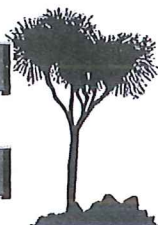


road 28/3/13.



LINWOOD INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL

our children

our community

our future

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Response to the Minister's Interim Decision to close Linwood Intermediate School

28 March 2013

Hon Hekia Parata
Minister of Education
Parliament Buildings
Wellington

Dear Minister Parata

Thank you for your letter of 18 February where you stated that you had made an interim decision that Linwood Intermediate School should close. I would also like to thank you for visiting the school on 7 March and discussing with the Board options for the school. I appreciate that you are very busy and therefore appreciate that you took the time to personally meet with us.

The following summary responds to your invitation to advise you if the Board has any reasons in favour of the school staying open. We do have a number of reasons why we believe Linwood Intermediate School should remain open, and offer an alternate proposal to reclassify our school as a year 7 to 9 provider to ensure the most effective middle schooling option for the Linwood Educational Cluster. Our rationale is set out below.

Executive Summary

1. Linwood Intermediate School (LIS) is a successful school. It caters to low socio-economic students with half the student population being Māori or Samoan. Features of LIS include:
 - providing quality education in reading and mathematics and improving the outcomes for previously failing students
 - promoting educational success for Māori students
 - providing the only Samoan language classes in the Linwood cluster
 - providing an effective program (PB4L) to improve student engagement in school and learning
 - having a valued relationship with its community
 - being viewed in a very positive light by ERO
 - providing learner and parent choice as regards provision for year 7 and 8 education (ie, its closure would reduce learner and parent choice)
 - having students that enjoy the benefit of the 'small school' effect – with all students able to play a part in social, cultural and sporting life, with flow on benefits to self-esteem; and
 - having a pragmatic vision for the future based on a strong foundation of achievements.

2. The school is an educational achievement success story. There is risk in closing LIS and expecting other schools to achieve in the same manner as LIS when other schools have no track record. Committing to a process with untested expectations is both ineffective and inefficient for learners and the community.
3. The schools community were opposed to the Ministry's original proposal to close the school and are strongly opposed to your interim decision. 90% of respondents opposed the proposal to close Linwood Intermediate.
4. The Board believes an alternate option to reclassify LIS as a Year 7 to 9 school would:
 - consolidate and build on the reading and mathematics gains with previously failing students
 - provide extra students that would make fuller immersion programmes more likely a reality
 - provide a cost effective middle schooling option (requiring comparable or less investment)
 - continue to engage students in education and school; and
 - provide choice for students and parents in the LEC, particularly where they receive their year 9 education.
5. We note the Ministry appears biased against this reclassification (Educational Report to you of 18 January 2013 (the "Report") see paras 32, 33 and 64). However, the Ministry position was not based on any analysis. To remedy this, we try to provide some initial analysis as set out below so that you might consider a balanced presentation of the options for middle schooling in the Linwood cluster and make a decision regarding next steps accordingly. To date, we feel this assessment has not been adequately provided to you.
6. For instance, there is a significant risk to closing LIS as it removes a schooling option from the Linwood Cluster with a proven achievement record that has:
 - ✓ delivered quality education
 - ✓ provided access for priority students including Māori and Samoan learners
 - ✓ engaged students in education and school
 - ✓ developed an excellent community relationship; and
 - ✓ received a positive assessment from ERO.
7. There is greater risk to educational outcomes closing LIS as it relies on good intentions and the Ministry's expectations that other providers will step in and offer what LIS currently provides. This is a troublesome strategy particularly when at-risk communities of Māori and Pasifika learners are involved. We ask why meddle with success by closing LIS, when the other schools have no track record? Such an approach is ineffective, inefficient and risks sacrificing real educational gains and at the same time limits parental choice for a dedicated year 7 and 8 education provision in the Linwood Cluster.
8. Keeping Linwood Intermediate School open is the most effective option for the delivery of year 7 and 8 education in the Linwood Cluster based on the analysis of the following year 7 and 8 education options:
 - i. Retain LIS in the cluster (keep LIS open)
 - ii. Change the class of Linwood College (LC) to become a Year 7 to 13 school (reclassify LC)
 - iii. Recapitate the three Year 1 to 6 primary schools to become year 1-8
9. The analysis is based on the following criteria/considerations:
 - a) Cost
 - b) Quality Education

- c) Māori medium offer
- d) Samoan language offer
- e) Engagement
- f) Community Support/Relationship

