Self-Managing Schools Seven Years On

What Have We Learnt?

Cathy Wylie
NZCER
1997

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NEW ZEALAND COUNCIL FOR EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH
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The 1996 questionnaires have much in common with previous years' surveys, to allow comparison, but also break new ground. I am very grateful for the discussions I had with Sandra Aikin of NZEI, Janet Kelly and Mark Farnsworth of the NZ School Trustees Association, Marilyn Yeoman of the NZ Principals' Federation, Ruth Mansell, and Martin Thrupp; and to those people who took part in the trialling of the draft questionnaires, and made suggestions for improvements.

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The parental sample was drawn from 26 schools, requiring help from those schools with drawing up the sample, and in some schools, sending out the questionnaires. We were impressed with the efficient way schools responded to our requests—and very grateful.

The NZCER team who contributed to this report were: Cathy Lythe, responsible for liaison with schools, and the complex job of managing the sample lists and keeping track of the returned questionnaires; Gloria Hanson, who set up databases and did the SAS analysis used in the study; Paul Merwood and Anne Gilbert, who headed the coding team; and Angela Tennant, Carlene Grigg, and Roberta Tiatia, who did most of the data entry.

Jean Thompson analysed the representativeness of the return rates.

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Cathy Wylie

SUMMARY

This is the final report in the New Zealand Council for Educational Research's series of national surveys monitoring the impact of the *Tomorrow's Schools* reforms, which began in 1989. These reforms shifted substantial financial and administrative responsibilities from the former Department of Education and Education Boards to staff and trustees at individual schools. The aim of the series has been to describe the experiences of people in primary schools, to find out what difference the reforms have made to New Zealand schools, whether some aspects of the reforms have had more of an impact than others, and whether the reforms' goal of improving New Zealand education, especially for children from low income homes and Māori, is being achieved.

The NZCER surveys were undertaken in 1989, 1990, 1991, 1993, and 1996, at the same national sample of 239 primary and intermediate schools for principals, trustees, and teachers, and at a subsample of 26 of these schools offering a good cross section of primary schools, for parents.

Here are the key findings and themes of this report.

Resources

Principal judgments of the adequacy of government funding for their school show a dramatic decline. Only 20 percent of the survey principals thought their government funding was inadequate in the NZCER 1990 survey—but in the 1996 survey, 76 percent of the principals thought this.

Schools have increased their fundraising efforts, and increased the level of parental donations. The 1996 parent survey shows an average of $491 per annum spent on a child's education. This is an increase of 163 percent since the 1991 survey.

Although schools have augmented their government grant with the funds they raise themselves, and used it to employ more support staff, they still have a need for support which remains as large as it was at the start of the reforms.

Seventy percent of the schools faced some problem or issue relating to their school property in the 1996 survey, somewhat more than the 59 percent in the 1993 survey. Property and finance are the two issues which take up most board time, and dominate the issues which trustees, principals, teachers, and parents identify as the ones confronting their board.

The survey data show that the Ministerial Reference Group staffing formula introduced in 1996 has had a positive impact on class size. Only 23 percent of the teachers surveyed had classes of more than 30 students. Yet 49 percent of the parents surveyed remained dissatisfied with the size of their child's class.

Staffing has become a major issue for primary schools. Fifty-eight percent of the principals thought their government-funded staffing was adequate in 1993. The figure is now 38 percent.

Finding suitable teachers was a problem for 55 percent of the schools—double the 1993 figure. Only 20 percent of schools had no difficulty finding properly qualified relieving teachers, a much lower figure than the 48 percent in the 1993 survey. Teacher turnover has also increased, both to new positions, and to new careers. Teachers' views about school appointment processes are mixed, with the main concerns being that they favour staff already working in the school, and can be dependent on personalities.

Workloads remain high. The 1996 survey shows that principals' average work week was 58.8 hours a week, teachers worked an average of 48.3 hours, and trustees, 3.4 hours a week. There are clear signs that this continuing high workload is having a negative impact on morale.

Parental involvement was high in New Zealand schools before the reforms. It changed little from 1989 to 1993. The 1996 survey contains some indications that it may be decreasing, with fewer teachers reporting parental help in classrooms, and trustees seeking more help than in 1993 with most areas of school life—particularly in the resource hungry areas of fundraising, school maintenance, sport, and classroom help.

Schools serving low income communities, or with high Māori enrolment, tend to have lower levels of local support, including fundraising, and more difficulty finding suitable staff. The additional resourcing these schools receive from the government is vital to them, but still has not allowed them to close the resource gaps between them and other schools.

All in all, this survey material, added to the material contained in the annual reports to Parliament on the school sector, suggests that New Zealand primary schools are underfunded. It is likely that the extra administrative and accountability work which was given to schools by the reforms was underestimated, thus explaining some of the continuing and increasing difficulty schools have had in matching their needs with the resources available to them. Parental and community support has been tapped, indeed mined in some schools. Yet it cannot bridge the resource gaps which people in schools are experiencing.

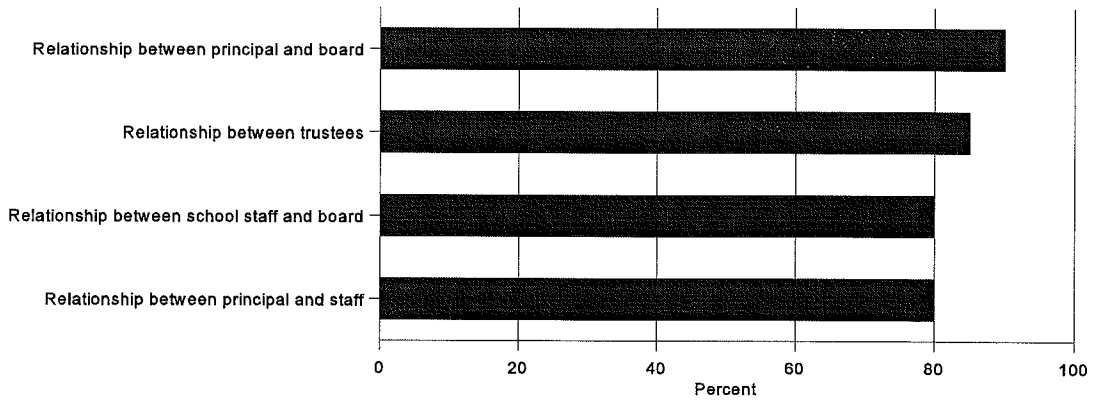
Partnership Makes the School Go Round

Sixty-four percent of the principals and 30 percent of the trustees defined partnership with school staff as the key element of the role of a school trustee. Trustees also saw their representation of parents and providing direction for the school as key elements in their role.

The figure below shows the high proportion of trustees, principals, and teachers who view the relationships described as of good, very good, or excellent quality.

Figure s1

Proportion of Positive Relationships at School Level



Most teachers continue to feel that they have good access to information on matters affecting their work, and that they are either part of the school's decisionmaking team, or listened to by those who make the decisions.

Changes in the Classroom

Ninety-six percent of the teachers surveyed made some change to the curriculum they taught. National initiatives and resourcing were important in the changes they made.

Table s1
Changes to Curriculum

Change	%
More use of computers	56
Change to subject syllabus	44
More integration of subjects	42
More emphasis on social skills	39
More emphasis on basic skills	29
More Māori language	26
More teaching of English to children whose English is a second language	14
More education outside the classroom	9
More religious/moral education	6
Introduction of a language other than Māori or English	4

Table s2
Reason for Curriculum Change

Reason	%
Children's needs	66
Ministry of Education curriculum or assessment contracts	37
Children's learning level	32
Development of teacher's own skills	30
ERO	30
School charter objectives	29
Parental interest	17

Most teachers were positive about the new curricula, though their workload increased. They thought they would continue to need further professional development to support the new curricula for mathematics, science, and technology.

Only 2 percent of the teachers said their school had had to drop a particular curriculum initiative to fit into the new curricula. Twenty-one percent of the teachers wanted to make some curriculum innovation themselves. The barriers to innovation were lack of time and lack of money.

Many principals and teachers identified some positive gains for children arising from the reforms.

Table s3
Positive Impacts of the Reforms

Positive Impact	Principals %	Teachers %
Quality of children's learning	62	39
Teaching content	71	57
Teaching style	56	48

These gains were most likely to occur where teachers were also making curriculum changes.

Changes to Schools

The reforms have led many schools to make changes in what they do.

Table s4
Major Changes at Schools Due to the Reforms

Area of Change	%
Student assessment	66
Staff appraisal	61
Internal monitoring and evaluation of school/class programmes	55
Staff development	44
Reporting student achievement to parents	38
School promotion/marketing	22
Presentation of school/class programme to parents	21

Change was least likely in school promotion or marketing: 31 percent had made no change at all since 1989.

The survey data show no growth since 1990 in programmes or policies for the particular groups of children felt to have been ill served by education before the reforms. Seventy-five percent of the survey schools have some Māori education programme for all students, 50 percent mainstream students with special needs, 49 percent have a programme or policy for gifted students, and 41 percent, a programme or policy for Māori students.

School charters are used mainly for planning and policy. Trustees are much more likely to regard them as working documents than principals or teachers.

Parental Satisfaction

Eighty-two percent of the parents surveyed were generally happy with the quality of their child's schooling. A major reason for dissatisfaction was the size of their child's class. This was also important to the 35 percent of parents who wanted to change something about their child's school. Most of the other changes sought by parents also centred around increased resources, rather than changes to curriculum. The main issues parents raise with their school board of trustees are discipline at the school, and health and safety matters.

Around two-thirds of the parents thought their access to information on their child's progress or classroom programme was good; and only 5 percent were unhappy with it.

Winners and Losers?

Increased parental choice was a hallmark of the reforms. Competition for students was another important element, particularly after the removal of zoning in 1991. The 1996 survey material indicates that 85 percent of parents were able to access the school of their first choice. The main reasons preventing parents from accessing the school of their first choice were: transport, the school's enrolment scheme, and cost. Māori and Pacific Island parents were less likely to be able to access the school of their first choice.

Many parents make their choice of school some years before the child is ready to move on: 66 percent had already chosen their child's next school, including 51 percent of the parents whose child was in their first year of primary school. Thirty-seven percent of the parents who had made a choice for their child could see some obstacle to their attending this school: mainly money, the school's enrolment scheme, and transport.

Twenty-three percent of the survey schools had an enrolment scheme—though only 11 percent of the schools did not have places on their rolls for all prospective students who applied. Schools with enrolment schemes were more likely to be large city schools, serving high income families, and with a low proportion of Māori students on their roll.

The schools whose rolls had decreased since 1989 tended to be very small, or to be serving low income families, and to have 30 percent or more Māori students on their roll. Principals of these schools were twice as likely as others to think that changes in student preferences accounted for changes in their school roll over the period of the reforms.

How real is competition between primary schools? Only 21 percent of the principals described their relations with other local schools as competitive—and half of these also said their relations were also friendly, or co-operative. Competition was more likely to occur in schools serving either low income, or high income families. Schools experiencing competition were just as likely as other schools to make changes—but it was the principals from schools with co-operative relations with other local schools who were more likely to find that the reforms had had a positive impact for their students.

The survey material raises some important questions about the impact of competition in primary schools, and suggests that this is one element of the reforms that needs revisiting.

Building on the Reforms' Achievements

School self-management did bring new energy and focus into primary schools. It increased the local financial and human resources available to schools. Teachers and principals have paid more attention to what they do, and why. Many principals and teachers do see positive gains for children.

But there is no evidence that all children have gained equally. In particular, the schools serving low income or Māori communities still have a harder job than others, a harder job finding resources, and a harder job to convince parents that they are as good as schools serving more advantaged groups.

The survey material indicates that what makes the reforms work is a combination of appropriate government support, and local initiative, effort, and desire to do well by the children in the school. Without school staff and trustees shouldering high workloads, the reforms would not have been possible. The NZ curriculum and the associated professional development it brought with it have also been key in allowing people in schools to start to see some positive gains for children from the later phase of the reforms.

To make the most of school self-management, the survey material suggests that schools will require additional government resourcing, so that they can focus more on teaching and learning, a stronger emphasis on professional and school development so that teaching and learning are sound, focussed, and vibrant, and a greater inclusion of school experiences in curriculum and policy development.

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1 SCHOOL SELF-MANAGEMENT—CHANGE AND CONTINUITY

New Zealand is now into its eighth year of systemic school-site management. There are children in the country's schools who were not yet born when the radical shift to decentralisation began in 1989, and there are teachers who have never known any other form of school management and resourcing.[1] The system is taken for granted. When people talk about the issues surrounding schools and education, they rarely phrase their analysis or recommendations in terms of the previous system, with 2 important exceptions. One desire is for "something like the old inspectorate", in terms of the previous system's ability to offer continual but often informal and non-publicised support for principals. The second desire is for the kind of inclusion of teachers in the development of curriculum and policy which led to the epithet "the education family" in reference to the relationship between people in schools and government bureaucrats.

These days, one never hears of the education family. The relationship between schools and government bureaucrats is at best polite, and, on occasion, respectful. At worst, it is characterised by mutual distrust. Principals and teachers no longer see service in the education agencies as an extension of their teaching careers and experience, and thus one of the prime ways of ensuring that policy development is informed by practice and recent experience of the "chalkface" has been lost. Nor did the inclusion of parents in school governance through an elected board of trustees at each school bring about their inclusion in central policy development. This is one of the paradoxes of the reforms. More "voice" at the school level, but less "voice" at the central level.

No reform and certainly no education system is without its paradoxes. This reform has brought gains in some areas, but costs or losses in others. As well, in responding to some issues, new issues have emerged. The aim of this report is to show the changes that have occurred in New Zealand's primary and intermediate schools as a result of the shift to school self-management, its impact on the people in schools, who are the ones who must make the reforms work, and the issues arising.

There are contrary elements in the reforms themselves. These arise partially from the nature of decentralisation itself. New Zealand schools enjoyed considerable autonomy in their decisionmaking before the reforms, within a framework of broad national curricula, and inspection systems that were combined with support. The reforms brought primary schools the ability to choose their own staff, equipment and materials, within the limits of their budgets—but it did not make them independent of national curricula, the new Ministry of Education, or the tighter system of monitoring by the new Education Review Office (ERO). Relations and roles of the national agencies changed, but they remained important, and gave schools both the grounds for their work, and some of their constraints.

The other main source of contrary currents within the reforms is the fact that they took place as only one part of New Zealand's radical reorientation of public and social services. This

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[1] Fifteen percent of the teachers participating in this survey started teaching after 1989.

demanded the same kinds of framework and accountabilities for all services, no matter what they were, what size they were, or how they were delivered. Contrast principals who also carry teaching responsibilities and have little administrative support with Chief Executive Officers who have a raft of managers and administrative help; or compare voluntary boards, as with schools, with appointed boards whose members receive remuneration bearing much more equivalence with the private sector.

The 1989 Education Reforms

The wider reforms of New Zealand's public services were intended to make them more efficient, by providing improved services for the same amount of money, or a reduced sum of money, and by making many services contestable. The improvements envisaged in education were that schools would become more responsive to their local community, and therefore more innovative, making education not only more focused, but more attractive to the groups which were missing out, particularly Māori and children from low income homes. In turn, this would raise general standards of educational achievement.

The spurs for these improvements came in these forms:

- a "contract", in the form of a charter, which set out each school's programme and goals within a centrally set framework with some mandatory components which included equity provisions;

and 3 elements which were based on the benefits thought to come from competition:

- new funding formulas from 1990, which centred on student numbers, so that "every head carried a dollar sum";
- the abolition of school zones in 1991, which had allocated school places on the basis of residential proximity to the school for secondary schools and a few primary schools. This was intended to enhance parental and student choice by allowing them to apply to any school they chose; and
- regular audits and reviews which assessed a school's compliance with legislation, including its curriculum responsibilities, and its gathering of evidence to show what "value" it was adding to its students. The results of these audits were to be publicly available, and, in 1995, began to be released to the media by ERO.

The education reforms did have one difference which set them apart from other sectors. The other major spur to improving schools' responsiveness was the introduction of boards of trustees at each school, elected by parents, and composed of a majority of parents, together with the principal and a staff representative. The composition of this board, bringing professionals and parents together, set it apart from the more commercial model which was introduced in other public service sectors. [2]

Over all, the introduction of the reforms in 1989 was greeted with a mixture of caution and interest. There was high interest in the initial board elections, with most schools having more

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[2] The other sector which brought "clients" and "providers" into the one body was conservation, and there the bodies are advisory rather than decisionmaking.

than enough candidates to fill their slates. The bones of the education reforms were fleshed out by working groups which included the teacher unions and others who were close to the working reality of schools. Although their inclusion had to be fought for, the fact that it occurred gave hope for the future, and also gave the reforms the credibility they needed within the education sector.

The NZCER Surveys

What has happened since? In order to provide an understanding of the reforms as they progressed, the New Zealand Council for Educational Research has been following a national sample of schools, through 5 postal surveys of principals, teachers, trustees, and parents. The survey sample is fully described in the next chapter. The first survey was undertaken in October 1989, 5 months after the first boards of trustees were elected, but before they had assumed financial responsibilities. We returned to the same schools again in October 1990, October 1991, October 1993, and, finally, August 1996.

Our questions have been guided by 3 concerns. Clearly, the first concern is to chart the changes as they affect school work, including the core work of curriculum, school roles, and school resources. Our second concern has been to gather material which would enable us to gauge the effectiveness of the reforms in terms of its own stated intentions. Has parental involvement increased? Have innovations occurred? Have learning opportunities for children increased? Our third concern has been to gather material and interpret it in the light of research on effective schooling and effective reforms.

The 1990 Survey

Our initial report provided baseline data on curriculum provision, parental involvement and contact, and some aspects of school resources and staffing which could be expected to change with the shift to school-based management. We also gathered data on workloads, relationships between people at the school, existing patterns of decisionmaking, provision for those groups of learners whom research had identified as needing more attention in the education system (Benton, 1988; NZCER, 1988), and existing levels of parental satisfaction. We found that parental satisfaction was high, and most parents surveyed already had some involvement in their child's school before the reforms began.

It was unsettling in terms of the hope that the reforms would unleash a wave of innovation in schools to find in that first survey in 1989 that, though people in schools were working hard to make the reforms work, they were often sceptical about their long-term effects. They were more interested in holding on to what they already had, rather than brimming with previously thwarted initiatives.

Hard work was required at school level to make school self-management a reality, as the results of the 1990 survey showed. Tensions also existed between people in schools and those in the newly created government departments, who were also engaged in learning new roles. The first and second years of the reforms produced a constant stream of deadlines. These deadlines kept changing, as did requirements, in the development of the charters which were to define the responsibilities of school and government, and in the development of school

budgets which would be auditable in relatively standard forms for government departments to analyse. Such a wave of paperwork, coupled with government interest in giving schools unwanted and unsought responsibilities (mainly in the form of bulk funding of teachers' salaries), created some suspicion and cynicism amongst trustees and school staff about the reality of partnership between schools and government. But at school level, partnership was more often than not the reality, with perhaps more overlapping of roles and relationships than the reform architects had envisaged.

Those who worked in schools during this time developed confidence in the process they were pioneering. There were few who called for a return to the old system: principals and trustees showed enjoyment in their ability to make decisions concerning their school. However, the initial misgivings about adequate resourcing and growing inequity between schools remained. There were indications emerging in the 1990 survey that schools in low income communities, or with high Māori enrolment, were less able than other schools to draw on the parental and community financial, time, and skill resources called for by the devolution of responsibility to school level.

The 1991 Survey

The 1991 survey showed that the pace of reform had settled—but with the continuation of the high workloads reached in 1990. Financial and administrative systems were in place. Government held off implementing the inclusion of teacher salaries into operational grants, thus seeming to heed the resistance to this which came from trustees and teachers alike. Some of the original fears voiced at the start of the reforms were receding. Professionals *could* work in partnership with parents who had greater powers than before. People with narrow educational views did not dominate boards of trustees, though there were pockets of difficulty. Arguably because teaching salaries were kept separate from operational grants, and pay was not performance based, teachers continued to work co-operatively, and to enjoy good relations with trustees. There was still little sign of innovation in the work of schools, teaching, and learning, however, and there were stronger indications that school resourcing was becoming more dependent on the economic circumstances of school communities.

The 1993 Survey

The 1993 survey found continuing partnership and general goodwill between professionals and lay people, embedded in the ways people in schools felt things should work. Most school-based problems were resolved at the school, but often with the help of outsiders, particularly the national organisations for teachers and trustees. Nonetheless, schools remained in need of support, information, and training.

Workloads remained high, and were increasingly burdensome. Principals felt distracted by their administrative work. Teacher morale was sagging.

