

5 December 2012

Kathryn Palmer
Acting Regional Manager ECRE
Ministry of Education
39 Princess Street
Addington
Christchurch 8041

Dear Kathryn

Please find enclosed the consultation submission for the proposed merger of Discovery 1 and Unlimited Paenga Tawhiti schools as part of the Christchurch Education Renewal Programme. The consultation has been a rigorous process and the submission clearly outlines the community responses and perspectives on the proposed merger.

Both schools are founded on the same principles and discovery learning approach so the desire to work together is real and long established. They have been founded on a platform of constant innovation and learning that reflects the needs of students now, so it is not surprising to us that the consultation process has produced an overwhelming interest from both schools to form this partnership and move the merger process forward as quickly as possible. In partnership with the Ministry of Education, a positive decision on this merger will enable the schools to establish themselves in the central city again and provide students with the benefits of learning in a dynamic environment. We are happy to be first in the queue, and we are excited to try new and exciting possibilities in the rebuild of the city and in meeting the present and future needs of our students and our community.

For our schools the central city is a vital part of our community and we want to be involved in the rebuild. The centre of the city currently lacks the energy and life that children and young people bring and we are keen to remedy that. We understand very well the current problems of the central city but we actually view this as a valuable opportunity to foster early relationships that embody early childhood, primary, secondary, tertiary, industry, enterprise and training, health and well-being, events and recreational activities in a location that is easily accessible, exciting, connected, versatile, and available.

With both schools united we will be able to form a seamless learning environment/s where we can continue to provide a quality education formed on those sound special character visions of partnership between the students, parents and the school that support a personalised programme of learning and achievement that reflects choice, diverse pathways and access to extended learning opportunities. We also look forward to expanding our current roll numbers to offer this opportunity to wider selection of students from the Canterbury region.

Both schools have always played a pivotal role in demonstrating innovative approaches to learning that have led to gaining national and international recognition. This merger and reinstatement in the central city is something that will continue to demonstrate the Ministry of Education commitment to leading innovation and creativity in education.

To support the statements above we offer the key elements that are an important component of our school progressing:

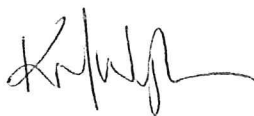
- We want to know that the merger decision can take place as soon as possible so that we can accelerate the process of finding a central city site as we have already been out of our 'home' for two years and our options will shrink markedly as buildings are leased and land is acquired. We want to be back in the city a.s.a.p.
- We feel as if we are ahead of other proposed mergers as we have already been in discussion about this with each other as per our submissions to Shaping Education. We can and will work well together to sort through issues in an open and transparent way.
- Timeframe for merger 2013 with proviso that funding arrangements are not adversely affected, as we will be on two quite distinct sites for 2013, and possibly 2014 .
- Build for increased roll cap (1500) as per the Ministries specifications as outlined in Appendix I, Indicative Costs and Benefits that was distributed in the Christchurch Education Renewal Programme Interim Business Case. The removal of the roll cap is one of our major requests from this process. Leaving a roll cap on special character schools only, seems grossly unfair to us. *(NB: UPT are fully in favour of the increased roll cap, D1 would like to consult on this further with their community)*
- The two Boards would like to manage the merger with financial support as needed for additional personnel necessary for formulating the best possible learning environment.

The Board of Trustees feels it has already cemented a sound basis with Discovery 1 for the move to build themselves into a new Year 1-14 learning environment (and well beyond to the whole community) that provides brilliant and exciting educational opportunities for students and the wider community that reflect choice and individualised learning.

Both schools are keen to be part of the rebuild of Christchurch and are very keen to be back in town.

We are happy to start on this immediately.

Yours sincerely



Karen Wylaars
Chairperson
Board of Trustees
Discovery 1



Matthew Ayton
Chairperson
Board of Trustees
Unlimited Paenga Tawhiti

Report for the Ministry of
Education.

disc@very 1 and



Community Consultation for the
proposed merger

Facilitated by M. Giroux

30/11/2012

Karen Wylaars
Discovey1 Board Chair

Matthew Ayton,
Unlimited Paenga Tawhiti Board Chair

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Executive Summary

The proposal – The Ministry has proposed that Discovery1 primary school and Unlimited Paenga Tawhiti secondary school, both Designated Special Character schools, be merged into a single school.

Consultation Method

The consultation process was initiated on the 18th of October. It was agreed that the following groups would be included in the consultation:

Discovery1	Unlimited Paenga Tawhiti
All students	Y9, 10, 11 Students
Parents	Students who came from D1
Teaching staff	Parents
Other staff	Families that came from D1
	New families starting in 2013
	Teaching staff

Consultation Process

- Each homebase at D1 was visited and polled (19 – 21 Oct).
- Students Y9/10 were polled at a morning 'community' session (20 Nov).
- An email was sent to UPT students inviting them to comment on the merger.
- Teaching staff at D1 had their own session with the facilitator (31 Oct).
- Teaching staff at UPT had their own session with the facilitator (30 Oct).
- Office staff at UPT were interviewed (6 Nov).
- After consulting with a Maori member of the community, it was decided phone calls would work best to gather their feedback. A random sample were telephoned and polled.
- A selection of parents of students who were once D1 and now attend UPT were telephoned.
- A random selection of UPT parents were also phoned to gather their feedback.
- A D1 student, as part of his inquiry, surveyed parents as they dropped off and picked up their children from school (19 – 23 Nov).
- D1 and UPT each held their own, separate community night to discuss and debate the proposal (both held on 24 October).
- Some of the D1 homebases held a parents evening so that parents could come along and share their concerns and give feedback (19 – 21 Nov).
- D1 and UPT held a joint/collaborative meeting for the two communities to come together and share their ideas/concerns (held 8 Nov).

- New parents to UPT were consulted on (20 Nov).
- A dedicated website was established (<http://d1uptmergerconsultation.co.nz/>) to allow comments and votes on various aspects of the proposal. Anyone connected to the two communities was allowed access and a vote.

Both schools sent out at least two notices in the newsletters inviting students and parents to either attend a meeting, visit the website, or make a time with the facilitator. The facilitator was available most weeks Tuesday-Thursday.

Summary of Key Findings

Respondents from both school communities cautiously support the idea of the merger. Both communities are keen to see the process run smoothly and they want reassurances that a new, combined school will create the same if not more opportunity for their children. The two communities are currently exhibiting trust that the MoE will work in partnership with the Boards and leadership to: be inclusive of different voices, keep the community informed, and strive on every level to ensure the best possible schooling experience for the students.

Concerns

Concerns that significantly affect the success of the merger include:

The possibilities of the merger affecting the timing of the new buildings in the CBD. D1 and UPT are very keen to begin planning the new school.

Current roll caps. The current caps are 200 for the primary school and 470 for the secondary school. There is a lack of clarity about what happens when these two school become one. Do the caps stay by age or does the count go across the school? How is the funding affecting? How are staffing numbers affected?

The relationship between the timing of the merger and the effect this would have on finances. If the merger proceeds while the schools are on two sites, what will the financial burden be to the school?

Both schools have undergone significant challenges over the past two years

Mixing of the extreme age ranges: learning access of younger students to NCEA courses, behaviour (language, adolescent issues), equity share of resources, access to equipment and assets (counter heights, speciality areas, etc)

Each community wants to see the practice of their special character and the culture of their school continue without being 'subsumed' by the other

Attracting secondary students into the new school. As an area school, new students and families may find the 'entry' point of secondary difficult.

Support from the MoE that ensures:

- -a merger process that supports and develops community rather than one that creates an 'us' against 'them' scenario
- -financial support to facilitate the changes that will be necessary
- -resources that assists the research into best practice around mergers and area school structure
- -continued flexibility of learning programs and support of the unique nature of the special character

Introduction

This report is a response by the Discovery1 and Unlimited Paenga Tawhiti school communities to the Ministry's proposal for the two schools to merge. The question the two communities were asked to answer was, "Does your community support the proposal; why or why not?"

In an attempt to make sense of the proposal the Boards of the two schools came together and met as one.

As members were assembling, it was noted that the timing of the proposal fitted very nicely with the work the Boards had recently completed. For more than a year the two Boards had been meeting to discuss and plan a co-location agreement in which Discovery1 and Unlimited would site share. In their submission to "Shaping Education" each Board had outlined plans that would create an innovative, collaborative and connected learning environment for not only the students of each school but also for the wider community who are interested in education such as industry and business and for youth providers in the areas of health, recreation, enterprise, and training. The 'school' site would therefore be open many hours in a 24/7 style of operation and learning would itself be opened up to the community that goes beyond the immediate school students to their parents, grandparents, friends, and community. This would also open up learning opportunities to the students in areas well beyond what traditional schooling can provide within their own resources. There is a desire to provide a space that is flexible, multi-purposed, open long hours and during weekends and holidays. The schools are keen to make learning a vital and exciting part of the new city rebuild.

The two school communities have, from their beginnings, embraced and sought innovations that allow two educational concepts to come to life: the first is student choice to follow their interests and to develop the knowledge they need/desire, and the second is to assist their young people to be well-positioned for the future paths they choose by offering them as many possible helpers, mentors, opportunities and learnings as possible. Both schools have been and will continue to be, committed to diverse, multiple learning pathways for students. This has led to many 'firsts' within the NZ education sector. The communities have enthusiastically looked for ways to push boundaries that currently seem too narrow or limit opportunity. They both want to continue to push the boundaries and open up education to provide quality learning for their students and their families/whanau.

Therefore the response the community arrived at is not a surprise.

Context

The following is a brief account of the experiences of Discovery1 (D1) and Unlimited Paenga Tawhiti (UPT) over the past two years. The point of reviewing all this is to provide an understanding of the context and pressures both schools have been under. Each school has shown incredible resiliency, optimism and inventiveness in finding solutions to make things work. Their driver has been to provide the best experiences for the students.

D1 was established in 2001 and UPT opened their doors in 2003. Both D1 and UPT are designated Special Character Schools under section 156A of the Education Act that at their core value and hold strongly the philosophy of student-directed learning that can occur anywhere at any time and is facilitated best by people who are excited and knowledgeable about the topic. Both schools were established in the Central Business District of Christchurch as part of the NZ Learning Discovery Trust's desire to have access to varied learning possibilities and to share the publicly funded facilities

of the city (and community) as much as possible. The central city allowed access to many businesses, community groups, art experiences, gyms, swimming pools, parks and access to the whole city through the Bus Exchange, which was very near. The students population of both schools come from all over Christchurch and as far away as Ashburton and North Canterbury.