10. The three options are assessed by each criteria (considerations are set out in detail in the body of this letter). Each option is ranked 1 to 3 (1 for the most preferred option, to 3 for least preferred option). A summary table of the result of the analysis of options is set out below:

Criteria/ Considerations:	Options		
	i) Keep LIS open	ii) Reclassify Linwood College (add years 7 + 8 to be years 7-13)	iii) Recapitate Primaries (grow from 1-6 to 1-8)
a) Cost	Current information insufficient for comparison, however costs appear comparable		
b) Quality Education	1	2	2
c) Māori Medium	1	Information not currently Provided (NP), but probably 2	No current provision. 3
d) Samoan Language	1	Information not currently Provided (NP), but probably 2	No current provision. 3
e) Students' Engagement in Education and School	1	No assessment in the Education Report (NAR)	No assessment in the Education Report (NAR)
f) Community/School relationship	1	No assessment in the Education Report (NAR)	No assessment in the Education Report (NAR)
Overall ranking:	1 (Preferred)	2	3 (Least preferred option)

11. Based on community consultation, the options analysis for providing year 7 and 8 education and the risk of closing an effective education provider with demonstrated ability to cater for Māori and Pasifika learners, the LIS Board recommends that you:

- a) agree to keep the school open; and
- b) agree to reclassify the school as a Year 7 to 9 school.

Background

12. The school was notified in a letter 18 February that the Minister had made an interim decision that Linwood Intermediate School should close. The letter also invited the Board to advise the Minister if it has any reasons in favour of the school staying open.

13. In the *Education Report* to you (18 January), the Ministry assumed that LIS would close and presented you with two options for the provision of year 7 + 8 education in the LEC:

- Recapitate the three Year 1 to 6 primary schools; or
- Change the class of Linwood College to become a Year 7 to 13 school.

14. The *Report* did not specifically assess these two options against keeping the LIS open [nor did the Ministry do such an assessment in its earlier document *Linwood Intermediate – Rationale for change* (date 12/10/12)]. We believe this failure to properly analyse all the options for the provision of year 7 + 8 education in the LEC means you were not given the opportunity to make accurate comparisons between options and thus may have omitted the best solution for quality year 7 and 8 provision in the Linwood Cluster (as it was not presented). A more straightforward assessment of options follows.

Comparative Analysis of Year 7 & 8 Options for the Linwood Cluster

15. In the analysis set out below we have considered three options for the provision of year 7 & 8 education in the LEC:

- i. Keep LIS open
- ii. Reclassify Linwood College (add years 7 + 8 to be years 7-13)
- iii. Recapitate Primaries (grow from 1-6 to full primaries years 1-8)

We have not considered other options (such as, recapitating the contributing primaries and changing the class of Linwood College, while leaving LIS open). The Board simply does not have this information, nor can prejudge parental and student choice across the LEC. We note however that current Ministry-led consultation is attempting to better understand preferences concerning these options.

16. We have assessed each option on the following criteria:

- a) Cost
- b) Quality Education
- c) Māori medium offer
- d) Samoan language offer
- e) Engagement
- f) Community Support/Relationship

17. In addition we have considered:

- the recent LIS ERO report
- the effect the closure of LIS would have on students' and parents' choice of educational provider for years 7 + 8 education (particularly for at-risk populations like Māori and Pasifika learners)
- the educational gains to be made by having LIS remain open as a small school (the small school effect); and
- the pragmatic nature of the LIS's vision and participation in the PB4L programme which enhances engagement.

a) Cost

18. We have read the *Report* (including Appendix 2) and have found it difficult to understand the basis of the costing of options. In the absence of better costing data we do not believe it is possible to compare in a meaningful way the property costs of the three options. However, we wish to make the following observations based on the information in the *Report* (including Appendix 2), summarised in the following table, and discussed further below:

Option	Report Stated Cost	Alternate Costing Perspective
i. <i>Linwood Intermediate</i>	\$3.2m	\$1.0m (if taking the current roll of 130 students as compared to the current 'capacity' of 350 students)
ii. <i>Linwood College</i>	\$1.0m	\$1.5m (if adding 'specialist space' to the four stated classrooms required to add capacity to LC for LI students, could add +2 teaching spaces)
iii. <i>Contributing Primaries</i>	Nil added costs	This option was not pursued in the Report, however, in a recap situation, some specialist space would be required for the intermediate students wherever they are accommodated