Yet principals and teachers also felt, for the first time in this series of surveys, that the reforms could be linked to improvements in their classrooms—in their teaching content, style, and the quality of children's learning. These changes in turn were linked with the central introduction of the new curriculum framework, and its associated professional development. They were not linked so much to school self-management. Where curriculum innovation occurred, it was in line with the new curriculum.

The ways in which school self-management did make a positive contribution to children's learning appeared to be in teachers needing to make regular reports on the school programme to the school board, in being able to answer the board's questions about the programme and its links with student progress and other aspects of school life, and in the gradual intertwining of school and staff development.

Thus the 1993 survey identified both gains, and costs.

It also showed that the differences in educational opportunities and achievement, which the reforms were designed to reduce, remained unchanged; school-based management alone did not seem able to close these differences or improve achievement.

It found that the money parents gave to schools was increasing, as was school fundraising. But so was a growing sense that schools could not provide sufficient money themselves. More principals and trustees thought that their government funding was inadequate. They also felt more distant from government, and more frustrated that their concerns and views were either ignored, or resented.

The Present—The 1996 Survey

This report on the 1996 survey will show that all of these trends continue, even though the government has recently improved resourcing, started to take a more proactive role in planning, slowed down the pace of curriculum implementation, and acknowledged the importance of its role in supporting professional development for the curriculum. It has also provided some support to schools which are experiencing financial difficulties, unsustainable rolls, or problems between people at the school. At least for some areas, it has also begun to invite comment before final policy decisions are made—though sector groups remain excluded from major policy development and formation. It is a moot point as to whether notice is actually taken of professional and board comment, as in the recent decision to trial school responsibility for payrolls, which ran counter to the improvements suggested by teacher representatives, and counter to the mounting evidence as reported here, that schools have not been sufficiently resourced for their higher administrative responsibilities under decentralisation.

This report raises some major questions about the real costs of school self-management, and whether in fact school self-management can deliver the benefits hoped for without significant improvements in government resourcing, the inclusion of teachers and trustees in policy development, and the re-igniting between schools and government of one of the most efficient ways of increasing human productivity, trust.

2 SURVEY DESIGN AND ANALYSIS

Each of the 4 surveys carried out by NZCER in this longitudinal project on school self-management has been on a base sample of 239 schools, a 10.5 percent sample of all New Zealand's non-private primary and intermediate schools in 1989. The sample is a stratified random one, proportionally representative of the overall national totals—for 1989—for type of school, location of school, roll size, proportion of Māori enrolment, and whether state or integrated. The 1996 sample replaced 7 schools which had closed since 1993 and one which had changed its status to become an area school with schools of comparable characteristics. The school characteristics of the sample base are set out in tables 80–82 in Appendix 1, which show the representativeness of each year's survey for trustees, principals, and teachers in relation to both the original sample, and to 1996 Ministry of Education figures for all New Zealand non-private primary and intermediate schools.

There have been changes in the national school profile between 1989 and 1996. In terms of location, there has been an increase of 7 percent in the proportion of urban schools, and a fall of 5 percent in the proportion of rural schools, and of 3 percent in small town schools. The proportion of schools with less than 8 percent Māori enrolment has fallen from 43 to 33 percent, while it has risen 8 percentage points for schools with 15–29 percent Māori enrolment, and 6 percentage points for those with 30 percent or more Māori enrolment. There has also been a slight increase in school size, with a rise of 6 percentage points in the proportion of schools with rolls over 100.

These changes in the national profile were largely mirrored in the responses for the survey. The principal returns matched the 1996 national profile, with the exception of an underrepresentation of the smallest schools, and integrated schools. In contrast, with the trustee returns, we had an overrepresentation of the smallest schools. Schools with very low Māori enrolment (under 8 percent of the school roll) were also overrepresented in our responses from trustees, and we had underrepresentation of those with high Māori enrolment (over 30 percent of the school roll) for both trustees and teachers. Schools with high socioeconomic decile rankings[3] were overrepresented amongst the trustee responses, and schools with decile rankings of 7–8, underrepresented amongst teachers. Urban schools are overrepresented in the teacher responses, and rural schools and schools with rolls under 100 were underrepresented. The underrepresentation of small and rural schools partially reflects the number of one-teacher schools in those categories. Such schools in the sample were sent principal questionnaires only.

For each survey round, separate questionnaires with some common questions have been sent to the principals of the sample schools, 2 randomly chosen trustees at each school, and between 1 to 3 teachers at each school, depending on its size. Replacement names were randomly drawn for trustees and teachers who had not returned questionnaires in the 1993 survey, or whose names no longer appeared on the Ministry of Education list for trustees, or the NZEI membership list for teachers.

For largely practical and economic reasons, the parent sample was drawn from a subsample

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[3] Decile ranking refers to the socioeconomic decile ranking assigned for funding purposes by the Ministry of Education.

of 26 schools chosen to provide a reasonable cross section of the school characteristics of the total sample. One of these closed between 1993 and 1996, another had changed its status to become an area school, and one declined to take part. Replacements with matching school characteristics were selected, and agreed to take part.

In previous surveys, we have randomly selected parents' names taking 1 name for every 4 on class lists supplied by the subsample schools. The Privacy Act meant that this approach was possible only if the school policy allowed for class lists to be made available to researchers. Eleven of the schools had such policies; and 15 schools undertook to draw a random sample themselves, in accordance with clear instructions, and to post out the questionnaires themselves, so that confidentiality could be preserved. To analyse the nature of our parental sample, we looked at national school roll data (table 84, appendix 1), and national occupational and educational profiles. These show an overrepresentation of parents with educational qualifications, and of those with professional or skilled work. In relation to school characteristics, the parental response was representative in terms of school size, but not of other characteristics, reflecting quite different response rates at different kinds of school. The school characteristics have generally not been used to analyse the parental responses.

Except where indicated above, the response rates for the 1996 survey are representative of schools. This was checked by estimating the 95 percent intervals of the population proportions one would expect to find if the responses were representative of the schools and checking that the response rates fell within these estimates. Thus the responses do allow us to have confidence that the principal findings are representative, and the trustee and teacher findings largely so, with imbalances relating to the proportion of Māori enrolment, and location.

The parental responses cannot be said to be representative of the school or population characteristics: thus the analysis of responses between different population groups becomes more important in assessing whether or not a finding is likely to be generalisable to the whole parental population.

Response Profiles

Principals

The overall response rate for principals was 76 percent, from 181 of the 239 schools in the survey sample. Forty-seven percent of the survey sample schools had changed principals since the 1993 survey, and 76 percent had changed principals since the 1989 survey.

Teaching principals comprised 55 percent of those responding (the 1990 Ministry of Education figure was 65 percent). Thirty-one percent of the principals were female (the Ministry of Education 1996 figure is 32 percent). Women tended to be overrepresented amongst the teaching principals—70 percent.

Most of the principals responding (90 percent)were Pakeha/European, 8 percent were Māori, and 1 percent Asian. Comparable figures from the 1990 school staff census were 82 percent Pakeha/European, 9 percent Māori, and less than 1 percent each Pacific Island and Asian.

Fifteen percent of the principals responding had become principals in the last 2 years. A further 18 percent had served between 3 and 5 years, 24 percent between 6 to 10 years, 17 percent between 11 and 15 years, and 24 percent for more than 15 years. This shows a slight

decline since the 1993 survey in the proportion of those who had been principals for more than 15 years. Length of service as a principal does not emerge as a factor behind differences in responses to the survey questions.

Thirty-three percent of the principals had been at their school for less than 2 years, 25 percent between 3 to 5 years, 28 percent between 6 to 12 years, 12 percent 11 to 15 years, and 2 percent, more than 15 years.

Seventeen percent of the principals (almost all teaching) were aged less than 40. Forty-six percent were in their forties, 34 percent in their fifties, and 4 percent were in their sixties. This overall age profile was much the same as in the 1993 NZCER survey.

Trustees

The response rate for trustees was 57 percent. Seventy-nine percent of the trustees in the sample were new to the survey. Eighty percent of the schools in the survey sample were represented in the responses (191 of 239). Characteristics of the trustees are given in chapter 6.

Teachers

The response rate for teachers in 1996 was 66 percent. Fifty percent of the teachers in the sample were new to the survey.

Thirty-three percent of the teachers held positions of responsibility, close to the 29 percent of such positions (excluding relieving and part-time positions) reported in the 1990 Ministry of Education census of school staff. Eleven percent of all teachers responding were deputy principals, 7 percent assistant principals, and 16 percent senior teachers.

Eighty-three percent of those responding were female (1996 Ministry figures are 80 percent).

Comparison of ages with Ministry figures for regular teachers in mid 1993 show some underrepresentation of younger teachers (10 percent of survey respondents compared with 16 percent over all), and some overrepresentation of those aged over 50 (32 percent of survey respondents compared with 23 percent over all). This may reflect the sample base, starting in 1989.

Ninety percent of the teachers described themselves as Pakeha/European, 5 percent Māori, 4 percent "New Zealander", and 1 percent Pacific Island. Comparisons with the Ministry of Education's 1990 census show overrepresentation of Pakeha/European (79 percent), and underrepresentation of other groups (Māori were 6 percent, and Pacific Island 2 percent).

Teachers' length of service is given in chapter 5.

Parents

Fifty-two percent (676) of the 1297 parents who were sent questionnaires responded to the survey. This is a higher number than in previous years, but a lower proportion. The majority of the parents who replied were women: 79 percent. Most were Pakeha/European (75 percent), 9 percent were Māori, 5 percent "New Zealander", 4 percent Pacific Island, and 6 percent Asian. These figures are close to the ethnic composition for the 30–49 age range found by the 1991 census, with a slight overrepresentation of Asian parents (1991 census figures were 77

percent NZ European, 9 percent Māori, 4 percent Pacific Island, and 2 percent Asian).

Thirty-six percent of the female parents responding were full time at home, 20 percent worked part time in the paid workforce, and 53 percent worked full time in the paid workforce. These are close to the 1991 census figures for 25–45 year old women: 31 percent not in the paid workforce, 23 percent working part-time, and 46 percent working full time, in the paid workforce.

Seven percent of the male parents responding were unemployed and/or receiving a state benefit—close to the 6 percent of males aged 30–49 years old in the 1991 NZ census, and 5 percent of the female parents were unemployed and/or receiving a state benefit.

Analysis

Because the aim of this project has been to provide a comprehensive picture of the reforms and their impact at school level, the questionnaires used in this survey are comprehensive, and therefore lengthy, though, we are told, otherwise user friendly. Copies are available from NZCER.

Many of the questions asked were in the form of closed questions, with boxes to tick. Open-ended questions and comments have been coded. As well as reporting frequencies of the answers on their own, they have also been cross-tabulated with a set of school characteristics—size, location, proportion of Māori enrolment, and the socioeconomic decile rating assigned to each non-private school by the Ministry of Education (a 1 indicates lowest ranking; 10, the highest socioeconomic status ranking)—to find out if these characteristics make a difference to the answers.

It is worth noting that some of these characteristics overlap more than others. This is particularly so for the proportion of Māori enrolment, and school decile ranking. Seventy-eight percent of the high Māori enrolment primary schools nationwide are also decile 1–3 schools, 19 percent decile 4–6, and only 2 percent decile 9–10. Conversely, of the very low Māori enrolment primary schools, only 3 percent are decile 1–3 schools, and 67 percent are decile 8–10 schools.

Personal characteristics such as gender, ethnicity, education, and occupation were the main variables used for analysing parental data, and were used for some trustee questions. Comparisons were also made between different groups' responses to the same questions.

It should be noted that it is the schools which have provided the constancy in the sample base, not particular individuals. A base assumption of this study is that school characteristics do have a bearing on the experiences people have of the reforms. But this raises the question of whether some of the effects and changes in results since 1989 are more a function of a change in the individuals responding, or an indication of effects related to the reforms. There are 2 reasons for thinking that the latter interpretation is sound.

First, if changes between surveys undertaken in different years were mainly due to changes in the individuals filling in questionnaires, one would not expect consistent trends in the data, as we find in the material reported here. Second, inasmuch as personal characteristics such as education and gender have a bearing on individual values and judgments, there has also been consistency in the patterns of personal characteristics reported in these surveys since 1989.

The cross-tabulations were done using SAS, and the results tested for significance using chi-squares. Only differences significant at the $p < 0.05$ level are included in the results for principals, trustees, and teachers, and at the $p < 0.01$ level for parents. At the $p < 0.05$ level,

a 1 in 20 chance exists that a difference or relationship as large as that observed could have arisen randomly in random samples. At the $p < 0.01$ level, a 1 in 100 chance exists that a difference or relationship as large as that observed could have arisen randomly in random samples.

Tests of significance do not imply causal relationships, simply statistical association.

Two additional methods of data analysis have also been used. First, an inter-year comparison of responses from the same school has been done on questions in areas of key interest, particularly relationships within the school.

Second, because low socioeconomic status and high Māori enrolment were so clearly associated with differences in resources in the 1991 and 1993 surveys, an additional test of their importance in explaining variability in the responses was made using analysis of variance tests available on SAS (chapter 16).

Terms Used in the Report

Because some questions allowed multiple answers, or because figures have been rounded to whole numbers, totals in tables (reported in percentages) may add up to more than 100 percent.

The 3 categories used in analysing school location differences are urban, small town (corresponding to the Ministry of Education's "minor urban" category; Balclutha is an example), and rural. The category of "secondary urban" has been omitted from this analysis because in the sample it provided too small a number of respondents to allow comparison. In most cases, the state and integrated character of schools has not been used to analyse answers.

School size is frequently given in terms of the categories used in analysis. In addition, "smallest" refers to schools with fewer than 35 students, and "largest" to schools with more than 300 students.

PART I
SCHOOL RESOURCES

3 BUILDINGS AND EQUIPMENT

Each school board is responsible for all property maintenance which falls within a 10-year period, including day-to-day maintenance. The board can borrow money for property work up to a certain sum, and borrow beyond that sum if they receive prior government approval. Major maintenance and capital projects are the responsibility of the Ministry of Education, which prioritises projects each year. Some schools are still waiting to receive funding for projects 4 or more years after their first application. The Financial Assistance Scheme provides another option, but one which is dependent on schools' fundraising capabilities. This scheme matches school-raised funds with government funding.

When boards took over the responsibility for property, they signed an occupancy agreement with the Ministry of Education. This took some time to complete, since most boards identified a backlog of deferred maintenance and property needs. Although the then government used money from the sale of Telecom to tackle the large problem of deferred maintenance identified with decentralisation, the work identified in 1989 is not expected to be completed until the 1998–99 financial year. The cost of clearing this inheritance of deferred maintenance is around $552 million. But this does not mean that school property is now in a satisfactory state. The cost of the currently identified capital works project—omitting those related to roll growth, not an unsizable amount—is around $600 million (STA News, No. 76, p. 8, 1997).

The problems with property are not simply to do with inheritances of the past, and the lifespan of many schools built for the baby boom in the 1950s and 1960s now reaching their desirable end. The increase in primary rolls means that more classrooms are needed. Decentralisation and per-student funding makes it more important that schools look attractive to parents and students. Trustees are also trying to keep property maintained to avoid increases in their future costs.

Trustees' Perspectives

Property maintenance and financial management are the 2 areas that take up most board time. This has remained a consistent pattern since 1991. Property-related projects are the projects or initiatives most likely to be mentioned by trustees and principals as being particularly important for their school in the past year—as they were in 1993. Property maintenance or development is by far the most frequently identified achievement over the last 3 years (44 percent). Trustees also identify property as the second most common issue confronting their board; finance comes first. This is little different from the experience of their predecessors, the school committees (Davey, 1977).

Most boards in the survey faced some problem or issue related to their school property (70 percent). This is more than the 59 percent of boards in the 1993 NZCER survey. The pattern of issues and problems remains, however, much the same. Thirty-six percent mentioned continuing problems due to deferred maintenance, for which they were still awaiting Ministry of Education funding. Twenty-seven percent said they were getting Ministry funding to tackle their property problems. Twenty percent had vandalism problems. Eleven percent had had repairs done which were unsatisfactory. Seven percent had faced a major unexpected problem, and 4 percent had had problems with their insurance. Other problems mentioned were the

legacy of poor work done previously, new needs due to increased rolls, and financial difficulties due to property problems.

Rural trustees were half as likely as others to say their board had faced a property problem, and least likely to have continuing problems with deferred maintenance or vandalism. Trustees in high Māori enrolment schools and those in small towns had more problems with unsatisfactory repairs.

Decile 7–10 school trustees reported fewer property problems at their school, and decile 1–2 school trustees, more ongoing problems with equipment.

Adequacy of School Buildings and Grounds

Table 1

Adequacy of Schools' Accommodation

	Very Good %		Adequate %		Poor %		None %	
Facility	1990 (n=207)	1996 (n=181)	1990 (n=207)	1996 (n=181)	1990 (n=207)	1996 (n=181)	1990 (n=207)	1996 (n=181)
Classrooms	21	28	63	59	18	14	–	–
Library	27	34	55	45	14	16	5	3
Sports facilities	25	22	57	59	18	18	0	1
Administrative space	12	18	38	34	49	48	–	–
Staffroom	21	17	40	45	36	36	2	1
Swimming pool	14	18	46	41	17	19	23	20
Hall	12	22	17	18	6	8	61	51
Medical room/ first aid facilities	–	12	–	46	–	24	–	18
Resource rooms	9	10	36	41	37	43	17	4
Specialist classrooms	4	7	8	11	5	9	78	72
Marae/whare	0	1	1	2	0	1	89	92

In 1993, principals of low income schools were twice as likely as others to describe their classrooms as of poor quality. The same pattern is evident in 1996 (27 percent of decile 1–2 schools compared with 11 percent of other schools). In the 3 years in between, school property funding allocation has given first priority to funding additional classrooms to cope with growth in rolls, and work required for health and safety reasons. Yet principals of decile 1–6 schools were more likely than the higher decile schools to describe their hall as very good (36 percent compared with 13 percent).

A similar trend was evident in the overlapping characteristics of Māori enrolment, with 22 percent of high Māori enrolment school principals reporting that their classrooms were poor, compared with 9 percent of others). Yet, principals of schools with high Māori enrolment were also more likely than others to describe their resource rooms and specialist rooms as adequate (54 percent and 22 percent respectively).

Most schools with rolls under 100 do not have a school hall; around 45 percent of schools with rolls of 100–299 have halls, and 63 percent of schools with rolls over 300. A similar (and related) trend is seen in relation to school location: 82 percent of rural schools had no hall, compared with 46 percent of small town schools, and 23 percent of urban schools.

The smallest schools were much less likely than others to have no medical or first aid room (62 percent, and 38 percent of those with rolls of 35–99). Thirty-seven percent of rural schools lacked a medical room.

No integrated schools in the survey had a marae or whare. Half the integrated schools also had no swimming pool, compared with 18 percent of state schools.

Small town school principals were most likely to consider that their swimming pool was of poor quality (46 percent). Twenty-nine percent of decile 1–4 schools had no swimming pool, compared with 14 percent of decile 5–10 schools. This lower proportion does not simply reflect differences in locally raised funds since decentralisation, since such differences existed before the reforms. Swimming pools were not included in government funding for school property prior to 1989.

Seven of the responding schools had a marae or whare. These schools came from those with low Māori enrolment as well as those with high Māori enrolment. None of the school marae/whare were found in the small town schools in the survey, though small towns had a high proportion of high Māori enrolment schools.

Teachers' Perspectives

Teachers' perspectives on the adequacy of their classroom space showed a slight improvement since 1993: 55 percent found their classroom space adequate for the learning needs of their students compared with 47 percent. Given that views of adequacy decreased with class size (from 65 percent of those with classes of less than 20 to 38 percent of those teaching classes of 30 or more), this may reflect the slight drop in average class size since 1993. Twenty-seven percent said there was not enough space in their classroom, perhaps indicating that the solution they saw to inadequacies in their classroom space was to reduce class size rather than the major alterations or replacement mentioned by another 5 percent. Seventeen percent of the teachers responding thought only minor work would be needed to bring their classroom up to scratch. Six percent thought that some additional improvements might be needed to provide for national curriculum changes. Teachers of form 1 and 2 students—who also had the largest classes—were most likely to report that their classroom did not have enough space to meet the learning needs of their students (46 percent).

Forty-eight percent of the teachers thought their classroom furniture was adequate; most of those who did not, thought only minor repairs or upgrading were needed (35 percent). Sixteen percent thought that their classroom furniture would need major repairs or upgrading to make it adequate for their students' needs. Teachers in decile 9–10 schools were most likely to rate their classroom furniture as adequate (61 percent), and least likely to think it needed major repairs or upgrading (6 percent). A similar trend was evident for low Māori enrolment schools compared with others. Teachers in schools with rolls over 200 were more likely to identify the need to make major repairs or upgrade their classroom furniture. New entrant teachers were least likely to feel their furniture needed major repairs or upgrading.