Following the February 2011 earthquakes both schools were relocated to sites on or near Halswell Residential College. The transition has been very difficult. Both schools have gone from the CBD with modern, interesting, lively purpose-designed learning environments to a gated traditional spaces in the middle of suburbia. With no general public anywhere near the school, as was had in the central city, there is no random interactions with the community. This has highlighted the impact facilities and location has on the life and enactment of the Special Character. In the CBD the space was created as a lively, open learning environment and organised so that two or three 'homebases' shared a large, open plan area filled with resources. The combination of being in an open plan space and being located downtown allowed for parents, students, staff and their ideas to 'bump' into others which often led to new learning opportunities to foster and grow. It also allowed everyone to feel as if they were a part of the larger school, not just one 'classroom'. It was often difficult to get students to leave at the end of the day! The community had made all three buildings feel very welcoming and places that embraced the students freedom to learn.

All this has disappeared on the Halswell campuses. It is very difficult for the Special Character to even exist, let alone thrive and grow in an environment that functions and feels so closed, separate, and gated off from the community. This is not life that either school knows or wants. The standard school design of the past was for the industrial model of education, not the connected, networked style of learning embraced by both school communities.

Additional stressors have arisen from the constant struggle to attain appropriate learning resources (spaces, materials) and the change in the financial arrangement with the Ministry of Education. These considerations have led to sometimes short-term, sometimes long-term reductions in learning opportunities. It has led to much frustration and energy-draining experiences for both staff and students. It has been experienced as a loss.

The beginning of 2012 saw Unlimited granted some space at the University of Canterbury which helped to address some of the 'site' requirements: drama space, science labs, space for UPT Digital, etc. As with most decisions, this had an up side (many great spaces available) and a down side (transport of staff/students between sites in ways that allow for flexible learning plans).

In addition, both schools experienced a change in the composition of their learning communities. With the move to suburbia, many families decided the travel was too inconvenient and/or required too much time. The site was a very long way from where they had enrolled their sons and daughters. Families also felt that the loss of learning opportunities presented by being isolated was too great.

Both schools have undergone significant leadership change. Both leadership teams are stronger now, and are working with staff to find solutions to the demands and needs of a changed environment.

Unlimited learned that they are required to move from their Halswell site at the end of 2012. It was only on 9 Nov that they were finally granted a new site at the Dovedale campus in the University of Canterbury.

The UPT Board and staff are excited by the move to vastly improved premises. They are looking forward to all being located on one campus and they are thrilled to have access to learning possibilities and collaboration with the University. Again, it means change and they are keen that the next move – the one back into the central city as a year 1- 13 school with D1 will encapsulate all that they have learned about learning environments over the past two years.

This move to Dovedale will initiate a different type of historical moment for both schools; this is the first time that they are not in close proximity to each other. The shared learning that has occurred (Chinese, maths, PE, dance, etc) will be very difficult if not impossible being on sites that are so far away from each other. As they have done over the past two years, the schools will work together to find solutions to this new challenge.

Both school teams energised by the thought that they are that much closer to moving back to a site that enhances the Special Character and are desperate to see it happen as quickly as possible.

Proposal

The Ministry of Education has asked the communities of Discovery¹ and Unlimited Paenga Tawhiti to merge into one school. This would create the first area school in New Zealand located in an urban environment, the CBD of Christchurch.

In the plan for Greater Christchurch Education Renewal Plan the Ministry has asked various communities to consider the larger changes to the education sector brought about by the earthquakes. These include reduction in pupil numbers, damage to buildings, and changing sector needs. In addition to those reasons, the Ministry gave specific rationale for the merger of D1 and UPT as:

- Provision of appropriate shared facilities between and across schools within a cluster.
- The two schools share a similar past and approach to education.
- Option for central city education provision.
- Retention of options for students to continue to enjoy the provision provided by Special Character schools.

At the combined Board meeting it was decided that the merger built on the aligning work that had been occurring over the past year and that the Boards would, in principle, support the merger. Their rationale for this includes:

- 1 Opportunities associated with a level 1 – 13 learning environment.
- 2 Building a seamless educational system leading to:
 - Access to multi-level learning
 - Student centred/chosen learning pathways
 - Sharing of facilities/expertise (including from the larger community)
 - Student mentoring/leadership experience
 - Expanded collaboration.
- 3 Building strength and recognition around kawa (the way we do things) within the education sector.
- 4 Developing leadership opportunities to improve quality teaching within a child-led environment.
- 5 Seamless and strengthened whanau engagement.
- 6 Shared understanding among students of their responsibilities towards each other as 'school whanau' and learners.

Along with understanding the positive potential, the Boards hold concerns about the merger: financial arrangements, delays to acquiring appropriate building/s in the CBD, more staffing and leadership changes, and the continuation of the upheaval and challenges experienced over the past two years. In absence of knowledge around some of these issues in it is a bit difficult to give an unreserved affirmation and the schools welcome the chance to work through all of these things in partnership with the Ministry. This would allow any concerns to be laid to rest as quickly as possible.

The Boards' look forward to working with the Ministry to support the process in a way that ensures fiscal, pedagogical, and change process success that also strengthens and enriches the Special Characters of both schools.

The Boards, parents, students and staff are innovative, future-focused people. They have sought out new ways of working as educators and an innovative style of education for student learning. They want to make sure that whatever the eventual outcomes are, that those outcomes work for their community and others around them. They would like to see education services in the Christchurch area leading the nation in cross-sector collaboration which leads to flexibility in learning. The Boards see this flexible learning as part of preparing students for a future that holds a range of options allowing each student and family to select a path that assists them reaching their individual goals.

When planning the consultation with the community the Boards wanted to gauge the ability of the community to get behind the proposed change.

To find answers to the questions, *Does your community support the proposal, why or why not?*, the Boards narrowed down the survey to five main questions for consideration. It was thought that each of them would provide a sense of how the community was feeling and also may give some insights into how the community is envisioning the potential of the merger. For example, if someone answered that they wanted the year levels split Y1-8 and 9 – 13 but said they would like to see the school in one building it indicates something different from a person who claimed year levels 1 – 13 is the best structure, but that students should be in two buildings.

The five questions asked were:

- What concerns do you have about the two schools becoming one school? What might occur that would help to alleviate those concerns?
- What would be the best way to organise the year levels to best meet the needs of the students and their learning choices?
- What is the best timeframe for the two schools to actually become one?
- What consideration should be made when searching for and planning one school? What are your top priorities?
- What will contribute to a successful transition from two schools to one?

The next section of this report will record the findings and summarise what was found. It will also make comparisons of the results between different groups within the community.

Responses

What follows are the questions posed and the background given to the community to consider. Following this are the responses of students, parents, and staff of each community.

It needs to be noted that all of the responses given at the combined community consultation meeting and the website responses have been included in the D1 parent responses as they were the majority of representation.

It is also noted that full summaries of responses are included as appendices.

Consideration 1

What concerns do you have about the two schools becoming one school? What might occur that would help to alleviate those concerns?

Background:

The Boards are interested in learning about any hesitations or concerns the community members may hold, especially those that have the potential to impact on the feasibility of the proposed merger. It may eventuate that the hesitation you raise may not be dealt with until later in the process.

Student Concerns

Although there are quite different concerns expressed by the students such as toilets by age range, and issues to do with being around older students, there are also some common themes. They include: concerns over the mixing of the extreme age ranges, sharing resources and learning staying at the forefront. Overall the Y 2 – 10 students seemed open to the merger. They just want assurances that they can have their own spaces, continue to have access to resources that assist with their individualized learning program, and that not too much changes.

The responses have been repositioned from what you will find in the appendices to better show where the statements align and vary.

Concerns D1 Students	Concerns UPT Y9/10 & few Y11 students
Toilets for younger and older students should be separate	No concerns (33)
How do students get a 'fresh' start if one big school. Usually can 'start again' if change to another school	Not being close enough to certain places like the library, bus, mentors (6)
Social mixing of year 7/8 with high school students could be troublesome Young kids getting bullied Mean kids Have PINs (passions, interests and needs) across ages as a way to get to know each other	Younger students may be a distraction for NCEA students (4) At what point can students participate in high school classes? Unlimited not getting on with Discovery students (3) In our own time/space. Need to know we are not with the little children (4) Unlimited or older students as bad influence (4)
Need transition points – want to experience change as move from one to another	Not enough room (3)

Concerns D1 Students	Concerns UPT Y9/10 & few Y11 students
Loss of D1 feel Not lose anything that keeps school whole, little bits changing to become a big difference	Less attention paid to students learning during the process (5)
Gain of specialty facilities but will D1 have access	Not enough resources to go around (4) Expensive equipment being damaged by young students
Outdoor play space Separate play space so not too scary if older students there. They (older) want to sit we want to play Big kids 'hog' the space Big kids can 'hurt' younger by accident if playing together	
Ages in homebase. Better if they are closer in age than big difference	Having unsuitable buildings
Who would be at our school as a leader	Please don't merge (6)
Want to be separate from sibling, but want to be able to see them	
Finding friends if the space is too big.	

Parent Concerns

Parent responses indicate that they are also concerned about mixing the extreme age ranges and about each school being able to keep its unique practice/culture. Neither D1 or the UPT parent group wants to see the other school's model 'imposed' on what, they believe, has worked so far. Keeping autonomy while working collaboratively to develop shared values and systems will require considered planning. It may be that over time as the 'one' school develops, these concerns diminish as new practices and improvements take place.

Parents are also concerned about the transition points for students and families. UPT parents who were once D1 parents, found as their children did, that the transition to the secondary model was more difficult than expected. With the school becoming one large school, the parents wonder what processes and steps would be in place to help students and parents 'come into' the school at any age, but especially at the secondary level where an extra 270 students need to enter.

There is concern that as one school, the secondary section may find it difficult to attract the necessary pupils. Current parents (and staff at UPT) want to ensure that the secondary holds a unique place among secondary schools and that the intake processes support new and continuing students and their families.

Concerns from D1 Parents	Concerns from UPT Parents
Resources split equitably (24) That the focus will be on secondary students and the primary will miss out (building design, resources, design of learning programs), representation on Board (9)	
Identify the way each school functions and continue D1 not to become mini UPT and UPT not to become secondary D1. Each keep their unique culture. (34) Keeping the philosophy alive with so such a larger school. Not becoming 'industrial' (1)	Maintain uniqueness of secondary model Embed philosophy so strongly that in a few years, new leaders will know what to do, how to be Maintain secondary students ability to follow interests and learn outside of school Keeping Y 7/8 students from getting involved or worrying about NCEA
Primary students being exposed to high school student 'stuff', age inappropriate language, behaviours, materials (35) 'Play' time interactions and older bullying younger (10)	Mixing of the students. Older and younger should be separate Segregation of 1-8, 9 -13 Bullying (1)
Big is not always better, danger of 'losing' students (20) Losing families so that they are unconnected to community	
Want D1 students to continue having the option to move to a different secondary school when the time comes (1) If one school, how make high school 'attractive' to outsiders? Bringing in new students, how enculturate? (6)	Intake of new students into secondary – how attract, help to fit in Intake of new families Transition from D1 – UPT for families
Focus on merger and associated business rather than on teaching and learning (1) Management getting enough support and time out to manage the transition effectively (1)	Creating good, solid education transitions for students Leaderships focus. Primary and secondary have very different needs Difficult for leaders to manage it all
Possibility of fragmented school (your side/my side) (1)	Agreed values that are lived and practiced across the school (10)
Getting younger students from bus exchange to site	Going back to CBD need a unified voice from all

Concerns from D1 Parents	Concerns from UPT Parents
(1) <i>This concern is also represented later in the survey under what is wanted at new site.</i>	schools in area about education
	The student tracking system needs to be changed to allow for flexibility of movement and learning places
How more change will affect entire community. So much trauma and challenges over the last few years (1)	Students who came into UPT just before the earthquake will have 4 years of very disrupted educational experience.

