

Engagements with NZSTA and board members

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



Kōrero Mātauranga
Me kōrero tātou

**Have your say about
the future of education.**

NZSTA conference

High decile schools

4.45pm – 5.45pm; Friday 20 July 2018

Millennium Hotel, Rotorua

Tomorrow's Schools Taskforce members:

- Bali Haque
- Barbara Ala'alatoa
- Mere Berryman

Secretariat support

- Alice Wyatt

Purpose of engagement: To help inform the review of Tomorrow's Schools.

Please note:

What are the changes you'd like to make to how trustees operate?

Increase professional development for trustees, regularly discussed by boards. It can be hard to get trustees to do training but links could be formed with the Institute of Directors. Training could result in some kind of qualification or accreditation at the end of a trustee's term.

Could be a system where trustees gain credentials to be involved in certain aspects of board work.

Training can be high quality but can be ad hoc and patchy in terms of what is available to different schools and communities. Inconsistency across the system is a key theme and this results in disparities between schools. Trustees are often given bad resources or foundations to make decisions on. Bad decisions made by boards can result in the wasting of resources, the ending of principal's careers.

High decile schools so have good resources to draw from in local communities, but this isn't the case in every school. Some communities also have more people who are willing to upskill than others.

We shouldn't assume that rural communities don't have the skills needed for governance, there are lots of highly skilled people in these communities.

Professional development should be mandated but training could be substituted if the trustee had already done other training.

However sometimes professional development can be taken too literally by trustees.

Introduce training for a new trustee before their nomination is accepted as there are high expectations of what trustees know from the beginning.

Increase training around the disciplinary process as this requires lots of work.

There could be a paid position on a board for someone who understands governance well. There could be a role for experienced principals to work with boards; it's important to think about how you use expertise and knowledge of principals nearing the end of their career.

However monoculture will cause problems in the long run as things get missed, need a diverse range of voices.

Resources are wasted in NZ schools through bad decision making. Seen principals careers ruined because of personality or inexperience of board members.

Could you change what boards do?

Could reduce the decision making responsibilities on the board. Property could be removed as it's owned by the Ministry anyway, with the Ministry already influencing some decisions (e.g. spend over 1 million dollars). Examples of where the school has reserves but the Ministry won't let the school spend it on what they want to.

However having parents and communities engaged in learning and leadership of learning is fundamentally a good thing.

What could you do to decrease inconsistency between boards?

Individual boards are siloed and there's no collective responsibility. Inequalities increase as schools are working for themselves and reluctant to collaborate.

Could introduce a pool of trustees using a model similar to justices of the peace. A pool of community trustees could be trained.

Could introduce aspects of a principal's role relating to trustee ship – e.g. a requirement to sit on a contributing schools board or do a certain amount of service per year. Principals have a big interest in what's happening in feeder schools. Having a principal on the board to scrutinise another principal's role could be useful as they have the necessary knowledge.

Could have groups of schools with one governing body. You'd need very experienced people on these boards (possibly paid directors), and there would need to be accountability.

Concerns about adding another layer to governance and creating a hierarchy.

Could consider introducing a layer that could broker knowledge between people, providing resource and knowledge rather than directing and instructing.

Schools won't combine boards on their own, you'd have to push for this change to happen. Importance of building relationships for collaboration.

Kāhui Ako had positive intentions as it recognised the value of a community working together, but teaching roles have created problems.

There are a limited number of children and resources and we need to be practical about this and work together to find solutions across the whole community.

Increase the number of educationalists working at the Ministry. Before Tomorrow's Schools you'd get an educational answer from the Ministry but this isn't the case anymore, responses just refer to a manual.

There's unlikely to be one single solution for the whole country.

If you had a board at cluster level would you also have individual school boards?

There's a need for community engagement at the individual school level as schools are so unique. Can be issues if governors don't understand the context of the school.

Passion of trustees is drawn from the communities they represent and this shouldn't be lost. Should instead focus on increasing knowledge of trustees and introducing a minimum criteria.

But a minimum requirement for trustees could introduce barriers to some community members' involvement. Should support involvement, not introduce barriers.

Should the appointment of principals be taken away from boards?

The group had mixed views. Some felt that boards should get more support with this, but that the connection between the board and the principal was vital for governance and management. The principal must be aligned with the strategic direction of the school and if communities are to have ownership of learning they should appoint the key leader.

Could have a joint model where the board is involved in the appointment but helped by people with professional expertise, such as an independent consultant.

Examples where boards have brought in advisers but advisers don't have decision making powers. What happens if the adviser and board disagree?

Could consider a model where a struggling school could have regionally appointed principal. If consistently poor appointments are being made should consider putting structures in place like review periods for appointments.

Low decile schools

3.00pm – 4.00pm; Friday 20 July 2018

Millennium Hotel, Rotorua

Tomorrow's Schools Taskforce members:

- Bali Haque
- Barbara Ala'alatoa
- Mere Berryman

Secretariat support

- Alice Wyatt

Purpose of engagement: To help inform the review of Tomorrow's Schools.

Please note:

What would you like to change around the organisation of schooling?

Supporting children with behavioural needs is a big challenge and this takes up lots of trustee time; there should be a simpler solution. This could look like a body that deals with behavioural issues, it could incorporate restorative justice, it should involve parents.

Each school needs a SENCO to support students with learning support or behavioural needs.

Would like to see more funding for extra support staff. Currently there isn't enough to develop the right solutions for students.

There should be counselling for students when stand downs take place as it has a huge impact on their future. Parents could get representatives to support them through the meeting, some parents are unable to advocate for their children in this setting, particularly if the child doesn't have a diagnosis and the parents don't know how to get them one.

We shouldn't be labelling learners – don't like the phrase 'Māori student achievement'.

Increased focus on teacher training. Teachers can leave ITE without knowing about student achievement or priority learners and you can't be confident that the school will help them navigate this.

Boards don't know where to get support to honour their Treaty obligations and they don't reflect the Treaty in their charters. Sometimes if the Treaty is reflected in the charter it isn't evident what the commitment to the Treaty actually looks like in schooling.

Professional development for teachers needs focus. Kāhui Ako has sucked PLD funding from schools and schools not in Kāhui Ako can't access it.

Underachievement of Māori learners in schools is a problem.

Discrimination is also prevalent, examples of schools changing the Māori names of students because they can't pronounce them.

One trustee had produced a culturally responsive framework for 8 schools, to make sure all learners are achieving the same level. To adopt a framework schools need to really understand what Ka Hikitia is about. Currently the knowledge is not there: principals appraise teachers on culturally responsive practice, but neither has a fluent idea of what this is. ERO visit but then go away for 3 years and their reports don't tell the whole story.

Some trustees had used the hau tu tool.

One trustee felt that boards don't actually reflect communities as school leadership team run board meetings and determine priorities (for example the principal set the board meeting agenda). Parents share their views but these are not truly heard. This hadn't been the experience of another trustee.

The distinction between governance and management isn't clear to all boards. There's a need for training on this so boards have clarity about their purpose and role.

If the board chair has another job they can't dedicate huge amounts of time to the role, they may only be visible at the board meeting and information may not be passed on in between meetings. There are instances of bad communication between the chair and the board.

The schooling system isn't adapting to reflect students' priorities and interests so students are transitioning out of school. Alternative education isn't always an option for students.

Achievement data and ERO reports don't reflect the full picture: for example they don't show why students have transitioned out of school (they might have gone to do something more appropriate). ERO doesn't consider the school's definition of success or progress.

Students learn in different ways and schools need to identify this and students' passion and interests. One trustee didn't feel they could influence schools to do this as a board member. They would like information to tell them that they have the option to have this influence and a framework or support in making a plan to cater to individual needs.

How could we reduce the variation between schools, so that all schools have excellent governance?

One school had dramatically changed in the last 3 years, with significant improvement and growth. The trustee was a parent of a child with learning support needs and was very positive about the transition to school programme the school had introduced, which provided support for the parent. This included an interview with the parent where they could talk about their child's needs. Support was offered before the child began school and the necessary support was in place in the school from the child's first day. Board and staff work together, have a great culture, made great progress in the last few years. The trigger for change had been the introduction of a new principal.

Kura are doing well – this is where achievement for Māori flourishes.

However there was a big divide at one kura between mainstream and rumaki schooling. The board focused on the mainstream element at the numbers in rumaki were declining. It felt like there was a separation between the two parts of the school.

Some boards struggle to get trustees. Potential trustees don't always understand the responsibilities associated with being a trustee and the responsibility can weigh on people.

There should be more flexibility for board members in terms of the commitment asked of them.

The key to being a good trustee is taking the time to do professional development. Ongoing support and training for trustees is important (including support prior to becoming a trustee). Often

board members do not have time or are not committed to engaging in professional development. There could be a textbook provided to new trustees.

Each board should have an advisor to provide support and help the board focus on the right things. NZSTA resources are spread thinly.

New boards particularly struggle. Could consider a transition phase between the old board and the new board, for example a 4 month handover process.

Boards have a responsibility to learn from each other.

Trustees felt that they didn't get much help from the Ministry of Education.

The group had mixed views on whether ERO is helpful for schools.

Leadership is important. A positive part of the current governance model is that it gives principals input.

If leadership is critically important, are boards properly supported to appoint and manage principals?

Appraisal of the principal is critical; someone with the right skills needs to be involved in this. One principal had an annual external appraisal (sometimes this had been from an NZSTA advisor). Another trustee didn't recall ever seeing the results of a principal's appraisal.

Board members should also be accountable for what they're doing and this could be through an appraisal process for board members. It should be seen as a process where boards could be helped to achieve more by identifying professional learning goals.

Could board responsibilities be reduced?

Some trustees felt that management aspects (e.g property) should be taken away from the board to help them focus on governance. However other trustees liked having this focus and there being a way for communities to influence and direct aspects of schools like property. In theory boards should be just setting a high level direction on aspects like property, but often get drawn into the detail.

Boards need to retain some autonomy to be able to make decisions that are right for their school and community.

Governance should focus on student achievement, staff appraisals, staff and principal professional development, the Treaty. Management should report to the board but the board should spend minimal time in meetings going through reports.

Could another governance structure work?

Some felt that every school needed its own board to preserve community focus and local flavour and to represent whānau. Schools are very different and have different priorities.

Kāhui Ako have been variable about whether they've improved transitions.