All but 3 percent of the schools in the survey had libraries. Sixty-four percent of the teachers found their school library met their children's needs, but 15 percent said there were not enough resources at their class level, 20 percent thought that the school did not have sufficient librarian time, 19 percent noted insufficient space for children to use the library, and 4 percent

noted inadequate or difficult access, including hours when the library was open. Teachers in bulk-funded schools were 3 times as likely as others to report that their library did not have enough resources at their class's level.

Teachers in decile 9–10 schools were less likely than others to find that their school library did not have sufficient resources for their class (9 percent, compared with 22 percent of decile 1–2 school teachers).

Sixty-five percent of the teachers responding thought that their school's recreational space was adequate—rather fewer than the 86 percent in 1989, or the 80 percent in 1993.
Twenty percent of the teachers thought that their school's recreational space could be improved, and 11 percent (compared with 4 percent in 1993) judged it inadequate. The proportion of those who thought their school's recreational space could be improved decreased in relation to the school's decile (from 29 percent of those in decile 1–2 schools to 14 percent of those in decile 9–10 schools), but showed the reverse trend for judgments of inadequacy (from 5 percent of decile 1–2 schools to 19 percent of those in decile 9–10 schools). A similar trend was evident in relation to proportion of Māori enrolment: teachers in low Māori enrolment schools were more critical of the adequacy of their school's recreational space, and fewer thought that their recreational space could be improved. Most rural teachers thought their school's recreational space was adequate (82 percent).

The more students a school had, the less likely were its teachers to rate its recreational space as adequate.

Space for Community Consultation and Private Interviews

Schools are supposed to consult with their communities in revising their charters and policies. Only 54 percent of the principals thought their school had adequate space for community consultation—much the same as in 1993. Only 40 percent had adequate space to hold private discussions between school staff and parents and trustees: again, a proportion which is little different from 3 years previously.

Integrated school principals were more likely than state school principals to find that they did not have adequate space (80 percent compared with 44 percent).

Most principals at the smallest schools (81 percent) thought they had such space (presumably using a classroom, since few of these schools had a hall), compared with 50 percent of other principals. Once the school roll increases past 35 students, a single classroom can presumably no longer double as a hall.

Vandalism

Many schools continue to put effort into making them more secure, and into improving their appearance to discourage vandalism. Some government funding for security systems has also been given to high-risk schools. The overall incidence of vandalism in schools shows a reduction in major damage (from 4 percent in 1993 to 2 percent in 1996), but an increase in graffiti and tagging (up from 6 percent to 28 percent). Otherwise the pattern remains unchanged: most schools experience some vandalism. Twenty-one percent of the principals reported that no vandalism had occurred at the school in the year to date. Fifty-two percent of schools had suffered minor damage, 35 percent broken windows, and 4 percent, fire.

No vandalism had occurred at 41 percent of the rural schools, and at 57 percent of the

smallest schools. The occurrence of vandalism was much the same for schools with 100 students on their roll as for schools with more than 300 students. The largest schools were more likely however to suffer graffiti or tagging, and break-ins.

Graffiti or tagging was most common in decile 1–2 schools (52 percent compared with 21 percent of decile 9–10 schools). These schools also had more break-ins (18 percent). Broken windows were slightly more likely to occur in decile 1–4 schools than others. A similar pattern was evident in relation to the overlapping characteristic of the proportion of Māori enrolment in a school.

Materials and Equipment

Schools have been responsible for making their own purchases and deciding their own expenditure for materials and equipment since 1990. The table below shows little variation in the overall picture of the quality of these materials over the 6-year period, with these exceptions: few schools now lack a computer for administrative or classroom purposes, fewer principals feel their books and classroom materials are poor, but there seems to have been some slippage in the quality of arts and crafts equipment and materials, and audio/visual equipment.

Table 2

Adequacy of Schools' Equipment and Materials—Principals' Views

	Very Good %		Adequate %		Poor %		None %	
Type of Equipment	1990 (n=207)	1996 (n=181)	1990 (n=207)	1996 (n=181)	1990 (n=207)	1996 (n=181)	1990 (n=207)	1996 (n=181)
Art and crafts material and equipment	31	21	65	70	4	8	0	0
Audio/visual equipment	27	14	60	68	13	17	0	0
Science materials	10	3	65	58	23	17	0	0
Computers for administration	28	30	17	55	2	8	52	7
Books and classroom material	18	20	70	55	11	4	-	-
Computers for classroom	23	28	36	39	28	17	10	0

Some updating to meet the needs of the new curricula was also identified: for books and classroom materials (33 percent), for science materials (25 percent), and for computers for classroom use (22 percent).

Some differences related to the socioeconomic area served by the school were noticeable in 1991, but were largely gone in 1993. In 1996, only 2 differences were apparent. Decile 1–2 schools were more likely than others to have poor art and craft material, and musical instruments.

Most of the schools without computers used for administrative work were rural schools; rural schools also had the lowest proportion of computers of very good quality for this work.

The smallest schools were most likely to have poor science equipment and materials, but most likely to have very good quality computers for classroom use.

Integrated schools were more likely than others to have poor quality arts and craft resources (30 percent).

New Technology

In 1996, Telecom provided all schools with the opportunity for a free second telephone line, though schools pay the usual charges for their actual use of the lines. This was to encourage the greater use of information technology, including the internet. Most schools signed up for the "learning lines'. The table below shows an impressive leap since 1993 in the proportion of primary schools using faxes or electronic mail (e-mail) and able to access the Internet. Yet not all schools appear to be using their second line in these ways.

Table 3

New Technology in Primary Schools

Technology	1993 % (n=191)	1996 % (n=181)
Computer(s)	94	98
Fax	48	98
CD-ROM material	8	76
Electronic security system	40	43
Internet access	0	41
Updated phone system	43	41
E-mail	7	33

Rural schools were less likely to have electronic security systems (26 percent), or to have updated their phone systems (25 percent). The latter may reflect the fact that a number of rural areas are still served by lines which will not allow updating. CD-ROMs were less common in the smallest schools. Schools with rolls of over 200 were twice as likely as those with smaller rolls to have updated their phone systems. The occurrence of electronic security systems was also related to school size: schools with rolls of over 200 were twice as likely to have these as schools with rolls of 35–199, and 6 times as likely to have them as the smallest schools.

Only 10 percent of the integrated schools in the survey had Internet access, and only 20 percent used e-mail. They were also less likely to have updated phone systems (10 percent).

In the Classroom

There has been a gradual decline in the proportion of teachers who consider that they have enough resources for their programmes, from 50 percent in 1989, to 41 percent in 1996. The next table shows the types of resources where gaps exist. Not surprisingly, areas where curricula have been recently revised are to the fore—technology and mathematics. Gaps in science, another such curriculum area, were strongest in 1993. As more emphasis is put on the use of computers, so the need for them is more apparent. The gradual widening of gaps for audio/visual equipment and art equipment is interesting, and may signal other budget priorities (for example, to meet the needs of the revised curricula). The pattern for Māori education and language resources is the most uneven. The improvement since 1993 may reflect the Ministry of Education's recent emphasis on the development of curriculum materials in Māori.

Table 4

Teachers' Views of the Inadequacy of Teaching Materials

Resource	1990 % (n=211)	1991 % (n=202)	1993 % (n=189)	1996 % (n=197)
Computers	28	27	32	35
Technology	–	–	27	32
Mathematics	26	26	32	30
Audio/visual equipment	21	19	26	29
Reading books	24	22	25	23
Tapes/videos/records	21	16	21	21
Science materials	19	19	24	20
Art equipment and materials	16	13	15	19
Musical instruments	18	19	17	17
Physical education/sports	12	14	14	17
Social/cultural studies	17	13	15	15
Library/reference material	18	15	15	14
Resources for Māori education/language	23	12	21	11
NZ Curriculum Framework	–	–	14	9

Teachers with classes of fewer than 20 students were more likely to judge their resources adequate (50 percent).

Teachers in the smallest schools were less likely to report gaps in these areas: mathematics, reading books, computers, audio/visual equipment, and English as a second language.

More rural teachers also found their resources were adequate for their programme, 57 percent compared with 34 percent of urban teachers, and 44 percent of those in small towns. Perhaps they indicate less wear and tear, since rural schools are often smaller; or perhaps they indicate some differences in programme emphasis. Rural teachers were less likely than others to identify gaps in these areas: mathematics, technology, audio/visual materials, tapes/videos/records, art, resources for special needs children, for children whose English was a second language, and classroom stationery.

Over all, teachers in decile 9–10 schools were less likely to find their materials inadequate

than others. On specific items, teachers in decile 1–2 schools were most likely to find their tapes, videos, and recording resources and their Māori language and educational resources inadequate. Teachers in decile 7–10 schools were less likely to find their stationery supplies inadequate (5 percent compared with 14 percent of teachers in decile 1–6 schools).

Summary

Under decentralisation, property management becomes a major preoccupation of school boards. On their own, without additional government funding, they are unable to resolve problems of deferred maintenance, provide space for community consultation or private discussions between staff and trustees or parents, or make major capital additions. The Financial Assistance Scheme may have made it easier for schools to fund additions such as halls, resource rooms, and specialist rooms than to fund classrooms.

The survey data also indicate an increase in the number of schools faced with property problems, a gradual erosion of the quality of teaching resources, and of the quality of some school materials and equipment. This may reflect changes in spending priorities, particularly given the increase in computers and new technology which the data also show. Some differences between schools can be related to their characteristics: particularly the proportion of Māori enrolment, location, size, and socioeconomic decile.

4 FUNDING

Each primary school receives its own operating grant, to allocate itself, so long as it meets the National Administration Guidelines that the allocation reflects the school's priorities as stated in its charter. Schools must also provide the Ministry of Education with audited accounts no later than 90 days after the end of the financial year. Around 10 percent of primary schools have opted for the direct resourcing ("bulk funding") formula, which includes teaching salaries in the operational grant. Most school boards have chosen to keep teaching salaries out of their operational grant, with teaching salaries paid by the government.

The original operational grant combined historic costs for items which varied according to the location and structure of the school, such as electricity, with uniform per-capita funding for other areas. The emphasis on per-capita funding is a marked feature of decentralisation. Since 1990, when schools first took responsibility for their operational grants, additional items have been added, sometimes without increases in actual funding to cover the increased costs for schools. Support staff, who are often employed on a temporary and part time basis, are also paid out of operational grants. When a salary increase of 3 percent was negotiated for support staff at the end of 1996, many boards found it difficult to meet the increased costs, and the NZ School Trustees Association (NZSTA) called for increases in the operational grant (*Eduvac*, 7 April 1997, p. 2).

Some discretionary funding was maintained in its original form during the transition to school self-management. Targeted and special purpose funding pools were established which schools needed to apply for. These have gradually shifted away from being dependent on successful application to formulas based on the socioeconomic profile of the school, its location, roll numbers, individual students needing particular assistance (for example, those whose English is not a first language), or the degree of Māori language used in a programme.

Previous NZCER surveys showed that schools augmented their government funding by increasing their fundraising efforts and, often, the—legally voluntary—school fees asked of parents. They also showed that principals and trustees grew more likely to judge their government funding inadequate as time went by. The Ministry of Education's briefing papers to the incoming government in 1996 estimated a loss of 10 percent in schools' purchasing powers over the 1989 period to 1995, using increases in the general consumer price index (CPI). The 1996 budget increased operational funding, and the 1997 budget made further improvements. However, a recent analysis of government funding for schools concluded that while the operations grant increased by 7.8 percent between 1990 and 1997, the CPI index increased by 14.5 percent over the same period, giving a real loss of 6.75 percent (ESRA, 1997).

The Ministry's figures also show an increase of 54.5 percent in the funds raised by primary schools themselves over the 4 years 1992–95, from $60.11 million to $93.44 million, and a decline in the proportion of government funding as a proportion of their total income. Since school work has also risen over the same period, what does this mean for per-capita funding?

Analysing the data on primary schools' financial performance given in the last 2 School Sector Reports (Minister of Education, 1996, p. 36; Minister of Education, 1997, p. 43) in terms of student numbers, indicates a rise in government spending over the period 1992–95 of 1.5 percent per student, while local fundraising rose by 46 percent per student. The inflation increase over the same period as measured by the CPI was 7.3 percent, indicating that

government spending per student fell in real terms over this period.

Administration costs per student rose 48 percent over the same period, learning resources spending rose by only 0.15 percent, while the cost of local fundraising rose 3 percent and depreciation rose 47 percent (reflecting government spending on deferred maintenance as well as schools' equipment purchases, including computers). Property management costs declined by 6 percent per student.

The 1996 school sector report to Parliament shows that while the proportion of primary schools ending the financial year in deficit declined from 35 percent in 1993 to 26 percent in 1995, 60 percent of primary schools were in deficit for at least one of the 3 years from 1993–95 (Minister of Education, 1997, p. 47). The proportion with a working capital deficit rose from 3 to 6 percent over the same period. The report warns that:

> The increasing number of schools with working capital deficits gives rise to concern that some schools are combatting operating deficits by exhausting their reserves and committing future income. Others may be investing prematurely in assets.
> (Ministry of Education, 1996, p. 46).

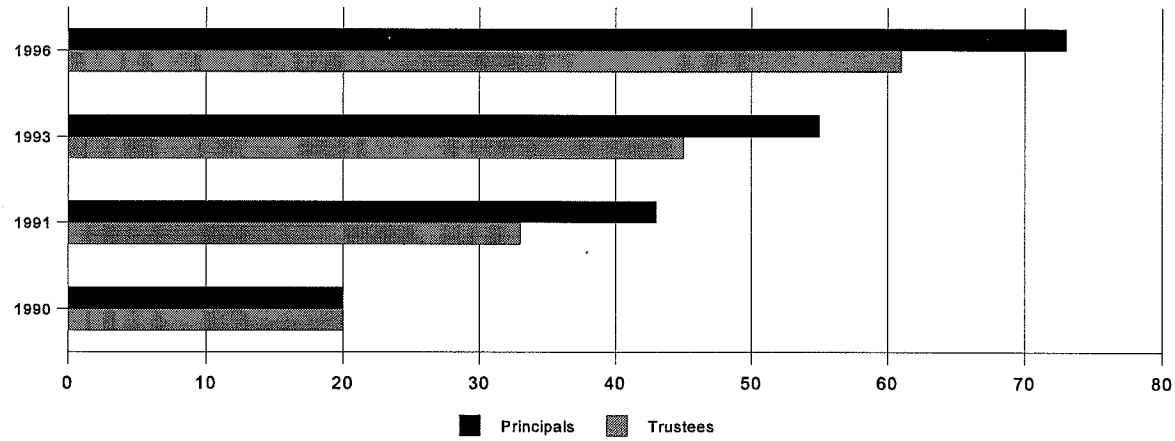
Government Funding

Is It Enough?

School views of the adequacy of government funding for schools show growing dissatisfaction since 1990, the first year of schools having responsibility for their own spending. Principals were more inclined to find their school's government funding inadequate than trustees, perhaps because trustees were less certain of the basis of their school's funding.

Figure 1

Proportion of Principals and Trustees Who Find Their Government Funding Inadequate



In 1993, principals of the smallest schools expressed the most satisfaction with their level of government funding. This was still the case in 1996 (48 percent). The schools showing least satisfaction had rolls of 200–299.

Rural school trustees were more satisfied with their funding than others (33 percent thought it was adequate compared with 18 percent of urban trustees, and 14 percent of trustees from small town schools).

Both rural schools and the smallest schools continue to receive higher levels of funding per capita than do other schools.

Judgments of the adequacy of school funding were linked to different experiences of demands on school funds, and different patterns of community and parental support.

Trustees who described their school's funding as *inadequate* were more likely to:

- find their government-funded staffing also inadequate;
- face more problems with their school's property maintenance—particularly with deferred maintenance—and getting money from the Ministry of Education to tackle their property problems;
- have more problems making staff appointments;
- have more problems with financial management; and
- describe their board as coping or struggling.

Principals of schools who felt their government funding was *adequate* were more likely to:

- be rural schools (29 percent compared with 9 percent of urban schools);
- find their support staffing adequate (75 percent compared with 29 percent of those who found their government funding inadequate);
- make no cutbacks in spending compared with the previous year (47 percent compared with 22 percent of those who found their government funding inadequate);
- predict a surplus funding situation at the end of 1996 (38 percent compared with 11 percent of those who found their government funding inadequate; 29 percent of the latter also predicted they would end the year in deficit compared with 3 percent of the former);
- apply for funding from the rural proposals pool (25 percent compared with 9 percent of those who found their government funding inadequate); though they were also less likely to apply for additional funding (31 percent made no applications compared with 14 percent of those who found their government funding inadequate);
- find the additional government funding they received adequate for the school's needs (25 percent compared with 11 percent of those who found their government funding inadequate);
- find the level of parental classroom assistance and policy development satisfactory (91 percent compared with 70 percent, and 88 percent and 60 percent respectively);

and they were less likely to:

- receive TFEA[4] funding (22 percent compared with 40 percent of principals who found their school's government funding inadequate);
- have increased their school fee in 1996 (14 percent compared with 36 percent);
- increase their fundraising effort in 1996 (13 percent compared with 47 percent of those who found their government funding inadequate);
- have a school development plan; and
- report vandalism (38 percent reported none, compared with 17 percent of those who found their government funding inadequate).

What these associations show too is that schools which find their government funding inadequate are not without planning frameworks. They do attempt to raise additional funds locally, but, as we shall explore in more detail in chapter 16, find themselves constrained by the nature of their local community.

The Use of Supplementary Ministry of Education Funding

In 1996, additional government funding was available in a number of different funding pools, most of which required application. In 1997, more of this additional funding is linked to roll data, decided by formula rather than application, and included in the operational grant. This may have been done to encourage schools to see the operational grant as their main source of funding, and to give them more flexibility, but in fact the accountability requirements of most pools were light, and only for Māori language funding is there any record of schools having to furnish evidence that the funding was used for the purpose given, or having to return money not spent on that purpose.[5]

Only 18 percent of the principals reported that they had not applied for any additional Ministry funding—much the same as in 1993.

The larger the school, the more applications it made for extra funding. The largest schools were most likely to apply for ESOL funding (63 percent). The larger the school, too, the less likely it was that this additional funding was thought adequate in relation to the school's needs.

Most principals who applied for additional funding in 4 of the 5 pools gained some money. However, only 17 percent of the principals thought this additional funding met their school's needs; another 20 percent thought it met the school's needs in some areas only. These figures are lower than in 1993, when 27 percent of the principals found the funding adequate, and 36

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4 Targeted Funding for Educational Achievement—equity funding related to school decile ranking and other indications of disadvantage (*see* p. 28).

5 The accuracy of the roll returns of a sample of schools is checked annually, and operating grants adjusted accordingly. Of the 1994 returns, 30 percent had overcounted students by an average of 2.6 students, and 6 percent had undercounted by an average of 2 students per school. Of the 1995 returns, 49 percent had overcounted students by an average of 4 students per school, and 6 percent had undercounted by an average of 2.7 students. Roll returns for 1996 show 41 percent overcounting by an average of 2.65 students, and 2 percent undercounting by an average of 1.3 students (*Education Gazette,* 74(1), p. 6, 75(1), p. 3, and 76(1), p. 3.) Thus it would seem that while around 40 percent of schools get their rolls wrong, they do so by very few students. Student mobility may account for some of the difference also. Only one case of a principal inflating roll numbers by a sizable amount has been taken to court.

percent found it adequate for some areas only.

Urban and small town principals were more likely to find the additional funding did not meet their school's needs (44 percent and 36 percent, compared with 23 percent of rural schools). Those who found their government funding inadequate were also more likely to find their school's needs were still not met (42 percent compared with 6 percent of those who found their government funding adequate).

Special Education Discretionary Assistance

In 1996, schools could apply twice yearly to their district Ministry of Education office for funding for teacher support, teacher-aide support, and equipment for students with special needs. Applications were assessed by the then Specialist Education Services (SES), and allocations prioritised by a representative district panel. Sixty-one percent of the schools applied for this grant, with an 85 percent success rate. However, chapter 10 shows that there was increasing difficulty accessing SES assessment as well as support. The Ministry of Education notes an increase in the number of special needs students, increased pressure on special education resources, and considerable variation in the resources available to students at different schools, reflecting historical differences. The government's review of special education, "Special Education 2000", is designed to improve this situation.