Staff Concerns

The staff of both schools share similar concerns: social mixing of ages, loss of jobs due to becoming one large school, loss of resources (if roll changes how it may affect specialty subjects), financial impacts on facilities, and leadership's ability to manage yet another change.

Staff at both schools have said that they want to be sure that the merger can be done in a sympathetic way that allows enough time, energy and resources to make it work.

Both want to ensure that the staff members of the 'other' school are not alienated or that an 'us' against 'them' mentality arises. Careful planning of exchanges will need to be put into place. This is made more difficult with UPT moving off the Halswell campus and will require additional effort to arrange.

The Special Character of the school is built around the idea that students are able to learn when they are ready, where they are most comfortable, and with whoever can best assist the learning. There is recognition that the academic learning opportunities are greater for D1 students than for UPT students. The staff want to ensure that after the merger resource allocation and access to learning continues to be at a high standard and that both schools have the ability to generate and extend new learning for students.

Many at UPT see the merger opening up new leadership, mentorship and guidance opportunity for senior students. This will need time to develop and grow within the 'one' school culture.

Again, the ordering of the concerns has been altered from appendices to demonstrate where concerns align and vary.

Concerns of D1 staff	Concern of UPT staff
Finances and resources equitably split Losing money due to being one school	Merging schools will affect a drop in senior student enrolments and staffing for specialist area will reduce The effect on staffing numbers and wide specialist area curriculum coverage Staffing – Discovery feeding in only 20+ students a year, will that reduce senior school staffing

Concerns of D1 staff	Concern of UPT staff
	<p>Funding – less money than now. Worry that senior school requires more money, not less</p> <p>Mixed level classes</p>
Losing jobs because of funding changes or roll	<p>Site and facilities will continue to be insufficient to offer awesome programmes</p> <p>Rooms/spaces/homebase/community areas/staff areas/work spaces</p> <p>Clarity in our teaching roles.</p> <p>Staffing development vs curriculum</p>
Flexibility of year groupings, want to keep children in appropriate age groupings	<p>Expectation that younger students can accelerate 'when they choose'</p> <p>Understanding in community of parents/students that students can study at any level</p> <p>How much 'flexibility' will be expected to move between ages?</p> <p>Prerequisites for courses</p> <p>How do we communicate this in a positive way to maintain student confidence;</p> <p>Understanding their baseline, where to start</p> <p>Pending exam fear</p> <p>Diminishing passion for learning</p> <p>Steps for success</p> <p>Learning to learn</p> <p>Developing communication/self-reflection skills</p>
Younger children around high school aged children	<p>Y1,2,3, having contact with 16/17 year olds</p> <p>Younger students exposure to teenagers, does this mean 'duty'</p> <p>Seniors become role models – positive/negative how this will be managed for positive, safe relationships</p> <p>Role modelling. Actions of older students</p>
Board representation	<p>Leadership – how many, where</p> <p>What is the leadership structure? How many directors? Curriculum leaders?</p> <p>Decision making process – understanding and empathetically listening to issues and responding accordingly.</p> <p>Leadership/Board taking the time to notice needs and making the goals/objectives reasonable and not too demanding all at one time</p>

Concerns of D1 staff	Concern of UPT staff
	<p>How attract other students to the secondary level</p> <p>How deal with an influx of new students at Y9 or Y10 when not 'prepared' through Discovery model. Will this hinder our ability to attract students</p> <p>How to integrate 'new' students at secondary level?</p> <p>Major problem difference in feeder numbers of D1 students 180 D1, 350 UPT</p> <p>Potential policy changes around health and safety for younger students will effect senior students independence</p>
	<p>Philosophy, "One Big School"</p> <p>How does this shape the way in which the schools functions</p> <p>Whole school purpose and understanding, How to build community?</p> <p>Issues around negative groupings of students who don't fit Special Character</p> <p>Isolation of some new students, how to include and build positive community?</p>
	<p>Leadership roles in senior primary can vanish, become small fish in a big pond. How to ensure opportunities for this to occur</p>

Consideration 2

What would be the best way to organise the year levels to best meet the needs of the students and their learning choices?

Background

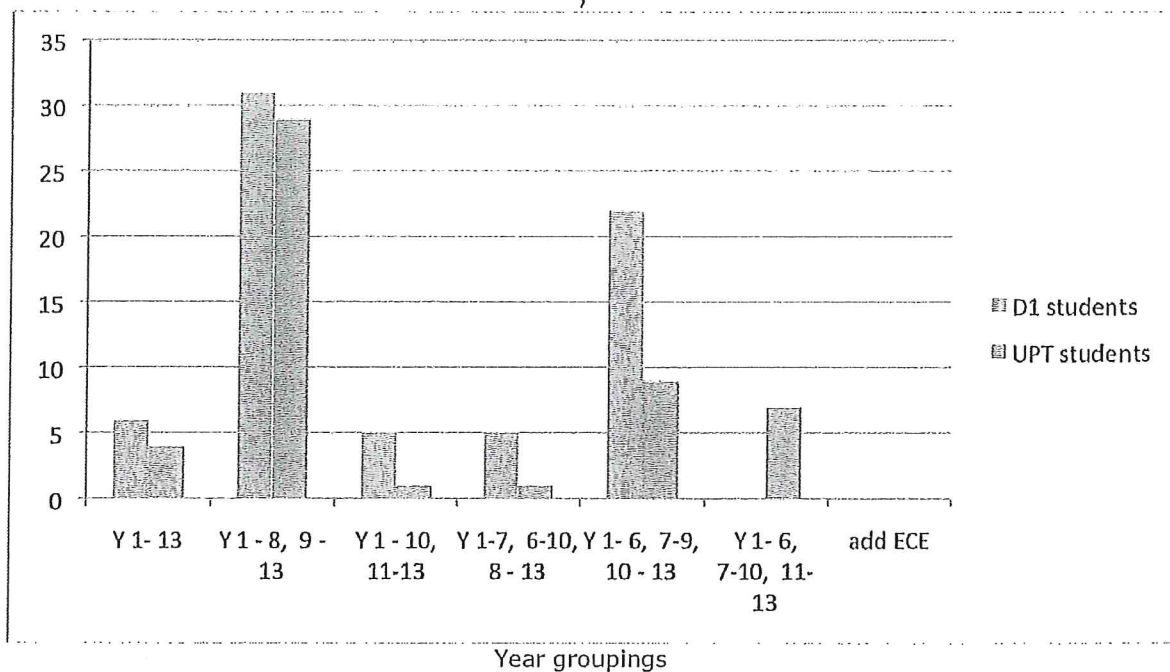
The question of structure is asked because it impacts on how the Boards will report to the Ministry about two aspects: timeframe and facilities. If the structure is significantly different, time will be needed to research, plan, and design learning options. The structure also has the potential to influence the types of facilities that are planned and requested.

When considering which structure you believe works the best, please be aware that the Boards value, and plan to continue, vertical groupings of students into homebases. Currently, D1 students stay with their homebase LA most of the day while at UPT the students meet in homebase 1 – 2 times a day and individually with the LA for 30 minutes a week.

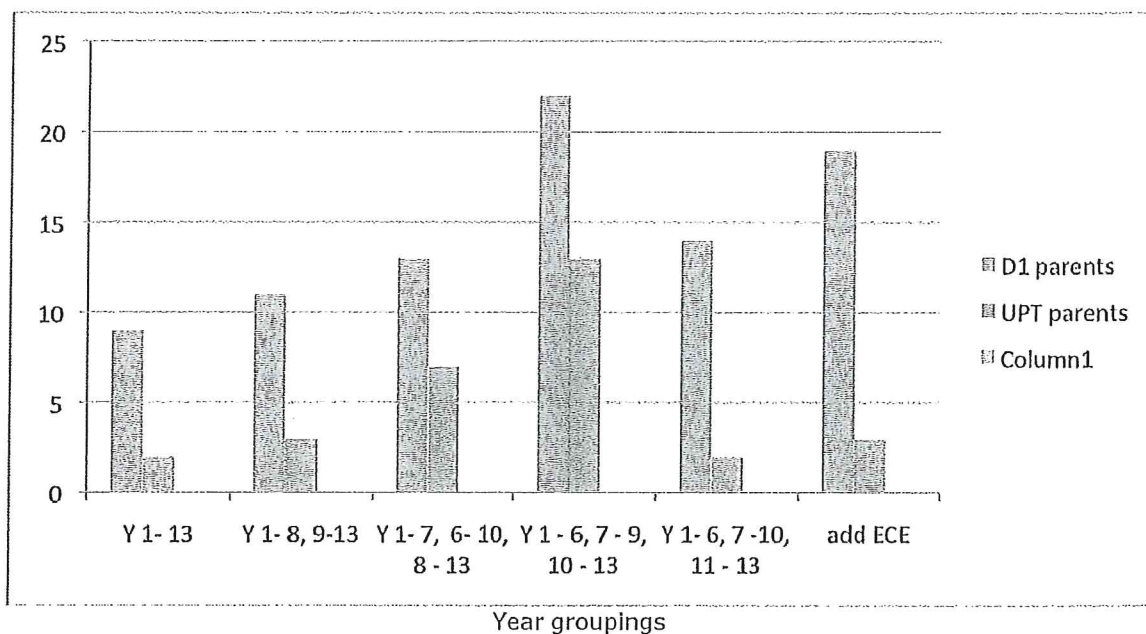
Responses

From the background given to the community it is easy to see that this isn't really a question that directly impacts the merger question but it does give an insight into how the community is currently thinking about the possibilities presented by the merger. It also indicates what type of community the current members see themselves belonging to and what might need to be done to facilitate a smooth transition.

Student responses to which structure they would like to see



Parent responses to the structure they would like to see



Staff responses

To this question the preference expressed by most staff was to see the schools work through this issue in detail after the merger. They want to keep the flexible learning nature of both schools but do want to protect students' access to learning to when it is the most appropriate.