Poor information sharing becomes an issue in transitions.

We also need to consider the transition between mainstream to immersion education.

A good leader produces leaders themselves and plans for the future.

Special character schools

- 10.30am- 11.30am; Friday 20 July 2018
- Millennium Hotel, Rotorua
- **Tomorrow's Schools Taskforce members:**
- Bali Haque
- Barbara Ala'alatoa
- Mere Berryman
- **Secretariat support**
- Alice Wyatt
- **Purpose of engagement:** To help inform the review of Tomorrow's Schools.

What would you like to see changed?

Would like to see more funding for board members, for example for childcare so that all families can input (particularly families with children with learning support needs). At the moment being able to access childcare for meeting times is a barrier and can result in poor attendance at evening meetings.

One trustee was positive about the idea of Kāhui Ako (as it would drive collaborative practice, there's common sense in collective resourcing and it can result in more effective governance). However each school does have a unique identity that is important and dictated by the community that a school represents. However the implementation was flawed, especially around the leadership model. It was forced upon the sector.

It's important to think locally, drop competitive thinking and take a more collaborative approach. For example, 4,000 children travel outside of West Auckland to attend school due to a capacity and perception issue.

There are a number of benefits of working collaboratively for special education:

- It could bring children with particular needs (for different schools across the community) together to provide focused support. This could provide more effective resourcing.

The infrastructure to bring in or develop passionate people with expertise to boards isn't in place.

Expectations about board member expertise is also too high and unreasonable for people with other jobs who don't have the time to build this expertise. Expectations of principals' expertise is also too high. Ministry support isn't sufficient to address either of these gaps in capabilities.

Ultimate responsibility falls to trustees and this can put people off from being trustees, particularly as the responsibility and expectations are ever increasing. This is the case even that under PCU board members can't be held liable.

The trustee role has become more complex over time: what trustees have to do and know has increased.

Board members aren't always focused on the right things. The compliance checklist takes up a lot of time, property also takes up a lot of time. This distracts from a focus on teaching and learning.

Property takes up a lot of board's time and can take up to 40% of principal's work. One person felt that PPP hadn't taken property from the board and had been unsuccessful, with it meaning it took a lot longer to get a decision. One person had a more successful experience.

Some group members would like to get rid of property responsibility whereas others still wanted to have some input.

Discussion around a shared board for a group of schools

This could result in schools being more community minded around the whole of the education journey.

Could have an officer role that would work within the cluster and make links to the wider region and services from the various different agencies. This role could coordinate and support staff in schools (e.g. the SENCO role). This coordination could result in a system that provides ongoing support for a student, rather than agencies coming in, providing support for a short time, and then leaving.

Importance of role of teacher aides in enhancing the experience of students. Teacher aides should have a career pathway and progression opportunities, particularly in special education where they are highly skilled.

There could be value in teacher aides working across the community in different schools, sharing support and expertise. This already happens in some special schools which provide outreach services to other schools or advice.

There can be challenges for some special character schools to be integrated into communities. Students in the youth justice system can't necessarily attend all community events as they're constrained by the court system.

Kāhui Ako aims to form these links across the community, however heard about instances where schools weren't invited to join Kāhui Ako, or where campuses in the same schools are in different Kāhui Ako.

Could have one board across the whole Kāhui Ako but there would be challenges due to huge diversity of settings in a Kāhui Ako. Currently boards are not always involved in Kāhui Ako as it's managed at principal level. There are also challenges with the Kāhui Ako leadership model. Another challenge with Kāhui Ako was that it was imposed and there wasn't clarity about where responsibility sits.

Kāhui Ako in Christchurch worked differently as the earthquake had already lead to groupings and strong relationships between schools.

Would be a big board that would need to make decisions. Many people may be too daunted to be involved in the board due to the number of schools they'd be responsible for. You'd be likely to get a different type of person putting themselves forward to be involved in a cluster level board; you might get more people who are experts at governance but you might lose the community voice as a result. It's important to represent the voice of the community as each school community is different. There are other ways to get this community voice, like consultation, but people don't always engage and it takes time to build relationships. Professional expertise might come at the cost of passion.

One person had experience of working with a ministry appointed board and found it had poor attendance and engagement. The Ministry had been slow to appoint a replacement to the board.

However the group didn't feel that the special education voice is always represented at boards currently.

A cluster level board could have a different, more overarching role than a school level board.

Could have one representative from each of the member schools sitting on an overarching cluster level board.

Moving to a cluster board would mean losing some independence and moving to interdependence. Independence has been good for some schools but failed others.

What are the key things that a board should be doing at school level?

Strategic direction. A board brings community voice and diversity to strategic direction.

Employment. Some group members felt it was crucial that a board appointed their principal, but some felt that the board needed support in doing this. It was suggested that a financial package could be available to support schools to bring in expertise to help with the appointment process. However the role of board input in appointing principals was valued as the principal needs to align with the board's strategic direction.

If principals were appointed by the cluster board this should be done with the input of the school board.

If it was compulsory to have outside assistance in appointing a principal there could be challenges if the outside person disagreed with who the board wanted to appoint – who would get the final say?

Money: Boards want to focus on how money is supporting students.

What other changes would you like to see?

More students qualifying for ORS.

Removal of section 9.

Student trustees

- 1.15pm – 2.15pm; Friday 20 July 2018
- Millennium Hotel, Rotorua
- **Tomorrow's Schools Taskforce members:**
- Bali Haque
- Barbara Ala'alatoa
- Mere Berryman
- **Secretariat support**
- Alice Wyatt
- **Purpose of engagement:** To help inform the review of Tomorrow's Schools.

Do you enjoy being a student trustee? Is it a good role?

One trustee found it interesting to see how a school runs and how the whole school system interacts.

Another trustee was enjoying their role and felt they had a good connection with the school board.

However there is sometimes a disconnect between the board and the students with no direct communication, despite the board motto being about raising student achievement. Board members are not visible to students and the chair of the board doesn't have a presence amongst students.

Sometime the board isn't focused on all students (an example was given of an area school where the board was focused on the junior part of the school and neglected the senior part. The student trustee felt like they were the only part of the board representing senior students).

One of the trustees was also head boy, another one wasn't head girl but had a good relationship with the head girl.

One of the trustees had been student trustee for two years in a row. There were elections with lots of competition.

One trustee was at a boarding school. Despite this there was still good board connection with parents and whanau due to them being very engaged and the board being whānau oriented.

How much time do your boards spend talking about students, welfare, learning vs. talking about property, money?

Two trustees found the board spent majority of their time talking about property and money. Neither felt hugely engaged on this. They were able to vote on these issues but didn't particularly feel that they could or wanted to oppose the board. One felt the board did a good job of explaining these issues to them. One commented that the board spend so much time talking about property and finances and they didn't pay much attention to this. The trustee was more engaged when the board discussed reports from teachers.

One trustee had asked if the board could have two student trustees but this hadn't been allowed.

One trustee felt confident to oppose things if they didn't agree, the others didn't. One felt that voting was hard because they didn't fully understand all of the figures, acronyms and information. Others felt they had taken a long time to get to grips with.

Sometimes it felt like the board was being run like a business, like the board was quite materialistic. One trustee reported that their board was more whānau oriented.

One trustee felt that their board was not diverse enough, resulting in everybody thinking in the same way and things getting missed.

One board had brought in a professional adviser who was Māori.

Why did you stand to be a student trustee?

For the experience, felt it would be a good learning experience to see what the board does.

One reported that it hadn't been as intimidating as expected, particularly as other board members had been very supportive and helpful in explaining things.

One student trustee had put themselves forward because they are opinionated, able to question the board and felt like they'd be able to represent students by focusing on the right things.

Another trustee applied because of the experience, but also because other students felt they were trustworthy and asked them to report their views back to the board. However this hasn't been able to happen in the way they want to as the board has told them they can't bring things up in relation to the students or teaching at the school, preventing them from fulfilling what they perceive to be their role. The trustee was worried about being individually scrutinised if they did bring up these issues, and felt it might be easier if there was another student trustee also on the board.

What would you like to see happen to help student trustees?

Being a student trustee for two years in a row is helpful as it gives you a chance to get to grips with the role and then input.

Would like to see board meetings organised in a specific way with each part of the meeting having a particular focus. One trustee enjoyed hearing the principal's report because it mentions student achievement. Other trustees also liked to focus on student achievement.

One student trustee was on the suspension committee. They found this hard when their peers or friends were put in front of the committee. It was their choice to be on the committee.

How will you take the learning from your experience on the board of trustees into the future?

- Learnt about speaking out your opinion in a serious situation.
- Learnt to look at things different and understand hierarchies.
- Understand how the school system works, this learning may benefit younger students.

Interaction between student trustee and student council or forums?

Three trustees had student councils or forums in their schools, one didn't. In one school issues raised at student council were meant to be escalated to the board if they were serious enough, however things were rarely actually put through to the board. Student councillors often weren't engaged enough to take action.

One trustee's student council was focused on organising events rather than raising issues.

One trustee's student council passed on concerns or suggestions for improvement to the student trustee.

What's the one thing you would change about schools and the way they work, if you could?

One trustee didn't have a Māori representative on their board and felt their school was culturally inept. Would like to see better diversity and cultural competence on their board.

One trustee would like more of a focus on learning how to learn, rather than learning stuff (for example learning how to research).

One trustee had timetabling issues in their school, resulting in students being put in the wrong ability groups. This could be sorted by having more teachers and smaller classes. Some trustees also had experience of distance/online learning, this had a poor reputation at one school.

Give students more influence over what they learn about, don't leave it up to the teachers.

Help Māori boarding schools to thrive proactively, don't just wait until they have too few students and close them.

Is there anything else you want to tell us about?

Should have actual classrooms not prefab buildings. Many classrooms are not up to scratch and this is affecting learning.

Sometimes schools are focused on what's good for teachers, not what's right for students.

Sometimes teachers are not up to scratch. In one instance the student trustee advised other students to write to the board about this. The situation was resolved by hiring another teacher to support the poorly performing teacher.

Another trustee felt that if teachers are not performing well the teacher will generally know this, and so in their experience there hadn't been a need to complain.

Relationships between teachers and students are important. Some teachers work better with certain students and this has a big impact.

The board has a responsibility to appoint the best teachers that they can. This is an important part of the board role. However small schools can't always recruit the best teachers, often because of their location, and have to go for the best teachers they can get. Teacher retention is also a problem for isolated schools.