Financial Assistance Scheme

This scheme matches school-raised funds (with a higher percentage, 66.6 percent, for schools receiving TFEA funding) for property projects, with a maximum contribution from the Ministry of Education of $150,000, and for schools receiving TFEA funding, $200,000. The money is allocated by district property consultative committees, which consist of Ministry of Education staff, NZSTA, and teacher and principal organisations. Until 1998, when there will be a major increase to $30 million, the sum available has been $10 million, and applications exceeded the money available.

A third of the survey schools had applied for this for the 1996 year—and only a third of the applications had been successful. Low Māori enrolment schools were less likely than others to apply for this funding (22 percent, compared with 41 percent of high Māori enrolment schools). This may suggest that it is the higher proportion of government funding available to high Māori enrolment schools that makes the scheme more attractive to them.

ESOL Support

This provides support for students whose first language is not English. Applications are made to local Ministry of Education offices. Twenty-eight percent of the schools applied for this funding, with a 94 percent success rate. Most of the schools getting this funding were in urban areas.

Māori Language Resourcing

Until 1996, additional funding was available to schools in relation to their proportion of Māori students. Māori language resourcing replaced this scheme, funding only Māori students in Māori language programmes. Funding was capped at $8.6 million, until 1996, when it increased to $13.871 million, with further increases of 7 percent in the 1997–98 year, and 11 percent the following year. The increase in funding is targeted at higher level immersion programmes. Applications were followed by verification visits at a sample of schools to assess the level of the programme, and the ability of the classroom teacher to deliver the curriculum at the level of immersion applied for. From 1997, this funding pool will be triggered by roll data, but the verification process will continue.

Twenty-seven percent of the schools participating in the 1996 survey made applications for this funding pool, with a success rate of 88 percent. Almost all the schools receiving this funding had more than 15 percent Māori enrolment. Small town schools were most likely to get this funding (46 percent compared with 24 percent of urban schools, and 14 percent of rural schools). This reflects the fact that 46 percent of small town schools also have high Māori enrolment.

Innovative Approaches to Curriculum Delivery for Rural Schools

This pool was available to primary rural schools with a roll of less than 160 who wanted to embark on an innovative approach to curriculum delivery. Examples given included using distance education, educational technology, and itinerant subject-specialists. It was also open to isolated schools which were not trying new methods of curriculum delivery. As from 1997, this pool has been subsumed with the grants for remoteness and small isolated school status into a single grant: the targeted rural schools grant. Schools need to apply to be recognised as a targeted rural school. Transition funding is available for schools which had embarked on 3-year projects under the innovation scheme.

Twelve percent of the responding schools applied for this funding, with an 81 percent success rate. Nineteen percent of the rural schools responding received funding from the rural proposals pool.

Schools receiving rural proposal funding were less likely than others to receive funding from the other special funding pools.

TFEA Funding

Targeted funding in relation to the socioeconomic and ethnic profile of the school's population was initially available on application to 2 pools. These were replaced in 1994 with the Targeted Funding for Educational Achievement (TFEA) fund available to schools fitting certain criteria, and triggered by roll-based data. This did not increase the money available but reallocated it using a socioeconomic indicator of the school's population generated by census data using income, qualifications, household crowding, occupation, income support, and Māori and Pacific Island ethnicity, and giving these factors equal weight. Initially, only schools with 1-3 decile ranking received this money (with 3 funding steps in each decile). In 1995, this was extended to decile 4 schools (with lower funding steps). From 1997, decile 5-9 schools were added, with additional funding. The per student rates in 1997 ranged from $270 per student for

the lowest decile 1 step, to $10.50 for students in decile 9 schools.

Only 7 percent of the high Māori enrolment schools responding had not received any TFEA funding in 1996, compared with 42 percent of other schools. Forty-one percent of schools whose government funding was thought to be inadequate received TFEA funding, around twice as many as the 22 percent whose government funding was thought to be adequate.

School size played no part in whether or not a school received this funding. The smaller schools were less likely to use it to employ teachers or offer new learning programmes, probably because the per-student amounts in schools with small rolls would not amount to sufficient extra funding. Otherwise, there has been quite an increase since 1993 in the use of the TFEA to employ teachers and support staff, to offer new programmes, and for staff development and the purchase of curriculum resources.

Table 5

Schools' Use of Equity/TFEA Grants

Use	1993 % (n=68)	1996 % (n=65)
Employ support staff	44	57
Purchase curriculum resources	40	52
Supplement existing learning programme	40	46
Employ teacher(s)	29	44
Offer a new learning programme	13	25
Out of school visits	31	20
Staff development	10	18
Visitors to school	10	8
Taskforce green teacher employed	4	6
Subsidise student costs[n]	-	2

n=new question in 1996 survey.

Local Fundraising

The next table shows the trend for increased school fundraising which resulted in an increase at the national level in locally raised funds of 55 percent from 1992–95. It shows three times as many schools earning more than $15,501 in 1996 as in 1989. It should be borne in mind that the actual profit from these endeavours is around 63 percent of the amount raised and that over the 1989–95 period, the CPI increased by 15.13 percent.[6]

[6] Using the December series figures.

Table 6

Total Amount of Locally Raised Funds

Amount	1989 % (n=174)	1991 % (n=186)	1993 % (n=191)	1996 % (n=181)
$2000 or less	20	13	11	6
$2001 – $4500	21	16	19	18
$4501 – $6500	20	16	10	10
$6501 – $12000	21	27	29	26
$12001 – $15500	9	7	7	9
$15501+	10	19	20	28

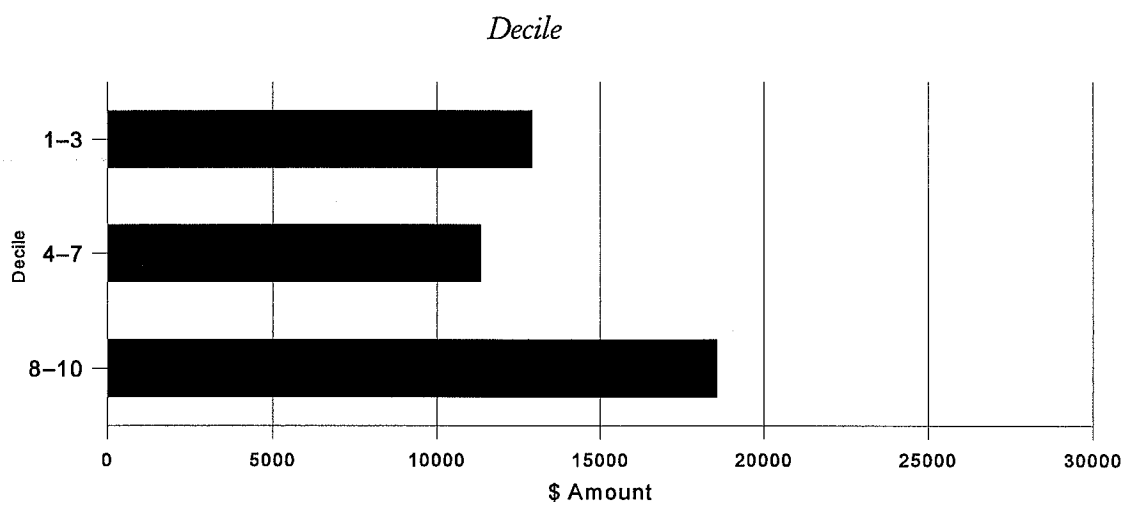
Note: the figures are not inflation adjusted.

There is some reasonable consistency between survey years in the amounts raised by schools, though it is rare for this consistency to be maintained in the highest bracket of money raised. An inter-year comparison of responses for the same school showed that of the 35 schools which raised less than $6,500 in 1995, 19 had raised similar sums of money in both 1992 and 1993, 15 had raised up to $15,500 in one of the 2 previous years, and only one more than that. Of the 6 schools that raised more than $50,000 in 1995, only one consistently raised that much in previous survey years; the others however had all raised at least $15,500.

An estimate[7] of the total amounts raised by different kinds of schools shows that school fundraising amounts are related to several school characteristics at the same time. Thus the impact of differences in community resources, for example, the socioeconomic composition of the school, can be mitigated by the size of the school.

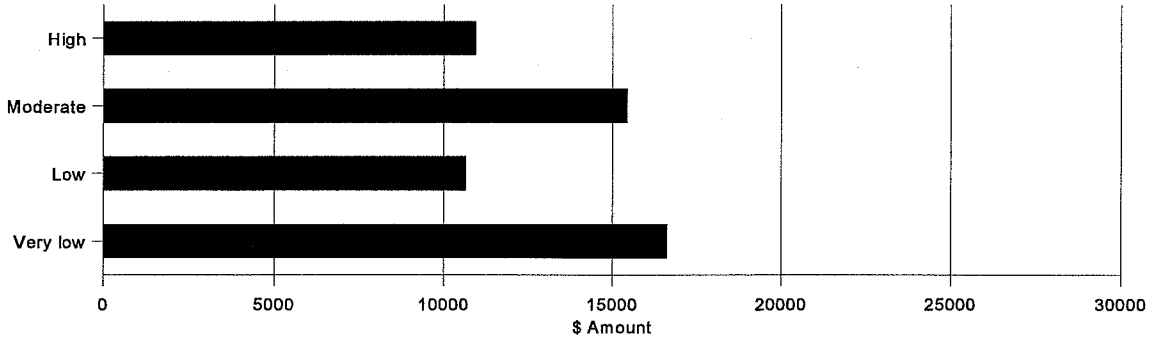
Figure 2

Comparison of School Characteristics and Local Fundraising Amounts

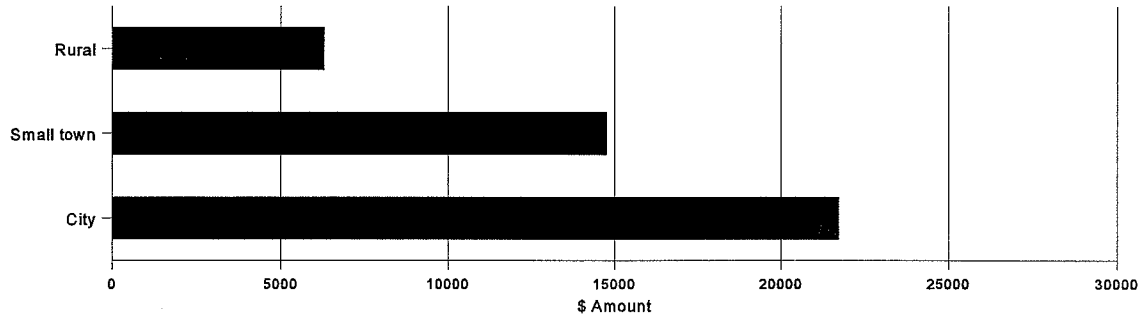


[7] This was done by taking the mid-point of each bracket used in the questionnaire, and taking sums of $50,000 or more at a conservative $60,000.

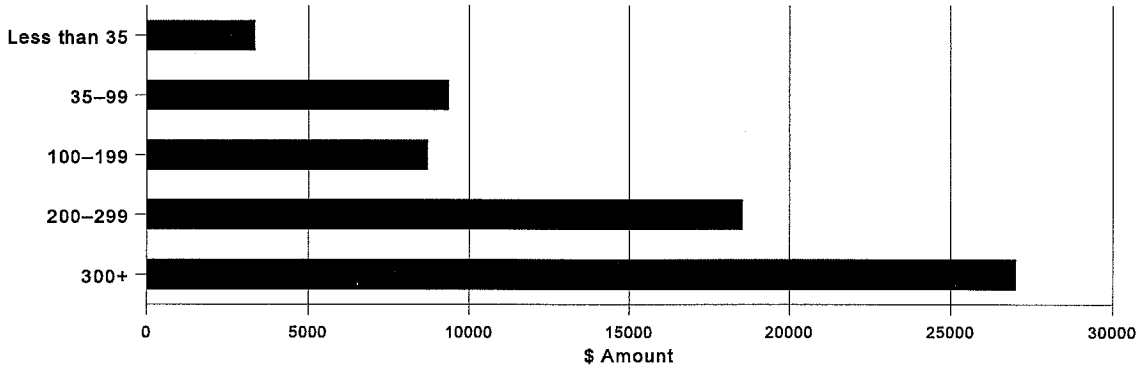
Figure 2 *(cont'd)*
Māori Enrolment



Location



Roll Size



Principals of low Māori enrolment schools were more satisfied than others with the level of parental support for fundraising. Parental information from our survey indicated that parental estimates of their total spending on their child's education (which could include fees, costs for extracurricular activities, transport as well as direct contributions to fundraising) was related to the socioeconomic decile of the child's school: $304 for children attending decile 1–3 schools, $379 for those attending decile 4–7 schools, and $581 for those attending decile 8–10 schools.

Decentralisation with school responsibility for funds and their allocation, occurring at a period when government funding is not covering all costs schools believe it should, clearly entails more fundraising activity by school communities and their staffs. Forty-seven percent of those who found their government funding inadequate increased their fundraising effort, about 4 times as many as the 13 percent who found their government funding adequate. This is another sign that schools are no longer relying solely on government to meet their needs. However, not all schools are equally affected by the need to find more funding.

School Fees/Donations

New Zealand education remains legally free of all charges. Most schools do request voluntary fees or donations, and can also levy activity fees. All integrated schools charge fees, usually called attendance dues, because their proprietors bear the burden of capital costs, not the government. Twenty-one percent of the schools did not charge a fee. A third of the principals who thought their government funding was adequate did not have set school fees, twice as many as the 15 percent of principals who thought their government funding was inadequate.

Only 23 percent of the schools were able to collect their school fee from almost all, or all, their students' families. Eight percent of the schools were unable to collect the fee from more than half their parents. Sixteen percent could collect donations from 80 to 90 percent of their students, and 27 percent from 50 to 80 percent of their students.

This picture of schools' actual ability to raise funds from their parents through the nominal parental fee has remained consistent since 1989. This raises some interesting questions. Does it mean that local school management does not in and of itself foster feelings of "ownership" in parents? Or does it mean that it is the increase in school fees rather than local school management per se (though the increase can be seen as due to decentralisation) which is the relevant explanatory factor in this proportion of unpaid donations? Or does it indicate that parents still believe that education of their children is part of the government's undertaking to its citizens?

Schools with rolls of under 100 had more success in collecting all the fees due than others. But they were also less likely to have raised their fees in 1996—and most likely to have no school fee (62 percent of the smallest schools, 33 percent of those with rolls of 35-99, 20 percent of those with rolls of 100–199, and none of the schools with rolls of 200 or more). The larger the school, the more likely it was for the principal to report that at least 30 percent of the locally raised funds came from school fees (compared with none of the schools with rolls of less than 35, rising to 37 percent of the schools with rolls over 300).

Rural schools were less likely to use school fees as a major source of their local income (only 10 percent of rural principals reported that it comprised 30 percent or more of their local income, compared with 36 percent of urban principals and 27 percent of small town principals). Conversely, 53 percent of rural principals reported that over half their local income came from fundraising, compared with 31 percent each of urban and small town principals. Thirty-six percent of the rural schools in the survey had no parental fee/donation. Perhaps this indicates that fundraising activity has a preferred value in rural communities, as a way of providing and maintaining community contact.

Low Māori enrolment schools were marginally more likely to have no school fee either (29 percent compared with 16 percent of other schools).

High Māori enrolment schools had a harder job than other schools in this respect: only 11

percent received their school fee from all or up to 90 percent of their students, compared with 29 percent of other schools.

Decile 9–10 schools had the easiest job when it came to collecting student fees: 40 percent got it from all or up to 90 percent of their students, and another 21 percent from 80-90 percent. Ease in collection was linked with the proportion of funds raised through this method. Thirty percent of the decile 1–3 schools raised less than 20 percent of their local funds through parental fees/donations, compared with 25 percent of decile 4–7 schools, and 9 percent of decile 8–10 schools.

The average proportion of funds raised[8] from school fees was 27 percent, much the same as in 1993, and 1991.

A quarter of the schools said they had increased their school fee in 1996, up from 15 percent in 1993, but comparable to the 28 percent in 1990. This indicates that schools prefer not to continually raise school fees every year.

Direct fundraising provided a larger proportion of school funds, an average of 55 percent (up from 46 percent in 1993, but much the same as the 58 percent in 1991). Direct fundraising incurs its own financial costs: around 37 percent for 1993–95 (Minister for Education 1997, p. 43). We have no information about the voluntary time which is needed for school fundraising. It is clear that voluntary time has become essential, but that it is often insufficient to meet schools' needs. Sixty-four percent of the trustees identified this as the main area where they would like more parental help—a threefold increase since 1993.

Investments, including interest the school earned on its advance Ministry funding, contributed an average of 18 percent to school budgets, much the same as the 19 percent in 1993, and less than the 28 percent in 1991. Donations, grants, and sponsorships from organisations or business also held steady between 1993 (18 percent) and 1996 (also 18 percent). Hireage of facilities was 11 percent in both 1996 and 1993. Hireage of school facilities was least likely in the smallest schools, and in rural schools. Four schools asked for subject fees, and 6 schools had foreign fee-paying students. Schools with foreign fee-paying students were all decile 8–10 schools, with very low or low Māori enrolment.

Parents' Estimates of the Money Spent on Their Children's Education

As schools have worked harder to make money, so the calls on parents have increased—quite dramatically. Parental estimates of their spending on their children's education (including transport and school trips) gave averages of $187 in 1991, $304 in 1993, and $491 in 1996: an increase of 163 percent over 5 years. The increase in the consumer price index over the same period was 11.5 percent.

Parents in professional occupations were spending an average of $647 a year, compared with $431 for those in skilled and semiskilled work, $450 for those in unskilled work, and $377 for those whose parents were receiving state benefits.

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[8] Information on this was gained by asking principals to give the approximate proportion of their total locally raised funds. Thus the averages if totalled add to more than 100 percent. The answers here are approximate only, but comparison of the answers to the same question in the previous NZCER surveys does enable us to gain some idea of the trends in local fundraising.

Thirty-nine percent of the parents were also putting some money aside for their child's future education. This is much the same proportion as in 1993. As then, lack of money or a low income was the main reason why parents did not put money aside.

Budget Allocation

As with principals' estimates of the contribution of different sources to their school fundraising, the survey material on how schools allocate their budgets gives only a rough approximation. The main value of this material lies in the comparison it allows with responses to the same question in earlier surveys. Comparison of budget allocation across the surveys indicates more consistency in some areas than others. The average proportion of the budget given to administration in 1996 was 16 percent (21 percent in 1993, 16 percent in 1991); for property and maintenance, 14 percent (19 percent in 1993, 15 percent in 1991); for cleaning and caretaking, 10 percent (down from the 18 percent in 1993 and the 19 percent in 1991), for classroom materials, 12 percent (16 percent in both 1993 and 1991), for staff/school development, 5 percent (8 percent in 1993, 5 percent in 1991), for teacher aides, also 5 percent (8 percent in 1993, 9 percent in 1991), and for aides for children with special needs, 4 percent (6 percent in 1993, 5 percent in 1991).

Spending More, and Less

We asked principals to tell us about the changes in their school expenditure between 1995 and 1996. Increases in spending were more frequent than decreases. The survey did not ask for reasons for the increases, so it is not clear whether the increases reflect the availability of more money related to growth in rolls, the reallocation of funds to meet new priorities, or increases in costs. The average number of areas where increases were made was 4.

Table 7

School Expenditure—Increases

Proportion of Schools → Area↓	1990 % (n=207)	1991 % (n=186)	1993 % (n=191)	1996 % (n=181)
Property and maintenance	22	30	52	48
Classroom resources	36	35	50	47
Administration	24	24	49	42
Staff/school development	29	30	49	41
Rates/energy charges	–	–	37	40
Support staff	17	19	45	38
Insurance/security	–	–	57	35
Special needs	18	13	32	35
Implementation of new school policies	11	10	23	30
Relieving teachers[n]	–	–	–	29
Trustees' training/advice	11	3	17	14
Māori language[n]	–	–	–	14

n=new question in 1996 survey.

The smallest schools were least likely to have increased expenditure in the areas covered. The largest schools were more likely than others to have increased expenditure on administration, property and maintenance, staff/school development, support staff, relieving teachers, and

rates and energy charges. Given the overlap between the characteristics of school size and location, it is not surprising that a similar, but not identical, pattern—in reverse—emerges for rural schools. They were least likely to have increased their spending on administration, children with special needs, staff/school development, support staff, relieving teachers, insurance/security, and rates and energy charges.

There was only one expenditure area where the proportion of Māori enrolment appeared to make a difference to patterns of increased spending—the provision of Māori language materials (rising from 4 percent of low Māori enrolment schools spending more on these in 1996 than 1995 to 35 percent of high Māori enrolment schools).