From the responses, some questions arise:

- Are these responses because this is what currently exists and what most people are used to?
- How do these well-known year structures limit possibilities?
- What is it about these structures that have people so comfortable? What are they saying they want?
- What transitions would need to be in place to help the community along if another structure is chosen?
- Should the new school start with a well-established structure and then move the community along into a different one?

Consideration 3

What is the best timeframe for the two schools to actually become one?

Background:

The last two years have been challenging for both schools. Both have lost their school sites, been relocated, seen their communities change, and have had leadership change. This has led to many challenges and much stress.

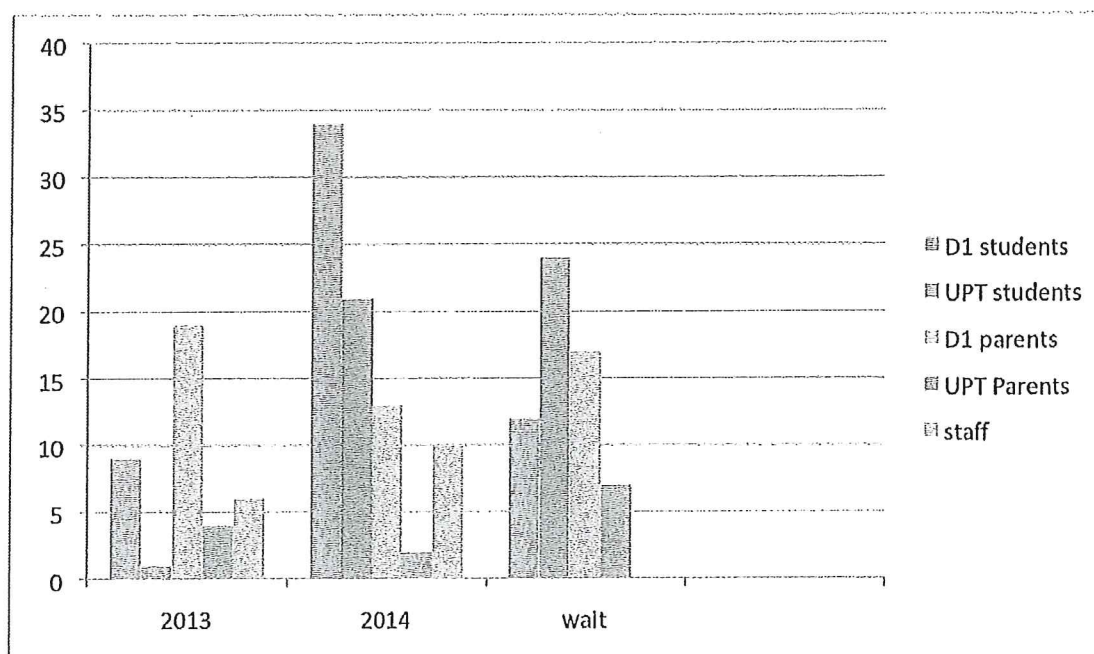
The current plan is for D1 to remain at Halswell for 1 – 2 years. UPT has recently received permission to be located at the Dovedale campus of UC for the start of 2013. Both schools will stay in these locations until the new school/s in the CBD has been established.

End of 2013 – let's jump into the merger and figure it out as we go.

End of 2014- this gives two years to sort things out.

Wait until new buildings are in place.

Responses of the various community groups



Best timeframe for two schools to become one

This question was asked because in the original documentation given to both school no timeframe was established. One Ministry representative from Wellington suggested the schools were able to submit a timeframe they felt would work best. Later, a Ministry representative from Christchurch claimed the schools had no say in when it would happen. Due to the confusion, it was thought best to raise it with the community to see what they could tolerate.

Again, this is not about the exact numbers. It was designed to show a trend towards an action. The most difficult aspect of this question is that people want the new buildings back in town as soon as possible. When speaking with many of the respondents, the question of merger was associated with

having a new building. Many want the new building/s, and the merger if it comes with it, as soon as possible.

Teaching staff want the merger to happen faster, for reassurance about their employment but are concerned about having enough energy to work through what the process may require.

Management had changing responses to the question due to employment issues and strategies related to the merger process. However, management is keen to get the ball rolling and have already made plans to align some staff development opportunities for next year. They are also keen to see what support the Ministry will offer to assist with the merger in regards to time, money, literature and research results, and access to others who have successfully been through the process.

Consideration 4

What considerations should be made when searching and planning for one school? What are your top priorities?

Background:

For both schools the last two years has highlighted the impact facilities and location has on the life and enactment of the Special Character. Both have gone from interesting and exciting, purpose-designed learning environments to quite traditional spaces. This allows the community a unique opportunity to think about what has been best about both sites. Can those aspects, or a form of them, be implemented in a new school in the CBD?

The ideas here are only early days information-gathering. If the merger is decided upon, a new process to understand what is needed will occur.

Responses

Consideration 4 was asked to help facilitate the Boards' ability to look for and consider sites downtown. It was thought that this information would contribute to the work the Boards have done over the past year regarding co-location in the CBD. Further, the data would also give an indication about how the community saw the two schools working as one school (one building or two buildings, etc).

The results are interesting, in that an aspect previously thought not to be high on the agenda has emerged as an across the spectrum, top priority - for the school to have green space attached to the school.

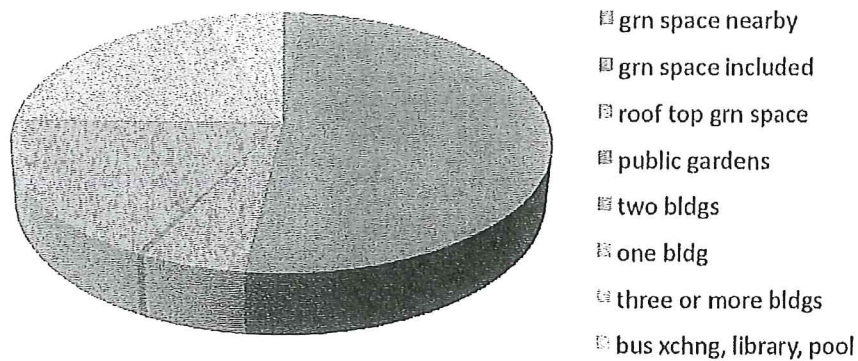
Students want the green space for room to play, design, build, talk, and walk. Parents want the green space for the same reasons but also because they know that for the younger students to have access to a green space away from the school there needs to be extra adults available to supervise. It is important to them that their children can get outside and play, build, and be physically active at any time they would like.

Staff like the idea of green space for all of the reasons listed above and because green space makes a great option for 1:1 conversations, small class discussions, and for the possibilities of altering the land through various learning projects.

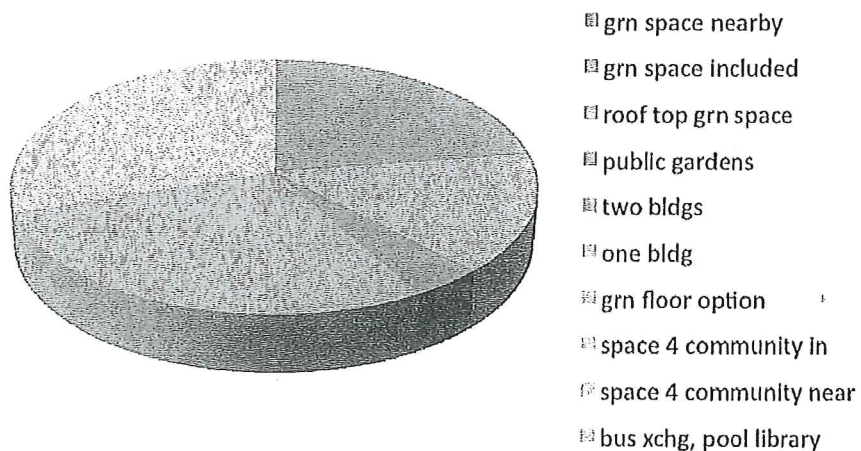
The other top contender is a space large enough for the entire community to meet. When each school was in the CBD they both had this available. Being at Halswell, where this type of space is not easily available, has made it clear how often it was used and the opportunities that space provided for interactions of all types to occur.

The following charts show the specific communities responses to all choices. This then will indicate each groups priorities.

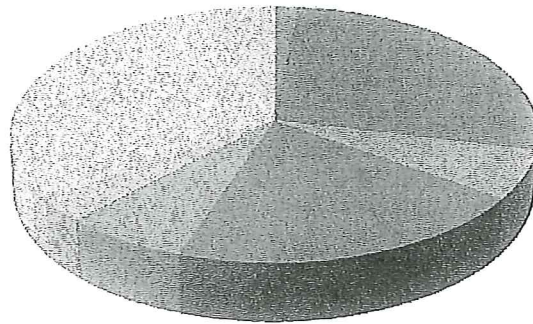
Property choices D1 students



Property choices UPT students

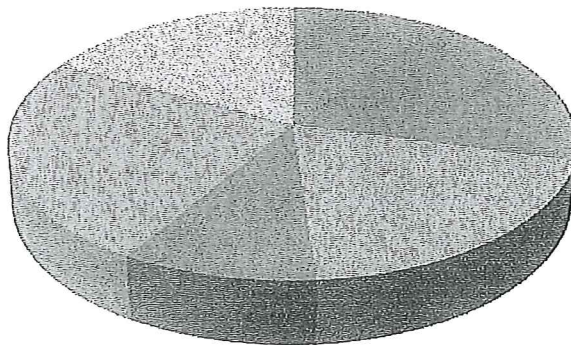


Property choices D1 parents



- grn space nearby
- grn space included
- roof top
- two bldgs
- one bldg
- three or more bldgs
- grnd floor learning space

Property choices UPT parents



- grn space nearby
- grn space included
- two bldgs
- one bldg
- space 4 community in
- bus xchg, pool, library

Consideration 5

What will contribute to a successful transition from two schools to one?

Background:

This point was included in the consultation because it was thought that as a criterion of what a successful transition looked like, it may help ensure those characteristics are realised.

When responding, please make simple, 1-2 sentence statements. This will help others to understand and to read through them quickly.

Responses

In addition to the question above, four other questions were raised with the community. Each person could choose if they wanted to respond to one or all of the questions.

The first chart is a compilation of the first two questions as the responses frequently overlapped. Unsurprisingly, the main themes were: being included and updated, solid communication between everyone, being sure the focus stayed on learning and that there was time to interact and get to know each other

What do you believe is necessary to ensure a successful transition? And question 2, What involvement and information do you need to help you understand and be a part of the change?