i. Linwood Intermediate

19. The property costing for LIS seems to have been done for a school with a roll of about 350 (roughly its capacity), but it has a current roll of 132. Even in the most optimistic scenario (including the alternate proposal to reclassify LIS to a year 7 to 9 school) we do not envisage a roll of 350, at a maximum one of 210/260 (260 if the reclassification went ahead).
20. We consider it would be misleading to calculate the property work needed for a roll the school does not have and would not aspire to. We believe the \$3.2m stated in the Report to reconfigure the school is for its capacity of a roll of 350 students. We feel reconfiguring the school to the current roll of 132 (allowing for no growth) would be about \$1m. Investing \$1m in Linwood Intermediate is comparable to investing \$1m in Linwood College (see below), however the benefits of the \$1m invested in the Intermediate go a long way to support and strengthen an already solid education provider (ie, with demonstrated outcomes for at-risk populations of Māori and Pasifika learners in the Linwood cluster).

ii. Linwood College (Class Change)

21. On the other hand the Report states (at para 69) that if LIS's year 7 + 8 students relocate to a rebuilt Linwood College that relocation would add a *possible* (emphasis added) \$1m to rebuild Linwood College with an extra four classrooms to cater for the relocated LIS students.
22. There are several issues with the 'possible' \$1m cost allocated with the Linwood College option:
 - First, it is interesting that the figure is only a possible figure given the decision to close LIS would certainly have considered costing (since LIS is an effective provider). The Board felt a more robust cost for Linwood College would be prudent, given the impact of closure.
 - Second, we believe that the School Property Guide (SPG) could allocate more than four teaching spaces (TSS) to Linwood College for the extra 132 or so students.
 - Third, the extra students would attract additional property, in addition to the Teaching Spaces, for the school (such as, extra Administration space, extra Hall space, extra Library space and extra Resource space), all of which cost money (and were not included in the Report costing of \$1m).
23. As the *Report* made no mention of the extra property entitlement generated by year 7 + 8 students for Linwood College, we would expect the cost of the change of class option to be more than \$1 million (eg, the actual figure might be upward of \$1.5 million).
24. So all in all we believe in the absence of proper costing of all options and flow on impacts, the Report's current costings likely **over-estimate** the cost for LIS to continue operating, and likely **underestimate** the actual cost of provision at an extended Linwood College. The Board suspects that the cost of the two options would be similar.

iii. Recapitated Primary Schools

25. The *Report* shows (at para 67) that if LIS's students were instead redistributed to recapitated contributing primaries there would be no property costs. As year 7 + 8 students attract specialist property (that year 1 to 6 do not), we believe this claim might not be true. In reality we just do not know the property costs for recapitated primary schools and given the Minister's decision not to go with the recapitation option (at this time) means that we have not further considered an estimated cost for this option.

Overall assessment

26. In conclusion we do not believe the analysis has been done on the appropriate property costs that would allow a meaningful comparison of the options, but suspect the property cost of a reclassified Linwood College and repairing LIS (for a reduced capacity) are similar.

b) Quality Education

i. Linwood Intermediate

27. Linwood Intermediate is effective in producing quality educational outcomes and it has a quantifiable track record of improving poor readers' reading ability. It has been shown to provide quality classroom teaching.

28. In assessing the LIS's quality education, ERO have been quoted (at page 15 of the original Linwood Intermediate submission) as saying:

...many students arrive at Linwood Intermediate several years behind the average NZ cohort. By the time they leave they are nearly at the NZ average.

Also in the ERO Report (at para 35) the Ministry reports ERO's statement that LIS:

...is able to demonstrate that generally students make very good progress in reading and mathematics.

29. These impressions are backed up by quantitative research undertaken by a team of researchers from Canterbury University as contained in the original Linwood Intermediate Submission (at pages 13 and 14). Recently LIS undertook further research into reading gain of the Year 7 students in 2012 (See research in Appendix 1). In 2012, at the beginning of the year, the school tested all incoming year 7 students and then again in October. Those students who were present for both assessments, on average, increased their reading ages by 14 months over a 9 month period of tuition: **a 60% improvement over that expected by maturation.**
30. Analysing the "well below" group, whose average reading age on arrival was 3.29 years (after six years at their previous primary schools), the result after nine months, was that **their reading age had increased 1.16 years over a nine month period.** In other words, in nine months at LIS, the "well below" group had achieved almost half the reading age improvement that had taken six years at their previous schools. Interestingly, the Māori, Pasifika and Asian students showed a greater increase than the New Zealand European (NZE) students.
31. Further when the school analysed the "well below" group they identified a sub group who had reading ages between 6 years and 8 years. This group has been called "well well below". The average reading for this group was 7.03 years. This means in the 6 years previous schooling they had made 2 years progress in reading. On average they made 1 year progress in 3 years or 4 month progress a year. After 9 months at Linwood Intermediate the average reading age was 8.25 years. This means they made 15 month progress. **This is a 275% improvement over their previous rate of progress.**

32. Further, the Ministry acknowledges in the *Report* (at para 21) that:

Linwood Intermediate School is valued for its teaching and non-teaching staff and the stable environment for its students.