However in some instances the rural location can draw some teachers in, for example one rural school offers an agricultural course which brings passionate and knowledgeable teachers.

Experienced trustees

1.45pm – 2.45pm; Saturday 21 July 2018

Millennium Hotel, Rotorua

Tomorrow's Schools Taskforce members:

- Bali Haque
- Barbara Ala'alatoa
- Mere Berryman

Secretariat support

- Alice Wyatt

Purpose of engagement: To help inform the review of Tomorrow's Schools.

What are the most essential changes that should be made?

New trustees find it hard to dive into management and this can restrict the development of principals. A bad board can push a principal towards resignation. There used to be lots of training available for trustees. Boards need help to step back and govern at a strategic level.

Boards need to have some understanding of the management issues and processes in order to govern.

Once elected, trustees should be trained before they take up their position. Learning as you go isn't always possible if the school has a big issue to deal with.

Even before trustees put their names forward they need to understand the role. One board ran sessions for prospective board members. Another tried to identify people with particular skill sets.

Boards find it hard to distinguish between management and governance. Governors should be focused on policies.

Try to identify people with particular skill sets.

How can we reduce the inconsistency in board capability?

One board tried to quality control trustees coming on the board but still had trustees with hidden agendas. Board members can't be fired and there's limited action that can be taken if the board member isn't right.

Board inconsistency is a problem in both rural and urban schools.

It's important for boards to be inclusive about who can be on the board and not just allowing people on because they've got particular skill sets. Need to also consider passion, commitment and willing.

What are the governance models we should be thinking about nationally?

Shouldn't put everyone in the same box – different things work for different people, each school is different.

Trustees passion comes from celebrating the individuality of each school.

Need to recognise the distinction between remote and rural areas. Lots of remote places have particular challenges like not having online connectivity – funding should take these challenges into account.

Needs to be a voice for people in the national decision making process.

A crown entity has a relationship with iwi. Must recognise the relationship boards should have with iwi.

Important that principals remain on boards of trustees. Boards can't govern unless they understand the management side. Reports from principals let the board know about problems.

Importance of good relationships between the board chair and principal.

Board role is about giving staff the resources they need to do that job. To manage inequity boards need to understand resources, pedagogy, even if they're management things.

Must recognise that the Treaty is what all schools have in common – it's the foundation. It's meant to be embedded in schools but isn't the case everywhere. Currently there is a very Euro centric model of governance and management which is a tension.

Boards need to understand the agendas of all trustees. Trustees bring their concerns to the board as a way to influence these.

Boards shouldn't just defer to the principal. They own the responsibility to do what they need to for the betterment of their community and kids.

Annual plans are often a tick boxing exercise, when there needs to be a detailed process that gets complete agreement from everyone about what the schools aims are and what needs to be done to get there. Once this is agreed there shouldn't be any surprises at board meetings as it should be in the strategic plan. Meetings should check progress against the plan and ask the right questions of the principal in terms of the plan.

Need to think about what achievement is and actively discuss this. Measuring achievement through NCEA wasn't designed by schools. For some students participation is achievement. Achievement should focus on progress.

The system isn't serving all students – what do we need to do better?

50% of elections are not contested, some schools can't get board members and there are people are just making up numbers meaning trustees aren't empowered and the principal is just running the school. The principal's power is too big when there's a disempowered board. There needs to be a way for schools that can't get effective, empowered boards to operate.

We need a skills based achievement model that is broader than achievement, that considers leadership, community etc. The model needs to empower students and prepare them for the future. This definition should be broader than the schools definition of achievement – student and family definition of achievement also matters.

What support would boards benefit from?

Interventions when needed – e.g. a group of governors coming in to govern a school.

An overarching model for 10-12 schools that looks after compliance elements, finance, property and employment. School boards would still input and direct, thinking about how these things

impact on the learner but people with specialist skills would carry out the detail. The core functions for the board would be learning.

An alternative view was that finance, employment and property should be delegated to management and the board just has an overview, but recognised that this isn't the reality in most schools, although some schools do manage to spend the majority of their time on student achievement.

Appointing a principal should be a process involving a selection panel that knows the school but also has knowledge the profession of the person they're employing. There should be a prescribed methodology of employment that a board has to follow, a consultant could be brought in to help. Shouldn't outsource but put in place a procedure.

One trustee was an accredited trustee and is meant to be available to support boards who need it, but they had only been asked once. People don't know how to access the resources available.

Boards could be visited by an adviser, providing a critical friend role.

Lack of communication from NZSTA or the Ministry means that boards are struggling in appointments.

In a remote community schools have to grow their own capability.

Many trustees don't receive all the information they need to receive.

Others felt that trustees also need to take ownership of being informed and shouldn't expect to be spoon fed.

Trustees need to be able to focus on learners rather than compliance.

The system is still using a Western model but this doesn't work for everyone. Should consider the possibility of using Māori models/integrating the Māori world view throughout governance.

Over 50% of males are incarcerated at some point. It is now part of teachers' roles for them to be social workers and this needs to be considered.

Schools and kura are focused on building up children's self-worth.

Rural schools

9.30am – 10.30am; Saturday 21 July 2018

Millennium Hotel, Rotorua

Tomorrow's Schools Taskforce members:

- Bali Haque
- Barbara Ala'alatoa
- Mere Berryman

Secretariat support

- Alice Wyatt

Purpose of engagement: To help inform the review of Tomorrow's Schools.

What are the challenges you face as boards? What are the challenges the nation faces with regards to the schooling system?

In one school behaviour was an issue. It was a year 1 – 13 school and behaviour of older children affected younger students. Support from the Ministry was not great.

Access to learning support is frustrating. Schools can get support from outside agencies but sometimes they don't do their job professionally and agency support isn't responsive enough. Funding is an issue. Schools are having to pick up on lots of things that have happened in the past.

There was a review of learning support but nothing changed as a result. Review said there should be one contact person for a child but for some children there hasn't been a person appointed, staff are part time and the office is short-staffed meaning it's hard to access support. When staff are provided they don't seem invested. The school ends up doing things themselves and trying to get different agencies to interact.

The information schools get when students join isn't sufficient. Instead schools have to search for information in different places.

Coordinating agencies who are meant to be providing learners with support is a challenge, particularly as responsibility often falls to a teaching member of staff. One board had funded a full time SENCO but were still having challenges as they're overworked and have to work with many different agencies.

Specialist services are facing staffing shortages meaning services are not being delivered.

One school was on the border of different agency boundaries. There were meant to be organisations servicing the community but they don't come as it's too expensive as too far and they don't have enough funding, meaning the services aren't there. Different services for one community are funded by different regions, making it a no-mans land.

One school was seeing lots of learning support needs particularly manifesting in children aged 8/9/10. The school works to address needs and has an in house psychologist but not every school has access to these services, particularly small schools.

This could be supported by more sharing of SENCOs, psychologists and other specialist staff between schools.

Would also like to see more training for specialist staff.

Ideal system would have a fully-funded dedicated role focused on learning support.

Schools are doing the best they can but the Ministry and its support services are broken. We can't achieve equity without these support services.

Solutions rely on a combination of funding, organisation and responsiveness and linked to this is the isolation of some schools. Currently some systems aren't responsive enough (e.g. when a child moves school there's a lack of information sharing and funding and support services stop). There used to be a card that followed each student but this has now stopped.

Quality of staffing is an issue and it can be hard to get applications for staff in rural environment. There is a national shortage of teachers but this hits rural schools first. Schools don't want to have to take whoever's available and examples were given of when staff had to be moved along because they were poorly performing.

Could consider rural service or other incentives to teach in rural areas. One school offered incentives such as housing, but it is still challenging to find good teachers who are comfortable in a whanau oriented place, that the children trust. One school was trying to steer their senior students towards eventually returning to the community to teach.

One trustee said that their board chair was comfortable with working directly with staff to understand teacher performance, and had good relationships with the principal and staff. The community would also approach the board chair to talk to them about their concerns.

One school had iwi representatives on the board.

Do you get enough people wanting to be on boards? Are there tasks boards should not be doing?

One person had lots of interest since school closures in their area took place.

One school headhunted people to be on boards and were always on the lookout for suitable people in their community. They didn't get many men wanting to be on boards.

One trustee found that they generally have 3 committed members, other numbers made up by others who they try and educate. They have an iwi member who's co-opted on.

One school had two ministerial appointees. They had lots of experience but were not parents at the school.

Some felt there should be more flexibility around numbers on boards for smaller schools.

Boards already have the flexibility to co-opt members with special expertise.

Trustees shouldn't have to fill in the 'how many hours have I spent' sheet.

There are lots of boards where you don't get consistent attendance, some people can't afford to come. Outside funding would be helpful.

PLD for a board should be compulsory.

PLD should come to rural areas, we shouldn't expect board members to travel to urban centres and online training isn't the same as face to face.

Rural schools don't get extra funding for being rural and this makes things like PLD hard.

What would be your recommendations to the Minister? What's the biggest lever we can pull to help inconsistency across boards?

Boards like the autonomy and ability to reflect the character of their community.

Need more staffing and more resourcing.

There were examples of challenges when staffing came from outside the community as they couldn't relate to the children or the community.

Status of teaching profession has dropped in last decade or so. Teaching is a hard job as teachers have to do many different roles.

Should think about how to get teachers to rural staff. There used to be initiatives like country service where teachers had to do two years of rural service before they could rise up the salary scale. Often accommodation was offered and this was an incentive.

It also used to be the case that rural experience was part of career pathway for a principal.

Trustees from schools with over 500 students

3.45pm – 4.45pm; Saturday 21 July 2018

Millennium Hotel, Rotorua

Tomorrow's Schools Taskforce members:

- Bali Haque
- Mere Berryman

Secretariat support

- Alice Wyatt

Purpose of engagement: To help inform the review of Tomorrow's Schools.

What would you like to see changed?

Interest in how Kāhui Ako have evolved, with one trustee having a positive experience with their Kāhui Ako, particularly because of the focus on the community. Another positive impact was the delegated leadership the model was allowing. Would like to look at expanding the decisions of the Kāhui Ako.

Another trustee's school wasn't in a Kāhui Ako but the schools were already working collaboratively (at principal and board chair level). The region had shared PLD. They didn't need Kāhui Ako to work together.