The lower the school decile, the more likely it was to have spent more money on Māori language materials (from 33 percent of decile 1–2 schools to 4 percent of decile 9–10 schools). This fits with the pattern of schools receiving Māori language funding (46 percent of decile 1–4 schools, 30 percent of decile 5–6 schools, and 2 percent of decile 7–10 schools.

Schools were less likely to cut spending, perhaps indicating that their spending is as low as it can be, with little room for further cuts. Sixteen percent of the schools had not made any decreases in their expenditure, and the average number of areas where cutbacks were made was one.

Table 8

School Expenditure—Reductions

Proportion of Schools → Area ↓	1990 % (n=207)	1991 % (n=186)	1993 % (n=191)	1996 % (n=181)
Classroom resources	13	26	31	21
Administration	14	12	13	14
Staff/school development	12	17	18	14
Trustee' training/advice	8	13	16	13
Property and maintenance	14	28	14	12
Māori language[n]	-	-	-	10
Implementation of new school policies	8	10	13	8
Support staff	12	16	9	7
Special needs	14	15	9	7
Relieving teachers[n]	-	-	-	4
Insurance/security	-	-	3	3
Rates/energy charges	-	-	4	1

n=new question in 1996 survey.

Integrated schools were more likely than state schools to report cutbacks to classroom resources, administration, trustees' training and advice, staff/school development, relieving teachers, and support staff.

School size has no bearing with cutbacks in expenditure made by schools. Nor, despite the higher proportion of integrated schools cutting back some items of expenditure, was there a significant difference between integrated and state schools. Fewer decile 1–2 schools made no reductions in the budget areas asked about than did higher decile schools.

Small town schools made more cutbacks than schools in other locations in all areas other than trustees' training and advice, and Māori language provision.

Board Responses to School Financial Management Issues or Problems

Only 27 percent of the trustees responding said their board had not faced any financial management issues or problems. Boards' main responses to financial problems were to increase fundraising (31 percent), cut back spending across the board (22 percent), or cut back spending in some areas only (22 percent). In addition 16 percent sought outside sponsorship, 8 percent reduced support staff hours, and 3 percent reduced support staff pay or conditions. As far as the school's financial management system was concerned, 23 percent of boards changed their accounting system over the past year, 19 percent sought help or advice from the Ministry of Education, 10 percent from other schools, 9 percent from NZSTA, and 4 percent used temporary help from a private firm.

Balancing the Books

Ministry of Education compilations of school's audited accounts show that 74 percent ended the 1995 year in surplus, up from 65 percent in 1993, and only 6 percent with a large operating deficit (down from 10 percent in 1994 and 1993). Yet they also show some volatility, since only 40 percent of primary schools had no deficit for all 3 years, 33 percent had a deficit for 1 year, 21 percent for 2 years, and 6 percent were in deficit for all 3 years (Minister of Education, 1997, pp. 46–47). The Ministry of Education interprets some of this deficit at least to be due to long-term planning, such as cyclical property maintenance.

To have 60 percent of primary schools in deficit for at least 1 of the 3 years seems rather a large figure. Since the operating grant does not include teacher salaries, the size of the deficits is often not large—most are under $20,000. One wonders how large these deficits would become if teacher salaries were included in operational grants ("bulk funding"), and the trends of 1992–95 were to continue.

Fifty-seven percent of the principals expected the school would balance its books at the end of 1996. Fifteen percent expected to report a surplus, and 22 percent, a deficit (slightly higher than the 15 percent in 1993). Six percent were unsure. Looking a year ahead, 50 percent expected to break even, 11 percent expected to end the 1997 year in surplus, and 20 percent in deficit—up from the 12 percent in 1993. Nineteen percent were unsure, compared with 28 percent in 1993. This may reflect the 3 years' experience of financial management since the 1993 survey.

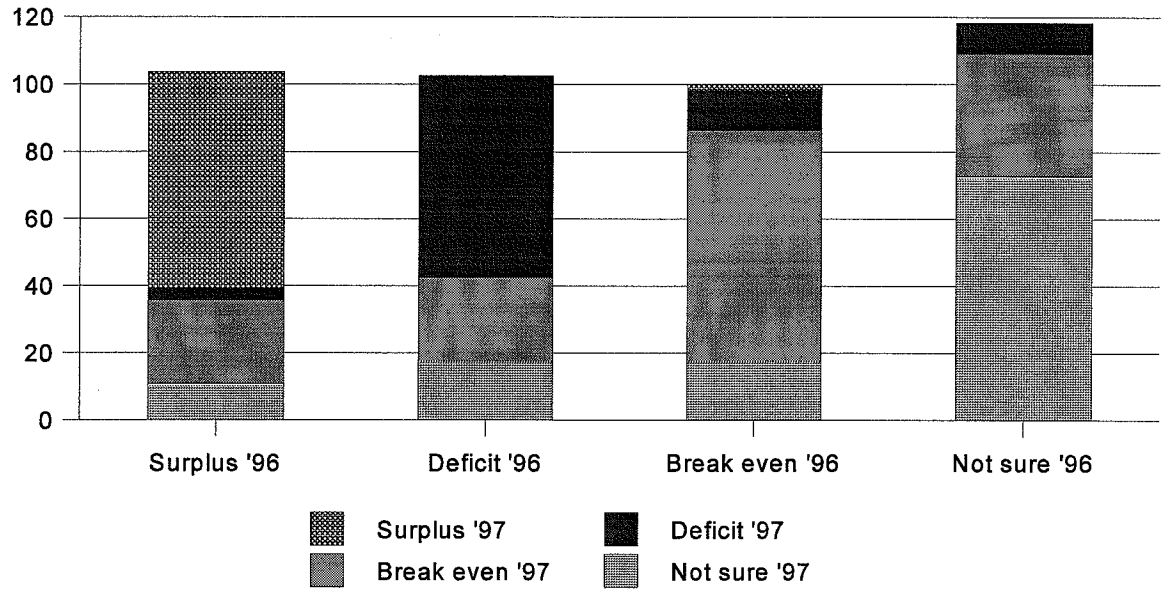
Schools' financial situations do appear to change over time in ways that make it difficult to predict future patterns from previous patterns. We start by looking at the patterns for the 133 schools represented in both the 1993 and 1996 principals' responses: the most consistency was found amongst those who expected to break even in 1993. Sixty-two percent expected to break even again in 1996, and equal numbers expected either a surplus or deficit. Of the 27 schools which looked to be in surplus in 1993, 7 also expected a surplus in 1996, 12 expected to break even, 3 did not know, and 5 expected a deficit. Of the 18 schools expected to end the 1993 year in deficit, 5 were also expected to end the 1996 year in deficit, 3 with a surplus, 9 breaking even, and 1 unsure.

The next figure shows the relationships between schools' expected financial positions in 1996 with their expectations for 1997. Note that continuity for this 2-year period is expected for around two-thirds of the schools. This means that 60 percent of the schools in deficit in

1996 did not see their position changing over the next year. There is a marked difference in the patterns shown in the 1993 survey, where around 30 percent of the schools in deficit in 1993 expected to remain that way in 1994.

Figure 3

Relationship of 1993 School Financial Positions to Expected 1994 Financial Position



There are several questions which arise from the 1996 survey data. It is more recent than the most recently available financial data from the Ministry of Education, and may indicate that the apparent trend to the greater proportion of schools ending their year in surplus (or, as schools would have it, breaking even) has peaked. It may also indicate that cumulative underfunding has made consistent deficits more likely than a few years back. On the other hand, operational funding was increased in 1996, which should have made some difference, unless the amount of increase has been insufficient.

Were there any characteristics distinguishing schools expecting to run a surplus from those looking at a deficit? We found:

- Schools which had lost students since 1989 were twice as likely to expect to end the 1996 year with a deficit as those who had gained students (35 percent compared with 16 percent), and also more likely than those whose roll had remained stable (20 percent). This fits with the fact that some school costs are fixed, and schools with falling rolls, mostly because of population shifts rather than changes in student choice, suffer disproportionately.
- Schools with enrolment schemes were more likely than others to anticipate a surplus (31 percent compared with 11 percent). These schools were most likely to be high decile, with low Māori enrolment. These schools appeared to be in more robust financial health than others.

- Schools where the government funding was thought to be adequate were more likely to be expecting a surplus financial position at the end of the year (38 percent, compared with 11 percent of those who thought their government funding inadequate).
- Schools where the government staffing was thought to be adequate for the school's needs were half as likely as those who thought it was not to anticipate a deficit for 1996 (17 percent compared with 33 percent).
- Schools anticipating a surplus were much more likely to be making no cutbacks in spending (50 percent). The proportions of those breaking even and anticipating a deficit were similar (77 percent and 82 percent respectively). Thus schools were not simply spending their money to the hilt, but, faced with a deficit, were doing their best to contain costs.
- Schools expecting to end the year with a deficit were more likely than others to be spending more on special needs provision, relieving teachers, insurance/security charges, and rates and energy charges.
- Schools looking to a surplus in 1996 were less likely to have made applications for additional government funding (75 percent), compared with the 93 percent of those who were expecting to end the year in deficit. The figure for those who anticipated breaking even were here similar to those anticipating a surplus (80 percent).

Thus a school's financial situation does not appear to be associated simply with its engagement in capital works, or its financial management, but on other characteristics of the school—such as the community it serves, population changes in its area, and also its "popularity".

Analysis of the Ministry of Education financial data for schools with different decile ratings—available for 2 years only, unfortunately—also shows some trends of concern. Low decile schools' property management costs increased more than others and their depreciation costs decreased (Minister of Education, 1996, p. 40; Minister of Education, 1997, p. 46). Both these point to such schools having older materials, which cost more to maintain, and less ability to update equipment. They were also raising less money than other schools, although their costs incurred in raising this money were comparable with other schools, leaving them less net income from their own efforts than other schools.

Summary

Changes in principal and trustee judgments of the adequacy of their government funding signal a steady decline in the adequacy of funding levels since 1990. That these judgments are not based simply on idealistic views of what individual schools should provide their students is borne out by the national financial data available through the annual school sector report to Parliament (required under the 1989 Financial Reform Act). The data in these reports record a decrease in real terms (taking inflation into account) in government funding. It is sobering that administration spending rose substantially over this same period, while spending on learning resources actually declined in real terms. Even though local fundraising was considerably increased over this period, it could not provide sufficient money to hold or increase schools' spending on learning resources.

The survey data show a steep rise in parental expenditure on their child's education since 1991, with marked gaps between parents in professional occupations and other parents.

The patterns relating to deficit (and surplus) financial positions also give rise to concern

about the underlying adequacy of the operating grant, and about what might happen to the size of typical deficits if schools had responsibility for the much larger sums involved in bulk funding of teacher salaries. Already board responses to shortfalls include cutting (support) staff hours and conditions. Schools with declining rolls appear more vulnerable to deficits than others—often the schools serving low income communities, with high Māori enrolment.

The survey data and national data taken together also make it very clear that schools serving low income communities and/or with high Māori enrolment would have even greater resource problems than they currently have if it was not for the extra targeted government funding they receive.

5 STAFFING

The basis of deciding a school's staffing remained unchanged from the start of decentralisation in 1989, until 1996, when new formulas came into place. These arose from the recommendations of the Ministerial Reference Group (a cross-sector group including teacher unions), and are known as the MRG model. The main objectives of the MRG as far as primary and intermediate schools are concerned were to improve the teacher/student ratio in junior classes, give a consistent ratio for all students in years 7–10 (forms 1–4), and in schools of 150–230 students, rather than have the ratio dependent on the type of school, and reduce class sizes in larger primary schools. The policy changes were to give a teacher:student ratio of 1:23 in years 1–3 (new entrants and juniors/standard 1), and 1:29 for years 4–8 (standards and forms 1 and 2), with a maximum average class size (MACS) of 28. Roll figures at each of these levels were used to derive a weighting to calculate management staffing. The new formula resulted in 1000 new positions over all. Most schools benefited, but some schools lost teachers.

Rather ironically, this improved staffing occurred against the background of a substantial rise in the number of children attending primary school, which began in 1994. Schools therefore found difficulty filling their teaching positions, and the Ministry of Education took special measures (starting only in 1996) to produce a rapid increase in teacher supply by recruiting teachers overseas, providing encouragement for former teachers to return to schools, and introducing funding for 1-year teacher training courses for graduates.

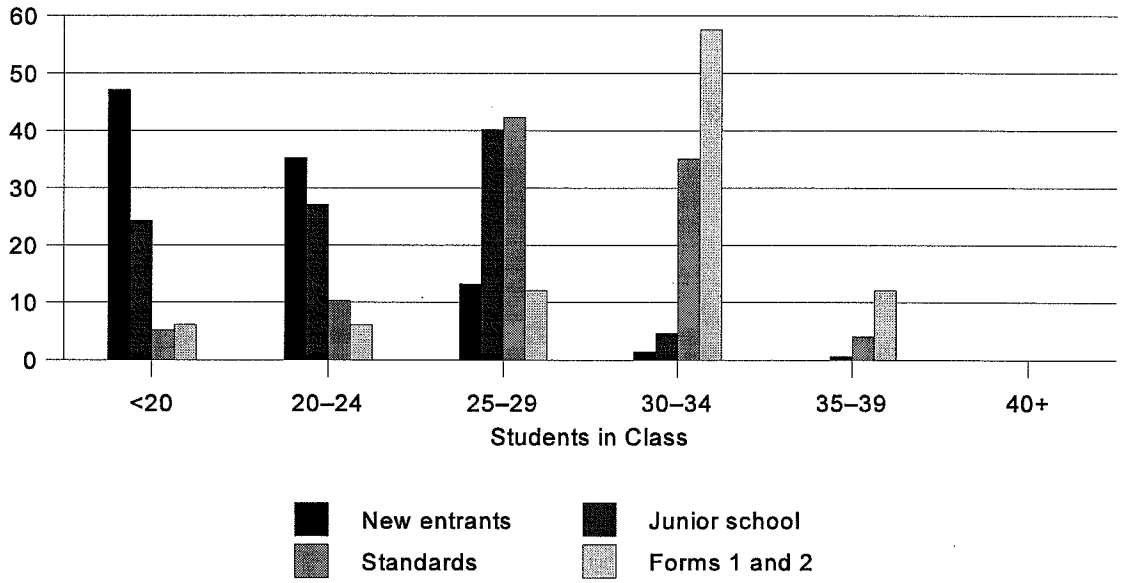
Class Size

Class size has been a source of concern for parents throughout the NZCER surveys. Until this survey, it has also remained reasonably constant. The 1996 survey results show the positive impact of the MRG lowering of the teacher:student ratio, with an easing of class sizes over all, from 33 percent of classes having more than 30 students during the 1989 to 1993 surveys, to 23 percent in 1996. This is still more than the MACS. Proportions of classes with less than 20 students, and with 20–24 students have remained much the same.

Thirty-one percent of primary students are now in classes of 25–29 students. Rural teachers were most likely to have small classes (43 percent had fewer than 20 students in their class, and only 10 percent 30 or more).

In line with the MRG formulas, the next figure shows that the smaller classes are most likely to occur at the new entrant level, and that most of the students in classes of 30 or more are in forms 1 and 2, or in standards (middle-primary) classes.

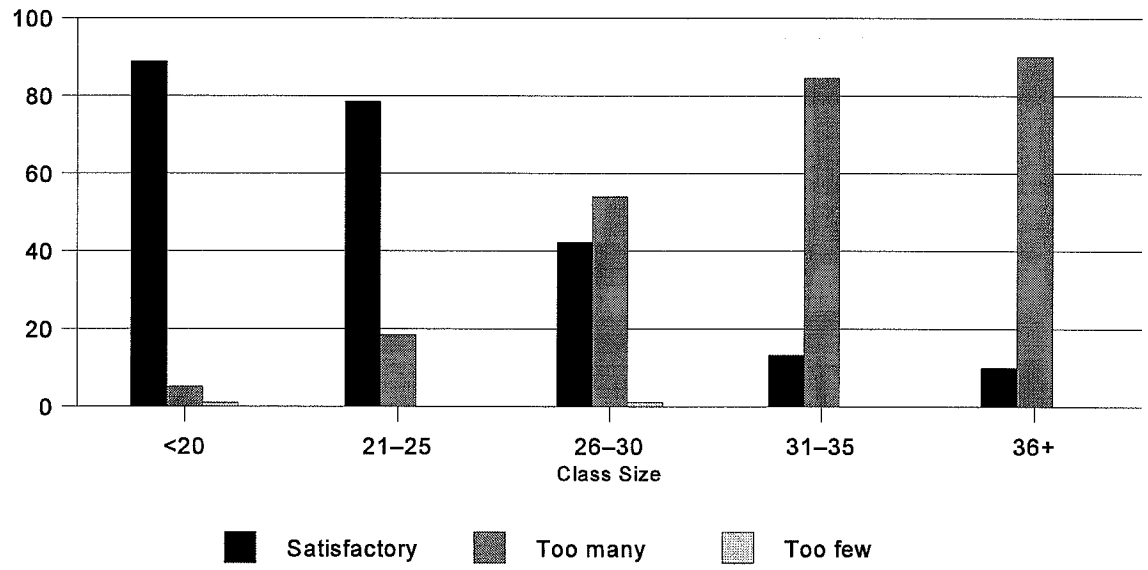
Figure 4
Class Sizes by Class Level



Parental descriptions of their child's class showed only 28 percent included only one level. Sixty percent of classes were composite classes, and 12 percent of classes included children from all levels of the school. New entrant classes were most likely to include only one level (51 percent).

Despite this overall easing of class size, 49 percent of parents remained dissatisfied with the size of their children's classes—much the same as in 1993. Only 4 parents thought there were too few students in their child's class. The next figure gives the relationship between parental satisfaction with class size, and the size of their child's class.

Figure 5
Parental Satisfaction with Their Child's Class Size



Teaching Staff

How Adequate Is Present Staffing?

There has been a sizable decrease in the proportion of principals who thought their government-funded staffing for the next year would be adequate to meet the school's needs: from 58 percent in 1993, to 38 percent in 1996. The 1993 figure was much the same in the previous 3 surveys, since 1989. The one school characteristic linked to different judgments here was proportion of Māori enrolment (49 percent of the principals of low Māori enrolment schools felt their staffing for 1997 was adequate compared with 32 percent of others).

Trustee perceptions of the adequacy of their government-funded staffing also show a similar decline—from 51 percent in 1993, to 38 percent in 1996. Half the trustees who thought their school's government-provided staffing was inadequate also had difficulty finding suitable staff—twice the proportion of those who thought their staffing levels were sufficient.

Principals who thought their government-funded staffing was inadequate were more likely to be working longer hours than others (55 percent worked 61 hours or more a week compared with 37 percent of those who thought their staffing was adequate), and close to three times more likely to report low or very low morale (25 percent compared with 9 percent).

Perceptions of the adequacy of school staffing were also linked to perceptions of the adequacy of school funding: 75 percent of the principals who thought their school funding was adequate also thought their staffing was adequate, compared with 29 percent of those who thought their funding was inadequate. Most trustees who thought their school's government funding was inadequate also thought their school's staffing provided by government funding was inadequate, as did a quarter of those who thought the funding adequate.

Only a third of the rural trustees thought their school's staffing was inadequate, compared with 52 percent of those in small towns and cities. Rural trustees were also twice as likely as others to find their government funding adequate.

Comments made by principals who thought their staffing entitlement was insufficient focused on high class sizes and the lack of provision for children with special needs, for children whose English was a second language, and for children who needed remedial work.

Twenty-nine percent of the principals (much the same proportion as in 1993) indicated that they would be using the school's own funds to provide more staffing for the school.

This is less than half those who find their staffing insufficient and points to the problems many schools were having in making their operational grant stretch to meet those costs it was intended to meet, let alone new uses, however desirable. The operational grant was originally designed to cover all costs *other* than teaching staff. The amount of money spent for additional teaching staff ranged from $300 to $43,000, with an average of $9,589. On this average, few schools were likely to be employing additional full-time teachers, though they may have been using the money to increase part-time teaching positions to full-time.

The 1993 survey average was $7804 (in 1996 dollars). Thus those schools that can use their money in this way are spending more of their operational grant on teaching staff.

Though the principals of the smallest schools were just as likely as others to find their government-funded staffing to be inadequate, they were least likely to be using the school's

own funds to hire additional staff (14 percent). Urban schools were twice as likely as schools in other locations to use their own money to hire extra teachers. Schools with rolls of 200–299 were also more likely to use their own funds for this purpose.