	UPT Students	D1 Parents	UPT Parents
Being updated Students are well informed long before it happens. Emails to parents at both schools Regular, timely meetings	✓	✓	✓
Being able to have an opinion, open to student input Students having an equal voice in all matters Accepting parental suggestions Regular involvement in important decisions	✓	✓	✓
Lots of communication between two school Communication – we know what is happening and Well informed Good communication between two schools Communication between MoE, schools, students Listening to everyone's opinions Involvement of community, students, LA's	✓	✓	
Keep students the priority not disrupting to the students learning To make sure that the two schools don't interrupt each	✓	✓	✓

others learning			
Clear expectations and boundaries for students			
Lots of get togethers so UPT get to know some of D1	✓		
Organisation	✓	✓	✓
Setting out the steps for change			
Time			
A quick transition			
A clear set of goals			
Leadership/direction of schools works together			
Having all of our stuff	✓		
A new building or two for the school to be a whole	✓		
5 year wait or don't do it	✓		
Outside expert to help where necessary		✓	
Support for staff		✓	✓
Separate building		✓	

The next question, *What do you think the two Boards need to think about or consider?* had very different responses from each group. Therefore, responses are represented separately.

UPT student responses

- *Student costs*
- *Think about green spaces*
- *If there is a part of the school that is 8-10 then the y9-10 won't get the opportunity with early NCEA that they have now*
- *Not having the younger and older students around each other too much*
- *Clear division between junior and senior school areas*
- *Working together*
- *Younger kids need different support than older kids.*
- *We still need our individual learning programs and support*
- *Having lots of free, open space!*
- *Staff*
- *Location – find a good site*
- *Services*
- *Transport*
- *When the schools merge will new systems be put in place there needs to be careful consideration and collaboration.*

What do you think the two Boards need to think about or consider? continued

D1 Parent responses

- Strong leadership through the process
- Having directors at both schools focused on the needs of those particular ages
- Solid Representation from both Boards
- Skills to get job done, open and transparent
- Always put the learning needs of the children first
- To consider developing an 'ideas' incubator that creates teams to follow through ideas all the way to tertiary.
- Philosophy and how it can be shared
- Structure of the new school, roles, responsibilities
- Tasks, evaluation of changes with an open-ness to seeing mistakes/what doesn't work and making new decision because of these
- SLT, Directors, Location, movement of students through the school
- Big enough site, keeping schools separate, green space, near public facilities
- Environment shapes behaviour
- Age/year level spread more evenly
- Everyone's welfare, including Board members be considered. Patience and openness required.

UPT Parent Responses

- Branding of secondary school section of new school
- Promote the new school as a complete education system
- Teachers can move across ages just as students can move across learning groups
- Intake of new students
- Transitions as they age
- Harder to be involved as a parent at the secondary level. Transition/induction of families
- Talk with schools in Invercargill who have had successful mergers
- A parent working party
- Continue to do what is best for the children
- Reinstate trust licenses
- Revisiting Architects for Humanity work done last year
- Being clear about what the advantages are and why choose merge.

The final question was answered by two groups only. It is very clear that the hope is for a school that is as good as if not better than currently available.

When/if the day arises that the two schools have become one, what would have happened that helps you to feel it was worthwhile?

UPT Student Responses

- More learning opportunities from different teachers, so that people are compelled to attend
- More fun classes
- Lots of learning opportunities for older students to work with younger students
- Where Y8 or any other year can do higher level classes
- That the style of Unlimited hasn't changed
- A great space to be in
- Smooth transition, everyone working well together
- Different lunch times and buses to school
- It is well divided between the junior and senior sections but communications is open and clear
- Increased resources.

D1 Parent Responses

- We have a strong management with a director who has a real vision for the school and the leadership skills to realise the vision
- Knowing that we have a forward thinking, modern approach to educating our children and a building to match
- Special Character remains intact and the learning is enhanced by the merger
- Great staff, strong Special Character and culture in place
- I will see a committed community that has worked through the process thoughtfully and is closer and more effective as a learning community who care about our children
- A community of learners
- Powhiri
- Settled, happy children. Parents feeling able to support learning across the school
- As little upheaval as possible.

Besides the Board questions, a D1 (primary) student interviewed parents as they dropped off their children. He asked them three questions that would assist with his inquiry project around the proposed merger. His questions and their answers were:

1. Do you agree with the proposal to merge?
 - a. Yes (9), No (1), Unsure (3)
2. When the school is downtown, do you want an outside area for play?
 - a. Yes (10)
3. You currently drive your child to school. When the school moves downtown will your child:
 - a. Be dropped off? (12)
 - b. Bus? (4)
 - c. Bike? (2)
 - d. Walk, scooter, skate? (1).

APPENDIX A

Discovery1 students

Each homebase was visited and the students were consulted with. The time in each room varied from 30 – 60 minutes. The younger students did not 'vote' per se but contributed their ideas and desires.

The following is a list of concerns from all of the homebases. The comment has made the list if more than three people supported the idea.

Concerns	Action
Toilets for younger and older students should be separate	
How do students get a 'fresh' start if one big school. Usually can 'start again' if change to another school	
Social mixing of year 7/8 with high school students could be troublesome Have PINS across ages as a way to get to know each other	
Need transition points -- want to experience change as move from one to another	
Loss of D1 feel Not loose anything that keeps school whole, little bits changing to be a big thing	
Gain of specialty facilities but will D1 have access	
Outdoor play space Separate play space so not too scary if older students there. They (older) want to sit we want to play Big kids 'hog' the space Big kids can 'hurt' younger by accident if playing together	
Ages in homebase. Better if they are closer in age than big difference	
Who would be at our school as a leader	
Young kids getting bullied Mean kids	
Want to be separate from sibling, but want to be	

able to see them	
Finding friends if the space is too big	

All but the youngest responded to the following question

Y 1 – 13 (6)

Y 1 - 8, 9 – 13 7, 10, 15, 1 (33)

Y 1 – 10, 11 – 13 5, (5)

Y 1-7, 6-10, 8-13 5, (5)

Y 1 - 6, 7 - 9, 10 – 13 5, 2, 15 (22)

17 wanted grouping of 3 (17) *Total of 49 wanted three or more age groupings. 2 wanted grouping of 4 splits*

Only the three older classrooms were asked this question

- Merge at the end of 2013. Let's just jump into the new school structure and have it sorted before we move to the CDB. 4, 5 (9)
- Merge at the end of 2014. This gives 2 years to sort things out before the official merger 19, 15 (34)
- Wait until both schools are on the same site 2, 10 (12)

All of the students were asked this question .Kay, Ian, Steve have oldest students. Then Melva and Susie have middle, Nadine and Ben have youngest (of course each homebase has a range of ages up to three year groupings together).

- Green space nearby school 3 of Kay/Ian's (3)
- Green space included with school all of Steve's hmbse, 36 of Kay/Ian's, 15 of Ben's, all of Nadine's, all of Susie's
- Roof top green space (this with space nearby a second for Susie's hmbse)
- No need, use public gardens 1 Ben's
- The two schools in separate buildings 18 of Steve's, 5 of Kay/Ian's, 4 of Ben's, 13 of Melva's
- The two schools in the same building but on different floors (possibly multiple floors) 5 of Steve's, 16 of Kay/Ian's, 12 of Ben's, 4 of Nadine's, 6 of Melva's
- 3 or more buildings 19 of Kay/Ian's, 8 of Ben's, 8 of Nadine's,
- Other (Write-in) e.g. close to bus exchange, pool, library ½ of Steve's hmbse

APPENDIX B**UPT Y9/10 students responses (50) Senior students responses (7)**

Total student population Y9-(45), Y10- (80) = 125

Concern	Possible solution
No concerns 33	
Not being close enough to certain places like the library, bus, mentors 6	
Younger students may be a distraction for NCEA students 4 At what point can students participate in high school classes?	Keep the schools in different locations/buildings 111
Not enough room 3	
Less attention paid to students learning during the process 5	More teachers/support Make transition quick and prioritise student learning Keep smaller homebases and each student spends a longer time working out timetable There could be more activities because there would be more people to participate
Unlimited not getting on with Discovery students 3 In our own time/space. Need to know we are not with the little children 4 Unlimited or older students as bad influence 4	Different lunch and break times for older and younger students Know/understand the plan better Separate year groups and spaces. Run admin one whole school
Not enough resources to go around – 4 Expensive equipment being damaged by young students	Having 'permission' in place with adult supervision
Having unsuitable buildings	Involve students in building process
Please don't merge 6	School too big, It is working fine now, why change it (2) Potential to loose special character What did we do to deserve this?

2. Which structure?

$$Y_{1-13} 1111 \quad (4)$$

Y 1 - 6, 7 - 13

$$Y_{1-8,9-13} = 1111111111111111111111111111 \quad (29)$$
$$Y 1-10, 11-13 \quad (1)$$

Y 1-7, 6-10, 8-13 fuzzy, flexible edges so that students can move when/as needed (1)

Y 1 - 6, 7 - 9, 10 - 13 11111111 11 (9)

Y 1- 6, 7- 10, 11- 13 fuzzy, flexible edges so that students can move 1 111111 (7)

no comment 11111 (5)

$$Y_{1-3}, 4-6, 7-10, 11-13 \quad (1)$$

add Early Childhood Education (1)

- Merge at the end of 2013. Let's just jump into the new school structure and have it sorted before we move to the CDB. (1)
- Merge at the end of 2014. This gives 2 years to sort things out before the official merger 11111111111111111111111111111111 (21)
- Wait until both schools are on the same site 111111111111111111111111111111111111 (24)

No comment 1111111 (7)

Green space nearby school 11111111111 (12)

Green space included with school 11111111111111111111 (21)

Rooftop green space 1111111111111111111111 (22)

No need, use public gardens 111111 (6)

[illegible]

The two schools in the same building but on different floors (possibly multiple floors) 111111 (6)

A ground floor learning space as an option 111111111 (9)

Space for entire community to meet in school 1111111111111111 (16)

Space for entire community to meet nearby school 11 (2)

Other (Write-in) e.g. close to bus exchange, pool, library 1111111111 (11)

skate park 111 (3) football pitch 11 (2)

no comment 11 (2)

5. What do you believe is necessary to ensure a successful transition?

Being updated 111

Being able to have an opinion, open to student input 11
time

communication – we know what is happening and well informed

good communication between two schools 11

not disrupting to the students learning

lots of get togethers so UPT get to know some of D1

organization

a quick transition 111

students are well informed about long before it happens.

Keep students the priority

Having all of our stuff

A new building or two for the school to be a whole

Lots of communication between two school

Listening to everyone's opinions

To make sure that the two schools don't interrupt each others learning

5 year wait or don't do it 11111

What involvement and information do you need to help you understand and be a part of the change?