Lots of schools work collaboratively but not around pathways, instead they cluster horizontally in terms of age group. But through Kāhui Ako they have seen concerns around breaking down of horizontal structure.

Currently must be a Kāhui Ako to access resources. Some principals don't want to claim extra funding for their role, would rather the money just went directly into a cluster pot. There is a lack of flexibility to allow schools to work together outside of the Kāhui Ako construct.

There was previously more rigidity in the Kāhui Ako structure but this has loosened somewhat. Rigidity often depends on which region the Kāhui Ako is in.

One school felt the Ministry had tight control of their Kāhui Ako achievement objectives.

There should be support for Kāhui Ako to develop as communities need.

If you were to design a new system, what would it look like?

Would like to see a real focus on early childhood with lots of resources put into teachers and PLD to recognise physical, behavioural, social needs and to provide support that starts early.

Better collaboration across social agencies (health, social care), to enable sharing of best practice.

Provide lunches in schools.

Incentivise collaboration through funding.

Stronger teacher training and teachers to be more highly regarded.

Introduce a governance structure across clusters of schools, with parent representatives on this board. In some aspects one governance structure would be ideal across a number of schools – for example property. However need leadership and governance for your community and your school.

Other participants liked the current board of trustee model. One saw this as a distributed leadership model which valued parent input, the educational leader (principal) and staff representatives. They liked that this was about local people taking ownership and having accountability and responsibility, honouring power sharing, and saw this as communities at their best. Expanding governance structures could lead to a loss of passion.

There are capability issues on some boards but all communities have skills they can contribute. There is a duty to upskill people through professional development.

Boards of trustees could still exist in a cluster model, with two-tiered governance and back end functions taken away from boards of trustees.

Those who wanted boards of trustees to remain liked that the board could make decisions over property to provide a learning environment that matched their vision. There were concerns about giving away power and decisions being taken that didn't fit into the holistic plan.

They felt that their role was to make sure that student achievement is lifted by making sure there's the right environment, teachers and other conditions. They'd like to see more functions removed from Wellington and decentralised. The solution could be to have a part-time business manager employed in the school.

Concerns that a cluster level board would be too big a job (i.e. it would be a full time job for some trustees).

In Canada there are district boards which aren't intimately involved in each school, wouldn't like to end up in this space. Canada has school committees but they don't have decision making power.

Some would like a solution for property where the board specifies the requirement, another function (e.g. the Ministry) develops the solution and the board then takes the final decision.

One trustee was from a catholic school where the diocese is the landlord. Families pay proprietor fees and school fees, there are proprietor representatives on the board. Student achievement should still be the proprietor representatives main focus but they sometimes think they're there for the proprietor. This board could only be part of an overarching structure if it was an overarching catholic diocese structure. They'd like to keep ownership in the community, felt they can't address issues of student achievement without having oversight of finance and property.

How can we make sure that all boards are working well?

Example of a completely new board coming in with no previous experience. To address this they brought a co-opted trustee in, but it still took a year to bring things up to speed.

The system isn't professional enough.

Improve marketing about the trustee role. Could introduce development sessions pre-election for trustees as potential trustees don't understand what boards are or what they do.

Better value the trustee role.

Need to recognise that there are a small number of boards actually having interventions so underperformance is limited. Bigger issues are teacher training, professional development, and the value of teachers. The focus should be on these.

There isn't a one-size solution that works for everybody.

Could have a traffic light system to rate different schools and their boards. This would need a review process.

ERO is frustrating. They will rarely agree to meet trustees outside of normal business hours. They will only come in during school hours, not during board hours. ERO say it's because it's in officers have contracts, there needs to be a more flexible approach as its essential ERO meet with boards and don't just scratch the surface. Need to consider trustees rights, they should have contracts too.

ERO identify a problem but don't offer support.

Lots of organisations already know about underperforming schools and boards – MOE, NZSTA etc. But there's a disconnect between identifying them and giving them targeted support.

The Ministry says that people don't take up offer of mentoring. Some felt it shouldn't be optional.

More could be done to professionalise trustees.

There's a role for professional development advisors but around a specific need, rather than more generally.

Should also recognise that some elections aren't contested because people in existing roles are already doing well, or because there is consensus from the community.

The work that the board focuses on determines who wants to stand for the board. The big time commitment puts a lot of people off.

Board is meant to be working for their community and provide that unique perspective. To do this there needs to be diverse boards and we need to avoid imposing one (white) perspective on all boards.

There are things that work for everyone – kids being healthy and happy. Early intervention. Poverty and social issues are huge in New Zealand schools.

Introduce a professional adviser for the process of appointing principals. This should be compulsory and paid for by the Ministry. The advisor should advise, but not make the decision.

There are issues with selecting ethnicities for children on forms etc. If you select multiple ethnicities you rank them, but the system only reports against what you rank as first.

Urban schools

8.00am – 9.00am; Saturday 21 July 2018

Millennium Hotel, Rotorua

Tomorrow's Schools Taskforce members:

- Bali Haque
- Barbara Ala'alatoa
- Mere Berryman

Secretariat support

- Alice Wyatt

Purpose of engagement: To help inform the review of Tomorrow's Schools.

What changes would you like to introduce?

Provide more support for learners that are struggling (because of learning, behaviour). It's problematic that funding for learning support doesn't stay with the student as when a student moves schools the support structures stop. The system isn't geared towards continuation of care.

The legal responsibilities imposed on trustees are increasing without consultation. Trustees are volunteers and this responsibility can discourage parents and community members. Trustee service comes with a responsibility but this shouldn't be done in a way that puts people off.

Increasing social issues in communities with a lack of support for schools to manage this.

Funding is a big problem for schools, particularly where declining rolls are impacting funding.

Support from the Ministry in response to severe behavioural issues is not consistent or sufficient. It's hard to access support and the Ministry tend to get involved too late (e.g. when a child has been suspended), rather than at the prevention stage. The Ministry will provide minimal support and then leave again but there's a need for continued support.

One trustee said their board was always the last to find out when something was wrong, with a fine line between management and governance. They'd like to know about issues before they're escalated.

Other trustees felt that boards needed to let principals manage the school.

Pre-training for trustees before they become trustees would be useful.

Currently professional development is optional and up to trustees; it should become compulsory.

Boards should be strategic thinkers, focused on the future and centred on students. Boards shouldn't be bogged down by management or administration. One trustee's board was constantly fire-fighting rather than thinking strategically about student achievement.

Upskill the board chair so that they keep meetings focused on student achievement and the future.

Sometimes it can feel like the principal is telling the board what they want to hear.

In making laws and regulation the Government and agencies should think about implementation and the requirements changes will place on boards (for example policy on restraints has placed burdens on boards as they have to fill out a paper-based form).

Small schools can struggle to find new board members and to retain existing trustees.

Teacher and principal retention is a problem and needs to be addressed.

Do boards have too many responsibilities? Would you like to get rid of anything?

Property consumes a lot of time (for both the board and principal), but board should still have input into this, it can't just be handed over to the Ministry.

Trustees had frustrating experiences of managing property projects where the Ministry has placed restrictions. Felt that the Ministry will blame boards when things go wrong on property, but boards don't have true power over property. Risk-sharing doesn't exist.

The Ministry doesn't know what schools need and lack understanding about how things work in the community. It feels like even regional offices don't know the community and like they're always trying to save money at the cost of what is needed.

One trustee said that boards building a strong relationship with their ministry officials on property was important but that this took time.

Trustees agreed that boards spent a lot of time talking about property.

What if communities of schools were helped by a service centre that managed certain functions like learning support and property?

One trustee had an example of a SENCO overseeing a whole Kāhui Ako. This meant pathways and funding were continuous for each individual child. Alternative education is also clustered.

Trustees are a voice for their community. How would you make sure each community is heard if you had a central board for a group of schools? Would schools lose their special character or identity? Some trustees were against a central board on this basis.

Structures could be layered, with a school-level board focused on particular things and a cluster-level board focused on resourcing the system for the region. At school level governance would be focused on learners' success, at cluster level it would be system aspects like property and resources.

A cluster could reduce competition and make region operate with a community focus. The things a regional board should focus on should be at a macro level for their region.

The Canadian governance system is tiered and complex. There are small boards in charge of 160 schools, but how do they know that each individual student is getting what their child needs? In the current NZ system individual boards know how each individual student is doing.

Community trustees know their children but there could be a next level up overseeing things trustees don't have the expertise on, like property.

Kāhui Ako success depends on the area and the schools. In one high schools are dominating.

Continuity of learning is important. Currently there are disjointed processes through primary, intermediate and secondary schooling. Need to think about how support follows the child through the system and through transitions.

At the moment collaboration is voluntary and some schools don't participate. There should be a process that requires all levels of learning to be connected – e.g. single learner identity throughout schooling.

What other changes should we think about?

Stronger focus on working with students looking to leave school by providing in-school careers advice. Currently too many schools are focused on achieving NCEA level 2, but not setting child up for the future. Employer connections are important, particularly for students who aren't going to tertiary.

Trustees from schools with fewer than 500 students

10.30am - 11.30am; Sunday 22 July 2018

Millennium Hotel, Rotorua

Tomorrow's Schools Taskforce members:

- Mere Berryman

Secretariat support

- Alice Wyatt

Purpose of engagement: To help inform the review of Tomorrow's Schools.

What can be done to improve the trustee experience?

Should be more recognition of the work that boards do outside of mandate originally set out in the Education Act. The workload and responsibility of boards has increased and remuneration should be increased to recognise the work, time and skills that parents and volunteers are offering. Recognition doesn't just need to be financial but also increasing the mana of the position in terms of recognition from the Ministry.

The Ministry underestimates the capability of trustees, undervalues their contributions and just sees them as parents.

Trustees are development skills through this work but it's not accredited. There should be formal recognition for the skills trustees develop through the work they do.

The work done is often beyond what is advertised. Many trustees don't know what to expect.

What's the solution?

Before board members are nominated they should have to do a 3 hour intro to being a board member, so everyone goes in with their eyes open. Many board members don't understand their role even 6 months in.

Schools are having trouble getting people to apply and it comes down to remuneration. Trustees aren't in it for the money but at the moment it's not even cost-neutral to be a trustee as the meeting fee doesn't cover childcare and travel. Remuneration also needs to recognise the work being put in by trustees.