New Difficulty in Finding Suitable Teachers

Finding suitable teachers was also a problem for 55 percent of the schools. This is double the 27 percent who had problems in 1993, a figure that had remained much the same since 1989. This underlines the national shortfall in primary teachers, related to both the new MRG staffing and insufficient forward planning and analysis of future needs by the Ministry of Education

The higher the socioeconomic decile, the less difficulty schools had in finding staff (falling from 57 percent of decile 9–10 schools having no difficulty finding staff to 33 percent of decile 1–2 schools). Finding suitable staff was a major problem for small town schools—90 percent had difficulty.

Difficulty in finding suitable staff rose from 40 percent of the low Māori enrolment schools to 74 percent for the high Māori enrolment schools.

The main reason given for having problems finding staff is a limited number of suitable applicants (41 percent, up from 10 percent in 1993). Other reasons were much the same as they had been in NZCER's previous surveys—the remote or rural location of the school (17 percent), a shortage of Māori-speaking teachers (9 percent), and the low socioeconomic area served by the school (7 percent).

Decile 1–2 schools were the ones most likely to feel that the low socioeconomic status of their area made it harder for them to attract suitable staff. As fits with the fact that most high Māori enrolment schools were also decile 1–2 schools, they were also most likely to note a shortage of teachers with Māori-speaking teachers (27 percent).

A similar pattern is, not surprisingly, evident for the high Māori enrolment schools, with the addition of a remote or rural location for 28 percent, and a limited number of suitable applicants (54 percent).

The schools most likely to give the remote or rural location of the school were the smallest ones (43 percent, falling to 2 percent of the largest schools). Yet only 5 percent of the principals of the smallest schools thought that there was a limited number of suitable applicants in their area, compared with 56 percent of principals of the largest schools.

Principals in small towns were just as likely as those in rural areas to cite remote or rural location, but more likely to also cite a lack of suitable teachers, a shortage of teachers speaking Māori, and the area's low socioeconomic status.

Employment of Non-registered Teachers

Teacher registration became voluntary in 1991, on the rationale that this would give school boards more flexibility in making appointments. In 1996, legislation was introduced through a private member's bill to restore compulsory registration, with some latitude given to schools to employ teachers with a "Limited Authority to Teach". This new category is for untrained people who will not be registered. However, when this survey went out to schools, it was still legal for them to employ non-registered teachers.

There was no growth between the 1993 and 1996 surveys in the employment of non-

registered teachers. Six percent employed them for normal positions, 17 percent employed relieving staff who were not registered, 2 percent employed them for specialist positions, and 1 percent mentioned employing teachers who had exempt status. The main reason for employing teachers who did not have registration was that it was hard to get registered teachers—and this reason has doubled since 1993 (18 percent compared with 8 percent). Two percent of the schools employed people who were applying for registration, and 5 percent of the schools employed local people who had suitable knowledge.

None of the integrated schools in the survey employed non-registered teachers.

Employment of non-registered teachers was highest in the high Māori enrolment schools (46 percent falling to 7 percent of the low Māori enrolment schools), and in decile 1–4 schools (39 percent falling to 8 percent in decile 9–10 schools). The main reason for these schools to be using non-registered teachers was that it was hard for them to get registered teachers (37 percent of high Māori enrolment schools, and 33 percent of the low decile schools). Eleven percent of the high Māori enrolment school principals also noted the lack of local qualified teachers with suitable knowledge.

Employment of non-registered relieving teachers was most likely in the smallest schools (38 percent), in high Māori enrolment schools (30 percent), and in low decile schools (30 percent, decreasing to 6 percent of the decile 9–10 schools).

A Teacher for Every Class, Every Day?

Seventy-two percent of schools managed to provide a teacher for all their classes every day. This is less than the 89 percent in 1993. Thirteen percent of the schools had classes without a teacher for 1–2 days over the past year, 7 percent for 3–5 days, 4 percent for 6–10 days, and 3 percent for 11 or more days.

Only 61 percent of the decile 1–2 schools and high Māori enrolment schools had no days in the previous year when a class went without a teacher compared with 81 percent of the decile 9-10 schools, and 84 percent of the low Māori enrolment schools. Rural schools were more likely than schools in other locations to have no days when classes were without a teacher (82 percent).

Increase in Difficulties in Finding Relieving Staff

One reason for more schools having difficulty in staffing all their classes all the time is that 23 percent of schools (double the proportion in 1993) had difficulty finding properly qualified relieving teachers, and an additional 56 percent of schools had occasional difficulty. Only 20 percent of schools had no difficulty finding properly qualified relieving teachers. This is much lower than the 48 percent in 1993.

Decile 1–2 schools had twice as much difficulty finding properly qualified relievers as decile 3–8 schools, and almost 5 times as much difficulty as decile 9–10 schools. High Māori enrolment schools had almost 3 times the problem finding relievers as other schools (41 percent compared with 15 percent).

The smaller the school, the more likely it was that finding relief staff had not been a problem in 1996 (48 percent, falling to 10 percent of the largest schools). This was linked to

the non-availability of relievers because they were in long-term relieving jobs (14 percent of principals in the smallest schools compared with 63 percent in the largest schools). Small town principals had the most difficulty finding properly qualified relievers (55 percent): again because many relievers were in long-term positions, but also because there was a lack of trained teachers in the area, and a lack of good quality relievers available to them.

In 1993, only 2 percent of principals said that the employment of relievers in long-term relieving positions was the reason they had difficulty finding relievers. In 1996, this factor had soared to 50 percent. A new reason was that there was a lack of good quality relieving staff (35 percent). Those who said that there was a lack of trained teachers in their area remained much the same as in 1993 (34 percent). Nine percent thought the pay was too low to attract teachers (up from 3 percent in 1993).

These figures lend considerable credence to the NZEI concern that the alleviation of the current staffing shortage in primary schools has owed much to the use of relieving staff, creating a new shortage in that area.

Decile 1–2 schools were more likely to cite the lack of good quality relievers (61 percent). Decile 9–10 schools were least likely to mention problems because of a lack of trained teachers in the local area, or the lack of good quality relievers. But they were just as likely as others to note that many relievers were in long-term positions, or that the pay rate for relieving staff was too low. A similar pattern was evident with relation to the proportion of Māori enrolment in a school.

Support Staff

There has been little change since 1989 in the proportion of principals who think their school needs more support staff: in 1989 it was 62 percent; in 1996 it was 57 percent.

Principals at the smallest schools were most satisfied with their level of support: only 29 percent felt they needed more staff. None of the integrated school principals thought they had enough support staff.

Table 9

Need for Additional Support Staff Hours

Area (n=181)	1–5 hours %	6–10 hours %	11+ hours %
Teacher aides	6	15	25*+
Special needs aides	4	8	25*+
Library	15	10	11
Clerical/accounts	7	14	12
Kaiarahi i te reo	4	1	7
Caretaking/cleaning	3	4	6
Executive officer	6	7	7

*=statistically significant change (increase) from comparable answers in previous years' results.

However, schools do appear to be employing more support staff as shown in table 10, and this is a change from the consistent pattern that emerged through the 1990–93 NZCER surveys. Eighteen percent of the schools employed 1–2 support staff (compared with 29 percent in 1993), 44 percent employed 3–5 support staff, 28 percent between 6–10 (up from 16 percent in 1993), and 8 percent employed more than 10 (up from 1 percent in 1993).

Table 10
Support Staff Hours

Area (n=181)	1-5 hours %	6-10 hours %	11+ hours %
Caretaking/cleaning	3	16	75*+
Clerical/accounts	7	10	68*+
Teacher aides	17	20	43
Special needs aides	9	11	40*+
Library	18	12	15*+
Kaiarahi i te Reo	6	2	11

* = Statistically significant change (increase) from comparable answers in previous years' results.

Only 17 percent of the schools had an executive officer or bursar, and only one school (a decile 9–10 school) shared this position with other schools.

The larger the school, the more likely it was to have an executive officer or bursar (rising from none of the smallest schools to 19 percent of the schools with rolls of 200–299, and 42 percent of the largest schools). Executive officers were most common in urban schools (29 percent), and least common in rural schools (4 percent). No integrated schools had an executive officer; but few integrated schools have large rolls.

Five percent of the principals reported general problems in getting support staff, 13 percent had problems finding special needs staff, and 19 percent problems finding Māori language staff.

Support Staff in the Classroom

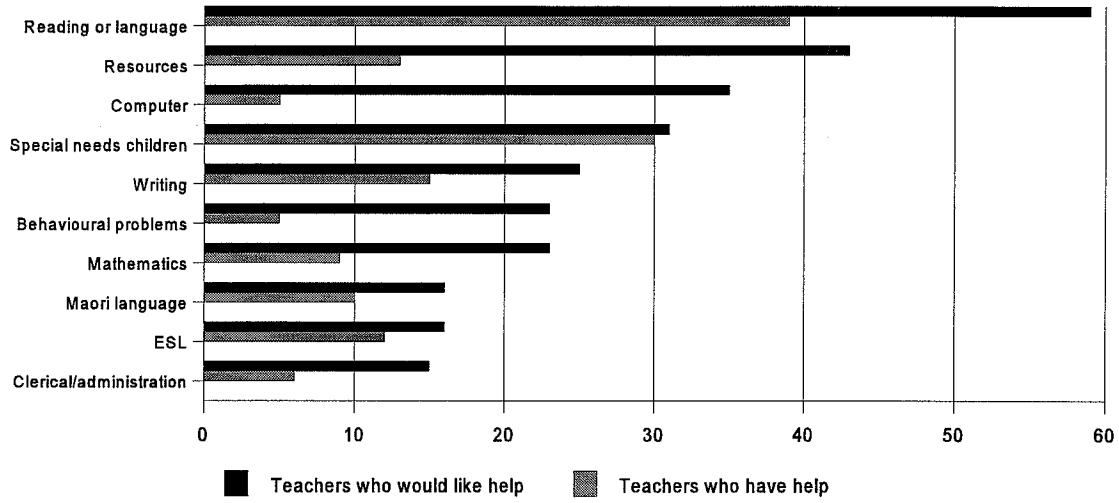
Fifty-nine percent of the teachers responding had classroom assistance from support staff—not much higher than the 53 percent in 1989. And there has been little change too in the number of hours of support staff help given to teachers: 11 percent had less than 1 hour a week, 21 percent had between 1 to 2.5 hours, 14 percent between 2.5 to 5 hours a week, and 12 percent, more than 5 hours a week.

Seventy-seven percent of the teachers would like more, or some, support time, and 7 percent were unsure—much the same proportions as in previous years' surveys. The time they would like is also much the same as in previous years, and relatively modest. Sixteen percent would like more than 5 hours a week, 24 percent between 2.5 and 5 hours, and 36 percent, up to 2.5 hours a week.

The areas teachers are most likely to have support staff help are reading, and help with special needs children. The areas where they would most like support staff help are reading, creating or mending classroom resources, help with children's use of the computer, and with special needs children.

Figure 6

Teachers' Use of Support Staff in Classrooms



Teachers in high Māori enrolment schools were most likely to have support staff help in their classroom (74 percent). Teachers in decile 1–2 schools were more likely than others to have help from support staff; they were slightly less likely to report that they needed (more) support staff help. This support is likely to be linked to these schools' extra government funding and provision for Māori students and special needs students.

Teachers in the smallest schools were least interested in having (more) support staff time in their classroom.

Interest in having (more) support staff was as high amongst those who enjoyed some help as those who did not. This is in contrast to the desire for more parent help, where those teachers who had some voluntary help in their classrooms were keener to have more than those who did not (*see* chapter 10).

Teacher and Principal Turnover

In the 7 years since the reforms began in 1989, 76 percent of this project's sample schools changed their principal. Some schools had several changes of principal in that time. Between 1989 and 1991, there was a turnover of 38 percent; between 1991 and 1993, 42 percent, and between 1993 and 1996, 47 percent. This seems to indicate a turnover rate of around 20 percent each year, and indeed 20 percent of the trustees said their school had appointed a new principal in the previous year. We do not have turnover rates prior to the reforms, so we cannot tell if the reforms have had an impact on principal turnover.

The figures from the different groups surveyed here indicate that most schools would make at least 1 appointment a year. Seventy-five percent of the teachers said that their school had made teaching appointments in the previous year. This figure is higher than the 59 percent in 1993, and closer to the 78 percent of teachers in 1990.

Eighty-one percent of the principals had lost at least 1 teacher over the past 12 months—up from 63 percent in the 1993 survey. Fifty-five percent of schools lost 1–2 teachers, 21 percent 3–5 teachers, and 6 percent, 6–10 teachers. The next table shows the reasons for teachers' movement, and shows some interesting trends since 1990.

An increasing number of teachers are changing careers—the figure is now comparable to the year after the reforms were introduced. More are moving to new positions since 1993. There has been a steady downwards trend in the proportion taking parental leave since 1990, and a drop since 1991 in the proportion of teachers moving for promotion reasons. Figures for retirement, travel, dismissal, stress, and the downgrading of the school have remained reasonably constant.

Table 11

Teachers' Reasons for Leaving Their School

Reason	1990 % (n=278)	1991 % (n=141)	1993 % (n=120)	1996 % (n=364)
New position	28	29	29	39
Change of career	12	4	7	15
Promotion	17	18	12	10
Travel	9	7	6	7
Parental leave	15	13	10	6
Stress	9	4	7	6
Retirement	10	8	10	6
School downgraded	2	3	10	2
Dismissal	1	3	1	1

Of those who moved to a new position, 4 percent went to secondary schools, and 1 percent to a tertiary institution.

We asked teachers if they were interested in becoming principals: 9 percent were. A third of these were deputy principals, a third assistant principals or senior teachers, and a third scale A teachers. Half the deputy principals who responded were not interested in becoming principals, and a further quarter were unsure. This remarkable lack of interest is even higher amongst assistant principals and senior teachers. It was unrelated to age or gender. Principals' workload was the main reason given.

Women scale A teachers were just as interested as their male colleagues in moving to a senior position. Women's chances of becoming a deputy principal, however, looked to be slightly less than men's: men were overrepresented among the deputy principals; 37 percent, compared with the 8 percent of the assistant principals who were male, 14 percent of the senior teachers, and 16 percent of the scale A teachers.

Thirty-two percent of the teachers who were interested in moving to a senior position were also interested in becoming principals; 41 percent were not, and another 24 percent were unsure.

Few teachers who had been teaching for fewer than 10 years held senior positions. Interest in holding a senior position is strongest amongst those who have been teaching for more than 6 years. Twenty-two percent of the teachers responding who did not have a senior position were interested in moving to such a position, with another 13 percent unsure.

Making Appointments

Trustees were asked if they had faced any problems or issues in making staff appointments. Thirty-eight percent had had no problem or issue (much the same as in 1993), but only 2 percent said they had not made a recent appointment (considerably less than the 22 percent in 1993). Trustees' main source of advice outside the school was the principal of another school (48 percent of those who sought advice). They also sought advice from NZSTA, NZEI, the Ministry of Education, or another board (around 20 percent each). Other sources of advice (around 5 percent each) were the NZ Principals' Federation, Employers' Association, and the State Services Commission. The use of another school principal is much the same as in 1993, but the use of all other sources has dropped. This may indicate that boards were developing some institutional memory as well as relevant information in relation to appointments, and had less need of external advice and information.

Teachers' views of their school's appointment process indicate that while a quarter have consistently thought it a fairer system than the previous system where education boards made the decisions for schools, others felt it has some disadvantages—giving a bias toward staff already working in the school, or decided more on the basis of personalities. Yet the next table also shows that fewer teachers now see a disadvantage for women and older applicants for senior positions.

Table 12

Teachers' Views of Their School's Appointment Process

View	1991 % (n=238)	1993 % (n=209)	1996 % (n=274)
Gives advantage to people already working in the school	38	40	31
Fairer all round	21	24	24
Based more on personalities[n]	–	–	22
Puts pressure on principal	38	32	18
Not sure	15	11	18
Disadvantages older applicants for senior positions	11	24	14
About the same as previous system	7	6	11
Gives advantage to people not known in school	4	6	6
Less fair all round	20	11	5
Disadvantages female applicants for senior positions	11	6	5

n=new question in 1996 survey.

Seventy percent of the teachers thought that their school's Equal Employment Opportunities (EEO) policy[9] was used in its appointment process, and 23 percent were unsure. One percent said their school had no EEO policy, and 2 percent said it was not used. Teachers in the smallest schools were least sure whether their school used its EEO policy in its appointment process (44 percent).

[9] This is legally required as schools currently come under the State Sector Act.

Teachers' Careers

Fifteen percent of the teachers responding to the survey became teachers after 1989, when school self-management began. This is almost double the 8 percent who took part in the 1993 NZCER survey. However, there is little difference between the profile of teachers' length of teaching service between 1993 and 1996. Over half the teachers had taught for more than 15 years (57 percent). Twenty percent had taught between 11 to 15 years, 13 percent between 6 to 10 years, and 4 percent less than 2 years. This profile is likely to be biased towards teachers with longer service because of the inclusion of teachers previously in the survey sample if they remained in the survey sample schools.

However, the profile of how long teachers have taught in their current school has changed from 1993 to 1996 reflecting the higher turnover rates reported by principals. A quarter of the 1996 teachers responding had been in their current school for less than two years, double the 12 percent in 1993. Only 15 percent of the 1996 teachers had been in their current school for 3–5 years, compared with 32 percent in 1993. Proportions above this remained much the same.

Twenty-six percent of the teachers at bulk-funded schools were new to teaching since 1989, when the reforms began (compared with 11 percent of teachers in other schools). Their average age was 41 years, compared with 44.5 years in centrally resourced schools. This may indicate that New Zealand bulk-funded schools are following the tendency of many English schools, whose operational grants also include teacher salaries, to employ younger—and cheaper—staff.

Sixty-five percent of the urban teachers had given more than 15 years' teaching service compared with 51 percent of those in small towns, and 45 percent in rural schools. Urban teachers were less likely to have taught in the same school for fewer than 5 years (34 percent compared with 51 percent of teachers in small towns and rural areas), indicating a higher turnover in city schools. However, urban teachers were also 3 times as likely as others to have stayed at the same school for 11–15 years (22 percent compared with 7 percent).

Nineteen percent of the teachers in the smallest schools had been teaching for fewer than 5 years compared with 7 percent of teachers in schools with rolls of 200 or more.

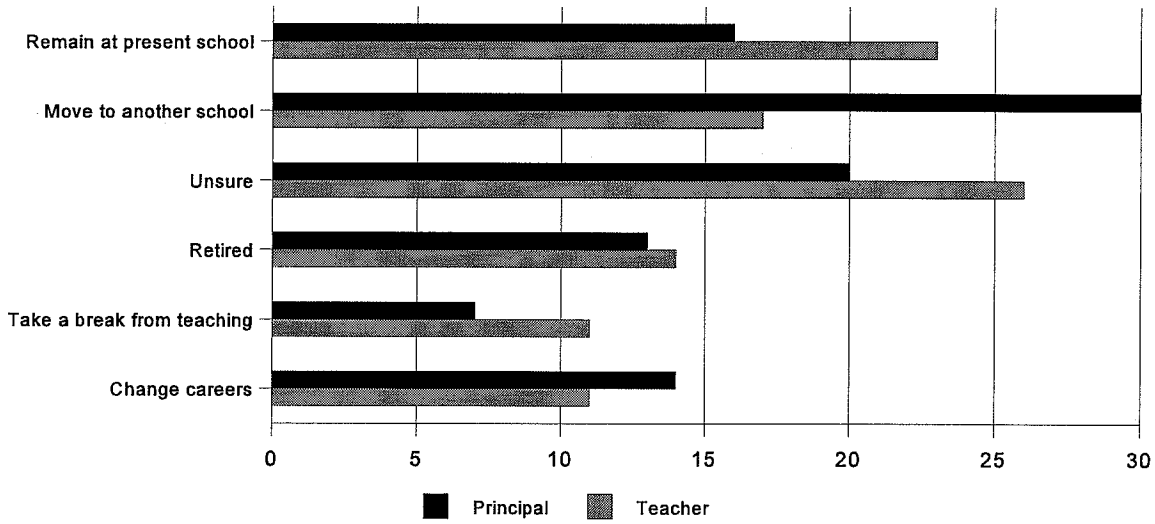
Forty-four percent of the teachers in the smallest schools had been in their school for less than 2 years—dropping to 19 percent of those in schools with rolls of 300 or more. They were also more likely to have been in the same school for 3–5 years—25 percent, dropping down to 13 percent of those in schools of 300 or more students. This may be an indicator of the schools with the greatest turnover, but it may simply reflect our sample, which was limited to 3 teachers in schools with rolls over 100.

Principals' and Teachers' Perceptions of Their Position in 5 Years' Time

The next figure compares teachers' and principals' perceptions of where they will be in 5 years' time. Principals were more likely to be thinking of career moves between schools than teachers, and teachers were slightly more interested in taking breaks from their chosen career. There was no difference between men and women in terms of their expectations of where they would be in 5 years' time.