Again, it is unclear as to why the Ministry is recommending closing a school providing such a positive learning environment and educational results for at-risk populations.

ii. Linwood College

33. The *Report* states (at para 36) that if Linwood College was reclassified as a year 7 to 13 school the year 7 + 8 learners attending the school can *expect* (emphasis added) a good quality of educational provision. However, the LIS Board feels Māori and Pasifika learners access a better education programme at LIS.
34. The ERO report for Linwood College quoted (in Appendix 3 of the *Report*) that the Māori and Pasifika students' academic achievement at Linwood College is similar to the national levels of achievement for these groups. In other words, the Māori and Pasifika students at Linwood College *are not doing particularly well with regard to their age cohort* (since Māori and Pasifika students on average achieve below their particular year's cohort). Whereas, the LIS students at the end of their two years at LIS are achieving almost at the level of their age (not ethnic) cohort. It should also be noted the LIS student body is approximately 50% Māori and Pasifika. We believe on this basis that the average student achievement for Māori and Pasifika at LIS exceeds that of the similar students at Linwood College.

iii. Recapitated Primary Schools

35. The *Report* states that "learners from Linwood Intermediate can be *expected* (emphasis added) to receive high quality provision at their receiving school" (at either recapitated primaries or by going outside the cluster to the new merged Phillipstown/Woolston school). However, the contributing primaries are where LIS learners, on the whole, came from and demonstrated their 'well-below' achievement when starting at LIS (para 30 above refers). It is our belief that Linwood Intermediate provides the highest quality of education particularly for Māori and Samoan students (while achievement remains unknown at Phillipstown/Woolston school). Again, expectation is one thing; proven delivery (as demonstrated at LIS) is another.

Overall Assessment

36. The Ministry has expectations (at para 22 and 23) the other schools (in the other two options) will be able to replicate LIS's achievement. At least some of LIS's students came from the very same contributing primaries that had failed them (eg, in reading when they arrived at LIS, from the contributing primaries they were well below the NZ cohort). Also, Linwood College's provision would appear to be below that of Linwood Intermediate, not equal to it. To expect schools to do something they are not currently doing is unrealistic. The quality of education provided by LIS is demonstrably superior to the other two options.

c) Māori Medium

i. Linwood Intermediate

37. While LIS does not have specific provision for Māori and Pasifika students in immersion or a unit, but it has effective Māori language and Samoan language programmes actually in place, no other schools in the LEC (primary or secondary) provide these programs. Around 50% of the roll is Māori or Samoan.
38. The school's ERO report was very positive, in the *Report* (at para 38) it was reported that the school is effective in promoting educational success for Māori students. Also the Māori student achievement is similar or slightly better than other groups of students at the school. The ERO

report also notes the school reflects the bi-cultural heritage of New Zealand with examples of Te reo and Māori Art displays. On the language/cultural side all the students take part in regular timetabled Te reo Māori classes and a Kapa haka tutor provides good quality instruction and leadership for the student Kapa haka group.

ii. Linwood College

39. It is unclear in the *Report* if Linwood College provides Māori medium instruction and if so to what standard. We take it as the Board has indicated (at para 29) that they *wish to deliver* (emphasis added) specialist Māori medium education is not currently offered at the College.

iii. Recapitated Primary Schools

40. One of the two primary schools identified for recapitation, Linwood North primary, has said it wishes to initiate Māori and Pasifika bilingual education. However it's one thing to intend or aspire to and another to actually provide. To initiate Māori medium classes at similar schools takes massive commitment, community support, school capability and time. In some cases it is several years of negotiating with the community to ensure sufficient support is provided by the school and community to ensure successful Māori medium education provision. It is naïve to think one can simply state it shall be provided and assume that will eventuate.
41. The *Report* also states (at para 29) that the Ministry *expects* (emphasis added) to work with other schools in the cluster to *ensure* that LIS's current provision for Māori and Pasifika students is supported in the new format. However, it is our experience that bilingual education is not easy to provide and also the school and community must want to do it (as we have shown we can), not just aspire to it.

