Wainoni School has a high proportion of priority learners. These students fall into the categories of Māori and Pacific, low socio-economic families, and students with special needs. There is a disproportionate number of students at this school with a range of care and learning needs that are supported by external agencies.

The 2010 and 2011 Canterbury earthquakes have had, and continue to have, a significant impact on children, families and staff. There are high levels of movement of students and families in and out of the school. This affects the overall roll numbers and has resulted in the loss of staff.

The ongoing support from welfare agencies for families and their children is helping the school deal with the health problems that continue to affect students. The delay in announcing the educational future of the area is adding to the frustration of the board and staff to plan for the future.”

In terms of sustainability ERO comments that:

“The school is well placed to improve its performance. The board is highly skilled and understand how its role impacts on students' progress and achievement. Trustees are highly supportive of the principal. They make good use of information from the principal's reports to inform their decision making.

The principal and senior leader are leading and managing the school well. There is a sense of urgency and a focus on improving outcomes for students. Effective teaching practice is supported by focused professional development, classroom observations, teachers' reflections, and robust discussions at a school-wide level.”

⁵ <http://ero.govt.nz/index.php/Early-Childhood-School-Reports/School-Reports/Wainoni-School-06-09-2012>

The engagement process conducted over the consultation period has re-emphasised these achievements and strengths of the school and its wider community. More over it highlights that since the earthquakes the school continues to achieve for all students.

6. Community Engagement

6.1 A principled approach

The engagement process designed and adopted for this school community was based on the best practice community development and International Association of Public Participation (IAP2) principles⁶ and practice.

6.2 Canterbury Earthquake Recovery Authority

CERA Recovery Strategy

The Canterbury Earthquake Recovery Authority (CERA) have developed a Recovery Strategy⁷ providing a vision, goals and a road map for ensuring the success of greater Christchurch for recovery and future leadership in earthquake resilience. The Recovery Strategy Vision is:

“Greater Christchurch recovers and progresses as a place to be proud of an attractive and vibrant place to live, work, visit and invest mō tātou, ā, mō kā uri ā muri ake nei for us and out children after us. The community is at the heart of the vision and the success of recovery”

The Recovery Strategy / Mahere Hauanutanga has Community at the centre of its model surrounded by five interrelated aspects. These are economic, built, natural, cultural and social. Weaving all of these recovery components together is leadership and integration.

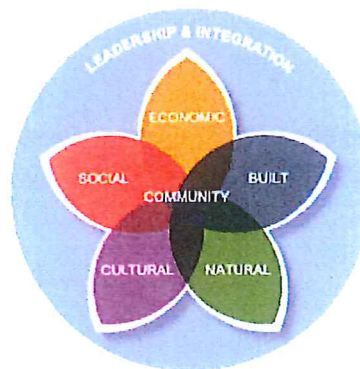
CERA Community Engagement Framework

The CERA has also developed its Community engagement framework based on the IAP2 framework⁸ that asserts that:

“We are committed to moving as far and as often as possible towards the level of empowerment.”

Further to this CERA clearly states in its Community engagement strategy to the people of Canterbury⁹:

“Our goal is to enable you and your communities to participate in decision making around the rebuilding and revitalisation of greater Christchurch.”



CERA Recovery Principles

Section 2 of the Recovery Strategy states the guiding principles that underpin the recovery strategy in Canterbury and Wainoni School concurs with these principles.

⁶ <http://www.iap2.org/associations/4748/files/spectrum.pdf>

⁷ <http://cera.govt.nz/recovery-strategy/overview>

⁸ <http://cera.govt.nz/sites/cera.govt.nz/files/common/cera-community-engagement-framework.pdf>

⁹ <http://cera.govt.nz/sites/cera.govt.nz/files/common/cera-community-engagement-strategy.pdf>

Wainoni School understands that:

“These principles, along with normal public sector requirements and obligations, will provide guidance at a strategic level. CERA, its strategic partners and other government agencies will refer to them as they plan and implement recovery activities together”¹⁰.

These Recovery principles are:

- **Work together**
Recovery is a collaborative effort. It is essential to have constructive relationships between the private sector, NGOs, local and central government agencies, and the wider community.
- **Take an integrated approach**
Links between different recovery initiatives will be identified so that together they achieve the greatest benefits.
- **Look to the future**
Development and recovery initiatives will be undertaken in a sustainable manner. They will meet the needs of future generations, taking into account climate change and the need to reduce risk from natural hazards. They will also ensure community safety and wellbeing now and in the future. If the process of repair reveals a way of enriching people’s quality of life, that opportunity will be taken.
- **Promote efficiency**
Resources will be used wisely so that the recovery is timely and affordable, and delivers value for money
- **Use the best available information**
A wide range of information, including spatial information, will be collected and shared. This information will help decision-making, improve transparency, promote best practices and enable the public to participate in the recovery effectively.
- **Care about each other**
Recovery initiatives will take account of people’s psychological, physical, spiritual and social needs. They will promote equitable outcomes and connected communities and recognise diversity.
- **Innovate**
Creative, cultural and resourceful solutions to recovery issues will be encouraged.
- **Aim for balanced decision-making**
Decisions will balance action and certainty with risk. They will consider the need for positive action, speedy responses and certainty; and the risk of short-term economic, environmental and social hardship and of compromising long-term objectives.
- **Keep it simple**
Communication must be clear and stick to the facts. It must give land owners, residents and businesses the information they need.

¹⁰ <http://cera.govt.nz/recovery-strategy/overview/read-the-recovery-strategy/section-2-guiding-principles>

6.3 Office of the Auditor General

In October 2012 The Office of the Auditor General (OAG) presented a Parliamentary paper¹¹ on the roles, responsibilities, and funding of public entities after the Canterbury earthquakes. In this paper it highlights the importance of collaborating effectively (Page 9). The OAG states that:

“The United Nations Development Programme, the World Bank, and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), as well as other state and national audit offices, have separately studied efforts to recover from natural disasters. Their work has identified some factors that contribute to effective recovery. These factors include:

- Public confidence and trust, gained through being transparent and communicating openly;
- Clear relationships between different levels of government to manage risks of duplicating work and lacking co-ordination; and
- Recovery authorities having a strong focus on gaining and maintaining cohesion, co-ordination, and consensus.”

The OAG goes on to state:

“For Canterbury to recover successfully, public entities must work collaboratively. Experience from other international natural disasters has shown how important it is to properly co-ordinate and govern how the public sector responds. If collaborating fails, recovery efforts can be hampered, causing delays and in the end poor outcomes for affected communities.”

The community engagement approach for the Wainoni School community of interest has been drawn from the inclusive and participatory principles identified and endorsed by IAP2, CERA and the OAG. This process has been designed to ensure the best outcomes for the Wainoni School and wider school community.

¹¹ <http://www.oag.govt.nz/2012/canterbury/2012/canterbury/docs/canterbury.pdf> ISBN 978-0-478-38388-1 (online)

7. Consultation

7.1 Legal Definition of Consultation

Wainoni School and its community accept there are legal definitions of consultation¹² where Chief Judge Goddard restated (at pp 455-456) several propositions as a guide to employers and employees.

“(3) If there is a proposal to make a change, and such change requires to be preceded by consultation, it must not be made until after consultation with those required to be consulted. They ‘must know what is proposed before they can be expected to give their views’...

“(5) The requirement for consultation is never to be treated perfunctorily or as a mere formality. The person or body to be consulted must be given a reasonably ample and sufficient opportunity to express views or to point to problems or difficulties...

“(6) Consultation must be allowed sufficient time...

“(7) Genuine effort must be made to accommodate the views of those being consulted; consultation is to be a reality, not a charade...

“(9) Consulting involves the statement of a proposal not yet finally decided upon, listening to what others have to say, considering their responses, and then deciding what will be done...”

The Wainoni School and wider network of community stakeholders acknowledge and thank the Minister of Education for the reassurance that this is a genuine consultation.

7.2 Engagement Process

The process of engagement consisted of numerous informal conversations, two surveys and three specifically prepared stakeholder workshops for parents and community.

These stakeholder workshops were hosted by the Principal and were well supported by parents, staff and community members. The purpose of the workshops was clarified as an invitation to participate in dialogue framed by the current reality for the school.

The process is consistent with the Ministry of Education's Information for School Reorganisation provided to consultant Facilitators¹³.

¹² The views in *Wellington International Airport* [1993] 1 NZLR 671 (CA) were adopted by Goddard CJ in *Communication and Energy Workers Union v Telecom NZ Ltd* [1993] 2 ERNZ 429, an application for an interim injunction.

¹³ Provided to consultant facilitators at two workshops in November 2012.

7.3 An invitation to participate

Parents and wider school community stakeholders were invited to several opportunities to share thoughts and feelings about the proposed closure.

These opportunities included:

1. Meeting with BoT on Monday 29 October 2012
2. A parent workshop at the school on Monday 4 November 2012.
3. A visit by the Minister of Education, Hekia Parata on Tuesday 5 November 2012.
4. Parent survey followed by a meeting to discuss surveys.
5. Weekly meetings through November 2012 with other 'Aranui cluster' school Principals and BoT chairs with community leaders.

The school community of interest was identified as any person who has a past or current interest in the school. Prospective students and parents were also welcome.

Key stakeholders identified were:

1. Past and current students
2. Past and current parents
3. Local education leaders
4. Community providers and leaders
5. Board of Trustees

Notable mention is made of the Aranui Community Trust Incorporated Society (ACTIS) who were proactive in being a catalyst to bring together the Aranui community with the five schools in two community workshops.

These workshop provided the opportunity for open dialogue and included stakeholders from the following domains:

1. Early Childhood Education
2. Social services
3. Health services (CDHB, General Practice, Public health and Community Pharmacy)
4. Community Mental health / Alcohol and Other Drug sector
5. Local Government (Elected members, Library management and staff)
6. Youth work
7. Maori and Iwi representatives
8. Pasifika community leaders
9. Recreation

9. School and Community Surveys

Two surveys were conducted for school and community stakeholders including, but not limited to; parents, teachers, local business, ECE, health and social services.

The first survey was a paper-based survey focused on the Wainoni Primary School and the second survey was an electronic survey. Both survey responses were collated together and the responses are included in this section of the report. By 24 November 2012, 27 surveys (representing the views of at least 37 people) had been completed.