Figure 7

Principals' and Teachers' Views of Their Position in 5 Years'



Some interesting patterns emerged in relation to teachers' expectations of where they would be in 5 years' time.

Forty-one percent of those who were interested in taking on senior positions expected to have moved to another school within the next 5 years. They were just as likely as others, however, to contemplate changing careers, and more likely to think of having a break from teaching. Those who looked to move to another school were more likely to show an interest in becoming a principal (18 percent).

Teachers in schools with mid or high levels of Māori enrolment were twice as likely as others to say they were thinking of changing their career. Seventeen percent of the teachers in the high Māori enrolment schools in our survey were Māori; 75 percent of the Māori respondents were teaching in high Māori enrolment schools.

Twelve of the 19 Māori teachers responding to this survey had taught for more than 15 years. If this is representative of the teaching experience of Māori teachers, then it may be pointing to a high turnover of younger Māori teachers. This finding would further underline the urgency of increasing the number of Māori teachers, if there are to be sufficient even to simply replace these teachers when they retire.

Small town teachers were more likely to expect they would move to another school (28 percent).

All the teachers aged 60 or more would retire in the next 5 years, and 27 percent of those in their fifties.

Teachers who have taught at their school for more than 10 years are more likely to see themselves staying at the school than others. Perhaps this reflects the views about school appointment processes—that applicants who are known to schools are likely to do better than others, and the concern that personalities play a role in appointments.

What of those who were new to teaching? Bear in mind that the morale of this group, and their views about their workload (*see also* chapter 9) were much the same as those who had been teaching longer. Only 3 percent of the teachers aged less than 30 expected to remain in their school. Twenty-one percent were not sure where they would be in 5 years' time. Nineteen percent envisaged taking a break from teaching, double the 9 percent of those who

had taught for longer. Seventeen percent thought they would change careers, almost double the 9 percent of those who had taught longer. Interest in changing careers is least amongst those who have taught from 3–5 years, a finding which may relieve those concerned about the loss of teachers; but this group also has 31 percent who are unsure of what they would like to be doing in 5 years' time.

Thirty-four percent of those who have taught for more than 15 years, and 28 percent of those who have taught for 11–15 years, thought they would probably retire over the next 5 years.

Summary

The MRG formulas had an immediate and noticeable impact on class size, though there are still a fifth of primary and intermediate classes which have more than 30 students. Parents are generally satisfied if their child is in a class of 25 or fewer. Their opinion is divided with classes of 26–30, but they remain unhappy with classes of more than 30 students.

While class size has eased, other aspects of school staffing have come to the fore of concern. The proportion of schools finding their government-funded staffing inadequate had increased substantially since 1993. Nor is their operational grant large enough in many cases to cover extra staffing costs. In previous NZCER surveys, finding suitable teachers was largely a problem for the low decile, high Māori enrolment schools, and rural schools. Now other schools face these problems too, competing with them for what may be a diminishing supply of teachers. Although the Ministry of Education has assumed some responsibility for ensuring that schools do have sufficient teachers to appoint, there are worrying signs in this survey that the present steps may not be enough. This survey shows signs that teacher turnover has increased, that the reserve of relieving staff has been depleted, that more teachers are changing careers—though the proportion is not high—and that younger teachers are just as likely as others to be thinking of changing careers or taking a break from teaching. The proportion of senior staff and others interested in becoming principals also seems rather low.

Most boards will make at least one teaching appointment each year. They appear to be confident about making appointments. Teachers' views about their school's appointment process are mixed, with the main concerns being that it is biased towards staff already working in the school, or that it can be dependent on personalities.

While schools have employed more support staff, many principals still feel they are understaffed in this area, as they have been since the start of the reforms. Support staff are funded from operational grants and locally raised funds, so this continued shortfall raises questions about the adequacy of the operational grant.

6 SCHOOL BOARD COMPOSITION

One of the hallmarks of the New Zealand decentralisation reforms is that parents of children at the school form the majority on school boards. This reflects in part the "consumer" orientation which ran through the Tomorrow's Schools policy, and in part the somewhat different desire in the same report to increase parent participation in schools, through democratically elected representatives—a model of parent involvement as "citizens" rather than "consumers". This latter emphasis and the emphasis on equity led to government efforts to encourage parents from all walks of life to put themselves forward for the first elections. This was also to safeguard against the fear of parochialism and narrow interests that Department of Education polling had identified (Heylen, 1989a & 1989b) amongst parents and professionals alike. In the first elections these efforts probably helped to increase the proportion of women on school boards, compared with the old school committees, though still not fully proportionate to the number of female parents. But a census of trustees just after the first election showed an underrepresentation of low income groups, and ethnic groups other than Pakeha/European. Boards were asked to use their co-option powers to bring in representatives of these groups, and there is evidence that this was done. This period was also the time when charters were being developed, necessitating community consultation: and boards could probably see a use for the co-option of representatives of these groups, even if it did not "naturally" occur to them.

As boards took control of their operational budgets, however, they also increased their co-option of people with useful skills and contacts, and this was encouraged in the Education Amendment Act 1992 which allowed non-parents to put themselves forward for election, in time for the second general election of boards.

Trustees' Roles

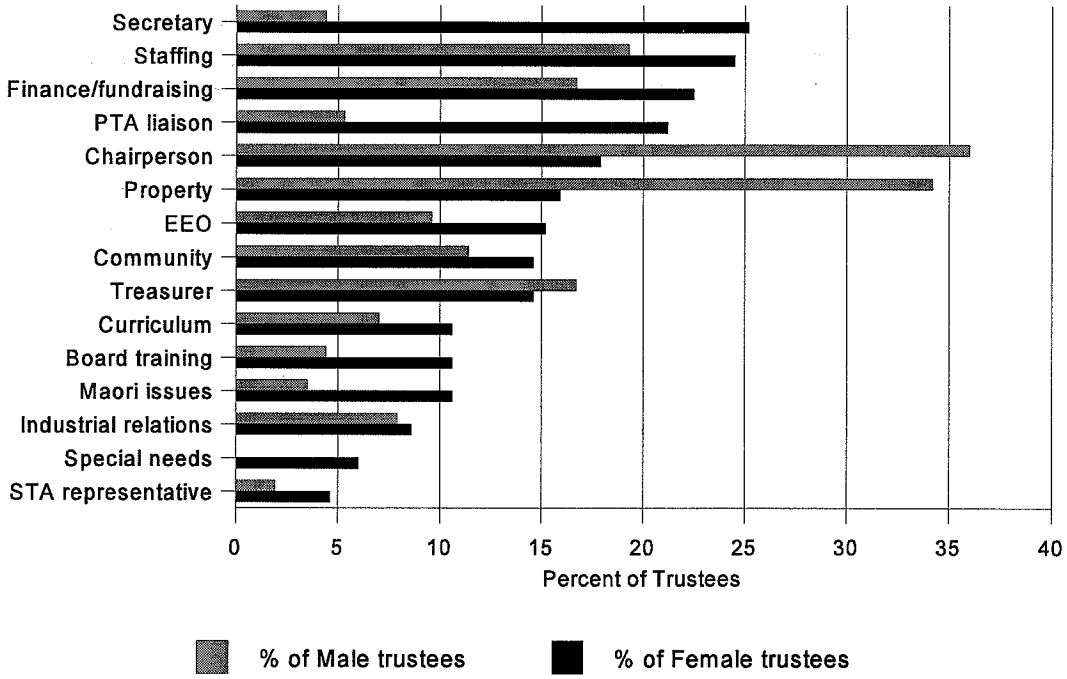
All but 4 percent of the trustees responding to the survey had a definite area of responsibility on their school board. Forty-five percent had a single area of responsibility. Twenty-three percent had 2 areas of responsibility, 11 percent had 3, and 17 percent 4 or more. Trustees with the roles of treasurer, secretary, and chairperson were least likely to have 4 or more roles to play on their board, and those responsible for industrial relations, board training, special needs, curriculum, and representing the board at NZSTA meetings were most likely to be wearing a number of hats on the board.

Most of the Māori trustees in the survey were in decile 1–4 schools. They were more likely to be occupying the roles of secretary, specialist on Māori issues, and equal employment opportunities than Pakeha/European trustees. Māori trustees were also more likely to spend 6 hours a week or more on their work: 31 percent compared with 14 percent of Pakeha/European trustees.

The next figure shows that gender continues to be associated with differences in the roles played by individual trustees on their board. While this is reflective of wider social differences related to gender, it does indicate that boards of trustees may not have provided an avenue for change in this area, despite the original emphasis on equal opportunities.

Figure 8

Trustees' Responsibilities by Gender



Are Trustees Representative of Parents?

Fifty-six percent of the trustees responding were male, and 42 percent female (2 percent did not give their gender).

Forty-two percent were in their 30s, and 48 percent in their 40s. Three percent were aged less than 30, and 5 percent, 50 years or more.

Eighty-one percent of the trustees were Pakeha/European, 11 percent Māori, and 1 percent Asian. Eight percent described themselves as New Zealanders. These are comparable for Ministry of Education figures for trustees at both primary and secondary schools in December 1996 for Pakeha/European, Māori, and Asian, but Pacific Island trustees are underrepresented in this survey. Māori and Pacific Island parents continue to be underrepresented on boards of trustees despite the initial emphasis on full representation of different social groups, and the use of co-option to bring them on to boards.

Trustees also differ from the general population in having higher educational qualifi cations, and higher socioeconomic status. In part this reflects a younger age group than the general population, but the profile has changed little since 1989. It was also the case with the school committees which they replaced (Davey, 1977).

Table 13

Highest Education Qualification of Parents and Trustees

	NZCER Survey 1996					
	Trustees %		Parents %		Census 1991 %	
Qualification	Female (n=151)	Male (n=114)	Female (n=531)	Male (n=143)	Female	Male
University degree	16	30	13	26	6	9
Nursing/teaching certificate/diploma	21	4	14	1	12	2
Trades certificate/diploma	7	25	16	28	8	26
UE/higher school certificate/sixth form certificate	18	11	14	13	13	11
School certificate	21	11	18	11	18	14
No qualification	11	9	17	13	43	38

Trustees at very low Māori enrolment schools were twice as likely as others to have a university degree (32 percent compared with 15 percent). City trustees were also more likely to have university degrees (33 percent), and small town trustees, trades qualifications (31 percent). Twenty percent of decile 1-2 school trustees had no qualification, compared with 8 percent of trustees on other school boards. Trustees in decile 9-10 schools were most likely to have university degrees (35 percent).

Table 14

Trustees' and Parents' Socioeconomic Status

			NZCER Survey					
	School Committee Members 1977		Trustees				Parents	
			Male		Female		Male	Female
Elley Irving Group	Male	Female[10]	1989	1996	1989	1996	1996	1996
1–2	64	33	43	42	39	25	28	18
3–5	32	60	44	41	48	40	36	30
5–6	14	8	5	9	6	5	12	7
unemployed/benefit	–	–	–	1	–	0	8	5

Half the city trustees came from professional occupations, compared with 21 percent of small town trustees, and 15 percent of rural trustees. Full-time homemakers were less likely amongst city trustees (15 percent, compared with 24 percent of small town trustees, and 29 percent of rural trustees).

Trustees in decile 9–10 schools tended to be better educated, in more highly paid work, and older.

[10] Female school committee members were assigned their partner's socioeconomic status. That has not been done in the NZCER survey where mothers were at home full time.

How Long Do Trustees Serve on Their Boards?

In the 1993 survey, 38 percent of the primary school trustees had been on their boards since the change to school-based management in 1989. By 1996, only 11 percent of the survey returns came from original trustees.

The third general election for trustees was held in 1995. Thirty-three percent of our respondents joined their boards at this last election—much the same figure as in the 1993 survey, also a year after an election, and comparable to the 39 percent of school committee members in the 1976 survey across the Wellington Education Board (Davey, 1977) who were in their first term (of a 2-year rather than the current 3-year election cycle).

Seventeen percent of the trustees had served between 5–6 years, also much as in 1993. Thirty-one percent had given 2–4 years' service, an increase since 1993.

Who Is Likely To Stand Again?

The proportions of those intending to stand again, this time for the 1998 elections, remained consistent with previous surveys. Twenty-seven percent of the trustees responding intended standing again, 31 percent were unsure, and 40 percent intended standing down.

The main reasons given for not wanting to stand again were that the trustee would no longer have children at the school (19 percent), that the trustee had been on the board long enough (11 percent), that the board work took too much time (10 percent), that the board would benefit by having new members, that others should take their turn (7 percent), or because the work had too many frustrations (3 percent). These reasons are related more to the voluntary nature of the work, and the trustee's connection with the school through their child than with active dissatisfaction with aspects of the role.

The main reasons given for standing again were that the trustee felt needed or enjoyed the work (13 percent), or that they wished to carry on with work they felt was incomplete (7 percent).

Trustees who had been on the board since the last election and those who joined the board in 1996 were somewhat more likely than others to be intending to stand again in 1998. The patterns between length of service on the board and intention to stand again were much the same as they had been in 1993, at a comparable point in the board election cycle.

How Often Should Board Elections Be Held?

Three-quarters of the trustees and two-thirds of the principals thought the frequency of board elections should remain at its current 3 years. Five percent of the trustees and 14 percent of the principals would prefer them to occur every 4 years, and 13 percent of trustees and 12 percent of the principals, every 2 years.

Principals were keener on rotation than trustees. Forty-nine percent of principals supported the concept of replacing trustees in rotation rather than having general elections, thirty-four percent were opposed, and 17 percent did not know. The main comment in support of rotation was that it would make continuity amongst board members easier, which would save the principal some of the work of training new board members. Principals from the smallest schools were only half as likely as others to support rotation (24 percent).

Twenty-nine percent of trustees supported rotation, mainly to provide continuity; nine

percent were unsure. However, the NZSTA survey of boards in May 1997 showed a dramatic change from this result, with 67 percent supporting rotation. This is the only common area between the 2 surveys showing any difference, and may be linked to the awareness of the elections within the next year. It may also be acting as a "canary" indicator of the frustrations related to resourcing levels that were found in both surveys, underlining the importance of addressing these frustrations satisfactorily before the next board elections. Certainly, the improvement of the operational grant level starting in 1998 will be helpful in this respect.

Trustee Turnover

Sixty-seven percent of the boards had lost at least 1 trustee over the course of the previous year. This is an increase over the 51 percent in 1993, and closer to the 59 percent in 1990, the second year following the first board of trustee elections.

Thirty-two percent of the boards had lost 1 trustee, 22 percent 2 trustees, 7 percent 3 trustees, and 5 percent, 4 or more. This pattern is similar to the 1993 survey finding. Reasons for the resignations are, on the whole, much the same as they have been throughout the NZCER surveys. The main reasons are related to paid work (24 percent because their paid workload is too great to allow the continuation of voluntary board work), 11 percent because of work transfers (a rise since 1993, but still half the 1990 figure of 26 percent, which may reflect a different economic situation). Twenty-six percent moved away from the district. Fourteen percent left because their child left the school. Ten percent found their family obligations needed more time than their trustee work allowed.

Only 5 percent left because of the board workload alone, though it is interesting that those who leave because of family and paid-work workloads do so because they find they cannot meet both or all demands simultaneously. Other negative or "push" reasons were disillusionment with the work, or conflict within the board (6 percent each).

How do boards find new members between elections? Eleven percent of the boards did not replace members who resigned. Holding another election was least likely (partially because elections cost money). Twenty-one percent of the boards represented in the survey used elections, 35 percent appointed a new trustee, and 34 percent co-opted someone. The use of co-options to replace board members who resign is double the 1993 survey figure.

Non-Parents on Boards

The Education Amendment Act passed in 1992 allowed people who did not have children at a given school to put themselves forward for election to that school's board of trustees. Sixty-seven percent of the schools represented in the survey had only parents on their board—much the same as in 1993, and in 1991, before the 1992 legislation was passed. Thus it appears that there is either little interest among people who are not parents of children at a school in standing for election—they have always been able to be co-opted or appointed[11]—or that parents may be less keen on electing non-parents. Eighteen percent of the boards had 1 non-

[11] Integrated schools have always had proprietors' representatives on school boards, often non-parents.

parent member, 8 percent had 1, 4 percent had 2, and 3 percent had 4 or more. Again, this is much the same pattern as in the previous NZCER surveys.

Trustees at high Māori enrolment schools were more likely to have at least 2 non-parents on their boards: 31 percent, compared with 9 percent of trustees at other schools. Thirty-one percent of small town trustees had at least 2 non-parents on their board compared with 14 percent of city trustees, and 9 percent of rural trustees.

Co-opted Trustees

School boards can co-opt as many trustees as they wish. Sixteen percent of the trustees responding were co-opted—much the same as the 17 percent of the school committee members in the 1977 survey. Most boards do co-opt at least 1 member, sometimes to replace an elected member who resigns. Sixty-two percent of the boards in this survey had a co-opted trustee on their board, somewhat more than the 52 percent in the 1993 survey. Thirty-three percent had co-opted 1 trustee, 25 percent 2 to 3 trustees, and 3 percent, 4 to 5 trustees.

School committees also had the power to co-opt, and about half the committees surveyed in the Wellington region study had done so (Davey, 1977).

Co-opted trustees' responsibilities were as wide ranging as others—even including the board chairperson. Three of the 4 most frequent roles taken by co-opted trustees are in the 2 dominant areas of their work and concerns: funding and property.

The use of co-option to secure secretarial support has also remained consistent, and high, since the shift to school self-management. But its use to provide liaison with the Māori community shows a slight decrease.

Table 15

Co-opted Trustees' Responsibilities

Responsibilities	1989 % (n=267)	1990 % (n=215)	1991 % (n=234)	1993 % (n=157)	1996 % (n=168)
Property/maintenance	14	23	33	35	37
Secretary	23	23	27	20	24
Finance/fundraising	–	–	7	17	21
Treasurer	32	16	22	22	18
Community consultation	3	9	18	15	16
Māori liaison	18	27	27	24	15
Staffing	3	7	10	7	10
Liaison with PTA/home and school association/school council	3	10	22	11	8
Chairperson	–	–	–	–	8
Curriculum	–	–	–	–	7
Public relations/school promotion	–	–	–	11	7
Industrial relations	–	–	–	4	6
Liaison with ethnic communities	7	8	7	5	4
Board training	–	–	–	4	4
Special needs	–	–	–	5	1
EEO	–	–	–	5	–

Rural trustees had fewer co-opted trustees than others: 45 percent had none on their board compared with 35 percent of trustees in small towns, and 29 percent of those in cities. In

contrast to the 1993 survey results, low decile and high Māori enrolment schools were only marginally more likely to have co-opted trustees on their board. This may reflect a general rise in co-option since the 1993 survey.

Board Size

Each primary school board consists of a majority of parents, with the principal, and a staff representative elected by school staff. In response to the difficulties of some small schools in finding their full complement of 5 elected parents, the Education Amendment Act (No. 4) 1991 allowed boards to decide how many they wished to have. This seems to have resulted in change for only a few boards. Ten percent of the boards had only 3–4 members other than the principal and staff representative, much as in 1993. Forty-three percent had the original complement of 5, 33 percent 6–7 (a gradual decrease from the 40 percent in 1993 and 53 percent in 1991), and 13 percent, 8–10 members, much as in 1991.

The decrease in the middle range of 6–7 members, taken with the increase in mid-term resignations, and use of co-options to replace members, may indicate some decrease in the attraction of the trustee's role.

Summary

Trustees are yet to be any more—or less—representative of parents than their predecessors on the school committees. Perhaps this tells us something of the nature of the work of a trustee, the confidence of different groups of parents, and, as chapter 10 would suggest, their involvement in their child's school—for it is through such involvement that trustees are often found.

The patterns of length of service have remained consistent throughout the reforms. Trusteeship generally appears to involve at least 2 years' service, with the average around 3 years'. Reasons for leaving a board are linked to children's changes of school, and length of voluntary service, rather than active dissatisfaction with the role. Non-parents do not appear very interested in putting themselves forward for election to school boards.

Yet there are also indications in the 1996 data that the role of trustee might be becoming less attractive. Whether these indications amount to a trend remains to be seen with the number of candidates putting themselves forward for election in 1998.

7 PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND TRAINING

Professional development and training is largely within the control of each school, through their budget allocation. But the government has also seen a responsibility for it to fund training related to the role of the school trustee, until recently through a contract with the School Trustees Association and, from 1997, through a contestable tender process. It has also provided some support through contracts with advisory services, for principals in their new management roles, and funding through contestable contracts to provide teachers with professional development linked to the introduction of the new curriculum framework.