Overall assessment

42. LIS actually provides successfully for Māori students. The other options are untested and rely on the schools to come 'up to speed' quickly and rely on the ability of the Ministry to ensure students are supported in the new format. These risks for learners and the community are mitigated with the actual provision at LIS which is also superior to the other options (which either do not provide Māori medium options or have an uncertain level/quality of provision).

d) Samoan Language

i. Linwood Intermediate

43. According to the *Report* (at paras 39 and 72) LIS is the only school to offer Samoan language classes in the LEC. And further it is acknowledged in the *Report* under Risks that should LIS be closed the Samoan classes could be lost to the LEC. Given Pasifika learner achievement is a key focus for the Ministry, the risk of losing access to the Samoan language class is significant.

ii. Linwood College and iii. Recapitated Primary Schools

44. Neither option provides for Samoan language classes. The Ministry (at para 72) notes two boards (the schools are not identified) have *indicated* (emphasis added) they wish to deliver Pasifika language and specialised programmes for Pasifika students and that the Ministry will work closely with the Boards to ensure the future provision of these classes. As with Māori medium education, school and community support for language options is critical and capability takes time to build.

Overall assessment

45. LIS actually provides successful Pasifika language and specialised programmes for Pasifika students. The other options are untested and rely on the schools to come up to speed and the

ability of the Ministry to ensure students are supported in the new format (which suggests a risk they might not be "up to speed"). Overall, it is clear LIS is superior on this criteria. We do not have the information to separately rate the other two options for the Samoan language criteria.

e) Student Engagement in Education and School

i. Linwood Intermediate

46. LIS has actually instituted an effective program Positive Behaviour for Learning (PB4L) to improve students' engagement in school and learning. It needs to be noted that the school's student population come from low socio-economic households and half the student body are Māori or Pasifika, overall one might assess the LIS student body as one of being at risk when it comes to engagement in education and school. ERO reported very positively in its report on the school, it stated (as quoted in the *Report* at para 35):

The PB4L programme has motivated students to be at school and in class on time. Students can see that there are meaningful rewards for correct behaviours in class, in the playground and away from school, for example on sports trips.

47. Implementing such programmes is always easier said than done, they require dedication from staff to make them work. PB4L is a recognised programme that the Ministry acknowledges significantly supports student access, participation and engagement. It is a real gain for LIS to have successfully implemented the PB4L programme (particularly with such an "at risk" student population base).

ii. Linwood College and iii. Recapitated Primary Schools

48. The *Report* is silent on what programmes the other two options have in place to promote students' engagement in education and school. What the *Report* does say though (at para 36) is that:

learners from Linwood Intermediate can be expected (emphasis added) to receive quality provision at their receiving school.

We assume this quality provision somehow also includes some method (undescribed) to promote students' engagement in education and school.

Overall Assessment

49. LIS actually provides a successful programme (PB4L) that promotes students' engagement in education and school and raises students' self-esteem. The other options do not appear to have any such programmes in place. We conclude LIS offers the best option for the engagement criteria (over the other two options).

f) Community/school relationship

i. Linwood Intermediate

50. The Ministry acknowledges (at para 30) the valued relationship LIS has with its community.

ii. Linwood College and iii. Recapitated Primary Schools

51. The *Report* is silent on the actual Community/school relationship for other two options. The Ministry does state though (at para 30):

however it expects (emphasis added) that all schools play an active and positive part in their community in which they are based.

52. We would note though that the *Report* does not show that the other schools do. In our opinion if the Ministry is going to recommend to you that a school be closed then it is incumbent on it to show the other schools at least match LIS in its close school/community links.

Overall Assessment

53. LIS actually has a valued relationship with its community. It is unknown if the other options have such valued relationships. Overall it is our view that our real relationship surpasses the Ministry's expectations of the other two options.

Analysis Summary

Which option provides the best year 7 + 8 educational outcomes in the LEC?