9.1 Parent and community survey responses

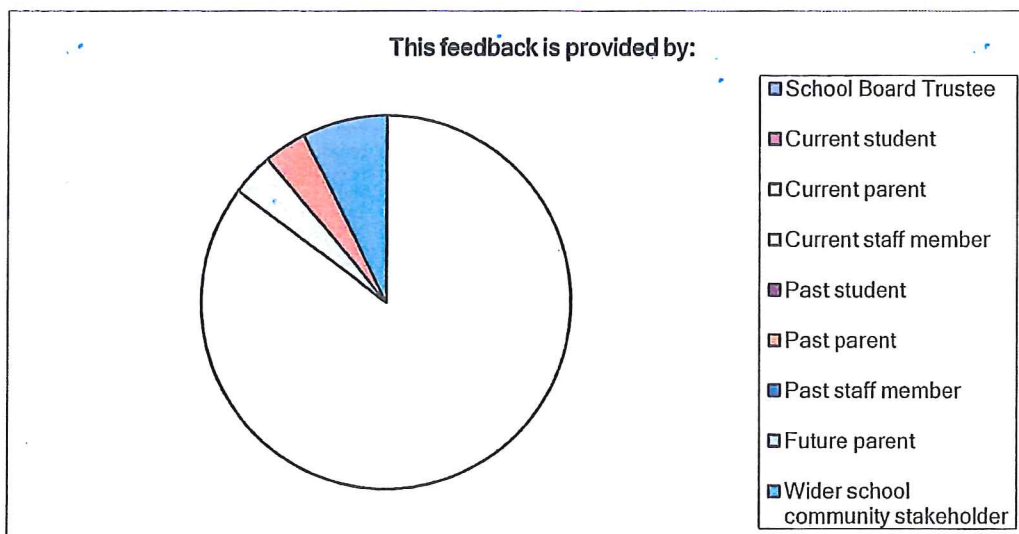
Question 1 Feedback provided by.

The table below illustrates feedback with response percentage and count.

This feedback is provided by:

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
School Board Trustee	0.0%	0
Current student	0.0%	0
Current parent	85.2%	23
Current staff member	3.7%	1
Past student	0.0%	0
Past parent	3.7%	1
Past staff member	0.0%	0
Future parent	0.0%	0
Wider school community stakeholder	7.4%	2
Other (please specify)		1
<i>answered question</i>		27

The graph below illustrates the distribution of 27 responses:



Responses from 'Other' school stakeholders identified themselves as a Grand parent

Summary:

Wainoni School is pleased with the level of engagement and diverse range of school and community stakeholders who have participated in the Wainoni School dialogue in the context of the broader conversation happening relative to the five schools in the 'Aranui cluster' and other related conversations including the New Brighton cluster.

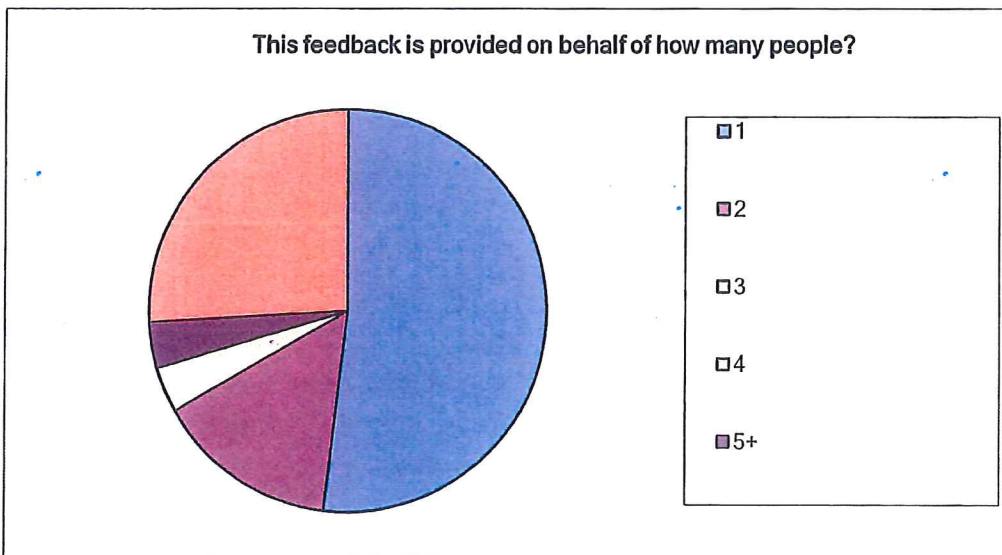
Question 2: Number of people feedback provided on behalf of:

Of the 27 survey responses these were indicated to represent the views of at least 37 people. Below is a breakdown of responses to questions:

This feedback is provided on behalf of how many people?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
1	51.9%	14
2	14.8%	4
3	3.7%	1
4	0.0%	0
5+	3.7%	1
If you are responding on behalf of a group please identify the group	25.9%	7
	<i>answered question</i>	27
	<i>skipped question</i>	0

Responses from people on behalf of a 'group' identified themselves as: Whanau/families



Summary:

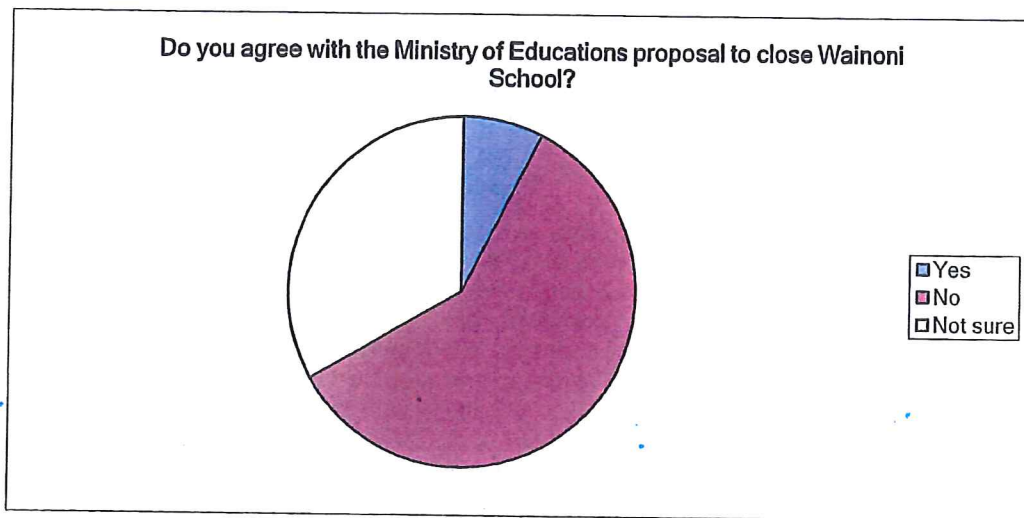
1. A total of 27 survey responses were received from the two surveys representing the views of at least 37 people.

Question 3. Do you agree with the Ministry of Educations proposal to close Wainoni School and create a Community Campus in Aranui?

Do you agree with the Ministry of Educations proposal to close Wainoni School?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	7.4%	2
No	59.3%	16
Not sure	33.3%	9
<i>answered question</i>		27
<i>skipped question</i>		0

Yes - 2
 No - 16
 Not sure - 9



Summary:

1. There is a majority agreement to reject the current proposal from the school and wider community of interest. There is a significant proportion who are unsure or who agree.

Question 4. Any further comments or possible solutions:

Below are the survey responses.

1. We strongly believe Wainoni School should remain as it is. We believe our children should not merge with older children (High School) pupils as some do carry bad influences. I prefer smaller schools like Wainoni as our Tamariki will benefit from this. Thanks
2. It would for Wainoni to stay as it is but it would be good for the school to go from year 1-13
3. Don't fix what's not broken
4. Fix the schools not close or merge
5. We recognise the sharing of resources would be beneficial but the idea of 1 school going from 0-13 is scary. A proposal of primary/intermediate site sharing with secondary appeals but not an overall 'umbrella' for the management of a 'super size' school with one BoT and one management team. It's too big and lacks a sense of family (we have gone around in circles)
6. Modified proposal. I feel we need to look after our very good staff in all of this. First and better than other schools in this proposal. Also if there is anyway I can help in these cluster meetings in the weeks/months please let me know. Thank you
7. Modified proposal. This is the unhappy process for our kids, cause the situation will change not usual like the normal time
8. Modified proposal
9. My kids are not happy what will happen, but they will look what is going on and what's the new situation
10. At the moment we have differing views on this but both agree we need more information before we can make a decision. Unsure about the motives behind this decision. (Don't trust National to have our best interests at heart)
11. We have two girls and four more children to come through Wainoni. We do not want them mixing or schooled with teenagers. It's inappropriate. Love Wainoni as it is. Small school small classes, better education will be very disappointed if this merger goes ahead we picked this school for a reason
12. Everything should stay how it is, what a crazy idea!!!
13. My grandson has just started at Wainoni, and has settled in nicely but doesn't a(d)just to change. Wainoni is a great school my family has always had great support from the lovely staff.
14. I am not opposed to the other options but just don't have enough info to support them at this stage. To support them I would need some strong evidence that it is what is best for the children & community and not just advancing political agendas, end of rant (-:)
15. Aranui High and Chisnallwood should merge (if schools must merge) This whole thing sounds like 'Slumlord Schooling' to me!
16. Wrap around services with education from EC through to tertiary
17. All schools will be over pack which would make harder on teacher to help each children reach their full abilities (abilities)
18. A whanau approach to schooling with all in the school community being linked together
19. Attached submission - Appendix 1

Parent meeting to discuss workshop notes.

A parents meeting was held to discuss the survey sent to families over the proposal to close Wainoni School. The following table summarises parent thinking from the meeting.

Category	Summary
Interesting	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. No charter school 2. Class numbers 3. Multi-site (possibilities) 4. Resource sharing 5. Safety of students 6. Who appoints Principal/BoT for new school - put Charter in place etc 7. No straight answers 8. How will our already messed up and unsettled kids cope 9. Will Government bother taking the time to ask them what they want 10. Is NZ turning into a socialist state 11. Teacher:pupil ratio?
Positives	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Different age siblings kept together 2. New facilities - classrooms, resouces eg technology centre, Arts/Dance/ Library/Sports etc 3. New technology 4. Possibly help with transition from primary - intermediate - secondary 5. Might give Aranui/Wainoni a deeper connectivity (if IMPLEMENTED right)
Negatives	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. No consultation 2. Not being informed enough 3. Loss of great teachers 4. Loss of caring teachers and school leaders/role models 5. National standards going down 6. No choices (zoning) 7. Too early to make big decisions 8. Growing role when housing is repaired 9. Community still in survival mode 10. Families still dealing with trauma 11. Social/economic stigma 12. Social problems 13. 'Poor' people and area perception 14. Affordability for parents - uniforms 15. Placement of school 16. Parents having to move 17. Children mentally going downwards with changes 18. Kids being displaced 19. Huge upheaval for everyone 20. Ruins our school sense of community and belonging 21. Issues with different schools integrating 22. Children being forgotten (behind the system) 23. High needs kids lost in the system 24. Safety - age of kids being clustered 25. Class sizing - teacher:pupil ratio 26. We have small class numbers now and it works for us 27. Has the concept of 'cluster school' been proven to work?

9.2 Parent workshops

On Monday 4 November 2012 at 2pm a parent workshop was held in the Wainoni School hall. This was hosted by Kym Wells and attended by a small and thoughtful group of 10 parents. There was a useful dialogue that identified a number of concerns, issues, questions as well as a number of opportunities for future children and learners in the Wainoni community.