Email updates 1111

More information about what it will be like (meetings) 11

Know where we're going to be located ahead of time(1-2 terms), clear learning spaces, flow of information between MoE, schools, and Student

Regular involvement important decisions 11

Just as much participation as the staff and board as we are what makes the school

Clear learning, room naming, keep up PBL, easy to find LA's for support 11

What do you think the two boards need to think about or consider

Student costs

Think about green spaces

If there is a part of the school that is 8-10 then the y9-10 won't get the opportunity with early NCEA that they have now

Not having the younger and older students around each other too much 11

Clear division between junior and senior school areas 11

Working together

Younger kids need different support than older kids. 11

We still need our individual learning programs and support

Having lots of free, open space!

Staff

Location – find a good site

Services

Keep Alastair

Transport

When the schools merge will new systems be put in place there needs to be careful consideration and collaboration

When/if the day arises that the two schools have become one, what would have happened that helps you to feel it was worthwhile?

More learning opportunities from different teachers 1 1

So that people are compelled to attend

That the style of Unlimited hasn't changed

More fun classes

A great space to be in

Smooth transition, everyone working well together

Different lunch times and buses to school

It is well divided between the junior and senior sections but communications is open and clear.

Where Y8 or any other year can do higher level classes

Increased resources

Lots of learning opportunities for older students to work with younger students

APPENDIX C

D1 Parent responses

28 paper responses, maybe 10 website responses, and 15 community night responses.

Community night represented below in this colour (many of the parents there were parents who had children at both)

Concern	Action
Resources split equitably 10, 4, 1,1,1 1,1,1,1,1,1,1, (24) That the focus will be on secondary students and the primary will miss out (building design, resources, design of learning programs), representation on board 1, 4, 1, 1,1,1, (9)	Board advocacy Equal numbers on boards Equal access to resources All students involved in all design aspects
Identity and way they function to continue D1 not to become mini UPT and UPT not to become secondary D1. Each keep their unique culture. 10,4, 1, 1, 1, 1, 1, 1, 1,1,1,1,1,1,1,1,1,1,1,1,1,1, (34) Keeping the philosophy alive with so such a larger school. Not becoming 'industrial' (1)	Keep schools small Power retained in mix of community and board – different decisions/voices for different parts of school. Directors of both schools working together Bring in 'experts' in group and organisational dynamics to actively address these issues prior to and during the merger
Agreed values that are lived and practiced across the school (10)	
Big is not always better, danger of 'loosing' students 10, 1, 1, 1 1,1,1,1,1,1,1,1 (20) Loosing families so that they are unconnected to community	Keep communities smaller with same teacher/student ratio Keep a junior school and senior school – managed together but run separately Community time and homebase focus on relationship building As part of the process study other schools like Steiner to help
Primary students being exposed to high school student 'stuff', age inappropriate language, behaviours, materials 10,1,1,1, 4, 1, 1, 1, 1, 1, 1, 1, 1, 1, 1, 1, 1,1,1,1,1,1,1, (35) 'play' time interactions and older bullying younger 1, 4, 1, 1,	Ensure all the school kids have separate spaces to play, socialize, interact 11 Staggering start times and breaks Schools next to each other to share facilities but there is a clear primary/junior school with separate play area Older children being able to have social breaks

1,1,1, (10)	without younger children around Mentoring program "little/big brother"
Want D1 students to continue having the option to move to a different secondary school when the time comes (1), If one school, how make high school 'attractive' to outsiders? Bringing in new students, how enculturate? 1,1,1,1,1,1, (6)	Encourage Y 7/8 to explore other learning opportunities
Focus on merger and associated business rather than on teaching and learning (1) Management getting enough support and time out to manage the transition effectively (1)	Ensure learning is top priority for both schools/all year levels
Possibility of fragmented school (your side/my side) (1)	BOT to have clear and fair policies. A well planned merger
Getting younger students from bus exchange to site (1) <i>This shows up in later in the what want in CDB</i>	Buddy systems to build relationships with older and younger students. Walking buses
How more change will affect entire community. So much trauma and challenges over the last few years (1)	Be acknowledged and worked with across schools

Y 1 – 13 1, 4, web 4, (9)

Y 1 - 6, 7 - 13

Y 1 - 8, 9 – 13 1,1,1, 1, 1, web 6, (11)

Y 1 – 10, 11 – 13

Y 1-7, 6-10, 8-13 fuzzy, flexible edges so that students can move when/as needed 3,1,1, 1, 1,1,1, 10, web 3, (22)

Y 1 - 6, 7 - 9, 10 – 13 1, 1, 1,1,1, web 2, (7)

Y 1- 6, 7 – 10, 11 – 13 fuzzy, flexible edges so that students can move when/as needed 1,1, 1, 1, 1, web 2, (7)

add Early Childhood Education 5, 1, 1,1, 9, web 2 (19)

Want to keep it as it so that students are separate and autonomy is maintained

Learning exchange of ages, but separate social spaces

Students learning to look forward to being role models

Keeping transition points as 'rite of passage'

Add early childhood for full spectrum and integration of new families into primary (seamless)

- Merge at the end of 2013. Let's just jump into the new school structure and have it sorted before we move to the CDB. 1,1, 1,1, 1, 11, web 3,
- Merge at the end of 2014. This gives 2 years to sort things out before the official merger 1, 1, 1,1,1,1, 1, 2, web 4
- Wait until both schools are on the same site 1, 1, 1, 1,1,1, 1, 1, 1, 1, web 7

Green space nearby school 1, 1 (2)

Green space included with school 1,1, 1, 1, 1, 1, 3,1, 1, 1, 1, 8 for freedom of mov't, 12, web 3 (36)

Roof top green space 1, 2, 1, 2, web.2 (8)

No need, use public gardens

The two schools in separate buildings 1, 1, 1, 1,1, 9, 11, web 2 (27)

The two schools in the same building but on different floors (possibly multiple floors) 1, 1, 1, 1, 1, web 4 (9)

A ground floor learning space as an option 1, 1 (2)

Space for entire community to meet in school 1, 1,1,1, 3, 1, 1,1, 1, 9, 12, web 2 (34)

Space for entire community to meet nearby school 1, web 2 (3)

Other (Write-in) e.g. close to bus exchange, pool, library 1, 1, 1, 1,1, 1, 1 (7)

Shared common room 1, playing fields, courts

Low and wide building 3 good quality, multi-purpose theatre

Make eco friendly 4,

Wharanui if more than one building, separate by purpose

What do you believe is necessary to ensure a successful transition?

Leadership – leaders who share a coherent vision of the school philosophy 1,1, 1

A careful, open process. Discussion at all levels of the community. 1,1,1,

Outside 'experts' to help where necessary.

Support for staff,

A good budget

Setting out the steps for change, consulting on them, doing them slowly and evaluating as we go 1, 1,

Time, consideration of the stress that this change may cause to student learning, good consultation and involvement with community, students, LA's 1,1, 1, 1, 1

Leadership/direction of school works together

A clear set of goals, agreement by all parties

Separate buildings

Joint emails to parents at both schools

Clear expectations and boundaries for students

What involvement and information do you need to help you understand and be a part of the change?

I would like to know a timeline of intended change, to know the decisions made by the board are derived from the communities input and good practice 1, 1

Strategic goals

Regular meetings on progress

Emails, or newsletters updating proposals in writing, 1,1,1, 1

being kept up to date, 1,1,1, 1

accepting parental suggestions 1

What do you think the two boards need to think about or consider

Strong leadership through the process

Having directors at both schools focused on the needs of those particular ages

Representation from both boards

Skills to get job done, open and transparent

Always put the learning needs of the children first 1, 1, 1,

To consider developing an 'ideas' incubator that creates teams to follow through ideas all the way to tertiary.

Philosophy and how it can be shared 1, 1,

Structure of the new school, roles, responsibilities

Tasks, evaluation of changes with an open-ness to seeing mistakes/what doesn't work and making new decision because of these

SLT, Directors, Location, movement of students through the school

Big enough site, keeping schools separate, green space, near public facilities

Environment shapes behaviour

Age/year level spread more evenly

Everyone's welfare, including board members be considered. Patience and openness required

When/if the day arises that the two schools have become one, what would have happened that helps you to feel it was worthwhile?

We have a strong management with a director who has a real vision for the school and the leadership skills to realise the vision

I will see a committed community that has worked through the process throughfully and is closer and more effective as a learning community who care about our children

Powhiri

Knowing that we have a forward thinking, modern approach to educating our children and a building to match

Great staff, strong special character and culture in place

Settled, happy children. Parents feeling able to support learning across the school 1, 1,

A community of learners 1, 1,

As little upheaval as possible

Special character remains intact and the learning is enhanced by the merger

APPENDIX D**UPT Parents**

About 40 different parents of Y9/10 students (125 families' total) gave feedback either by phone, survey, website, or 1:1 visits. The numbers are lower because many people didn't 'vote'. They expressed opinions. The following is a summary of the notes from the calls or the survey data. Most of the website information was placed with D1 parent's data.

Parents of older students had the opportunity to share by website, newsletter invite, and community night. Very few participated as they thought their child would have completed school by the time the merger occurred.

Concern	Action
Mixing of the students. Older and younger should be separate Segregation of 1-8, 9 -13 Bullying 1,	Manage with time and space
Keeping Y 7/8 students from getting involved or worrying about NCEA	Creating a unique program for the middle years that is engaging and helps students know how to follow interests
The student tracking system needs to be changed to allow for flexibility of movement and learning places	
Leaderships focus. Primary and secondary have very different needs Difficult for leaders to manage it all	
Intake of new students into secondary – how attract, help to fit in Intake of new families Transition from D1 – UPT for families	Develop a strong initial intake practice of what it means to be a UPT student, family
Maintain uniqueness of secondary model Embed philosophy so strongly that in a few years, new leaders will know what to do, how to be	
Students who came into UPT just before the earthquake will have 4 years of very disrupted educational experience	
Maintain secondary students ability to follow interests and learn outside of school	
Going back to CBD need a unified voice from all schools in area about education	

Concern	Action
Creating good, solid education transitions for students	

Y 1 – 13 1, 1 (2)

Y 1 - 6, 7 - 13

Y 1 - 8, 9 – 13 1,1,1 (3)

Y 1 – 10, 11 – 13

Y 1-7, 6-10, 8-13 fuzzy, flexible edges so that students can move when/as needed 3, 1,1, 1, 1, (7)

Y1 - 6, 7 - 9, 10 – 13

Y1- 6, 7 – 10, 11 – 13 fuzzy, flexible edges so that students can move when/as needed 1, 1, (2)
add Early Childhood Education (3)

- o Merge at the end of 2013. Let's just jump into the new school structure and have it sorted before we move to the CDB. 2, 1, 1,
- o Merge at the end of 2014. This gives 2 years to sort things out before the official merger 1, 1
- o Wait until both schools are on the same site 3,1, 1,1, 1

Whatever works 10

Green space nearby school 1, 1, 2 (4)

Green space included with school 4, 1, 1, 1, 1 (8) no need for supervision, freedom to 'play as like)

Roof top green space No need, use public gardens

The two schools in separate buildings 3, 1, 1, 1,1, 1(8)

The two schools in the same building but on different floors (possibly multiple floors) 2, 1, 1 (4)

A ground floor learning space as an option

Space for entire community to meet in school 1, 1, 1, 1, 1, 4, 1 (10)

Space for entire community to meet nearby school

Other (Write-in) e.g. close to bus exchange, pool, library 3, 1, 1, 2 (7)

What do you think the two boards need to think about or consider

Branding of secondary

Intake of new students

Talk with schools in Invercargill who have had successful mergers

A parent working party

View of students

Continue to do what is best for the children

Reinstate trust licenses

Revisiting architects of humanity work

Harder to be involved as a parent at the secondary level. Transition/induction of families

Promote the new school as a complete education system .