There should be a model similar to jury service which recognises that trustees are doing community service and offers some kind of compensation to them/their employer.

Smaller schools have trouble recruiting trustees as they have a smaller pool of parents. Lots of parents have good skills but don't have the confidence to come onto the board. Training before the election could help with this by giving people confidence that they can do the role.

Online training could be provided for potential trustees. NZSTA have lots of online learning available for trustees (covering a wide range of topics including finance, principal appraisal) but there's not always lots of uptake.

Wifi or internet access could be provided for trustees for free to support them with their training. Some Kāhui Ako are already working to get wifi to all schools and homes in the community.

Possibility of NZSTA online training becoming NZQA accredited so that trustees get some kind of qualification. Currently trustees take on huge responsibilities but leave with no qualification or accreditation.

Do small schools have idiosyncrasies in terms of boards of trustees?

They have a smaller pool of parents to choose from.

Intermediate schools present a challenge as children are only there for two years but a board member term is 3 years, making it hard to attract board members to the role. One school implemented mid-term elections to help this. Another sends trustee nomination forms to parents in the year before their child joins the school (it gets sent to all year 6 parents at feeder schools). Some intermediate boards have people stay even beyond their child leaves. E.g. if a parent will have another child there in the future.

Another challenge is students transitioning, often moving out of the area because of parent's work or housing. Declining rolls are a problem for some schools.

One example of a Kāhui Ako doing co-governance. This was a challenge for the Ministry to deal with. There was also some push back from individual boards of trustees.

Suggestion of having governance at the Kāhui Ako level, across schools from a learning pathway. Each school would have its own committee (not a board), from each committee one representative would be drawn up to the Kāhui Ako governance structure so that each school would be represented. Should also have representation for tanga tu whenua in the governance.

Kāhui Ako governance would take responsibility for property.

There would be a lead principal for the Kāhui Ako and specialist teachers, but the roles would be used in a more structured way.

Would need good remuneration as there would be even more significant time commitments at this level of governance.

There is precedence for this in the UK with mixed success.

Others wanted to keep governance locally based to retain community understanding. There were examples of Kāhui Ako where all schools were very different. A DHB model would be wrong.

In forming clusters around learning pathways need to be aware that there are multiple pathways in lots of communities. Learning pathways couldn't be restricted to one cluster unless you brought in zoning or enrolment zones. This could reduce segregation, provide consistency and help schools be whanau oriented. However we also need to recognise that society is more mobile and parents choose schools for different reasons which could create barriers if pathways were mandated.

Would need to carefully consider how ECE settings would be involved. In some cases they feed primary schools so it would make sense for them to be in a Kāhui Ako/cluster. ECE involvement could also provide consistency and help children with their identity.

ECE should be free to all, with no cost or travel barriers. Non-participation has an impact on achievement.

Do property and finance get in the way of focusing on learning?

One trustee didn't understand that part of their role. Another felt that property took up lots of time, although less time than before due to a change of principal.

Found it frustrating that the board is responsible and manages property, but the Ministry owns it and can stop the board from doing things if it wants to. It can take a long time to get decisions from Ministry and they don't recognise that you know your community best.

Under a Kāhui Ako model of governance would anything stay at school level?

Would need to look carefully at how it would work for Catholic schools. They don't get Ministry funding for property so charge a fee. If governance went to Kāhui Ako level there would be a risk that the community would be paying into something but not benefiting (e.g. if all resources were diverted to one school).

Even if property was managed at a higher level, would still need school level input. The board could identify the property need and it could be managed elsewhere.

It was less clear whether this model could work for finance. Examples of schools making decisions about learning support and teacher aides and the Ministry and ERO asking them to change this because they don't understand their school's needs.

Employing the principal should stay at school level. Boards need to be able to manage the principal as they understand school's particular needs.

Moving some responsibilities away from school boards could reduce the skill set needed of school level boards and encourage more parents to participate.

Anything else we need to know?

Learning support and behavioural needs are intensified in small schools, particularly if there are multiple children with needs in a class. Presents challenges for staff and other students. The board has to focus on staff wellbeing.

Needs of communities have changed, housing, health etc. provide challenges.

Excerpt from Dunedin Māori focus group

18 July 2018

Taskforce: Barbara
Secretariat: Angela

■■■■ - long-time board member, currently serving on ■■■■ boards:

What do you think would work to address that issue?

Maybe Ministry has pool of people they can draw on, this is your cluster, you can help in that area and they are assigned to that cluster.

We know that resources are really thin and people want them, so if community has that need they can dip in and get assistance, instead of crashing and the director gets involved. That's TS.

Trustees, it's about knowing your community. We talk about professionals on boards, I'm on ■■■■ boards (diverse schools, deciles etc), if you want a perspective on how community influence boards. At primary school it is usually a true reflection of community. At intermediate [and beyond], it is totally about what the management of the kura wants. Not reflecting community at all. They tick boxes. The typical scenario is Māori and Pacific consultation, they do it and tick that box, but then what? They want to see the curriculum change, more tikanga around delivery – both groups. Both of them have implemented different stages of that. They have had help from Mana whenua and that's great. At intermediate and secondary – the only difference is, that now gets filed and nothing happens with it. So we need a change so that the community can use the board as they community needs to use it. Completely different ways, but need flexibility from community perspective. BOTs needed or Māori and Pacific communities won't get a say. Annual plans and strategic plans, all Māori tikanga etc, but nothing really changes. Its' about knowing your community.

[to experience BOT member] You have massive experience. You've seen a range of boards, a range of drivers. Have you thought how that could be different?

I don't necessarily see it as Kāhui Ako, well not in Dunedin. I see real advantages in overarching community boards.

How big?

It depends, to look after finances, property, you still have a sub-board that looks after the community interests in the school, but you have parents on boards and it's not making a difference for how our kids are doing. Get rid of the professional stuff eg HR and keep the community stuff. You've got to empower them enough to do that. You can go as wide as you like then, depending on finance.

You still need that very close community involvement and parents knowing at a strategic level how the school is running for kids.

Rotorua Board staff session

20 August 2018

With Bali Haque
Secretariat: Angela

Introductions

4 Board members (From Rotorua, Tauranga and [REDACTED])

Short introduction about the review, its purpose, and the evidence base behind the strengths and weaknesses of current system and needs of future.

Questions

As board members, what core function would you not want to give up, and what would you want to get rid of?

Anything to do with student achievement we would like to keep
We wouldn't mind getting rid of property. They're distractions away from the students' learning. Although we have a strategic priority around property and finance, most of us are there because we want to raise achievement at the school and close that gap between priority learners and other learners.

I would have to agree. Out of everything that we have to cover, property is most distant, although you have to create that good learning environment. I think the Ministry could be focusing on that. Making sure everyone has access to that great environment. Expertise is not something that's available to all boards. (eg architects and specialists)

In terms of rationalisation, reducing number of teaching spaces in the schools.

In the number of boards where trustees get heavily involved in property they lose touch with students.

They might have five rental properties they are looking after. Your primary purpose is the children. Take property away – it's difficult to attract trustees. For some, property is their only focus. Consider A board without the property umbrella – it makes inequality, the principals having a trustee hat, the principal is asked quite fair questions, the principal is in a vulnerable position, they feel they could lose their job.

Make it about community, engagement and student wellbeing and achievement.

All schools have their independent identity, eg for bilingual units. The Ministry uses student ratios, but will not consider the needs for a bilingual unit (which uses the same student population but different ratios for mainstream). Schools are in [positions of having to pay for these things themselves, and not matching up to the demands of the community. It then falls back on the board to make that decision.

The property thing is a theme that comes up wherever we go. Some are saying they don't trust the Ministry. What are your feelings?

We took away prefabs and did a twelve classroom build under budget. The next one is 8 classroom, taking ages, and cost 2 million more. Some of it is the market. While the process happens, the bureaucracy slows it down. If it were centralised it would be slowed down even more and the kids would be suffering for it.

It's depending on the relationship you have with your current property advisor and how tenacious your principal is. Reality it takes principal away from their core purpose. Boards have to follow it up and that's not what we want either.

It's also applicable to Learning support... it's across the board. It's variable.

I want to drill in to the employment issue – it's provocative – it's very odd that we hand over the employment of a principal of multi, million dollar business to a board who earn \$55 a meeting. The problem is it leads to incredible variability, particularly for low decile and possibly rural schools have difficulties.

If you agree, would you countenance boards giving up that role and where would it go?

Our school is going through a principal appointment process now and it's the second one that we've done since I've been on board (over 5-6 years). There's a lot of thought that goes into it. Both times we've used an advisor. Support wise, it can be done, if school's lucky enough to pay for an advisor. Others may not be in that position.

Sometimes people have advisors that aren't helpful, and they don't always take the advice.

We are setting them up for what our community knows (eg farmers) then a principal may not align with the board's natural leanings.

Boards may tend to appoint safe principals.

We had to appoint someone who was not our first choice, slightly more innovative and challenging in the end, I don't know if we had enough board members to make that decision.

Schools look at things from school perspective. We are looking at systems. How we can get the biggest impact. We could set up something that requires parents to be on the board and on the panel. OR perhaps move it out of the boards, and those boards that are capable have to meet criteria, and if they have the skills the role can be given back. What do you think?

We are just starting on that process, I don't think our board would want to give that role up. I've been there 11 years and others 8-9 years. We are stepping aside after this one. It's a very professional board. You've got lawyers, accountants, business people etc. But system wise, I think we already have that, with NZSTA have those HR advisors,

But they have no authority, only if invited. It comes down to what you don't know.

We wouldn't want to give that responsibility away either. We've been living the school culture for so long. We wouldn't want someone from outside that culture to make that decision for us.

We can explain that to the committee but that's a lot of trust we are placing in them.

Step it up and look at the whole country

How do we solve this?

Do you have a critical advisor, someone who comes in and they take you through the process, and someone who sits alongside with a research base or education professional base to challenge, to get the board thinking, but the appointment role still sits with the board.

You could mandate – you must have 2 experts from wherever to do that..

The process needs to be a strong one.

So veto power if that process not followed?

We had a high turnover of principals, we had one of those emergency principals. We couldn't attract enough, we're a rural kura kaupapa. We got a pakeha and she was excellent because she was an expert.

But we don't want to give it away. And we don't want to share it either.