The following table is a record of that dialogue

Concerns & Issues	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Seems this is more about the money 2. The current reduction in housing around Aranui/Wainoni 3. Taking more away from us 4. Our community - what happens when more people move back in 5. What reasons for change 6. Support our teachers (to Aussie!) 7. Is the timing right? 8. Why have MoE chosen this option to present? 9. What would a community campus look like? 10. Staffing at schools ratio - Schools can choose to top up 11. Worried about more children in each class and an increase in bullying (personal experience) 12. No guarantee that change will be positive 13. Parent choice? 14. Localised schools are good 15. How will all the age groups work together? Young kids grow up too fast 16. Hidden agenda (Charter schools) 17. Dyslexia not picked up (personal experience) 18. Lack of trust in the process of consultation 19. Pastoral care is great here (at Wainoni) 20. Why change something that is working so well? 21. Stigma 'Mega Ghetto School' 22. Costs to families - uniforms 23. Size of school
Questions	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Is this a genuine consultation process? 2. Closure vs Merger (what does it mean) 3. Timeframes (2017 beyond) 4. Actively (exploring other similar schools) eg Southern Cross Campus
Positives/ opportunities	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Champion centre (Relationship) - who recommended Wainoni to us 2. Technology and other resources 3. Respect individual differences 4. Wainoni is a doer school 5. Need to have a system that supports every student 6. Secondary option kept in (in Aranui) 7. Increased individualised (teaching and support) 8. Learning preferences recognised 9. Individualised support when required 10. More opportunities here for our children 11. Excellent learning/teaching practice

- | | |
|--|--|
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 12. Smoother transitions and learning pathways 13. Increased teaching staff, brilliant here 14. Awesome staff help make the school 15. Position ourselves to get the best deal for our children 16. Community involvement 17. Gotta do the best for our kids 18. Preserve the school culture 19. High expectations for what the kids can achieve! |
|--|--|

Summary:

1. The Wainoni School community recognises the significant impact the Canterbury Earthquakes has had on Greater Christchurch, the Canterbury education network and that it is appropriate to review schooling provisions.
2. The stakeholders in this engagement process are very sensitive to the human impact of the earthquakes especially on the many vulnerable families of Wainoni Schools community who are fragile and struggling to manage the complex recovery of our community.
3. Two surveys were conducted for school and community stakeholders including, but not limited to; parents, teachers, local business, Early Childhood Education, Kohunga Reo, health and social services.
4. By 24 November 2012, 27 surveys (representing the views of at least 37 people) had been completed for the proposal. The school Board of Trustees (BoT) considers this to be a good level of engagement given the current reality of many parents and the constraints the school is currently operating under. These constraints include; the timing (Term 4), the time frame and resources required to effectively engage with a diverse, fragile and vulnerable community.

9.3 Visit by Minister Parata

On Tuesday 5 November 2012 at 6pm Minister Parata visited Wainoni School and parents, teachers and community members attended this.

Principal Kym Wells shared reflections on behalf of the school community. The full address is attached as Appendix 2. Below is a summary of notable points:

Summary:

1. Backstory of earthquakes and the massive impact on the community and school.
2. Ongoing testing of school leadership, staff, parents and children whilst still focusing on student achievement.
3. Shocking and disempowering impact of the meeting on 13 September 2012 and engagement process especially the lack of information and planning.
4. Importance of Whanau atmosphere and uplifting ERO report (6 Sep 2012)¹⁴ that acknowledges the student achievement in the current context. In particular that the students are well engaged in their learning, lifting achievement and having closer relationships with other students and their teachers.
5. Plea to the Minister to partner with the school community so they feel empowered to identify and explore the options available. Also to listen to and value what is most important to the school community.
6. Reality that things will be different and that positive change is informed by evidence and research to ensure the best learning opportunities for our children and mokopuna.
7. Community wish to ensure:
 - Individualised learning pathways and strong support for every child, and their Whanau if needed.
 - That this new education setting is not too big or too broad that our tamariki will get lost or hurt.
 - We want to ensure our tamariki have opportunities to build strong relationships that matter with people they know and trust.
8. We want to be sure that the very best things that we have in place now, can be carried through into our new learning environments
9. Importance of ongoing meaningful dialogue with us about the possibilities.

¹⁴ <http://ero.govt.nz/index.php/Early-Childhood-School-Reports/School-Reports/Wainoni-School-06-09-2012>

10. Likely impact of merger

10.1 What closure would mean for the school and its community

Closure would mean many different things to different stakeholders and the diverse feedback in the workshops and surveys reveals the breadth of opinion and thinking in the Wainoni community. Students, staff, parents and the community have raised a number of concerns relative to this process, uncertainties and the current impact on students and community of this proposal.

10.2 School closure and the overall plan

It is not yet clear for our learning community cluster how the proposed closure of our school would fit into the overall plan for our learning community cluster in the short, medium or long term.

This is the same situation for the network as a whole because it is unclear how the schools closure will fit into the overall plan for the network. Initial thinking is that the school BoT wishes to remain engaged in this process.

11. Response to current proposal

The Wainoni School community:

1. Recognises the massive impact the Canterbury Earthquakes has had on Greater Christchurch, the school and community of Wainoni.
2. Acknowledges this most challenging context and the test this has been to school leadership, staff, parents and children whilst still focusing on student achievement.
3. The importance of Whanau atmosphere and the uplifting ERO report (6 Sep 2012)¹⁵ that acknowledges the student achievement in the current context. In particular that the students are well engaged in their learning, lifting achievement and having closer relationships with other students and their teachers.
4. Notes the shocking and disempowering impact of the meeting on 13 September 2012 and the engagement process undertaken especially the lack of information and planning.
5. Realises that due to the impact on the Canterbury education network it is appropriate to review schooling provisions.
6. Are very sensitive to the human impact of the earthquakes especially on the many vulnerable families of the Wainoni Schools community who are fragile and struggling to manage the complex recovery of our community.
7. Is pleased with the level of engagement and diverse range of school and community stakeholders who have participated in the Wainoni School dialogue in the context of the broader conversation happening relative to the five schools in the 'Aranui cluster' and other related conversations including the New Brighton cluster.
8. Considers that this is a good level of engagement given the current reality of many parents and the constraints the school community is currently operating under. These constraints include; the timing (Term 4), the time frame and resources required to effectively engage with a diverse, fragile and vulnerable community.
9. Thanks the school and community stakeholders who have engaged in the Wainoni and wider 'Aranui Cluster' dialogue including, but not limited to; parents, grandparents, teachers, education leaders, Maori and Pasifika leaders, Early Childhood Education, Kohunga Reo, local government, health and social services.
10. Acknowledges the Minister of Education for granting the additional three month time extension and the reassurance that this is a genuine.
11. Plea to the Minister of Education to partner with the school community so they feel empowered to identify and explore the options available. They also implore the Minister to listen to and value what is most important to the school community.
14. Acknowledge the reality that things will be different and want positive change as informed by evidence and research to ensure the best learning opportunities for our children and mokopuna.
15. Acknowledge the relationships and trust that exists with the numerous agencies whose people provide specialist services and support to our children. This is especially for the 43/103 (42%) students who have external support.

¹⁵ <http://ero.govt.nz/index.php/Early-Childhood-School-Reports/School-Reports/Wainoni-School-06-09-2012>

Initially there was a majority agreement from the school and wider community of interest to reject the current proposal

The school and its community recognise that the Minister of Education, ultimately has the power to decide on the future of Wainoni School.

Regardless of whether a decision is made to close the school or not, the Wainoni School community wants to ensure:

1. Individualised learning pathways and strong support for every child, and their Whanau if needed.
2. That this new education setting is not too big or too broad that our tamariki will get lost within the system and their learning compromised.
3. Our tamariki have opportunities to build strong relationships that matter with people they know and trust.
4. That the very best things that we have in place now, can be carried through into our new learning environments.
5. We are partners in ongoing meaningful dialogue with us about the possibilities.

There are a significant proportion of those engaged who are unsure or who agree with the current proposal and as the discussion has proceeded people have shown openness to exploring new opportunities that may become available for our tamariki and Whanau in a community campus.

The Board of Trustees has given careful consideration about the long-term future of this special place and the children and families to come. Through this consideration it is our unanimous decision to endorse the current proposal in principle.

We look forward to ongoing meaningful engagement with the Ministry of Education to continue working through this Education Renewal process.

Appendices

Appendix 1 Written submission from parent

I was just going to write a wee comment but I realised I had too much to say so decided to even type it as well.

Wainoni needs to stay!

I chose to send _____ to Wainoni School because I love the school and what they do! I think Wainoni is unique and it would be a huge loss for our children but also the community!

I love how Wainoni is small, I love the child teacher ratios because there are often teacher aides supporting as well.

I love how there is a sense of belonging, whanaungatanga and manakitanga throughout the school. The children all know each other, the teachers and principal all know the children. There are amazing relationships and I think this is key in helping our children succeed and this is one reason why Wainoni is unique!

Speaking of relationships and this feeling reminds both _____ and I of _____ first day. She started the first day of term 2, 2011. When we arrived at school, the first thing we saw was Kym at the gate welcoming the children back. It was this that reassured Michael and I that we had made the right decision in shifting schools for _____. This is not just a once of and if it's not Kym its _____. Not to mention _____ and all the other teachers, you always feel welcome and I think this is unique and not something you get from other schools.

I think the way Wainoni teaches is effective for the children at Wainoni! I love the values and skills that are being instilled into my daughter. The teachers do a great job and know who the children are and what they need to do to help them succeed.

Wainoni needs to stay!

At this stage if the proposal go ahead as is, we would not send Karisma to the 'super school' in Aranui. Even with Wainoni being part of it.

We have lots of questions or concerns around this super school and how it will work.

I can see and appreciate the benefits that it could have in the community especially if you incorporated and started at early childhood. You would have families and children growing and learning together. Relationships and the sense of belonging would be strong in our children and values could begin to be instilled at such a young age and then followed throughout their learning that would hopefully be similar in values etc throughout the 'super school'. Transitions could be smooth for children from ECE to Primary to intermediate/high which in turn would be beneficial for our children. However this is in my ideal world and from what is proposed and the government we currently have I do not see it like this.

I feel like the government has just seen an opportunity with the earthquakes and taken advantage of this to trial their "chartered schools" before putting them to the rest of the country. I know Hekia is saying this is not the case but it still feels like this.

However my concerns are with the super school, how can wainoni's values be implemented into this new super school and what about all the other schools and their own philosophys and beliefs?

I do just believe what you do and how you do it is unique and I don't think it is normal practise in other schools, so what will the new super school look like?