Being clear about what the advantages are and why choose merge

Transitions as they age

Teachers can move across ages just as students can move across learning groups

When/if the day arises that the two schools have become one, what would have happened that helps you to feel it was worthwhile?

APPENDIX E

Discovery1 staff

Concerns

Finances equitably split

Losing money due to being one school

Representation at the Board level

Losing jobs

Younger children around high school age behaviour

Year structure varied but all wanted flexible year groupings

In the new site wanted to see

Green space included with school

Schools in separate buildings (unless could easily house in a not too tall building)

Space for entire community to meet

Would like to see whole school meetings with regular updates about the merger process.

Would like the board to consider how differently the philosophy is lived at both sites (one not better than the other, designed to best fit age of students)

APPENDIX F**UPT Staff fdbk Merger, 30 Oct****Consideration 1**

Concern	Action
<p>Mixed level classes</p> <p>Expectation that younger students can accelerate 'when they choose'</p> <p>Understanding in community of parents/students that students can study at any level</p> <p>How much 'flexibility' will be expected to move between ages?</p> <p>Prerequisites for courses</p> <p>How do we communicate this in a positive way to maintain student confidence;</p> <p>Understanding their baseline, where to start</p> <p>Pending exam fear</p> <p>Diminishing passion for learning</p> <p>Steps for success</p> <p>Learning to learn</p> <p>Developing communication/self-reflection skills</p>	<p>Diagnostic in term one to enable students to be placed appropriately</p> <p>Seniors mentoring juniors</p>
<p>Nature of grouping/structures</p> <p>Structure of two schools, careful not to throw baby out with bathwater</p> <p>What areas can the two schools collaborate on?</p> <p>Relationships, innovation and outreach influence</p>	<p>Look at different possible models when thinking about new structures</p> <p>Ensuring transition points for students are marked and significant</p> <p>Community</p>

Concern	Action
<p>our plans for 2012 – What will need to change?</p> <p>Careful, considered implementation – if rushed may be in worse shape than now</p> <p>Careful not to divide staff, parents, students by making certain structures that 'pit' one against another</p>	
<p>Clarity in our teaching roles.</p> <p>Staffing development vs curriculum</p>	<p>Staff contracts clear; subjects, age groups</p> <p>Somehow maintain our flexibility in teaching through age boundaries</p>
<p>Merging schools will affect a drop in senior student enrolments and staffing for specialist area will reduce</p> <p>The effect on staffing numbers and wide specialist area curriculum coverage</p> <p>Staffing – Discovery feeding in only 20+ students a year, will that reduce senior school staffing</p> <p>Funding – less money than now. Worry that senior school requires more money, not less</p>	<p>Being proactive in working with senior students to ensure we don't get rid of the key 'attractive' things for them in deciding to stay/enrol at UPT</p> <p>Consideration of these issues when organizing staffing</p> <p>Staffing and facilities reflects student's actual needs in terms of curriculum</p> <p>Distribute to meet all needs</p>
<p>Site and facilities will continue to be insufficient to offer awesome programmes</p> <p>Rooms/spaces/homebase/community areas/staff areas/work spaces</p>	<p>Long term school plan. Purpose built buildings visit other new schools around NZ, steal ideas end of 2012</p>

Concern	Action
Can this be effectively managed at BOT level? If one Board, could mean 'sector' favouritism. Have to watch for wide representation	Get consultant to work with BOT
Leadership – how many, where What is the leadership structure? How many directors? Curriculum leaders? Decision making process – understanding and empathetically listening to issues and responding accordingly. Leadership/board taking the time to notice needs and making the goals/objectives reasonable and not too demanding all at one time	Open process
Y1,2,3, having contact with 16/17 year olds Younger students exposure to teenagers, does this mean 'duty' Seniors become role models – positive/negative how this will be managed for positive, safe relationships Role modelling. Actions of older students	Keep age groups separate Separate timetables/schedules/hours Can move when achieve specified curriculum level Physical layout putting age groups together. Clear behaviour management processes Make code of conduct a living document
How attract other students to the secondary level How deal with an influx of new students at Y9 or Y10 when not 'prepared' through Discovery model. Will this hinder our ability to attract students How to integrate 'new' students at secondary level? Major problem difference in feeder numbers of D1 students 180 D1, 350 UPT Potential policy changes around health and safety for younger students will effect senior students independence	Is the 'ideal' having students from y1 on? Concentrate on middle school Y7 Y10 UPT certificate – foundation stuff OR Is it an opportunity for students to come in for a couple of years? Make the learning culture within CHCh allow for the experience of this style of learning for a couple of years?
Philosophy, "One Big School" How does this shape the way in which the schools functions	Whole school activities Community time/focus (values and messages)

Concern	Action
<p>Whole school purpose and understanding, How to build community?</p> <p>Issues around negative groupings of students who don't fit special character</p> <p>And</p> <p>Isolation of some new students, how to include and build positive community?</p>	<p>Tuakana/Teina</p> <p>Have to ensure interview process is rigorous</p> <p>HB's need to be a place to knit/unify</p> <p>Use merger as an opportunity to focus on adapting to improve this sense of community/special character – use exemplary groups of positive/achieving students to model our special character</p> <p>Formal peer support structure</p> <p>Focus on everyone knowing each other – having spaces for this to occur</p>
<p>Leadership roles in senior primary can vanish, become small fish in a big pond. How to ensure opportunities for this to occur</p>	<p>Support junior component</p> <p>Have a junior council</p> <p>Plan structure to work for D1 and UPT</p> <p>Has to work 5yrs +</p>

The staff felt that discussing a learning structure would be best done after the merger

Merging date doesn't matter to them because it won't effect them until on the same site

Green space, separate buildings, and space for entire community to meet were key options

APPENDIX G

Apt Parent written feedback

Consideration 2: Structure of the school

I am suggesting a possible model which includes both ECE and school. The key assumptions/intentions that underpin this model are:

- to foster the emergence of a core group of families who will be part of the school throughout their children's education, from ECE to high school level. These families can help to contribute to and make more visible the philosophy and discourse(s) of the D1-UPT approach to education. This visibility is especially important if D1 caps its student enrolment at 200 and UPT's cap is 400 which implies that there will be 200 new students entering the school in the high school levels. The school's philosophy and discourses must be sufficiently visible and coherent to the new and existing students and families in order for the school to be effective in its approach to education at ECE, primary and high school levels.

To make visible both clear structural boundaries and enable flexibility within and across boundaries.

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These structural boundaries need to be clear enough without being too rigid so that it becomes an enabling constraint. A big school without structural boundaries is difficult to make sense of and can be overwhelming. A school with too rigid structural boundaries cannot cater to diversity.

The structure I am suggesting (below) consists of 5 groups (for want of a better word), with each group consisting of several mixed-aged homebases. There is some fuzziness in the boundaries between the groups which means that, e.g., a child/student who is in Y1 can continue to be in Grp 1 or move to Grp2. Similarly, a student in Y7 can remain in Grp 3 with his/her younger peers or be in Grp 4 with the older peers. This clear structure with fuzzy boundaries can enable a joint/collaborative decision between parents, students and LA/school on when a student is ready to move on to the next group without being too constrained by which year he/she is in.

		3y.o	4y.o	5y.o/ Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6	Y7	Y8	Y9	Y10	Y11	Y12	Y13
ECE	Grp1															
SCH	Grp2															
	Grp3															
	Grp4															
	Grp5															

Some considerations in this model/structure:

- Conceptually, all groups are separate but loosely-coupled entities within the school, as are homebases within each group. As a separate entity, each group can develop its own identity from the daily interactions of people, knowledge and activities. At the same time, as loosely-coupled entities, each group will be influenced by and contribute to the identity of (1) the school as a whole and (2) other groups it interacts with. This means that it is important for there to be sufficient coherent/ meaningful interactions across the groups to enable the

groups (and people in the groups) to know, live and contribute to the shared philosophy and discourse of the D1-UPT approach to education.

- The ECE part operates as a separate institution (from a regulatory and funding perspective) from the school. However, there can and should be overlaps, couplings and interactions in terms of people, activities, curriculum and pedagogy to enable sufficient degree of continuity and diversity/differences between the two parts. For example, joint activities between Grps 1 & 2 should be a regular feature but conducted within the separate regulatory frameworks that govern the two groups.

- There must be coherent and flexible transition processes for children moving into the different parts of the school from outside or from one group to another. This is particularly important so that the transitions enable children and families to make sense of the different parts/groups and learn to manage change, differences and uncertainty.

-

Currently, D1 students learn mainly in the context of their homebases with opportunities to access UPT courses, MTDT, ICL, learning at home, etc. UPT students, on the other hand, learn in the context of courses, projects, work experience, ICL, etc. There needs to be due consideration given to how students are transitioned from one 'way of doing' to the other so that the different ways can still exist and make sense to students and their families.

Consideration 4: Facilities

- To enable the different groups to develop its own identity and participate in a shared school identity, there needs to be spaces that are shared (by the whole school, by different groups) and those that are used only by a certain group. These spaces are both indoor and outdoor spaces.

- Under current regulations, the ECE part of the school will need its own premises and facilities as an ECE centre is to be used exclusively for the centre at all times. However, this should not preclude the ECE community from visiting other parts of the school or invite them to the centre.

- There should be easy access to outdoor spaces, transportation and the library.

- There should be either specialist spaces/facilities built or easy access to these spaces/facilities:

- o Music, e.g., practice rooms, auditorium, recording studio

- o PE, e.g., gym, field, courts, etc.

- o Technology (of various kinds)

- o Science (for various sciences)

- o Drama & dance

Consideration 5: Successful transition

Here are some of my thinking, which are not organized in any particular way.