54. It is our view, that keeping Linwood Intermediate School open is the preferred option after analysing the various options for the delivery of year 7 + 8 education in the LEC. The table below summarises the result of the assessment of the three options by criteria (as elaborated above). Each option is ranked 1 to 3 (1 for the most preferred, to 3 for least preferred option):

<i>Criteria/ Considerations:</i>	Options		
	i) Keep LIS open	ii) Reclassify Linwood College (add years 7 + 8 to be years 7-13)	iii) Recapitate Primaries (grow from 1-6 to 1-8)
<i>a) Cost</i>	Current information insufficient for comparison, however costs appear comparable		
<i>b) Quality Education</i>	1	2	2
<i>c) Māori Medium</i>	1	Information not currently Provided (NP), but probably 2	No current provision. 3
<i>d) Samoan Language</i>	1	Information not currently Provided (NP), but probably 2	No current provision. 3
<i>e) Students' Engagement in Education and School</i>	1	No assessment in the Education Report (NAR)	No assessment in the Education Report (NAR)
<i>f) Community/ School relationship</i>	1	No assessment in the Education Report (NAR)	No assessment in the Education Report (NAR)
Overall ranking:	1 (Preferred)	2	3 (Least preferred option)

Additional Factors to Supporting Keeping LIS Open

55. In addition to a formal analysis of the options we have considered other factors that we consider add to the case that LIS should remain open:

- a) LIS's ERO report
- b) The effect the closure of LIS would have on students' and parents' choice of educational provider for years 7 + 8 education
- c) The educational gains to be made by having LIS remain open as a small school (the small effect); and
- d) The pragmatic nature of the LIS vision.

a) LIS's ERO Report

56. LIS received a glowing report from ERO. The extracts from the ERO report that is included in the *Report* at para 35, paints a picture of school that is getting it right. The school has been able to demonstrate generally that students make very good progress in reading and mathematics; collect and use good quality achievement information; and have motivated students to engage in education and school.

57. Obviously LIS is succeeding, and with low socio-economic students and having half the student body being "priority students", and yet the Ministry recommended closing it. We find that a strange decision and would argue that success should be rewarded by keeping the school open.

b) The Effect the Closure of LIS on Students' and Parents' Choice of educational provider for years 7 + 8 education

58. Closure of LIS would reduce student and parent choice of educational provision in the LEC cluster as there would be no dedicated year 7 to 8 school left in it.

59. In the *Report* (at paras 24 and 25) the Ministry reviewed the research on middle schooling that come to the conclusion that such research had been inconclusive. In other words, middle schooling has no educationally compelling advantages, but on the other hand no obvious disadvantages either.

60. In the absence of any arguments against intermediate (or middle provision) we believe the public interest is best met by having the widest range of educational provision, and hence let students and parents choose the educational provider they (rather than the Ministry) would prefer.

c) The educational gains to be made by having LIS remain open as a small school (the small effect)

61. There are benefits from retaining LIS even though it has a small roll. In Ehrich's report, *The Impact of School Size*, he found that in the United States, "smaller schools produce a higher quality of curriculum and more responsive as well as more involved students inside and outside the classroom." Often linked to responding to the needs of the most at-risk students, Ehrich notes: "smaller schools show positive effects on the achievement of ethnic minority students and those of low socio-economic status." ¹ Researchers report a "greater sense of community and belonging among students of smaller schools," (Rutter 1998). The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation fund a small school policy initiative in the USA, where evidence indicates a year level roll around 150 to be an optimal size.

¹ Ehrich, Roger. "The Impact of School Size," <http://pixel.cs.vt.edu/edu/size.html>, last accessed 06/12/12.

62. In New Zealand, there is no clear evidence to support or refute the claim of school size due to a lack of research and achievement/social outcomes data. The Canterbury District Health Board recognises the trend toward reducing school size, noting research to date has outlined both advantages and disadvantages.²

d) The pragmatic nature of the LIS's vision

63. The Ministry commends LIS for its vision (at para 34) but sees no problem other schools developing and implementing such ideas, but have they got such a vision if not why not? Also vision is often hard to come by, why not go with a school with vision and a proven track record of quality educational provision?
64. We believe that having a pragmatic vision is another reason not to close the school, it's easy to have a vision but hard to have one based on reality.

Alternate Option: The Case to Reclassify LIS as a Year 7 to 9 School

The Advantages Reclassifying LIS as year 7 to 9 School

65. The Ministry briefly noted the school's counter proposal (to being closed) at para 31 in the *Report* without discussing the pros and cons of those suggestions. While we still see these proposals as valid we would specifically like to briefly note and discuss those that build on current provision where LIS has a comparative advantage so you might decide if you believe they are worth investing in. The aspects of our alternate proposal build on our currently successful provision. They are:
- consolidate and build on the reading and mathematics gains with previously failing students with an extra year of our proven programmes;
 - make fuller immersion programmes more likely through extra student enrolments (in year 9);
 - continue to engage vulnerable students in education and school (provide them with an extra year of the PB4L programme and hence more likely "cement in" the current gains); and
 - provide choice for students and parents in the LEC where they received their year 9 education.