I know the concepts of Ako and tuakana-teina and because of this think on one hand having primary to high could be good and the learning that could happen amongst all could be awesome; but on the other hand I worry about this. How can we ensure our children will be safe, with teens that are just learning to drive and have their licenses, teen learning and experimenting with lots of different things, and they are heaps bigger. I am stereotyping but just want to know how this is going to work. What is the school going to look like, is it still separate on the same grounds or all open? How can we ensure our children won't grow up to fast and be exposed to experiences that they wouldn't usually be exposed to them till later in their schooling? How is this all going to work?

I guess I am also worried about the classes and class sizes, is there going to be funding, support for the teachers and children to have teacher aides? I'm stereotyping again, but I think there are so many high risk children in this community and it is like the government is just sticking them in one place. I know Wainoni has it fair share too but I think it is also balanced enough not to mention the support you have with teacher aides (although im sure you could always have more), and also the way and style you teach, I think you cater to each child's individual needs. With the super school will they be able to cater to each child's individual needs?

I also worry there will be lots of children with behaviour problems (sorry stereotyping again) all in one place, so how will this look in the class? Will the teachers have enough support to tend to all the children? Are the children who just get on and do it, going to get the support they need or challenges they need to succeed or will they just be left because they are 'no trouble' and 'meeting national standards'?

I guess I also worry for the children on what the majority of children will be and weather this gives them a clear idea of normal is or what normal can be, if that makes sense. If we have lots of high risk children and children who have behavioural problems how will they see that things can be different if they don't have enough other people for them to compare and learn from each other and measure what normal is. I think this is a big concern and being someone who has broken many cycles that no one else in my family could do, I just worry about this, what impact is our super school going to have on our children in 15, 20 years time? Is this super school actually going to set up children to be lifelong learners?

I guess also the placement of the new school first of all it's such a rundown area right now but I know it could look good. But there is a dairy right there. Also the Library. So how far away will the school be away from these things and how is it fenced or blocked off? Will anyone just heading to these places be able to walk through our school, and what about our children? How will we know they will be safe?

I don't know unless there is a clearer proposal and I can see it will be beneficial for our children, I think Wainoni needs to stay!

Appendix 2 Principal Kym Wells address to Minister Parata

Kia Ora to the Whanau of Wainoni School, to our past and present pupils and friends of Wainoni, Tena Koe Minister Parata, and welcome to Wainoni School for this meeting. We thank you for making the time to spend with us this evening. I am honoured to speak to you on behalf of this Wainoni School community this evening.

More than 2 years ago, the world as we knew it changed forever, as we lived through one of New Zealand's worst modern disasters.

During the months since then, the people of Christchurch, who have chosen to stay, have been tested to their very core.

Minister Parata, we have all struggled at times to remain composed and to do as we must do on a daily basis. Our school whanau and staff have been living in conditions that have been shocking at times. Mould on walls, freezing draughty homes and financial strain caused by job losses along with ongoing breakdowns of sewerage, water, phone facilities and roading, these are all things that have shaken us around, along with many many quakes.

The staff and students of Wainoni School have worked hard to remain focused on keeping things normalised for children. We are grateful for the support that we have received from around New Zealand and from around the world. With the support that we have received, financially, personnel, and the comforting gifts, we were able to ensure that our focus was on student achievement, even through continued quakes.

More than 10 000 quakes later, we are somewhat weakened. However, Minister, I have to say that nothing prepared us for the extensive nature of the announcement from your office that we received in September.

The meeting on the 13th September 2012, was something that many of us in Education circles will never forget.

We were shocked by the level of the news delivered, by the lack of follow-up information, and the plans for our schools that were totally devastating.

Minister, we knew that things could not remain the same, we knew that changes must occur, and we absolutely accept this.

Let me tell you about our school as it is now, and the hopes and dreams we have for the future.

Wainoni School enjoys a whanau atmosphere, and recently was bolstered by an ERO review that proclaimed its excellence.

Students at the school enjoy high levels of support, excellent opportunities to lift their achievement and close relationships with other students, and their teachers.

We wish to ensure that the great things that happen at our school currently are captured and moved into the planning for the future of schooling in this area. We would love to look at the possibilities with an open minds and hearts.

Our current and future students must be the focus as we move forward.

Unfortunately, the process that we have experienced to date, has not enabled us to capture this. Confidence has been lost, and the community has not felt supported, or

consulted. In fact they have felt disempowered even more.. and after the number of quakes that we have experienced, this has felt very unfair to many.

There have been extremely strong feelings caused by the process to date.

So Minister, I have a plea for you tonight from our community.

And it is,

Please help us to feel empowered by this process that we continue through under your guidance.

Please stop this rushed-through process now, and lets do this better and in open partnership. Lets talk through the many options, not just the one that we have been given.

Please listen to our parents, our community who really want to do this well for their Tamariki and their future moko.

Please help us to feel listened to, and valued. Help us not to feel like further victims of another event that we have no control over.

We ask this of you Minister as it **will** make all of the difference. Our community understands that things will be different for our Tamariki. We just ask that you enter into full partnership with us to ensure that what we get for them is the very best. That what we end up with is researched-backed and so we know it will be successful and that we can ensure the best learning opportunities for them for the future. We know that what we have now is successful and we want to ensure anything new can be even more so.

Our community wish to ensure:

Individualised learning pathways and strong support for every child, and their whanau if needed.

That this new education setting is not too big or too broad that our tamariki will get lost or hurt.

We want to ensure our tamariki have opportunities to build strong relationships that matter with people they know and trust.

We want to be sure that the very best things that we have in place now, can be carried through into our new learning environments.

So our plea Minister is for you to enter into meaningful dialogue with us about the possibilities. Help us to feel empowered and included. Stop the rush of this process so that we can all do this with great care.

Thank you Minister for listening to us.

Kym Wells – Tuesday 5 November 2012

Appendix 3 CDHB Community and Public Health response

Community and Public Health, CDHB

Community and Public Health, the public health division of the Canterbury District Health Board, upholds the Treaty of Waitangi, seeks to address issues of equity, utilises a determinants of health approach and endeavours to be informed by best-evidence.

Education as a determinant of health

Education that is meaningful and relevant is recognised as playing a fundamental role in personal and social development. Education and health are inextricably linked. In simplest terms this means that healthy young people are more likely to be able to make the most of learning opportunities and to learn more effectively. In addition well educated young people are more likely to make healthy choices and young people who remain in education have a better chance for good health.

Partnerships between the health and education sectors can therefore add value to both health and educational outcomes. A health promoting schools approach can, for example, provide opportunities to create environments that increase a sense of belonging and connectedness to school and community, and demonstrate a whole school commitment to improving and protecting the health and wellbeing of the wider school community.

1. Education is a strong predictor of long-term health and quality of life.¹ A positive relationship has been found between one's education and one's health status.² A positive link has also been found between one's own schooling and the schooling received by one's children.³
2. Success in school and years in education are major factors in future social and occupational status throughout life.⁴ Education, together with income and employment status, has been identified as critical to determining an individual's social and economic position and ultimately their health outcomes.
3. Evidence suggests that a low level of educational attainment is associated with poor health status.⁵ Educational attainment is strongly related to future occupation and income level with adverse early social circumstances associated with a significant chance of low educational achievement.⁶

¹ Feinstein, L.I. 2002. *Quantitative Estimates of the Social Benefits of Learning, 2: Health (Depression and Obesity)*. London, England: Centre for Research on the Wider Benefits of Learning. Available at: <http://www.learningbenefits.net/Publications/ResReps/ResReps6.pdf>

² Groot, W. & van den Brink, H.M. 2006. *What does education do for our health? Measuring the Effects of Education on Health and Civic Engagement*, Proceedings of the Copenhagen Symposium. Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development

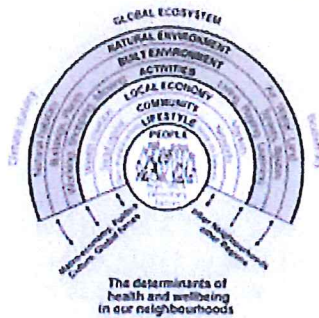
³ Ibid.

⁴ Ross, C.E., Wu, C.L. 1996. Education, Age, and the Cumulative Advantage in Health. *Journal of Health and Social Behavior*, 37:104-120.

⁵ National Advisory Committee on Health and Disability. 1998. *The Social, Cultural and Economic Determinants of Health in New Zealand: Action to Improve Health*. Wellington. National Health Committee.

⁶ Wadsworth, M.E.J. 1997. Changing social factors and their long-term implication for health. *British Medical Bulletin* 51, 198-209.

4. Education is recognised as a key element of sustainable development and can be considered one of the most important underlying determinants of health outcomes for both individuals and communities. Education reduces poverty through increased employment, and provides skills for attaining better health.⁷ Education makes a positive contribution to the efficiency of (consumer) choices (i.e. on smoking and on the use of health care).⁸
5. Although health care services are an important determinant of health, most of the determinants of health lie outside the traditional 'health sector'. Far greater impacts on population health can be attributed to environmental, social and behavioural factors.⁹ The diagram below presents an overview of the factors that determine the health of populations.



Source: WHO Collaborating Centre for Healthy Cities and Urban Policy, University of the West of England, Bristol.
 URL: <http://www.bhs.uwe.ac.uk/who-researchtheme.asp>

6. Initiatives to improve health must therefore involve organisations and groups beyond the health sector, such as the education sector if they are to have a reasonable impact.¹⁰

Māori and health outcomes

7. Indigenous children are acknowledged as one of the most vulnerable and marginalised groups in our world. These children inhabit every region, often living in remote areas, representing some seventy countries and five thousand different peoples. Even in income-rich countries indigenous children do not tend to enjoy the same levels of health or access to health services that are

⁷ World Health Organization Regional Offices for South-East Asia and the Western Pacific. 2008. *Health in Asia and the Pacific*. WHO Regional Offices for South-East Asia and the Western Pacific. Available from: http://www.wpro.who.int/NR/rdonlyres/07833FE9-0D55-40E2-A776-E844430F00F0/0/07_Chapter2Socialdeterminantsofhealth.pdf

⁸ Groot, W. & van den Brink, H.M. 2006. *What does education do for our health? Measuring the Effects of Education on Health and Civic Engagement*. Proceedings of the Copenhagen Symposium. Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development

⁹ Public Health Advisory Committee. 2004. *The Health of People and Communities. A Way Forward: Public Policy and the Economic Determinants of Health*. Wellington. Public Health Advisory Committee

¹⁰ McGinnis JM, Williams-Russo P, Knickman JR. 2002. The case for more active policy attention to health promotion. *Health Affairs*, 21(2): 78 - 93.

enjoyed by their non-indigenous peers. Indigenous children continue to be over represented in mortality statistics for infants and children regardless of whether they live in income-rich or income-poor countries.¹¹

8. In 2006 there were 867,576 New Zealand children aged 0-14 years, who formed 21.5% of the total New Zealand population. Of these children, 23.0% identified as Māori.¹²
9. There is considerable diversity and disparity in health and wellbeing outcomes for New Zealand children. Overall, children who live in Māori, Pacific and low-income families fare much worse compared with other New Zealand children. The health status of Māori and Pacific children has been identified as two to three times poorer than the health status of non-Māori and non-Pacific children.¹³
10. Māori generally have poorer health than non-Māori for many health measures including heart disease, cancer and mortality.^{14,15} These findings have been found to persist even when other factors such as smoking and socio-economic status are controlled for.¹⁶ It appears that there are multi-factorial explanations for these findings.^{17,18}
11. The New Zealand Public Health & Disability Act 2000 incorporates a number of significant references to Māori health. The Act requires district health boards to establish and maintain processes to enable Māori to participate in and contribute to strategies for Māori health improvement. These, and related requirements, are imposed in order to recognise and respect the special relationship Māori have with the Crown under the Treaty of Waitangi and to improve the health status of Māori to at least the same level as non-Māori and to safe-guard Māori cultural concepts, values and practices.¹⁹

¹¹ UNICEF. 2003. Ensuring the Rights of Indigenous Children. *Innocenti Digest No. 11*. Florence: Innocenti Research Centre.