- Enabling the present community to let go of the past (consideration 1 is a good move).
- Enabling contributions to the imagined future so that we all have some sort of image of what it can look like. Making clearly visible and living the values that underpin our imagined future because this will become the shared aspects of our vision.
- Clarifying the processes and the roles different people play, e.g., Who makes the decision? What role do students, parents play in this decision? What other ways can students and parents be involved in, e.g., working bee, etc?
- Enable everyone (parents, LAs, students, teams within the school) to take time and reflect on the journey. Ensure that decisions are clearly explained with trade-offs and tensions considered and explained.
- Have structures to manage the change and allow flexibility to manage the inherent randomness/unexpected that will emerge.
- Have a clear shared goal/purpose and enable individuals to incorporate their individual goals within the framework of the shared goal and journey to this goal.

Unlike Hanin, I am blissfully unaware of the rules and regulations that govern education in NZ, and I maintain this ignorance deliberately so that I don't give up hope. So here are my ideas, unstained by practicality and affordability:

Consideration 1: Reluctance or Hesitation.

(1)

I like the idea of the two schools becoming one and support Hanin's idea that early childhood should be added at the lower end, so that there is a seamless educational path for kids to follow from the time they are ready to learn to the time they are ready to learn without a school. The devil is

in the detail however. Ten years from now the combined school will be managed by people we haven't even met yet, and what they make of our educational philosophy will be measured against what they bring with them (in their heads and hearts) from other schools. Will a school of 600 be managed in a more industrial manner than two schools of 200 and 400 each? That could happen. I'd hate to see the future school turned into a row of little boxes that kids transit through year by year as kids do in main-stream schools. The structure of the combined school has to be future-proofed against people with old-school philosophies because with a larger school population the urge will be strong to apply industry-scale thinking.

(2)

The other concern I have is in the differences between UPT and D1. I visit both these places typically three times a week and the differences are in my face all the time. UPT has twice the population of D1 so there is less of a community feel to the place. Furthermore, UPT operates as a string of classes that kids attend for an hour and then move on, whereas D1 operates as a single day-long class with occasional outings. This is a huge difference. UPT tries hard to maintain a sense of connection with the kids and generally succeeds but it is harder to do under these conditions, whereas D1 doesn't even need to try. What will happen when these two schools combine? Will there be a one-size-fits-all approach to how the classes are structured, and if so whose approach will dominate? Will UPT start to look like D1 or will D1 start to look like UPT? My preferred model is that the two schools (possibly a third one in between) operate autonomously with the standards they currently apply, but with plenty of crossover for the kids that want or need to be part of the other side occasionally.

(3)

A third concern I have is depersonalisation. What happens to a seven year old in a sea of 600 kids, most of whom are older, have different aspirations, talk louder and faster and get heard more easily? If all the kids are treated as 'equal', the seven year old is not going to be heard. So will he get a playground with a swing in it or will he be shouted down by the fifteen year olds who want a

trampoline instead? And if a trampoline is bought instead of a swing, how often will the seven year old get to use it?

Depersonalisation is a nasty thing because it's invisible. We think kids are able to speak their minds but often they can't. And fifteen year olds look so big through the eyes of a seven year old.

Depersonalisation might affect parents and staff as well. How easily will the concerns of any one teacher be heard in a staff meeting of 40 or 50? The easy answer is that there will be subcommittees and messages will go up and down the authority tree so that everyone will be heard. My experience of these things is that the person occupying the middle-manager seat often whispers while the person at the bottom is screaming. Problems at the bottom often don't get heard at the top because the person in the middle doesn't think the problem is important enough, or would rather not let senior management know that something is wrong. In a nutshell, this is corporate management and it can be awful at the worst of times.

Parents at both schools already (and consistently year-by-year) lament that they don't know many of the teachers or other parents and don't know how to get involved. Do you think this will get any easier in a school of 600, without special consideration?

I like the idea of the merger because so many good things will come out of it. But I have listed the only bad things because I don't want these things to be overlooked.

Consideration 2: Structure of the school.

(1)

I work regularly with D1 kids of age 10-12 and see them as the happiest bunch of kids at the school because they're already quite sophisticated but haven't discovered exams yet. I would not want them to become absorbed into exam-directed courses and lose the natural curiosity they have for things.

At the same time, I'm aware of D1 kids who arrive at UPT for the first time and look a little lost and nostalgic for a few weeks until they acclimatise to the style of the school. Some of them drift back to D1 in those first few weeks just to say hi to old friends and teachers they were close to. I get the feeling that these kids would be happy to have the character of D1's upper school carry over into the lower school of UPT.

Both schools have natural fissures that split them in two: D1's upper and lower schools and UPT's upper and lower schools. I think there are good reasons for creating a middle school that takes kids from approximately 10 years of age up to approximately 14 years of age and operates very much as D1's upper school does: kids spend most of their time with an LA of their choice and many of the same classmates they've known for years, and yet have the choice to go out occasionally to specialist teachers for education in areas that suit them.

(2)

You may or may not know that I am a specialist teacher in maths and science at D1. They call me a Teacher Aid there but that hardly does justice to what I do. I am not there to assist full-time staff with what they do but to meet kids who have a special interest in the fields I teach and create classes for them. I follow no-one's syllabus, generally work only with those who have asked me for help. Other specialist teachers at D1 teach music and theatre arts, dance, cooking,... you name it. These are not scheduled classes that kids are shoe-horned into because of a syllabus or an examination system. Kids and specialist teachers just connect over their favourite subjects.

So, the structure of the school I would like to see is

(1) A preschool with a learning focus, as Hanin has described. This would have a fuzzy boundary with current HB1 kids at D1. There would be shared outings and activities occasionally so that kids making the transition to HB1 would not feel they are entering a new universe.

(2) A lower school that would operate on current D1 philosophy up to age (approx) 9-10. Again there would be a fuzzy boundary with the next level up, with some shared activities and so on.

(3) A middle school in which contact with specialist teachers is available and common though not compulsory. This would truly reflect the intention of the title "Learning Advisor", because LA's would be there as the first point of contact and the hand-holder for kids who are not quite ready yet to make decisions on their own. LA's would teach to the extent that was necessary but would freely let kids connect with specialist teachers, who may be paid or voluntary, professionals or hobbyists; in short, people who know more about a given topic than the LA.

(4) An upper school that would probably be very much like the present UPT because of the need for NCEA qualification. Kids would go from class to class, project to project according to needs. Education would largely be in their own hands, though of course under the watchful eye of the school.

Consideration 3: Time frame.

The only thing I want to say about time frame is that, if it is measured in years then a lot of the kids who are presently at school won't get to see the end result and won't have any experience of high school except as an institution constantly squeezed into the corners of some other establishments. My boy will be one of these.

When UPT moves to (erm, I'm not allowed to say) next year, the proximal connection with D1 will be severed. That means an end to science classes and IT classes and mandarin classes for the 12 year-olds unless someone does a lot of driving or alternative classes are set up within D1. We could argue that this is only for a couple of years, but that's two years out of a kid's 12-year education. Without putting too sharp an edge on it, a kid's longer-lasting interests are formed very much by accident as a consequence of the things he happens to see and do at the age of 12. This was true for me and for

my son. So I'd like to see the transition happen faster rather than slower, and I'd like good stopgap measures to be put in place for those kids caught in the middle of the transition.

Consideration 4: Facilities.

In short, I'm a greedy parent and want everything for my kid. Drawing back from that, I will try to talk like an objective academic (another oxymoron) and say that I think these are the priorities:

(1)

Outdoor space, preferably three distinct play fields associated with the three distinct school levels. I say this as someone who has seen the tremendous positive impact that having a playfield has had on the kids at D1. Kids at D1 previously only had the rooftop on which to play. There was one activity and of course it was usually dominated by the bigger and more physical kids. Kids at the new D1 can go on the basketball court if they want, or build pine-needle houses in the space behind the buildings, or stroll around the perimeter hand in hand if they are so inclined, or sit on the boardwalk with a board game or even stay indoors in the peace and quiet knowing that the other 90% are outdoors. As for kids at UPT, they say they don't care about the outdoor space, yet I always see small groups under the trees discussing what's important to them. I see couples wandering around the grounds where they can talk without being overheard. I see kids on the football field. I even see LAs joining the kids on the football field. You can't tell me the open spaces are not important to everyone.

(2)

Having separate and diverse areas is important for the sake of diverse age groups and interest groups. Let the little kiddies play 'house' in the trees without being bothered by the ten year olds. Let the young ones wander over to join their older brothers and sisters on the other play fields. Let teenagers play football without having to go slow and easy because some little fellow with no ball skill has wandered onto the field. And yes there are contradictions in all of this, but that's when kids get to negotiate who can play and who can't. There's opportunities for learning all kinds of social behaviour when there are choices.

(3)

An LA from D1 stressed to me the importance of having a space big enough for the whole school to gather, and for easy flow between different parts of the school. When people can meander unobstructed by walls and fences, they will get to know people in other corners of the school. They will join in more easily.

(4)

Most importantly, keep everybody on one campus unless there is a particular need to go offsite. A split school inevitably becomes two schools. That's what I've observed from the split campus model that UPT is currently operating by.

Consideration 5: Successful transition.

(1)

This is a catch-22 because what I'm asking for inevitably is its own undoing: consultation.

Consultation means asking everybody for their input at all stages of the game, and then ultimately ignoring a lot of those people because only one vision can be implemented. That means arguments, bickering and conspiracy theories. It also means humungous delays while we consult and reconsult and overconsult, but that's what we have to do because anything else is unpalatable. I don't want to be ignored and neither does anyone else, so we all need a turn to be heard. And many of us won't get what we want because everybody wants something different.

Ultimately it comes down to pleasing the people who will be at the school the longest, and that has to be the teachers. By the time the new school is built, half the people filling out this form won't be associated with the school anymore. Their ideas might be right and valuable, but will they please the other fifty percent who will arrive years after we had this debate? I don't know. But if your teachers are good people and good judges of how kids learn, then respect their opinions more than mine because most of them will still be there in ten years time (if the school is what they want).

(2)

Speaking a bit more selfishly, in answer to your last question of "...what would have happened that

helps you feel it was worthwhile?" my answer would have to be that I had become in some way involved as a teacher at the new school. For that to happen, the school would have to become a bit more D1 in style than purely UPT, in the sense that education would not be a conveyor-belt of courses designed for examinations. I would want it to be a place where the influence of D1 kids going into the high school arena would be so strong that kids coming in from elsewhere would be encouraged to act like D1 kids and not vice versa. There are some wonderful kids at the school but I have also witnessed rudeness and selfishness that I would not want to be a present at the new school, especially if it was going to be mentored down to the younger kids. I'd want the kids coming into the school from elsewhere to be aware that there are standards of behaviour that are exemplified and embodied by the kids who have been at the school since they were 5 years old. If you get the kids to monitor their own individual behaviour then you don't have to have external measures in place to control unhelpful behaviour. I see this in action very nicely at D1, where there is a critical mass of good-natured kids who don't have to be supervised all the time. As much as I want the lower school to benefit from the academic opportunities of the upper school, I want the upper school to benefit from the example set by the lower school.