It's after the recruitment process, We come in and support the boards, and it's that unevenness and some principals are defensive. Our principal is terrified of losing the job. If you don't know that context, as a parent on a board, you won't have the ability to do that role properly.

Weird relationship – you're the employer and the employee.

If you think about governance, most times the boards have time without the CEO. So in schools this is unique model.

Some parents are brave and they get shut down and it's a risk for them.

When we joined the Kahui Ako and appointed the lead principal, the advisor and criteria were helpful. They had to have all the requirements and the panel had to approve the appointment according to the criteria the ministry asked for, but it was up to the Kahui Ako to ensure they had a cultural fit. That process is really good. They are also our contact person (for conversations, externally).

That process is far more rigorous than usual.

Is it also about the quality of applicants you get? Depending on what your school is viewed as, eg we've had white flight...

Let's talk about that. Go to that issue of white flight and school competition. How do you see that being addressed? It's not slowing down... The drift to high decile. Where there is concentrations of disadvantage in a school. How do we address this national issue?

We are changing as a school, we are losing our white families. It's terrible. It's alright to speak equity, but not in my backyard.

I don't think I'll get onto the board next year. It's really challenging. It's hard to say we have these priority learners,

We are having conversations... There is a lot of self-interest, about my child only.

Equally we have attracted other families who say we want that for our child.

Should we be addressing?

We have white flight all the time. We don't see it as a problem (decile 10). We take on the challenges they don't want to take on. We are fortunate in our finances to get the support and services for the kids who need extra help. We still have to deal with all the families who want the variety of services the intermediate provides but don't want to mix culturally. Our attitude is not to be too strong on the enrolment scheme, we can take kids from outside our catchment. Those from lower decile schools, our Maori, those kids we have focused on. We have stuck to our guns. At the primary, we had families who could have enrolled in decile 10 or Rudolf Steiner, they wanted our culture. Stay true to the identity of the school. 100% Māori. Mana Tapu. We have a rumaki, everyone is comfortable in te reo Māori.

What I see in those two schools is the strong identity.

Like small towns, you attract people by having a point of difference, an identity. Staying strong. Those families are really appreciative. The services around, the police, the special ed, someone taking our kids on.

How did we get that inequality? How did we get a decile 9 or 10 with neighbouring lower deciles?

I see it in gentrification. Our Māori communities, that's their Kainga. In Tauranga, they want those scenic views. People get pushed out if they don't have the money. Where the pa were situated and then the town builds around them and those areas become the most sought after.

30 years ago you tended to go to your local school. Now, eg in Auckland, some schools are taking large numbers of out of zone students. To take that choice away, is perilous, but if that polarisation continues, is that good for us as a nation?

No. We have a lot of excellence in our school. Do I think that will have any impact on our enrolments for next year? No.

I think it's a lack of understanding of what decile means. Parents don't know.

What I'm hearing from lower decile schools is – we don't get the funding we should, we don't get property, applicants for principals or teachers, or resourcing we should get. We tend to get kids with most needs. Not a surprise our achievement results aren't great. Then parents judge the school on that.

Maybe funding changes will address these issues?

Do we do something about enrolment schemes, encouraging people to attend their local school more than they do?

We have about 200 out of zone students, predominantly because of our bilingual unit. Families know that's a way to get access to the other services.

Compared to rural schools who might find it challenging to get those services.

Then does it fall back on... a child can learn without walls, it's the quality of teachers. ERO might say, just get rid of that principal, why can't you just do that. But they will go, then they will pop up in another district.

Can we get schools to cooperate more? To get into those issues of competition? Shift thinking from individual schools to groups of schools?

Schools enjoy getting together. Some schools refuse to get into the Kahui ako so that's a challenge.

And the voluntary and mandatory debate is common... It creates competition.

It's quite noble. You can't give up.

We have feeder schools and the scope is big. Not all schools have joined voluntarily. It took relationships of individuals to have that sway. The resources have been shifted to where they are needed.

We try to make it attractive, not forcing them but letting them know what they are missing out on. Eg PD.

It's about a common language. Soft pressure applied. It is the principals who are the barriers.

These leaders of learning are usually ok, but it's those others who

The reality of being accountable to people who don't believe the parent reps know much about education. It's a big gap, tension.

Not all "All Blacks" make good coaches.

Do you feel the principal job is realistic? Able to spend time on leading learning?

Ours knows the shortcuts through experience. It works for us. And the depth in senior leadership team to be able to step away.

There are a lot of issues to deal with, eg vulnerable children, that red tape keeps coming.

Yes a lot of compliance.

The admin staff enable the principal. But in a small school with a teaching principal, that's much tougher.

To be able to get a principalship you had to go to a rural school (also for teachers). Look at the bigger picture, why not?

Why not also for a bilingual unit, thinking big picture, building shared understanding.

Also have a qualification – we would support that.

Sometimes as parent reps we look so closely at our principal, we lose sight of our children. We would appreciate some safeguards to know our principal was alright.

What about tenure?

I think renewable tenure, 30 years is normal in many ways.

What about ERO?

I didn't like our last ERO review. The new format and structure (drop downs) are really prescribed. I understand they want continuity, but it damaged our staff, they didn't like the lack of choices to select from.

Our school was reviewed in 2017 (one of first in new system). Feedback was although staff really busy, they found it really worthwhile, got a good report. Discussion with board and principal, 4-5 years is a good health check but question whether 4-5 years is too long...
It's good for the board, you know if you are on track.

And 1-2 year or 4-5 year reviews have become an assessment measure of schools. Whereas they might not be aligned with performance.

We have seen some later 4-5 year ones that have puzzled us. Some of the boards are falling apart, but heavy on the principal, and we don't know.

ERO is one of those variable things... It depends on the team you get almost.

Schools can get a beautiful action plan from an ERO review. I think it might be a leftover from those principals who have been in for a long time. I don't think ERO is necessarily doing a bad job.

It was more the organisation, eg changing dates, changing the structure of the review, timetabling, they just kept changing things. Logistics.

Although we appreciate the opportunity to do a SWOT analysis.

Having the 2014 review which recommended some changes, gave us the impetus to make those changes. It justified the changes and helped the principal to get things happening.

A great ERO review can affirm to our communities that we are doing the right things.

Our new principal turned our school around. We had all those decile 1 issues, and we are isolated, small. We are now on a 3 year review. We now operate our classes in whanau units. From 0-18. The kids love it. The new principal made all the difference. He was from Auckland. We want to change our constitution, we have a tribal community, we want to do our board constitution like that too. Hapu representatives, you do your job for your hapu. Our development is about making a tribal young person rather than a NZ citizen, it's our focus. (Tuhoe)
Then we'd like to be evaluated differently – under a different framework.

What about 1 student rep and 1 staff rep? And iwi representation in this democratic structure?

We have to co-opt. It was a shock that we hadn't done that in a long time. And we will do it again, we will co-opt a second iwi rep.

Totally agree, we need more than one Māori voice.

The Kāhui Ako enabled us to bring on the additional support for Māori voice and iwi collaboration.

Voluntary and mandated, if mandated it can reduce the credibility of the rep.

One of the overseas options we looked at, was every school having a group composed of parents, students, teachers, iwi – a stakeholder group, perhaps 30 people. That group would be the group that asks questions of the principal, does the self-review, does strategic direction of the school, community engagement and student wellbeing questions.

I'm concerned with the size of something like that. If you have 1 rep, they become the community engagement responsibility, to coordinate the views and the engagement.

I'm concerned with 30 members being "hui, hui and no doing". You need some people doing the doing.

There aren't student reps in a primary school. We don't get their voice. And the staff rep doesn't understand their role. More people would help with understanding each other's roles but agree 30 is too cumbersome.

We have had some great, vocal student reps and others who need more encouragement. At one stage we had a staff rep telling their own view of life at the school. We just see it as your opportunity to have a voice at this meeting as well, a different perspective on the board.

The board depends on the knowledge of those in the roles. There really must be some training for board members. There's also not enough impetus from the \$55 per meeting to get them to do training. I have seen some professional boards that are the least focused on student learning. Some decile 1 schools have really strong governance.

I have asked to be paid as a board member by the Kāhui Ako. You feel stink reminding people that they are using your time.

We could ask government departments to arrange meetings after 5pm, at times that suit us. A day a week when the board chair is in the school. Paid leave. If you are leading you need to be in there knowing what's going on. It's also good to be there in the staffroom to answer questions about what the board does. We had push back from our staff about something our board had made decisions about. Staff generally don't understand what boards do.

But when you understand you have better relationships.

If we can't get people to be boards of trustees, and we've decided they are critical to our children's success... does that make any sense?

I see the Ministry pointing a finger at a school and board and will drop their support very quickly. I have met board chairs with PTSD from those experiences. Thrown under the bus by the agencies who are supposed to be supporting them. The Ministry has more authority than NZSTA...

Could the Ministry be organised differently?

I think we need to get rid of the blame culture. Worse since Pike River.

The board chair will get the negative press (but no positive press).

So why do we do boards, they are there for their community, it's greater than them. Beyond their children who go to the school.

If you questioned board members why they do it, would they want the governance role? It's really about contribution and community.

You might be onto something there, the governance narratives cut out some people. You can see that you're not connecting, the board is not getting to the parents. You don't want to overstep. The principals are missing those relationships with their parents. Board meetings have become quite scary to them because we are focusing on student achievement and wellbeing (they don't know about it and think it is the teachers' and principal's area of expertise).

So they want somebody to assure them that student achievement and wellbeing is going ok...

Yes, parents want that assurance.

How do you get that good data?

Parents and community want a say in the culture and identity of the school.

Message to parent reps: You don't need to be an expert, but you need to do the training and you have to be there for the kids.

Principal reports?

What about reporting of first time principals?

It's a novel, inundates us with guff. What's it all about...

I would like to hear about the pastoral stuff, how are the kids doing. I did this in response to that.

All that reporting is presenting in alignment with those strategic goals.

Discipline – suspension hearings etc. Do we need to change those?

How terrible to have community members sitting there next to the parents. That puts the board in a poor position. Especially if they don't know the process (eg Ombudsman, lawyers). It can be a traumatic experience for the trustees.

Some of them don't stick to the rules, some don't know the rules.

We are hearing of boards sticking with principals through the process, and also that there is no complaints process...

I had to tell off the principal like a little child...

I don't think you can ever make the right decision, you make the best decision for that moment.