The first three ensure access to quality education and are not offered in the Linwood College provision as far as we can ascertain.

The Ministry's opposition to year 7 to 9 proposal is not based on analysis

66. We believe that the Ministry has not completed any real analysis of why middle schooling and the LIS alternate proposal is ineffective, inefficient or costly. You need this assessment, based on evidence and analysis, to make robust decisions. As such, we still consider our alternate proposal to be worthy of proper consideration. Set out below are areas where the Ministry might further assess our proposal:
- At para 32 the Ministry states that for a network to function efficiently it requires a coherent structure. We agree. What we object to is the notion that parents and students should not have choice when the Ministry states a Year 7 to 9 school would either compete with Year 7 to 13 for its students or with a Year 1 to 8/ Year 9 to 13 network and then in para 33 states that there would need to be a reclassification of existing secondary schools (sic) to remove

² Canterbury District Health Board (CDHB). *The role of schools in communities and community recovery post-disaster. A Literature Review*. Community & Public Health (26 November 2012).

year level overlaps. We do not see why you need to remove year level overlaps unless you do not like the notion of choice.

- The Ministry further states (at para 33) that it:

considers any benefits that could be gained through this alternative proposal [the LIS year 7 to 9 reclassification] do not outweigh the considerable change required and also consider (sic) that the benefits can be gained by other means...

We would note the Ministry does not spell out exactly what the benefits are so we assume the Ministry agrees with us that what we see as benefits (as noted in the *Report* at para 31) are indeed benefits. What though is the considerable change required? We challenge the Ministry to show the analysis of how the cost does outweigh the benefits.

- Finally, at para 65, the *Report* states:

The Ministry considered the Board's proposal for Year 7 - 9 schooling and decided that it would be untenable in the schooling network. No analysis of it was progressed.

However the Ministry has not shown why the proposal is untenable. This statement is not justification for not analysing the proposal's property costs.

67. We believe the advantages of reclassification and absence of analysis to the contrary by the Ministry provides a solid case for you to reconsider your interim decision regarding the future of LIS.

Concluding Comments

68. Based on community consultation, the options analysis for providing year 7 and 8 education and the risk of closing an effective education provider with demonstrated ability to cater for Māori and Pasifika learners, the LIS Board recommends that you:

- a) agree to keep the school open; and
- b) agree to reclassify the school as a Year 7 to 9 school.

Once again, the Board appreciates this opportunity to respond to your interim decision to close Linwood Intermediate School. The rationale we have set out supports why Linwood Intermediate School should remain open. We are currently an effective school, providing results for our students, most of which are Samoan and Māori. With a reclassification to year 7 to 9, we feel Linwood Intermediate would provide the most effective middle schooling option for the Linwood Educational Cluster.

We welcome the opportunity to discuss our submission with you. If you have any questions, or require further clarification of the contents of this letter, please contact me directly on

Sincerely yours

Dorothea Brown
Board Chair
Linwood Intermediate School

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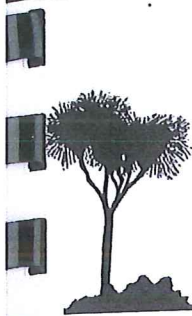
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LINWOOD INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL

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Appendix 1: Reading Achievement – Student Progress 2012 Report to Linwood Intermediate Board of Trustees March 2013.

Target group Y7 2012.

The group was chosen as we had data soon after entry to Linwood Intermediate and at the end of year 7.

Assessment tool used

PROBE (Prose, Reading, Observation, Behaviour and Evaluation).

How administered

Students are assessed 1 to 1 by an experienced staff member. Each assessment takes 15 to 20 minutes.

What does it report?

Students are assessed to have a Reading Age (RA). This can be compared to their Chronological Age (CA) and students can be described as being below, at, above their CA.

In addition it has been determined that there is a fit between RA, Curriculum level and National Standards as below:

Reading Age from PROBE	asTTle curriculum level	National Standards for Y7
6 – 7y 11months	1	Well Well Below
8 – 9y 11 months	2	Well Below
10 – 11y 11months	3	Below
12 – 13y 11 months	4	At
14 – 15y 11 months	5	Above

The PROBE test was administered in February 2012 to all incoming year 7 student (SoY7) and in October 2012 (EoY7). This is a time difference of 9 month = 0.75 years. It would be expected that students would make 0.75 years progress in that time.

School Results.

The data is only for student present for both assessments.