¹² Ministry of Health. (2009). *A Focus on the Health of Māori and Pacific Children. Key Findings of the 2006/07 New Zealand Health Survey*. Wellington: Ministry of Health.

¹³ Public Health Advisory Committee. 2010. *The Best Start in Life. Achieving effective action on child health and wellbeing*. Wellington: Ministry of Health.

¹⁴ Ministry of Health. 2004. *A Portrait of Health. Key results of the 2002/2003 New Zealand Health Survey. Public Health Intelligence Occasional Bulletin No. 21*. Wellington: Ministry of Health.

¹⁵ Ministry of Health. 2003. *Decades of Disparity: ethnic mortality trends in New Zealand 1980-99*. Wellington: Ministry of Health.

¹⁶ Reid, P., Robson, B., & Jones, C. 2000. Disparities in health: common myths and uncommon truths. *Pacific Health Dialog* 7 (1): 38-47.

¹⁷ Harris, R., Tobias, M., Jeffreys, M., Waldegrave, K., Karlsen, S., & Nazroo, J. 2006. Effects of self-reported racial discrimination and deprivation on Maori health and inequalities in New Zealand: cross-sectional study. *Lancet* 367(9257): 2005-9

¹⁸ Reid, P., & Robson, B. 2007. Understanding health inequities. In: Robson, B., Harris, R. eds. *Hauora: Maori Standards of Health IV A study of the years 2000-2005*. Wellington. Te Ropu Rangahau Hauora a Eru Pomare.

¹⁹ <http://www.health.govt.nz/about-ministry/ministry-business-units/maori-health-business-unit/our-history-and-current-position>

Māori, education and Te Reo Māori

12. Adopted in 1989 the Convention on the Rights of the Child states the full range of civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights of children. Article 30 of the Convention upholds the right of a child to 'enjoy his or her own culture, to profess and practise his or her own religion, or to use his or her own language'.²⁰
13. The Māori Language Act 1987 recognises Te Reo Māori as an official language of New Zealand and the Waitangi Tribunal has found Te Reo Māori to be a taonga guaranteed to all Māori under Article 2 of the Treaty of Waitangi.²¹ Te Reo Māori is the basis of Māori culture and is considered a gift from the ancestors. It expresses the values and beliefs of the people and serves as a focus for Māori identity. It is generally recognised that language is a critical component of cultural identity which in turn is essential to the mental, physical and spiritual health of indigenous peoples – an expression of ways of life, ways of thinking and shared cultural understandings.
14. Approximately one in every 10 Māori students left school in 2007 with little or no formal attainment. Māori were almost three times more likely than European/Pākehā students to leave school with little or no formal attainment.²²
15. Te Puni Kōkiri have reported that Māori with higher levels of qualifications are more likely to be employed and earn higher incomes (particularly those holding tertiary level 4 qualifications and above) and Māori with higher levels of qualifications (post-school qualifications compared with school or no qualifications) are more likely to live longer.²³
16. The Education Act 1989 requires school boards to take 'all reasonable steps to discover and consider the views and concerns of Māori communities living in the geographical area' served by the school. School charters must recognise the importance of Māori culture and instruction must be provided in Te Reo and tikanga for those pupils whose parents request it. The Act also allows the Minister to designate any school a *kura kaupapa Māori* where parents request it. A *kura kaupapa Māori* is a school that observes Māori cultural practices and as far as possible teaches all of its curriculum in Māori.²⁴
17. Māori-medium education was established in order to ensure Te Reo Māori and Māori culture survived. Māori-medium education is explicitly linked to a

²⁰ <http://www2.chchr.org/english/law/crc.htm>

²¹ <http://www.waitangi-tribunal.govt.nz/doclibrary/public/reports/generic/Wai0262/Wai262Factsheet6TeReoMaori.pdf>

²² Ministry of Education. 2008. *State of Education in New Zealand 2008*. Wellington: Ministry of Education. Accessed 25 November from:

http://www.educationcounts.govt.nz/_data/assets/pdf_file/0020/41663/890829_MoE_State-of-Education.pdf

²³ <http://www.tpk.govt.nz/en/in-print/our-publications/fact-sheets/benefits-of-education-for-maori/download/tpk-benefits-of-education-2010-en.pdf>

²⁴ Barrett, M. & Connolly-Stone, K. 1998. The Treaty of Waitangi and Social Policy. *The Social Policy Journal of New Zealand* 11: 29-49

local Māori community or iwi and is expected to be adaptable to the specific setting, the whānau and the community.²⁵

18. The Māori Education Strategy: 'Ka Hikitia – Managing for Success' is the Ministry of Education's five-year plan to transform the education sector, to ensure Māori are able to enjoy education success as Māori. The two main focus areas are 'Culture Counts' (knowing, respecting and valuing Māori students, where they come from and building on what they bring with them') and 'Productive Partnerships' (Māori students, whānau, hapū, iwi and educators sharing knowledge and expertise with each other to produce better mutual outcomes).²⁶
19. Ka Hikitia acknowledges that culture and education are inextricably interwoven²⁷ and that Māori children and students 'are more likely to achieve when they see themselves, their whanau, hapu and iwi reflected in the teaching content and environment, and are able to be Māori in all learning contexts'(Ka Hikitia, Pg 20).^{28, 29}
20. New Zealand research findings indicate that effective teaching practices require learning contexts which have meaning for the learner, involve accurate assessment, and feedback that is responsive and supports future learning. In addition integrating understandings of cultural identity into learning settings has been found to be most effective when it contributes to the shaping of teaching practices and learning experiences for specific students.³⁰

-
21. Language and culture influence our perceptions of both illness and health. 'Culture is a dynamic and adaptive system of meaning that is learned, shared, and transmitted from one generation to the next and is reflected in the values, norms, practices, symbols, ways of life, and other social interactions of a given culture.'³¹ Culture can provide a foundation for both personal and collective identity, the erosion of which can adversely impact the health and wellbeing of populations and may lead to depression, anxiety, substance abuse, and suicide.³²

²⁵ Ministry of Education. 2010. *Nga Whanaketanga Rumaki Māori About Māori-medium education Factsheet* Wellington. Ministry of Education.

²⁶ Ka Hikitia – Managing for Success; Available at:

<http://www.minedu.govt.nz/Boards/TeachingAndLearning/MaoriEducationSuccess.aspx>

²⁷ Bishop, R., Berryman, M., Taikiwai, S., & Richardson, C. 2003. *Te Kotahitanga. The experiences of year 9 and 10 Māori students in mainstream classrooms. Report to the Ministry of Education.* Wellington: Ministry of Education.

²⁸ Ibid.

²⁹ Ka Hikitia – Managing for Success. Available at:

<http://www.minedu.govt.nz/Boards/TeachingAndLearning/MaoriEducationSuccess.aspx>

³⁰ Alton-Lee, A. 2003. *Quality teaching for diverse students in schooling. Best evidence synthesis.* Wellington: Ministry of Education.

³¹ Kreuter, M.W. & McClure, S. 2004. The role of culture in health communication. *Annual Review of Public Health*. 25: 439-455

³² Kirmayer, L.J., Brass, G.M., & Tait, C.L. 2000. The mental health of Aboriginal peoples. Transformations of identity and community. *Canadian Journal of Psychiatry*. 45(7): 607-616

Appendix 4 CDHB Community and Public Health Literature review
Attached separately

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27 November 2012

Wainoni School Board of Trustees Response to Ministry of Education Proposal

Appendix 4

Canterbury

District Health Board

Te Pōari Hauora o Waitaha

The role of schools in communities and
community recovery post-disaster

A literature review

**THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN PREPARED BY
THE INFORMATION TEAM, COMMUNITY AND
PUBLIC HEALTH**

Final version

26 November 2012

The information contained in this document may be derived from a number of sources. Although CDHB has taken reasonable steps to ensure that the information is accurate, it accepts no liability or responsibility for any acts or omissions, done or omitted in reliance in whole or in part, of the information. The Canterbury District Health Board accepts no responsibility for the manner in which this information is subsequently used.

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Executive Summary

This literature review has been conducted to inform schools in Christchurch and Community and Public Health staff about the role of schools in communities following disasters, following the government's announcement in 2012 that 31 primary and intermediate schools in Christchurch may close or be merged with another school.

Education as a Determinant of Health

The current and future health of our region's children and young people is strongly associated with each individual's educational achievements and level of qualification attained. Education, together with income and employment status, is critical to determining an individual's social and economic position and ultimately their health outcomes. A low level of educational attainment is associated with poor health status.

Schools and their Communities

Schools have more than just an educational function. They can be the centre of identity for their community, providing a sense of social cohesion and ultimately contributing to better wellbeing for their community.

1. Effects of school closures on communities

Because of the important roles schools play in their communities, proposed school closures or mergers are likely to be perceived by their communities as threatening a range of losses. Some of these losses have been researched but to a relatively small extent, therefore their ongoing effects are inadequately understood. In New Zealand, communities have been left divided and feeling bitter over school closures, particularly where they felt there was a lack of consultation.

2. Effects of (changes to) the school community on teachers and students

School closures affect students in different ways. Students may adapt more easily to closures or mergers than parents or teachers. There are both positive and negative effects of school closures and mergers. Positive effects may include more educational opportunities and more diverse social networks; negative effects may include more distant relationships between adults and students, larger class sizes and transportation challenges.

3. The importance of school communities in post-disaster settings

A sense of school as a community was crucial in saving tens of thousands of lives following a major earthquake and tsunami in Japan in 2010. Returning to school made a huge difference to children and re-establishing a routine and a sense of security were important in helping combat the sense of insecurity created by disaster. Similarly, following Hurricane Katrina in 2005, schools were 'anchors of their communities' in the short and long-term, by returning a sense of normality to children and parents.