If there are policies, they can be interpreted widely, they can contradict with pastoral care policies for example.

I've attended a lot of suspension hearings, we've excluded or expelled maybe 5 students. You are doing this for very good reasons, often not the first time the student has been in trouble. We are disappointed when the Ministry hasn't supported us in those decisions. For example when a student has assaulted a teacher, the Ministry has asked us to take that student back. We have to provide a safe environment.

What about a whanau hui? With social agencies present.

Sometimes it's the learning environment they are in. The right one can help to turn around a student's outcomes.

Key things to change?

Top priorities:

- Student wellbeing, more support for teachers, more learning can happen. Specialised resourcing... for the children who need it most.
- Quality leadership
- Principals spending time in country schools.
- Principals paid by size of achievement challenge
- Enable the community to make their own structure. And structure around enabling community voice.

Nelson Boards of Trustees Meeting

3.00 – 4.30pm, Monday 30 July 2018

Tomorrow's Schools Taskforce Member: Mere Berryman

Location: Whakatū Marae, Nelson

Attendees: 8 current Board members from the surrounding area

Summary

- Board members came from a number of different schools from around the Nelson region. The decile of these schools were comparatively lower than those of a subsequent Boards of Trustees engagement that we attended. Mere gave a brief presentation to the Board members and were then invited to discuss. The group was asked to write their thoughts down on post-it notes as well as participate in discussion.

Secretariat notes:

- The Board of Trustee role needs to be properly funded so they can have Professional Learning and Development, e.g., time off work. There needs to be an agreement. It's currently \$55 for 11/12 meetings for the year. Parents giving up their time, not all are skilled. Beneficial having an educationalist.
- There's an openness to learning for BOT members, and not just sitting on the sideline. Financial issue around that PLD for BOT.
- [REDACTED] – Teaching in Nelson, there are high levels of competition, especially at secondary schools. They champion what they're good at instead of prioritising student needs.
- This is not just secondary schools, it's primary and intermediate too. It's tied in with assessment, and who gets the results. They can be easily swayed to get the results we want.
- Direction of primary, had to hold 21st century in secondary.
- Students learning self-management, need time to learn.
- Kāhui Ako contribution working across your levels, responsible for learners in the system.
- That's it with assessment, you get excellence when someone else gets achieved. They aren't being measured against themselves, but other people.
- [Iterated by majority of the table] Many of the things the Ministry need to do, and should take back. E.g., wrongful dismissal of teacher, property maintenance, took people away from teaching and learning. Whole lot of management, finance, health and safety, employment, property. Take that back, supporting leadership.

- What do you want from the board? Responsibility, shared professional resource which may not necessarily be from the Ministry.
- Sees the Board as purely governance – appraisal is a huge challenge, understanding data and achievement. For suspension hearings, these are a massive weight, and we don't have the skills to understand and manage that. [SENCO] – Some bad decisions have been made. That expertise from Ministry would help. It's a deeply flawed process and hugely stressful.
- Equal members, but staff aren't considered equal.
- Small rural community, small pool to choose from. Comes back down to decile/competition. Some don't have the opportunity to get in.
- High number of Māori at STA conferences, local board as a collective. Careful throwing baby out, cultural differences in Māori vs non Māori views of BOTS boards.
- Invested interest in relationship with students in the rural isolated school. Knowing the students.
- Mental health, supporting wellbeing. Opposite of intention as people don't live in the community so schools are no longer the community hub anymore. Just buildings, businesses. Comes down to 'How many students?' Is competition helping?
- Flip the idea of who's getting excellence – Who goes to school every day?
- Assessment all year, they're stressed all year. Even at primary level.
- That's the Boards too, ERO, kids underachieving but they might be making huge gains, less on how it is measured, the whole trajectory, that measurement, thriving of learning, school curriculum, high level strategic goals – how are we going to achieve that? Changing the way we do it.
- Changing the resources, no one can teach something they're not comfortable enough. PLD.
- Learning social culturally; Emotional.
- Teaching and learning for wellbeing for individual learners, focus is on assessment and academic achievement, can't focus on wellbeing.
- 21st century, not industrial model.
- Community level engagement, not siloes of we can do it better. Our BOT need to understand these individual needs.
- Elephant in the room, 100 kids in school. Feeding kids out of their own money. Basic needs are not being met.
- If all teachers worked to the one child, building these relationships.

- Benefits of that long relationship, core whānau they can come back to. A social thing. Kid from witness protection, need that relationship, some don't have it at home.
- Resiliency. Transitions, when they don't have that one person.
- Intermediate should be middle school, longer 9/10.
- Transitions is difficult at y10 especially.
- Mentorship program as a model. Mentors, overcome some of lumpy transitions.
- Staff don't have time for relationships, assessment. Staff need reassuring that it's ok to make it a priority from the Ministry.
- Training issue from primary to secondary – teachers. The training is very different.
- Having Kāhui ako catchments across the pathways are good. Avenues to go to other schools. The Ministry throw money at it but there's no time. Make time for it. Is this a school issue though? No teacher release time. Think about how to do it properly. This then needs to be embedded.
- Expected to do more and more but there's no time. Some people get paid to do their reading at work, teachers need to do this in their own time.
- Conflict tension, kaupapa/staffing vs collective agenda.
- Kāhui Ako addresses fundamental gaps in the system. Cross fertilisation.
- Competition with other colleges. WINZ moving or kids moving barriers, schools saying kids are resource heavy, they feel unwanted. Awful ring around from the Ministry to find a place for kids who aren't being accepted.
- Therapeutic model, embedded in schools, time out space.
- Nelson central, nurture problem. Social/emotional coaching. Capacities for youngest kids, but they can't roll it out for the older kids, no capacity.
- Teachers don't have the skills to even teach that (nurturing/social/emotional coaching). Teacher – student teaching; Advice is poor sometimes, "don't let the kids see you smile".
- SWIS service in every school. Holistic, mental health etc.
- What you embed differs and changes depending on the point at which you are. Will affect what we put in and where, nurses etc.
- Integration with other agencies, justice, health etc.
- The line of responsibilities, depends on what's happening in the schools, shifts, relationships with principals/chair etc.

- Treaty obligations – systemic bias, history, old teachers, schools can choose how much they put in. This MUST be mandatory. Ties in with boards too that co-opting in, white boards.

Post-it notes:

Boards of Trustees:

- Boards being required to take part in compulsory training. This will need financial support; training coming onto boards.
- Property/finance/buses are a distraction to the real work of boards.
- Completely revise the suspension/stand down process.
- Governance: consider the state inter agreement, e.g., catholic schools and having proprietors reps – dilute the board again.
- The need for expert advice on employment, health and safety, finance etc.
- Schools should be asking BOT/communities what THEY want, and what can THEY offer? Rather than the business model that says to BOT members, “this is what you need to learn/know/do”.
- Need to ensure board is representative of the community, cultural groups, needs – emotional and financial.
- Boards are required to do the legal stuff first; health and safety, property, expulsion and exclusions, staff discipline, teaching and learning is last.
- Support for schools and BOTs in areas they need it.
- Professional board members; board ‘health’ – weak/strong; BOT training – online/external; specialist support – mediation, discipline for staff, students, board; BOT understanding what teachers do and why.
- Governance; current model overloads schools in terms of managing finance, HS, employment, property, appraisal.
- Boards do not have the training/expertise to understand/manage complex (any) suspensions; how can we explore the discipline system – unpack this.

System:

- The school day does not need to be 9-3, or within the walls of school. Allow schools to develop individualised learning programmes to suit individual learners.
- Keep students in your class for more than one year or more, to develop social and learning relationships. Year levels/age is irrelevant → wellbeing = learning.

- Other problems in system; holidays for vulnerable kids can be sensitive; the ways highly transient families are responded to.
- A model that works better; Year 1-6 for middle school learners; year 7-10; year 11-13.
- Get rid of intermediate schools. Do 7-10 OR 0-8.
- There is an inherent tension between the kaupapa of individual schools, autonomy of management, school agenda, and overarching collective agenda.
- Synergy between government departments; social development, justice, health, education for better outcomes for all learners.

Competition:

- Reduce competition within subject areas, otherwise you reduce student choice and create an inaccurate hierarchy of subjects.
- The business model has no place in education.
- Competitive model → schools now have marketing managers; detracts from core business of teaching and learning.

Funding and resourcing:

- More support for low decile schools. Oftentimes there is less staffing to deal with high need children and day to day running of schools. Less teachers to share the same number of jobs as a larger school.
- How relevant is the decile system? Is it actually accurately representing schools? Decile feeds into the notion of competitiveness rather than community.
- Resourcing for schools! SENCO High needs. DP being supported to support the principal and so forth. Develop more career paths.

Future focus:

- Changing the industrial model to a 21st century learner model. Learners are ready for a community/job based around collaboration, innovation, etc.
- Move to a model where students are taught to be 21st century jobs, i.e., stop the industrial model.

Progress and achievement:

- NCEA makes students more stressed. Reduce assessment and focus on teaching and learning.
- Current over emphasis on assessment is impacting on student wellbeing and mental health. The change to NCEA has resulted in ONGOING assessment throughout the year. Therefore the stress is continuous from week 1, term 1.

- What is success? We need to move towards a system that's not based solely on results. It needs to be holistic. SWiS model.

Learning support and Disability:

- To support our struggling children, we need more support from SENCO. We need more professional help for children in those schools.
- Easier access to support for high needs kids earlier on.
- Inclusive and accessible education; high needs, students behind in their educational development, it's currently adhoc. Schools choose how they value these.

Diversity:

- How do we achieve fit in all the things we want to do; Māori, Pacific people, cultural.
- Nurturing Māori and wellbeing needs who came before and alongside; academic achievement.
- Te tiriti obligations; teacher awareness, white spaces, systemic bias; NZ history, new teachers to NZ, old teachers; schools choose how much of this they respect, this must be MANDATORY.

Teachers:

- Teacher training needs to include mentoring and relationship building. Nurturing is the starting point, not an add on.
- Flip how we train our teachers; Unlearn what we 'know' and what we think we know about teaching and learning; Primary teachers more relational and secondary more subject based.
- More robust training for new teachers; emotional training and coaching; behaviour management; not left with classroom teachers.