School wide averages	SoY7	EoY7	Incr
Whole School (56students)	10.49	11.66	1.17
NZE (20)	10.83	11.87	1.04
NZM (16)	10.48	11.76	1.28
PAS (11)	10.84	11.86	1.02
ASN (7)	8.96	10.32	1.36

Comment:

On average students made 1.17 year (1 year 2 month progress) in the 9 months of tuition. This is 5 more month than expected in 9 month = 55% more than expected.

Further it can be seen that all ethnic groups made more than a year's progress in the 9 months of tuition

School reading targets 2012 (from Charter)

The school had a target of moving the "well below" National Standard group to be "Below" the standard, "Below" to "At" and the "At" group to be "Above"

The results are shown below:

		SoY7		Became at the EoY7	
Whole School		24 Well Below		15 WB and 9 Below	
		12 Below		5 Below and 7 At	
		17 At		8At and 9 Above	
		3 Above		3 Above	

This means 25 students moved up a National Standards level. This is equal to 45% of the year 7 students who were present all year.

Analysis of Ethnic groups

NOTE. Within the "Well Below" group of students there were 8 students who were reading between 6 years and 7 years 11 months. We labelled this group "Well Well Below (WWB)" the standard.

Students starting "Well Well Below"

		Well Well Below SoY7		They became EoY7		Incr
Whole School (56 students)	Number	8		4WWB, 4WB		
	Average	7.03		8.25		1.22
NZE (20))	Number	4		3WWB, 1WB		
	Average	6.94		8.2		1.26
NZM (16)	Number	2		2B		
	Average	7.75		10.25		2.5
PAS (11)	Number	0				
	Average					
ASN (7)	Number	2		1WWB, 1WB		
	Average	6.5		7.75		1.25

NOTE the 2 ASN students were ESoL students.

This means this group of students had an average reading age of 7 years on entry to Linwood Intermediate. They had made 2 years reading progress over their 6 years of schooling. In 9 months at Linwood Intermediate they made 1 year 3 months progress. They made as much progress in 9 months as they had on average in 3 years previously.

Students starting "Well Below"

		Well Below SoY7		They became EoY7		Incr
Whole School (56 students)	Number	16		9 WB, 7 B		
	Average	8.92		10.05		1.13
NZE (20 students)	Number	2		1 WB, 1B		
	Average	8.63		9.63		1.0
NZM (16)	Number	6		4 WB, 2B		
	Average	8.75		9.71		0.96
PAS (11)	Number	6		3 WB, 3B		
	Average	9.21		10.33		1.12
ASN (7)	Number	2		1 WB, 1B		
	Average	8.88		10.63		1.75

This shows the increase for the whole school for the group starting "Well below" was from 8.92 years to 10.05 years, an increase of 1.13 years.

The significance of this is the students had made approximately 4 years progress in their 6 years at their previous schools. This is under a year each year. In 9 months at Linwood Intermediate they made over a year's progress.

There was no difference between the different ethnic groups..

Students starting "Below" the standard:

		"Below" SoY7		They became EoY7		Incr
Whole School (56 students)	Number	12B		5B, 7At		
	Average	10.75		12.13		1.38
NZE (20 students)	Number	5B		1B, 4A		
	Average	11		12.1		1.1
NZM (16)	Number	2B		0B, 2A		
	Average	10.75		13.25		2.5
PAS (11)	Number	2B		2B		
	Average	10.25		11.5		1.25
ASN (7)	Number	3B		2B, 1A		
	Average	10.67		11.83		1.16

These students had made on average 5.75 years progress in their 6 years at school. They made 1.38 years progress in 9 months.

Students starting "At" the standard

		"At" SoY7		They became EoY7		Incr
Whole School (56 students)	Number	17At		8At, 9Above		
	Average	12.75		13.87		1.12
NZE (20 students)	Number	8At		3At, 5Above		
	Average	12.78		14.16		1.38
NZM (16)	Number	5At		3At, 2Above		
	Average	12.85		13.7		0.85
PAS (11)	Number	3At		2At, 1Above		
	Average	12.5		13.08		0.58
ASN (7)	Number	0		0		
	Average					0

Again the trend is positive.

Students starting "Above" the standard stayed above the standard.

Conclusion

On average students made 1.17 years reading progress in the 9 month (0.75y) of reading tuition.

Significantly this was across all ethnic groups and all ability levels.

The most significant aspect of this result was the improvement of student who were "well below" to begin with.

This is a result of excellent team work between classroom teachers and the out of class remedial team.

Lee Walker
Principal
18 March 2013