Children, Schools and Disaster Recovery

Schools have played a central role in providing a sense of normality for students and parents following disasters, including the Canterbury earthquakes. This is very important, as exposure to disasters can lead to mental health problems in children. Teachers can help monitor the ongoing mental health of children over time. However, teachers themselves need ongoing support following disasters, and the current proposed changes for the school sector in Christchurch may represent an additional burden that is unhelpful for their wellbeing in the wake of the earthquakes.

School Size

The movement towards reducing school sizes (albeit in high schools rather than primary schools) in the United States has arisen in a substantially different context and may not be directly relevant to New Zealand. The literature suggests that research surrounding the relationship between school size and educational achievement is relatively sparse and inconsistent in its findings. New Zealand research has found that smaller schools have both advantages and disadvantages.

Introduction

This document has been written to inform schools in Christchurch and Community and Public Health staff about the role of schools in communities following disasters, following the government's announcement in 2012 that 31 primary and intermediate schools in Christchurch may close or be merged with another school. The government has given schools until 4th December 2012 to consult on these planned closures and mergers.

Limitations of the evidence base

There is a relative dearth of literature on education restructuring in post-disaster settings. There has also little been little written about the effects of educational restructuring on communities, and even less is known about the effects of educational restructuring on students and teachers. Some of the research available relates to high school students rather than those of primary/intermediate age, some of which has been cited in this review, despite the author(s) being aware of the limitations of the generalisability of those findings.

Limitations of this review

This review is highly limited by the short timeframe available to search for, retrieve and review relevant literature. This review scans the breadth of literature across such diverse disciplines as education, health, geography, economics, psychology and law. To do justice to such a wide scope in a short timeframe is a challenge and so the author(s) do not claim that this review is in itself, comprehensive, nor the final word on this topic. This review also presents the findings from the literature around the small schools movement in the United States, even though this movement is amongst high schools rather than primary schools, with the view that some of the arguments may be generalisable towards schooling in general. In addition, despite every effort of the author(s) to maintain a neutral stance towards the literature, it is likely that due to the highly emotive nature of the context there may be some bias in the presentation of findings.

Background

The earthquakes of 2010 and 2011 resulted in some level of damage to all schools in the greater Christchurch region. The extent of damage to early childhood centres, schools and tertiary facilities, together with the ongoing relocation of people and school roll change, have raised concerns that the education network cannot be returned to its pre-earthquake state. There are currently 215 state and state integrated schools (including two teen parent units and seven special schools) in greater Christchurch. These schools provide a range of educational options including single-sex secondary education, Maori immersion and bilingual options as well as two designated character schools.

Approximately 12% of the 69,781 students enrolled in these schools (as at March, 2012) are Maori and 4% Pasifika (Ministry of Education, 2012). It has been estimated that some 12,000 students left the city immediately following the February 2011 earthquake. Many have subsequently returned to the city with March 2012 roll returns indicating 4500 fewer students compared with March 2010 (Ministry of Education, 2012).

In October 2011 Christchurch school communities and other interested parties were invited to comment on the development of a draft Education Renewal Recovery Plan. Feedback was received from 229 individuals and groups. In May 2012 the Minister of Education released a draft document 'Directions' which was followed by a period of consultation undertaken by the Ministry of Education and the Tertiary Education Commission. An additional 524 submissions were lodged with the Ministry and together with a series of consultation meetings and focus groups informed the development of 'Directions for Education Renewal in Greater Christchurch' which was released in August 2012. This process was focused on developing a vision or direction for the future of education in the greater Christchurch region rather than considering the immediate future of any particular school, service or facility.

On 13 September 2012 proposals indicating the future direction for the education sector in greater Christchurch, at an individual school level, were released by the Minister of Education. This introduced proposals for identified schools which were defined by three categories: Restore (low-level change), Consolidate (moderate-level change) or Rejuvenate (major change across a cluster of schools). Of 215 schools in the greater Christchurch area 42 schools are directly affected by proposed closures or mergers.

- Closure is proposed for 13 State Primary and Intermediate schools (two of these schools have opted for voluntary closure)
- Merger is proposed for 18 State Primary schools.
- A new Year 1-13 school has been proposed to replace three Primary, one Intermediate and one Secondary school
- Education provision for three Banks Peninsula schools will be consolidated under the umbrella of the Area School but the schools will remain on their existing sites
- Geotechnical information is still being sought for three secondary and two primary schools

Education as a Determinant of Health

The current and future health of our region's children and young people (and in turn the health of their future children) is strongly associated with each individual's educational achievements and level of qualification attained. Education, together with income and employment status, has been identified as critical to determining an individual's social and economic position and ultimately their health outcomes. Evidence suggests that a low level of educational attainment is associated with poor health status. A number of health and health-related effects of education have been identified including:

- 'A positive relationship between individual education and health status
- A positive association between school and the health status of family members (in particular on one's children)
- A positive link between an individual's schooling and the schooling received by their children
- A positive contribution of schooling to the efficiency of (consumer) choices (i.e. on smoking and on the use of health care)
- A relation between schooling and an individual's fertility choices and the fertility choices of their children (Groot & van den Brink, 2006, p356)

Education and health are inextricably linked. In the simplest terms this means that the healthy young people are more likely to be able to make the most of learning opportunities and to learn more effectively. In addition well educated young people are more likely to make healthy choices. Young people who feel positive about their school and who are connected to significant adults are less likely to engage in high risk behaviours and are likely to have better learning outcomes (St Leger, L., Young, I., Blanchard, C., & Perry, M., 2010).

It is recognized that communities that were vulnerable prior to disaster may fare less well in long-term recovery thereby resulting in increased disadvantage. Following disasters the very young and very old, the disabled and those who are poor or who have limited literacy skills are likely to suffer the most (Bidwell, 2011).

Many of the communities currently facing proposed school changes (i.e. closures or mergers) are in those areas most heavily affected by the earthquakes: areas already identified as home to some of the most deprived and potentially vulnerable communities in the greater Christchurch region. For example of the 42 schools earmarked for proposed change 35 are currently engaged with Health Promoting Schools (HPS is a national initiative supported by the Ministry of Health) and are working with HPS facilitators based at Community and Public Health, CDHB. The opportunity to be involved in HPS is offered to low decile schools and/or schools with a high proportion of Maori and Pacific students. Consequently involvement in HPS implies recognition that a school is based within a potentially vulnerable community.

Schools and their Communities

1. Effect of closures on school communities

As already discussed, there is a strong relationship between education and health. There is also a relationship between the make-up of an area (including transport, food supplies etc.) and the health of its population. As such, in poorer areas with fewer amenities that promote good health, community facilities that provide opportunities for people to socialize or get together informally are highly valued (Witten et al., 2001). In many areas, a school can be a key community centre for people to contribute and belong, ultimately contributing to better health for the community (Witten et al., 2001). One way in that schools and health are linked is through the concept of "social cohesion". Social cohesion includes the ideas of trust in others, reciprocal relationships, fairness and being integrated socially (Witten et al., 2001).

Schools have more than just an educational function (Witten et al., 2001, Kearns et al., 2009). The school is the centre of identity for the community, and has a social role as a meeting place for parents. Schools help parents to feel more socially integrated and to participate in the life of a community (Witten et al 2001). Schools are a common meeting point for parents, for whom there may be existing social ties from the neighbourhood and whose children are at similar stages (Kearns et al., 2009). Schools contribute to the "vitality of neighbourhoods" (Witten et al., 2001, p. 316). Schools are also a legacy from previous generations.

Prior to 1999, Surrey Park School in Invercargill was an important meeting place for its local community. It closed in 1999 due to falling rolls as a result of population decline. It was a decile 2 school with many children from families on lower incomes, and 22% of the schools' students were Maori. For some families, the school provided the only sense of community they had (Witten et al., 2001). The familiarity of meeting at the school gate at 3pm was highly valued. After fighting the impending closure parents spoke of some of the losses they experienced: feeling more socially isolated; loss of personal investment (of money, time and resources); concerns for the safety of their children (walking longer distances home from school); and feeling less accepted or included at new higher decile schools. Because Surrey Park School had been the lowest decile school in Invercargill, parents were forced to send their children to higher decile schools, where they felt there were socioeconomic barriers. These included the school being more expensive and less accommodating financially (Witten et al., 2001). Ultimately, this sense of exclusion from communities may have an impact on health.

In other school communities in South Taranaki, parents also voiced numerous concerns about the impact of the school closures on their community life. As a result of falling rolls in South Taranaki, in 2003/04 the Ministry of Education closed four local schools completely and merged others. Parents from these schools worried about sustaining community relationships over time; they mourned the loss of intergenerational connections with the school; they were concerned about practicalities such as transport, and had received insufficient information about new bus routes to inform their choice of a

new school; they regretted the loss of personal investment of money, time and resources to build the community; and they saw the school closures as losing the focal point of their community. For some, it was the only place where they had contact with other local people. They saw the school as essential for building "community spirit" and as having a "big role to play in the stability and security of people's lives" (Witten et al., 2001, p.137). Parents were also concerned that losing the centre of the community would deter people from moving to the district and that this could have long-term economic effects.

South Taranaki parents who were interviewed by researchers described the advantages of smaller schools. These included parents feeling more motivated to support the school. For instance, they felt it would be harder to become involved as "mother help" in a larger school. In particular, the advantages of a small school were seen as "a sense of accessibility to the teachers, the curriculum, their child's learning environment and other parents in the community" (Witten et al., 2001, p.138). Parents felt that their children were not held back academically at all in a smaller school; rather, they felt that it gave them "greater opportunities". This was reflected in the comment that the "teacher, in most cases, knows the children really well, both in and out of school, so they can give them that extra support that they need". They were aware that school closures were partly justified by the Ministry of Education by "educational disadvantage... associated with small school size" but didn't feel that they had been given adequate evidence to support those justifications (Witten et al., 2001, p.138).

Parental feelings generated by the review process included dismay, sadness, confusion, uncertainty and resentment (over the time taken and lack of clear direction from the Ministry of Education). Parents rued the loss of cooperation amongst schools, sensing the spirit of "divide and rule". They suggested that "Mergers, they can either make or break a community... this merger here nearly broke this community because the Government did it the wrong way". They mentioned the breakdown in trust between communities and "felt that these broken relationships between communities and individuals would affect community interactions for years to come". Parents felt that communities were left "fighting amongst themselves" (Witten et al., 2001, p.138).

In terms of the school closures in South Taranaki, researchers have argued that the closure process failed to recognise how central schools were to their communities and how the closures would affect community wellbeing (Kearns et al., 2009). They argue that the "one size fits all" policy with its focus on property, finance and administration did not work for the rural communities of South Taranaki. In particular, "the closure of rural schools disconnects communities from their past, shuts down a crucial focal point and meeting place for the community, and blocks the paths to other resources" (Kearns et al., 2009). The researchers suggest that the efforts that parents went to in order to fight the closures was evidence of how central schools are to community life.