Relationships:

- We need to flip our current processes: the schools are no longer the hub of the community. The focus is on academic achievement rather than social goals or the success seen in a child just still coming to school! Being in class! Wanting to learn and improve.
- It's relationships and ako that is key to learning. Creative kids that want to be part of communities. Stronger funding so people can get release for PD, COLs are so important to our kids! The shared knowledge.
- Time needs to be given and prioritised for relationship building and not just at primary and intermediate.

- Secondary teachers say there is not enough time given to build relationships because of the pressure to get on with teaching and assessment.
- Future: senior management look after teaching and learning; outsiders brought in to look after other stuff. Current model has too much effort wasted on the other stuff).
- Change from school as centre of focus that processes students, to student as centre of focus that is served by the school.
- Supporting learners over their whole education – it's about relationships. This takes time – children building a relationship with a teacher is important. Whānau classes, year groups less relevant.

Access to education:

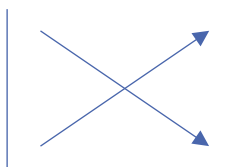
- Learning: at both ends of exceptionality; more community engagement. Social and cultural needs; including hardship, social.
- Food in schools.
- Children need to be kept fed and warm. This should become provided as a matter of course?? Not sure what the word is.


Kāhui Ako:

- KA open up the opportunities for PLD to non AKO teachers, within and across school teachers. Opportunities to embed PLD fed forward from Ako teachers.
- Things I love in the current system: Kāhui Ako – emphasis on pathways, on transitions, vulnerability.
- Kāhui Ako – time for PD of non-role holders.

Wellbeing:

- Things I love in the current system: SWiS model.
- SWiS service; currently massive under resourcing, the number of SWiS'; system change – integration between health, justice, education, social welfare.
- Model where nurture programmes embedded in mainstream schools where children can come and go depending on needs.
- Expansion of SWiS system; mental health and addiction, nursing public health, social workers.
- Integration with health, justice, MSD etc. model of pastoral intervention – The graph suggests that by investing in early interventions and help, this will reduce the amount of intervention required later on.



- Vulnerability of students should be a key focus of system change. Need place-based health services embedded in schools.
- Create more of a nurture model in our schools for our vulnerable learners. Training for term 2. Funded SENCO (senior leader). PLD for staff to manage/understand complex learning and behaviour needs.
- 
- Training/Quals for SENCO to support early intervention model.
- Support for Mental Health and A in students. Services embedded in schools. Early intervention.

[REDACTED] – BOT members

Tomorrow's Schools Taskforce Member: Mere Berryman

Location: [REDACTED]

Attendees:

Summary

- Note: the secretariat did not attend these meetings and these notes are from the conversation between Mere and [REDACTED] after the meeting – capturing Mere's key points and reflections from the meeting.
- The meeting was between Mere and an experienced BOT member, a current BOT member and the student rep on the BOT.
- A key point with the BOT model is how the community is represented in the school and therefore how the school represents the community.
- How do you take a more coherent overview from the community perspective?
- The meeting attendees said that they never knew what they were putting their hands up for when they agreed and were voted onto the Board.
- So, would it be better to share these roles across the community? If school BOTs are representatives of the community, how do we ensure that the expertise on the BOT comes from across the community? If someone has been on the BOT for a while, they might learn through doing the role, but when they leave, that experience can be lost. We need to be able to hold onto the skills that they have picked up.
- A key question, is how do you take the chance out of BOT members? One way is to tap into the experience and expertise from across the community.
 - How do we bring back expertise when it is needed?
 - How do we maintain the expertise?
 - How do we grow governance across other schools but still within the broad community that the schools are within?
- The role of the [REDACTED] community...
 - They felt lucky that their community [REDACTED] is contained and small.
 - It's really beneficial that they see the kids regularly through the community and they know them
 - They share across and the know each other kids
 - They ended up doing the COLs type thing organically

- One of the best things is that it's their community and they know it.
- They didn't think that the COL could look as close to their communities as their community does.

New Zealand School Trustees Association (NZSTA)

| Facilitator: | No Secretariat

Not easy to get people on **boards**.

More time-poor parents since 1989 – social, community changes. 2-parent families, mothers are working. Every family needs 2 incomes to survive.

Role of board chair has become more complex, and parents more litigious – complaints can take hours and hours, might not be about anything. They get nothing for this work. Capacity of some boards for the more difficult things e.g. finance and property, especially where growth or rebuilds, the board chair expected to be project manager; some boards can't afford to employ project managers.

Our team mostly thought that property should be out of the hands of boards. One member thought that property was a way of ensuring a safe culture – that we shouldn't take anything away from the board related to creating the culture of the school. You don't want a big bureaucratic organisation that doesn't care how children are affected by property. More of a partnership model, not an either/or.

Leadership

Personally, shocked to come into the education sector – some really outstanding individuals, including in nzsta, moe, principals – but never seen such politically motivated values, poor integrity. I've worked across corrections, health, justice, welfare, had a lot to do with senior ministry officials, navigating large-scale contracts – in education, overall there is tokenism towards collaboration.

People have gone to university, become teachers, up the ranks, line-managed people and done exactly the same thing - no new thinking about the pedagogy of leadership development. Even the poorest NGOs in other sectors would never put senior leaders in without some kind of executive development or peer supervision, supervision of some kind.

Inculcation of values has never changed.

Really sad how the education system has repressed itself. The concept of collaboration – how difficult it is for us. Legislation is complex, and choice of people participating. If I think of welfare – in '99 CYF, 2 years before Strengthening Families network – that's 20 years ago now – you would not work in non-collaborative way – so embedded in training and development - how can education have missed out collaborating between local schools? Missed because of made up of self-managing and competitive units. And remember [redacted] of [redacted] saying she couldn't afford to lose any more kids because then she would have to knock out a whole elective subject. Why collaboration is so important.

Think should separate out the pedagogical leader from the admin leadership – maybe look at something external. Enhance support for teaching principals, need to do something about their workload, how that affects the kids. Maybe only 17 kids, but they're still entitled to a good education.

Do something about principal remuneration, that the big schools are paid most, but load can be lighter since more admin support.

NZC – strength of holistic, child-centred approach. And its values – what we need is trust between professionals and parents, better relationships and partnership. Lack of values in education sector, so get antagonistic relationships. Parents have to start trusting teachers again, and teachers trust parents that they know what's best for children. Open conversations.

Education Act freed up the board constitution somewhat, focused boards on what's best for kids. Parents on some boards need help. They don't need knights on white horses. Power is often with the principals. Merit in looking at this further. If principal wasn't a board member, reporting as employer, couldn't have boards as they are now. The scaffolds would need strengthening. If your aim is the child at the centre, and every school can function at optimum level.

Current model devalues huge number of parents without time for the role, and minorities. Board elections often popularity contests, not necessarily representing the whole school population.

Could have 1 board overseeing – thinking of one organisation with a number of offshoot businesses. Board with elected parents, iwi, specialist knowledge – property, financial, pedagogical.

At larger schools could have equivalent of GM pedagogical, GM operations – not a single CEO role.

Be more rigorous about leadership.

Experience in NZSTA role, some experienced principals, can't have a conversation without conflict; even well-functioning schools, there's a delicate tightrope walk between the principal and the board.

Issues of power, status, competition. Often not about \$.

Inefficiencies in the system, so lots of time wasted.

Stand downs as example – exclusions – nothing analysed about why this is happening – the causes – how adults contribute and could do better. PB4L – needed more support so well implemented – a failure because it didn't seem to apply to school leadership. Kids get passed onto another school, to a less resourced school – that is a stupid waste of time, for the adults, and for the kids – the time they have lost for their learning.

Principals in schools that had implemented PB4L but still intimidating staff. Things need to be values driven in the real sense of the word - but not the values of 'I know what's best for you'.

So much time is wasted because it's spent on the wrong things, in schools because no external view comes in 'we're the experts'. And they have the power.

Eg in Nelson region, when new legislation on child restraint, [REDACTED] (then MoE regional director) talked with her about how to hold MoE session with bot and principals, a captive audience begging for support, the focus could have been on the legislation, how to fill out the forms – instead they looked at how we end up there – could have people coming into a school with high level of restraints, talking with teachers about the need for everyone to feel safe so kids don't flip out. Only region to do anything like this – the material used is brilliant.

Real wastage that no-one at national level really sponsored PB4L.

Example of the importance of cultural change from her experience in national service working with sex offenders – a reduction in 6 months of 48% violent offences client-staff. Not by adding more staff, not by being more punitive. Changed how staff worked. People

with no qualifications could get it. Don't get this through using big words, but by understanding what is going on in the brain when someone gets agitated. ¹

Treating everyone with respect – we need little kids treated with the same respect people were showing high level offenders. This is the intention of Pb4L.

Frustration with the successful model – psychologists rejected it, wanted to stick to own, so DHBs did not take it up.

Ed sector places so much value on the psychological model – neuroscience makes it a dead duck.

In education it's very much about blaming the child, and by extension the family. Lots of kids – school is a foreign environment, and they're so anxious.

Eg of rigidity, her grandson, started school, he's wellbehaved, inquisitive, a bit anxious, calms down when he finds the lego, told gruffly to pack up and join the others, where 5 minutes with lego would have settled him, instead of returning to anxiety.. not an approach that is going to get the best out of a child. Still an industrial model designed to produce obedient workers – and that's not the kind of work we have now and need. How are we future-proofing? Still have an enforcing, punitive culture. Not using what we know about brain development.

If there is one thing I could change, it would be to implement PB4L properly – values-based approach, kindness, working together. Had a poor roll out, lost its value. Probably needs to be repackaged.

ERO and working with MoE

I love ERO. In terms of collaboration, they're 20 years ahead of MoE. MoE are really overworked, though I question some of that as inefficiency.

ERO are really open to innovation, maybe it's a question of organisational size?

Huge respect for [redacted] [ERO [redacted]] and [redacted] [redacted] ERO [redacted] [redacted]. [redacted] had a really rough time with the principals [she did not come directly from school role], they wanted fluffy and feelings, her messaging was really right for an audit office, just show the facts of what they found.

Important to have more transparency, openness, accountability – we don't have the culture to fit.

Decentralisation of MoE and NZSTA best move ever – we're less impacted by the behaviour in Wellington, all that political stuff. We can build relationships, sense of more openness, can work as a team.

¹ [redacted] shared the resource they developed and the evaluation. I could share that within the taskforce.