2. Effects of (changes to) the school community on teachers and students

There is some New Zealand evidence of how changes to the school community affect students. Following the closure of Surrey Park School in Invercargill, children adapted to the closure more easily than did their parents. Reportedly, in follow-up interviews months after the 1999 closure, most children had settled into their new school and made new friends (Witten et al., 2001). Children were, however, more likely to be “spread out” from their friends from Surrey Park School, after relocating to nine different schools. Some of them changed schools more than once after the closure.

The effects of school closures on students and teachers have also been documented internationally. Between 2003 and 2006 in the state of Arkansas, U.S.A, two rural high schools closed and two merged. From those four schools, 23 students and teachers were interviewed following the closures and mergers (Nitta, Holley and Wrobel, 2010). The students and teachers painted a complicated picture of consolidation, with stories that often contradicted each other and “unique individual stories” (Nitta, Holley and Wrobel 2010, p.2). Overall, students adapted better to the restructuring than did teachers, because ‘kids are kids’ (ie. they made new friends more easily and fitted into the new school); and both students and teachers experienced benefits of the consolidation, such as more professional development opportunities for teachers, and more educational choice for students. However, some of the teachers and students did experience difficulty in the process of moving school. As the researchers stated, “the onus of fitting in was on the moving students, and some failed to fit in” (Nitta, Holley and Wrobel, 2010, p.8). Students admitted to worrying about the process, but one of the teachers interviewed from a receiving school said “It took them a little while to get adjusted, but it worked out fine” (p.9 *ibid*). Positive social aspects of the move included a broader network of friends including increased racial diversity.

These researchers emphasised the importance of realising that it was up to the moving students to blend in; and that moving to a larger school did create social adjustment problems for some students. For teachers, the process of moving was more difficult. One teacher described the two weeks following merger as being like the grief following a death in her family or the burning down of her business. The initial shock was huge, although she did also say that it “worked out OK” (Nitta, Holley and Wrobel, 2010, p. 10).

Other general effects of school consolidation were: more distant student-adult relationships; more courses and expanded academic opportunities; larger class sizes; and transportation challenges. Teachers and students thought that the relationship between teachers and students following the mergers was more bureaucratic and impersonal, and less family-like. In all schools, teachers and students believed that the mergers had increased the academic opportunities for students, with a broader selection of courses. Most teachers and students “believed that class sizes had increased after consolidation” (Nitta, Holley and Wrobel, 2010, p.12). While students in this study did not believe their longer commutes affected their ability to complete homework, some teachers did report

challenges created by transport, including struggles with parent participation. Specifically, the effects of the consolidations on working conditions for teachers included: reduced number of classes to prepare; improved formal professional development opportunities; and little change in facilities and technology.

In contrast to the mergers above, with apparently positive (albeit inconsistent) overall effects on students, three elementary (primary) school closures (due to falling rolls) in an area of Los Angeles had strikingly negative effects on its minority population of Mexican American students (Valencia 1984). Following the closures, nearly 600 Chicano children were moved to five different schools, which were generally European in their make-up. The school closures increased the “already high probability of school problems and failures” (Valencia, 1984, p.161).

In a follow-up study of the effects of the closures on students, fifty mothers of the students were interviewed. The parents had sued the Santa Barbara School District, on the basis that “the exclusive burden of the closures was placed on minorities” (p. 145 *ibid*). In the interviews carried out between one and a half and two years after the closures, mothers reported overall negative effects on the students of the move, difficulty adjusting, lowered achievement and reduced parental involvement. In terms of adjustment, mothers reported that 86% of children felt sad about the closures and overall, 66% of children had been happier at the closed schools compared to the new schools. In terms of achievement, 45% of mothers reported that their children’s school work had been better at the closed schools, 22.5% believed it was better at the new schools and 25% thought it was about the same. Mothers generally reported more parental involvement at the closed schools, with 72.9% of mothers saying that this was the case, partly due to distance from home to school. Overall impacts of the closure included the increased distance between home and new school, and a feeling (amongst 82% of mothers) that the closures had been for the worse (Valencia, 1984).

Whilst this study is limited in terms of the generalisability of its findings to other contexts, due to the unique context of a law-suit and the specific Mexican-American population, along with the possible biases of the author, methodology and study participants, it does deserve some consideration in terms of the implications of school closures for minority populations and for those who are already falling behind in the school system. It illustrates that minority students may be more vulnerable to declines in school achievement following school transitions in general. The study concludes that those who propose future school closures “should not place the exclusive or disproportional burden on the most marginal or vulnerable student and parental populations” (p.161 *ibid*).

3. The importance of school communities in post-disaster settings

The sense of school as a community has been credited with saving “tens of thousands” of lives on Japan’s East Coast following the March 2011 earthquake (measuring 9.0) and tsunami (Parmenter, 2012, p.10). When the earthquake occurred, at 2.46pm, most children were still at school. School principals had the massive responsibility of deciding

how to respond to save lives from the ensuing tsunami within the timeframe of approximately 30 minutes. Their critical decision was whether to move children to higher ground or to stay where they were. In the face of this decision, “teachers stayed in school to look after their pupils rather than leaving to ensure the safety of themselves or their own families” (Parmenter, 2012, p.9). To the credit of school principals and staff, out of 19,000 people in Japan who perished in the earthquake and tsunami, only 536 of these were children between the ages of 6 and 18 (and many of these were children who had already left school). The sense of school as a community meant that school staff and children were well-trained in disaster preparedness; principals and teachers made good decisions in a crisis; children trusted their teachers and were willing to respond to the decisions they made; and teachers were committed to protecting the children (Parmenter, 2012). Because of the highly valued role of teachers as leaders within the community, they went above and beyond their job descriptions in making personal sacrifices and saving the lives of children in their care (Parmenter, 2012). Schools in Japan have an additional community role in being used as emergency community shelters, and due to the “familiar routines and rhythms” of the schools, everyone there experienced greater wellbeing (Parmenter, 2012, p.14).

Following Hurricane Katrina in August 2005 on the East Coast of the U.S.A., schools in Mississippi were described as anchors of their communities in both the short and the long-term (Bowman, 2007-2008). By reopening “within a matter of weeks”, they enabled “significant recovery to begin and then progress” (Bowman, 2007-2008, pp. 712-713). Once schools were able to reopen, they provided both parents and children with a sense of “stability and familiarity” during the day, amongst a time of chaos (ibid. p. 720). This stability was important for children in providing them with the familiar routines they needed to help them cope following disaster. The return to normality was also a huge relief for parents, one of whom stated that “the day my kids went back to school was when we knew things would be normal again” (ibid. p. 721). Families were also more likely to stay or return to the community if schools remained open. According to Bowman, this has a direct bearing on the economic life and potential of the community. She states: “The economic impact of reopening or creating good schools extends beyond the jobs it provides for teachers and staff...re-emerging or new businesses will be able to attract high-caliber workers only if the schools their children can attend are good” (ibid. p.722). Schools also had practical functions, in acting as emergency relief shelters, and also caring for students by providing meals once school resumed.

Following Japan’s 2011 earthquakes and tsunami, researchers have speculated that it was the familiar surroundings of their own schools that enabled the children to bounce back more quickly (Parmenter, 2012, p. 13). Within these schools/shelters, students helped with organising food, water and cleaning.

Children were transformed by returning to school (Parmenter, 2012). In Japan, the re-opening ceremonies of schools that had been the worst-affected were credited with making a “huge difference” to children, with one school principal describing the “total transformation” of children when they returned to school (Parmenter, 2012, p.15). Routine and a sense of security were important in helping combat the sense of insecurity

created by disaster. In one school which reopened in August 2011, the priority was to “recreate a sense of community security within the school” (Parmenter, 2012 p.16). Despite the children having had a range of experiences outside of school, including parents having lost jobs, it was important that “life [went] on as normal” (p.16 *ibid*). Not only was it important to maintain school life to keep things as normal as possible for children, in some places, the school was the only physical remains of what was previously a town or community. It was therefore vital to keep it alive as the sole remaining vestige of community.

Children, Schools and Disaster Recovery

Parents and families/whanau have critical roles in enhancing resilience and promoting recovery in children in a post-disaster environment. Preschool and primary age children are particularly reliant on their adult caregivers to make the world safe for them and to model coping skills. Consequently, children of parents who are compromised because of overwhelming adversity or unmet mental health needs may require additional support. Teachers also have an important and influential role in fostering recovery, particularly as they were the 'responsible adults' in closest proximity to students during both the February and June Christchurch earthquakes. The professionalism and skills of Canterbury teachers in managing these crises, keeping their pupils safe and monitoring their wellbeing and safety until the arrival of parents has undoubtedly contributed to the recovery of their pupils.

In addition, schools play a pivotal role in the recovery environment by providing a point of focus for the community and a natural place for the provision of support to both children and their parents.

1. Effects of disasters on child health and development

The major earthquakes over 2010 and 2011, causing loss of life and the destruction of our city's infrastructure together with the unprecedented impacts on suburban areas, have been very frightening events for Canterbury children.

Exposure to large-scale natural disasters predicts enduring mental health problems in children and adolescents (Kar & Bastia, 2006) with the most frequent post-disaster stress reactions including depression, anxiety and complicated grief, and at the pathological extreme, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) (Masten & Osofsky, 2010). Existing research suggests that between 10 and 30% of children and adolescents will suffer significant psychological effects, which may have longer term impacts on their development (Pynoos et al., 1993, Goenjian, 1993, Kronenberg et al., 2010, Dell'Osso et al., 2011, Liu et al., 2011, Cohen et al., 2010). For children with existing vulnerabilities their mental health problems may be exacerbated by ongoing stressful events, financial strains and family dysfunction, all of which accumulate post-disaster.

Over time the majority of children and adolescents will recover and show stress resilience. This presents as the continued achievement of developmental milestones, despite adversity or after initial distress, together with evidence of adaptive functioning and recovery (Bodvarsdottir, Elklit & Gudmundsdottir, 2006).

2. The role of teachers and schools in enhancing recovery

The extent of trauma exposure, the developmental stage of the child, their individual characteristics and their social environment all interact to determine the impact of a disaster and the likely recovery pathway.

Recovery has been shown to be enhanced by children with:

- ability to regulate affect (Terranova, Boxer & Morris, 2009),
- prosocial skills (La Greca et al., 1996),
- positive cognitive coping strategies and the capacity to make meaning of losses (Terranova, Boxer & Morris, 2009), and
- the protection of effective caregivers (Masten & Osofsky, 2010).

Performance in school is a significant indicator of recovery as so many of these developmental transitions are played out in the context of the academic and social functioning required in a school environment (Franks, 2011).

In addition, schools have an important role in the monitoring of individual recovery. Teachers have knowledge of a child's functioning pre-disaster and can monitor academic and social progress through classroom and playground observation. Teachers also have a cohort of contemporary peer norms with which to compare progress. During the disaster response, therefore, "it is important to identify children who are having trouble coping and address any developing mental health problems" (Council on School Health, 2008, p.898).

The role of teachers in monitoring individual psychological recovery of students is evident in examples from recent international disasters. In North-East Japan following the 2010 earthquake and tsunami, teachers have taken on the long-term role of monitoring the mental health of their students (Parmenter, 2012). This is because there are no other systems providing for mental health available to children. Japanese schools do not have guidelines for mental health care or school counsellors. This is similar to the experience of Mississippi schools following Hurricane Katrina, where schools had an important function in providing mental health services for children, partly through providing a "substantial normalizing force in students' lives merely by holding classes" (Bowman, 2007-2008 p.729). It is important to recognise the "positive impact that schools can have on students' mental health at a crucial point in time" (ibid.p.729). It is necessary for schools to "learn more about the ramifications of disasters for their students' mental health" (ibid. p.732), through understanding the "reality of Katrina survivors' experiences" (ibid. p.732). Teachers in Mississippi have helped provide "students with tools for coping" but they have "also indicated concerns about their students' long-term mental health" (ibid. p.732). Looking forward, it will be important to provide these teachers "with resources that will help avert a children's mental health crisis in the wake of another...disaster" (ibid p.732).

In Christchurch schools following the September and February earthquakes, teachers provided "important support to children and young people", who "looked to them with each aftershock" (Dean, 2011, p. 95). Christchurch teachers continue to play a long-term role in the individual recovery of students.

3. Support for teachers

Not only do teachers support children following disasters, and aid in their recovery, but they too need adequate long-term support in order to recover. This is recognised by the Ministry of Education, who have taken on board research from other international disaster contexts. The Ministry of Education have been advised to take heed of what the Australians have learnt following the bush fires in Victoria, in terms of continuing to provide support for teachers. In particular, if “they could turn back time, they would have provided more direct support to schools” (Dean, 2011, p. 95). In response, the Ministry of Education has begun surveying teachers’ wellbeing. In May 2011, 194 teachers responded to an initial survey asking about their wellbeing needs. The survey indicated that “where teachers taught and lived had no effect on their perceived need for support” (ibid. p.95). The main wellbeing needs were: “information about supporting families; information on children and student well-being; and information to support their own well-being” (ibid. p.96). Teachers had concerns about sharing school sites, about the increased teaching demands and differences in management in different schools. Amongst other findings, teachers stated emphatically that they “didn’t want things that took up extra time and extra resources, and/or placed additional burdens in their daily lives” (ibid. p.96).

School Size

1. The small school movement: high schools in the U.S.A.

Internationally, there is a new movement within education towards smaller schools in general, although so far this has been confined to high schools. This movement has originated in the United States over the past 20 years (Carolan, 2012), and is reported to be a response to high school shootings where large school sizes and the relative anonymity of the students to the teachers may have been a factor in the killings (Grauer, 2007, Kuziemko, 2006). An American proponent of smaller high schools cites articles from the Washington Post and the Los Angeles Times in suggesting that “Smaller, more intimate learning communities consistently deliver better results in academics and discipline when compared to their larger counterparts” and “Students at large schools are more prone to be alienated from their peers or engage in risky behaviour” (Grauer, 2007, p.1). Furthermore, Grauer describes the purported advantages of larger high schools in providing greater opportunities as serving “a very small percentage of students and rarely [having] any connection to the most basic thing of all: the focus on student learning” (Grauer, 2007, p. 3). Another Australian researcher has challenged the assumption that larger schools offer greater equality of learning by offering a more diverse curriculum, saying that many smaller schools were also able to offer a broad range of subjects. Furthermore, evidence of whether students in larger schools actually engaged in the extra activities offered was debatable (Elsworth, 1998).

In Oakland, California, 48 new small schools have been shown to ‘outperform’ academically the larger schools from which they originated (Shah et al., 2009). The small increases in academic achievement were partly attributed to the increased educational opportunity through the more positive school climate following the change to smaller school size. This information was gathered in a follow-up study over six years.

2. School size and educational outcomes

Proponents of smaller schools argue that their positive benefits include stronger, ongoing relationships between students and adults, providing more choices for students by catering to their learning styles, the development of a unique school culture, engagement with the community in student learning (Grauer, 2007). Smaller schools may benefit adolescents by enhancing social capital and “connectedness” amongst students, leading to increased achievement and the increased likelihood of graduation and going on to further education (Carolan, 2012). Therefore they aim to create schools where students feel more connected, with the expectation that this will improve performance (Carolan, 2012).

Carolan suggests that in general, research so far is insufficient and too inconsistent to determine which school size works best for optimal student achievement. He suggests that it is not the school size that matters so much as how the size of the school determines the way that adults and students relate to one another. His study results showed that

although parents knowing their friends' parents was related to increased maths achievement for students (at Year 12), this relationship was not evident when controlled for confounding factors to do with the students and the school (e.g. SES, school SES, parent aspirations, student expectations, thinking that maths is fun, number of hours on math homework, etc). He concluded that there is "no one-size-fits-all prescription for school size reform" (Carolan, 2012, p. 593) and that much further research in this area is needed. He suggests "any...school-level reform that focuses on size...needs a much closer and critical public evaluation" (ibid. p.589).

Another researcher deplors the lack of economic literature available on the subject of school size and educational outcomes (Kuziemko, 2006). He argues that there is a lack of credible research on school consolidation and that good evaluation research in this area needs to be a priority. His own study results suggested that smaller schools increase both math scores and attendance rates and that the "benefits of smaller schools outweigh the cost" (Kuziemko, 2006, p.63). He looked at data from public schools in the United States to "identify abrupt changes in school enrolment" (due to either mergers into larger schools and schools splitting into new schools; or the opening of a new school which affected enrolments at nearby schools) and focused on how these changes affected the third grade maths and language test scores, as well as attendance, of younger students at elementary (primary) school level in Indiana. He found that in general, increases in school enrolment were associated with decreases in math scores.

In general, the evidence regarding any association between school size and the school's social environment appears to be contradictory (Nitta, Holley & Wrobel, 2010). That is, supposed benefits of larger schools may include improved social opportunities through a more diverse friendship network and the beneficial aspect of relative anonymity for students concerned about their prior or family reputation. Smaller schools, however, may be more caring and supportive and more inclusive of outsiders, students may be less likely to be overlooked, and there may be a more positive environment overall (Nitta, Holley & Wrobel, 2010). Likewise, the evidence concerning school size and learning opportunities is also complicated. While larger schools may be able to offer a broader curriculum it does not necessarily mean that students in larger schools learn more (Nitta, Holley & Wrobel, 2010).

3. Smaller schools in New Zealand

In 1999, the Education Review Office (ERO) produced a document called 'Small Primary Schools: Performance as a function of size'. It summarized the advantages and disadvantages of smaller schools. One advantage for smaller schools was that they may have smaller class sizes, and it may be easier for teachers to respond to individual student needs. They may have more of a 'family' atmosphere and it may be easier for students to settle in and feel a sense of belonging. Smaller schools may be the hub of their communities, and the community may be strongly involved in helping maintain the school. A disadvantage for smaller schools was the challenge of providing a balanced curriculum with fewer teachers. For smaller schools which have fewer teachers over the long term, there may be a problem if teachers are of poorer quality. It may be difficult to

recruit good teachers or principals to the area. There are also more demands on principals who have to teach. It may also be a disadvantage for smaller parent communities if they have to select their Board of Trustees (BoT) members from a less experienced pool.

The Education Review Office (ERO) states that the "Government has an interest in ensuring that as many students as possible have access to schooling within a reasonable travelling time" (ERO, 1999, p.4) and that the government recognises that providing education to some students will always cost more, due to isolation, special needs or educational disadvantage. For very small schools, the government balances an interest in access to services/schooling versus the educational and financial viability of the school (ERO, 1999, p.4).

Between 1996 and 1998, ERO reviewed the performance of 400 small schools (with fewer than 150 students), compared to a control group of 100 schools reviewed between 1997 and 1998. It found only a minor difference between those schools and the control group in governance and management (although very small schools with fewer than 26 students performed more poorly). It found that all small schools performed lower than the control group on curriculum management and delivery. All of the small schools performed well in terms of their school climate. The reasons for high performance in small schools included the close relationship between the school and its community, the multiple roles of community members within the school, students and families being well-known to school staff and Board of Trustees members, and generational ties. In contrast the reasons for low performance (such as in self-review, assessment of student achievement, and curriculum planning) included not having good systems in place, the multiple roles of teaching principals, recruitment of suitable staff, and a limited pool of potential Board of Trustee members.

New Zealand researchers have noted that in the last two decades a "neoliberal restructuring program" has led to the Network Review programme of school closures (Kearns et al., 2009). In 2000, 32% of New Zealand's schools were located in rural or very small settlements. However, falling rolls have forced many of these schools to close. Although school sizes may be smaller in rural areas, researchers argue that "Small size and/or isolation do not necessarily mean ineffective teaching and closure is neither the only nor necessarily the 'best' option". Small schools develop more intimate knowledge of children, encourage committed teachers and encourage their community to participate (Kearns et al., 2009, p. 133).

Conclusions

Education is a key determinant of health. Schools are a vital part of their communities. They have more than just an educational function and can serve as a central meeting point for families, which is particularly important for those families who have no other sense of community. Schools contribute to the health of their communities by creating a sense of social cohesion. Many communities in New Zealand have demonstrated their attachment to their local schools by strongly resisting school closures.

Because of the important roles schools play in their communities, proposed school closures or mergers are likely to be perceived by their communities as threatening a range of losses. Some of these losses have been researched but to a relatively small extent, therefore their ongoing effects are inadequately understood. In New Zealand, communities have been left divided and feeling bitter over school closures, particularly where they felt there was a lack of consultation.

There is only a small amount of research about how school closures affect students and teachers and closures may affect students in different ways. It seems that in general it is harder for teachers and parents to adjust than it is for students. There are both positive and negative effects of school closures and mergers. Positive effects may include more educational opportunities and more diverse social networks; negative effects may include more distant relationships between adults and students, larger class sizes and transportation challenges.

Schools have played a central role in providing a sense of normality for students and parents following disasters, including the Canterbury earthquakes. This is very important, as exposure to disasters can lead to mental health problems in children. Teachers can help monitor the ongoing mental health of children over time. However, teachers themselves need ongoing support following disasters, and the current proposed changes for the school sector in Christchurch may represent an additional burden that is unhelpful for their wellbeing in the wake of the earthquakes.

The movement towards reducing school sizes (albeit in high schools rather than primary schools) in the United States has arisen in a substantially different context and may not be directly relevant to New Zealand. The literature suggests that research surrounding the relationship between school size and educational achievement is relatively sparse and inconsistent in its findings. New Zealand research has found that smaller schools have both advantages and disadvantages.

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