Previous NZCER surveys showed that principals and teachers put their own time and money into increased professional development outside school hours. The teachers' major focus was the curriculum; for principals, it was both curriculum and management. Most trustees received some training, but largely through written material or informal use of the school's professionals, or other local trustees.

Principals' Training

Ninety-four percent of the principals had had some professional development over the past year, a slight increase over the 1993 and 1991 figures. Whether principals undertook professional development was unaffected by their length of service as a principal. Eighty-three percent of the principals responding used their own time to undertake this training. Most received financial support from their school's board (86 percent), and 34 percent paid for some of the costs themselves. Eighteen percent received some financial support from the Ministry of Education. These proportions are similar to those in 1991 and 1993. Fewer principals of the smallest schools had board of trustee funding for their training (62 percent).

The next table shows some settling down of some of the new aspects of the principal's role under decentralisation—management per se, personnel matters, and accounting/budgeting. Some changes in the role from the early days are also reflected, particularly the reduced stress on community consultation and the Treaty of Waitangi. Other topics remain steady perennials, such as staff appraisal, particular curriculum areas, and policy development.

Table 16

Areas of Principals' Professional Development

Area	1990 % (n=207)	1991 % (n=186)	1993 % (n=191)	1996 % (n=181)
Staff appraisal	66	61	47	65
Curriculum area	60	47	46	49
Management/administration	75	45	46	46
NZ curriculum framework	-	-	34	43
School self-review	-	43	28	43
Principal's role in general	68	51	59	41
Educational leadership	-	19	50	39
NZ principals' conference[n]	-	-	-	38
Policy development	-	36	29	35
Personnel matters	62	40	30	31
Computers[n]	-	-	-	28
Accounting/budgeting	55	26	25	17
Legal obligations[n]	-	-	-	15
Employment/industrial relations	-	-	20	14
Community consultation	33	15	9	8
Māori issues	-	9	10	7
Treaty of Waitangi	38	7	7	5
Equity	-	9	7	3

n=new question in 1996 survey.

Changes in the pattern of interest in certain topics (table 17) further show the growth of principals' confidence since the early days of the reforms in the aspects of financial planning, administration, and staff appraisal. Other topics appear to be more perennial.

Table 17

Principals' Priorities for Their Training Related to Decentralisation

Area	1990 % (n=207)	1991 % (n=186)	1993 % (n=191)	1996 % (n=181)
School development	51	40	60	50
School self-review	56	59	55	48
Educational leadership	37	29	40	39
NZ curriculum[n]	-	-	-	38
Staff appraisal	62	44	41	30 *
Legal aspects	-	31	35	27
Financial planning	42	32	29	23
Administration	32	20	24	21
School relationships	-	16	21	18
Property management	-	-	13	13
Industrial aspects[n]	-	-	-	11
Multicultural issues[n]	-	-	-	8
Māori issues	-	-	15	8 *

n=new question in 1996 survey.

*+=statistically significant change (increase) from comparable answers in previous survey results.

Eighty-five percent of the principals would like some further professional development over the next 2 years—slightly less than the 94 percent in 1993. Ten percent of the principals said they had no energy left after work for training, and 7 percent, no time. Six percent said training was not accessible to them, and 3 percent, that it was not affordable.

The proportion of principals not undertaking any professional development was just as high amongst those whose morale was high as amongst those whose morale was low, and for much the same kinds of reasons.

Teachers' Professional Development

Ninety percent of the principals also identified some professional development other than curriculum that they would like their staff to have. This is slightly higher than the 81 percent in 1993. The table below shows an increased interest in staff using computers; less concern with aspects of staff appraisal (though this is still a topic of professional development which half the principals in the survey would like for their staff), with budgeting, and with equity.

Table 18

Principals' Priorities for Teacher Training

Area	1990 % (n=207)	1991 % (n=186)	1993 % (n=191)	1996 % (n=181)
Assessment	–	–	58	63
Computers	–	–	42	59*+
School self-review	–	60	62	57
Staff appraisal	71	55	52	51
Behaviour management[n]	–	–	–	51
Relations with parents	26	28	28	27
Charter/policy development	22	36	31	20
Budgeting	23	25	18	10*-
Equity	25	15	13	8

n=new question in 1996 survey.

*=statistically significant change from comparable answers in previous years; "+" means an increase, "-" means a decrease.

The common areas of training principals sought for both themselves and their staff in relation to the reforms were school self-review and staff appraisal. Only 10 percent of the teachers gave appraisal as the area of their most useful training or advice over the past year; school self-review was not mentioned. Nor are appraisal and school self-review mentioned under the topics which teachers studied in their own time, though they may be subsumed under the general heading of administration/management, or educational leadership.

Table 19

Topics Studied in Teachers' Own Time

Area (n=365)	1996 % (n=246)
Curriculum area	43*
Information technology[n]	29
NZ curriculum framework	25
Outdoor education[n]	12
Administration/management	11
Teacher appraisal	11
Child behaviour/behaviour management	10
Special education	9
Educational leadership	7
Interpersonal skills	5*
Education administration reforms	4*
English as a second language[n]	4

n=new question in 1996 survey.

*-=statistically significant change (decrease) from comparable answers in previous survey results.

Sixty-eight percent of the teachers responding had undertaken some professional development in their own time over the past year, much the same proportion as in 1993.

Those who were interested in becoming principals were more likely to describe their most useful area of training or advice as one related to school management, including school development, as well as student assessment. This interest was also reflected in the pattern of the courses they took in their own time, and the topics that most interested them—though, like their colleagues, they were also interested in specific curriculum areas. Seventy-one percent of those who were interested in becoming principals intended continuing their professional development in their own time over the next year, compared with 43 percent of those who were not.

Teachers were less likely than principals to have the professional development they did in their own time paid for by the school's board of trustees (53 percent). Thirty-one percent paid for their own, and 6 percent had financial support from the Ministry of Education. There was no relation between the subject-matter of the training undertaken out of school hours and who had paid for it, if it was the board of trustees or the teacher. The Ministry of Education was more likely to be mentioned as a source of financial support for the topics of administration/ management and teacher appraisal.

Forty-seven percent of the teachers intended doing some further professional development in their own time over the next 12 months. An additional 31 percent were not sure if they would. This pattern has remained much the same since 1990. Intentions to train were just as high amongst those with no interest in becoming senior staff members, those who were interested, and those who were senior staff members. The main reasons for being unsure or not intending to train further were a lack of energy after work (24 percent), or a lack of time (16 percent). Some teachers found their preferred training was too far away (12 percent), or that they could not afford it (11 percent). Eleven percent saw no need for further training. Teachers who had not undertaken any education or training in the previous year were much less likely to be thinking of doing some over the next year: 19 percent compared with 58

percent of those who had done some.

Since decentralisation, there has been an increase in teachers undertaking training in their own time, and using their weekends and school holidays to do so. Sixty-seven percent of the teachers used after-school hours for their professional development, 29 percent the evenings, 25 percent weekends, and 19 percent, school holiday time.

We asked teachers to identify the 3 topics which would most interest them in the professional development undertaken in their own time. While specific curriculum areas are prominent, information technology was the other prime topic of interest.

Table 20

Teachers' Preferred Topics for Professional Development in Their Own Time

Area (n=361)	%
Specific curriculum area	34
Information technology	21
NZ curriculum framework	15
Child behaviour/behaviour management	15
Administration/management skills	12
Educational leadership	12
Special education	10
Interpersonal skills	6
Outdoor education	6
English as a second language	6
Teacher appraisal	6
Education administration reforms	4

The next table shows the topics that teachers found most useful in their professional development 1995–96; the picture is much the same as in the 1993 survey.

Table 21

Teachers' Most Useful Areas of Training/Advice in Last 12 Months

Area (n=361)	%
NZ curriculum	55
Other curriculum area	17
Computers	14
Student assessment	13
School development	10
Teacher appraisal	10
Management	5
Special needs children	5
Classroom management	5
Administration	5
Interpersonal skills	5
Child behaviour	4
Māori language	3

The teachers in bulk-funded schools were more likely to nominate the NZ curriculum as the area of their most useful training or advice over the past year (78 percent compared with 53 percent).

Ministry of Education curriculum contracts and advisers were the most common source of teachers' most useful professional development over the past year (38 percent and 35 percent respectively). Teachers also gained useful information and insights from other staff at their school (24 percent), and college of education lecturers (23 percent). Other sources of teachers' most useful professional development for between 6 and 9 percent of the teachers were a Ministry of Education assessment contract, a private firm, the principal, and other teachers in local schools.

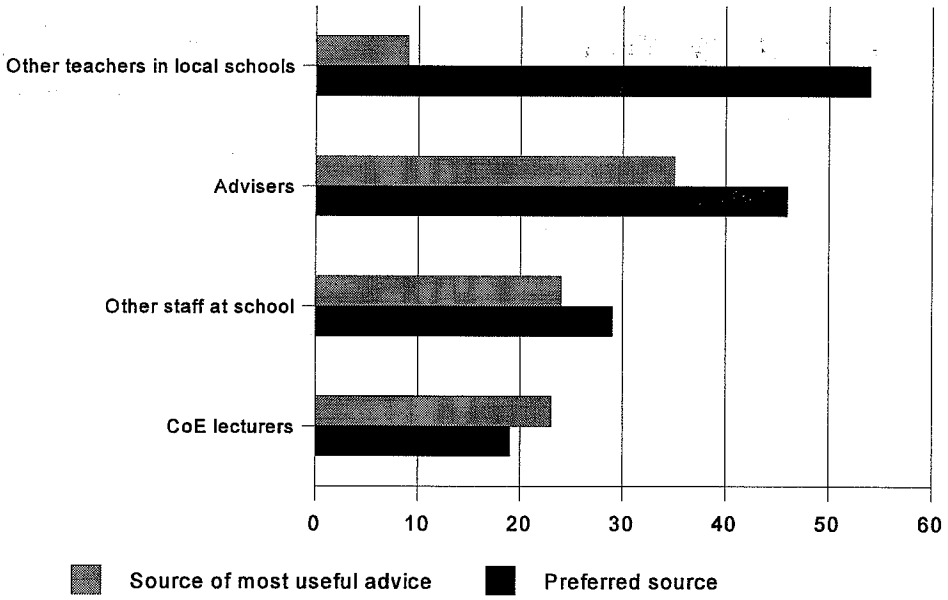
Use of local cluster groups for training appears to rise with school decile, with 29 percent of decile 1–2 teachers citing these as their most useful training source compared with 46 percent of those in decile 9–10 schools.

Teachers in the smallest schools were more likely to say they had had no other source of advice (19 percent) but themselves, and they were also less likely to have taken part in training which brought together teachers from round the country, or to have undertaken some education or training in their own time (44 percent).

Most teachers' professional development occurs in the company of other teachers—71 percent with teachers in their own school, and 49 percent with teachers in other local schools. Eleven percent mentioned a local cluster group. Four to 6 percent each mentioned trustees (much reduced from the 18 percent in 1990), a variety of people, teachers from all over New Zealand, or no one else. Two percent had also undertaken their training with support staff.

Twenty percent of the teachers had no preferences for who they would like to provide them with their inservice professional development in the next year. Experienced and successful teachers from other schools were the main pick (54 percent), followed by advisers (46 percent), experienced and successful teachers within their own school (29 percent), and college of education lecturers (19 percent). Seven percent mentioned the Specialist Education Services, 6 percent university staff, and 2 percent ERO. The figure below shows that while preferences and existing sources were well matched for advisers and college of education lecturers, the desire to have access to teachers in other schools far outweighs teachers' actual access, as it has in previous NZCER surveys.

Figure 9
Sources of Teachers' Most Useful Advice and Preferred Sources



Increased workloads since decentralisation and the focus on individual schools (including, ironically, more of a focus on school development and improved performance) are likely to make it difficult for teachers from different schools to take advantage of each other's experiences for the benefit of their own programmes. This points to an inefficient use of teaching expertise for the dissemination of effective or innovative approaches in the system as a whole.

Staff Appraisal

The National Administration Guidelines which all schools must follow state that all schools should have a form of teacher appraisal; the exact nature of the form is left up to the school.

Only 6 percent of the teachers said their school did not have an appraisal process for staff. This is little changed since 1993, though all schools were to have put in place such a process by 1996. Fifty-seven percent of the teachers said this process had been negotiated with staff, and 18 percent were unsure.

Teachers from decile 9–10 schools were more likely to say their school's appraisal process had not been negotiated with staff (26 percent). Nor did as many staff in schools with rolls over 200 students think their school's appraisal process had been negotiated as their colleagues in smaller schools.

Fifty-two percent of the teachers responding were happy with the way they were appraised, with another 18 percent unsure. Dissatisfaction with the process of appraisal in the school rose from none of the teachers in the smallest schools to 19 percent of those in schools with rolls over 200.

Teachers' reports of the use made of teacher appraisals in their school is outlined in the next table. This shows that the use of teacher appraisals for their intended policy purposes of performance management is occurring for just over half the teachers surveyed.

Table 22
Use Made of Teacher Appraisals

(Teachers →) Use	(n=361) %
Identify staff development needs	61
Improve areas of performance	56
Support and encourage staff	55
Supply information to the school board	23
Inform school development plan	20
Supply information to ERO	16
Not sure	14
Plan career	10

Half the teachers were happy with the use made of their appraisal, 10 percent were not, and 21 percent were unsure. Teachers whose school used their appraisals to supply information to ERO or the school board were less happy about these uses than those whose appraisals were used for staff and school development. Only 12 percent of the teachers thought the school's form of appraisal would not help improve teaching and learning in the school, with another 11 percent saying it would be helpful if there was sufficient time available for it, and 4 percent that more resources were needed to make it useful. Seventeen percent thought the process was very helpful in improving teaching and learning at their school, and 39 percent thought it was of some use.

Trustee Training

Ninety-one percent of the trustees had some support or training for their role, as they did in 1993. Most of the support is through written material produced by government departments, NZSTA, and school teachers' professional organisations, or through informal use of school resources and other trustees. The median number of sources used by trustees for their training or advice was 4.

Table 23

Sources of Trustees' Training or Support

Source	(n=270) %
Material from NZSTA	66
Material from Ministry of Education	49
Guidance and information from school staff	43
Material from NZEI	41
Material from ERO	41
One-off training sessions/seminars NZSTA	33
Guidance and information from other trustees on the board	31
One-off training sessions/seminar	28
One-off training sessions/seminars cluster	22
Material from NZ Principals' Federation	21
Regular contact with trustees in other schools	18
Private firms/consultants	14
Local college of education	10
Training session with school staff	9

Other sources mentioned by 1 or 2 percent each were videos or the Catholic Education Office.

The next table shows the topics that trustees had covered in their training, and those in which they would like more training. Bear in mind that only a third of the trustees were new to their board, having joined it the previous year. Thus this picture does not describe the total training received by trustees since they took up their role. The topics cover a wide range, as does the work of school boards.

Table 24

Topics of Trustees' Training 1996

Trustees → (n=270) Topic	Had training in %	Would like training in %
Role of the school trustee	56	15
Curriculum	38	18
School self-review	36	26
Health and safety	34	21
Financial management/planning	34	20
Property management	33	13
Industrial relations	25	10
Role of the principal	24	11
School strategic planning	22	25
Equal employment opportunities	22	9
Making appointments	19	14
Assessment	19	21
Children's behaviour	11	19
Communication and interpersonal relationships	11	15
Treaty of Waitangi	9	7

Twenty-one percent of the trustees did not want any further training.

Forty percent of the trustees had no preference as to who should provide their training. Twenty-six percent mentioned NZSTA, 23 percent the Ministry of Education (not at present a source of training, other than written material), 15 percent mentioned educational institutions (such as colleges of education), 11 percent private firms, and 10 percent NZEI, the primary teachers' and support staff union. Nine percent of the trustees mentioned other trustees in general, and 8 percent, their fellow trustees on the school board.

Summary

The amount of professional development done in principals' and teachers' own time has increased since decentralisation, its resourcing coming from a combination of school funds, distinct government support, and people's own pockets. While teacher appraisals appear to be used to identify areas for further professional development, principals' priorities for teacher training are not reflected in the topics of teachers' training. In addition, a substantial part of teachers' professional development appears to be self-chosen, and self-funded through money and time. This raises questions about the impact of school development plans, which usually include professional development (*see* chapter 14) and teacher appraisals, and which need further exploration, given the importance which has been placed on utilising individual professional development for the development of the school as a whole. It may be that there is more consistency than is apparent in the questions asked in this survey.

Teachers do appear to be more reliant since decentralisation on the expertise within their own school, and to have less access to other schools—with whom they may be in competition. Increased workloads and intensification of work, and the growing focus on professional staff development in the context of school development since decentralisation, are probably also playing a part in teachers' increased focus within their own school. Yet this does make it more difficult for schools to learn from each other, and to pass on effective ways of teaching. This raises questions of the systemic efficiency of school-site management in relation to teachers' professional development.

Although most trustees receive some training, it still remains in the written or informal forms it has been for some years. Trustees themselves identify the need for more training, or better understanding of the areas they are held responsible for (*see also* Wylie, 1997a). This is not a new identification, and remains one of the moot points of the reforms. Few school boards are dysfunctional, and most keep some continuity of membership. How important is it that trustees understand the work of schools, and their legal responsibilities to carry out their work? Is the difference one that would occur in any voluntary organisation where professionals are employed by lay people, and accountable to them? Is it the particular nature of school board responsibilities—to government as well as to themselves, which is different from most voluntary organisations—that makes trustees feel that there is a gap?

8 ADVICE, INFORMATION, AND SUPPORT

What happens when schools become responsible for seeking their own advice and information, at the same time as the government agencies change? As before the reforms, schools continue to get free printed information from the Ministry of Education and Education Review Office on the requirements on them and advice on how to meet these requirements, or make changes to schools. Ministry of Education national and regional offices also give some advice on property maintenance and development. The advisory service, now attached to colleges of education and funded partially through Ministry of Education contracts, also provides advice, particularly in rural areas.

The School Trustees Association is contracted by the Ministry of Education to provide its members with a free service giving advice on industrial relations, personnel, and equal employment opportunities. However, its government contract to provide general support through a system of local field officers was halved in the 1994 budget, and ultimately discontinued, since schools could not afford the increase in subscriptions that would have been needed to keep the service going.

Schools also have access to NZEI, the teachers' union, and the NZ Principals' Federation.

Changes in Sources of Information and Advice

Tables 86 to 88 in appendix 2 give principals' reports of their sources for information and advice on 11 key aspects of school life and policy. The main trends since 1989 are:

- Although most principals give cluster groups as one of their forms of contact with other principals, there has been a marked reduction in their identification of cluster groups as a main source of their information and advice. (Principals often had their own informal groups before the reforms; at the start of the reforms each school was assigned for training purposes to a cluster group, often combining both primary and secondary schools in a locality).
- Steady and high levels of use of advisers, and the written word. The advisory services were originally to become contestable, but after a review, they were relocated in colleges of education. Schools have free access to most of their services, but can pay for others. Three-quarters of the principals described their experiences of the advisory service as good or better (37 percent said it was excellent or very good). Fourteen percent found it satisfactory, and 8 percent had had problems with it (2 percent major). Principals of rural and the smallest schools were most likely to describe their experience as excellent/very good.
- A steady use of college of education, and, to a lesser extent, university staff.
- Little use of private consultants.
- Decreased use over all of sources of information and advice on Treaty of Waitangi and gender equity issues. (These aspects were key to the initial charters and training, but were less emphasised after 1990.)
- Increased use of the school's own teachers for financial and building maintenance information, at the same time as fewer principals use parents or voluntary people.

- Stable use of the private education service centres (set up with former government assets to provide schools with sources of school materials, such as art and craft material, and services such as financial and appointments) for financial advice, but a decrease in their use for advice on property and art and craft materials. Sixty-one percent of schools in the survey have a contract with an education service centre, much the same as in 1993 and 1990.
- The Education Review Office is not a major source of advice or information, though it is used by schools in relation to assessment.
- When the curriculum framework was in its infancy, principals made more use of education organisations, ERO, and the school community than they did when they were more familiar with it.

The changes in the curriculum and equity areas particularly indicate that principals use a wider range of sources when they are treading on new or unfamiliar ground. The same interpretation may also hold true for the property and financial areas; but, given principals' desires for more trustee involvement in these areas, and trustee views on the need for more parental input in these areas, one wonders whether it is more a decline in the availability of parents and voluntary people that has led to the decline in their use.

Principals' Contact with Each Other

Most principals have some contact with their colleagues in other schools. This has become increasingly important as a source of support and advice since the reforms. Principals also provide advice to schools on their appointments, particularly of principals.

Table 25

Principals' Contact with Their Colleagues

Form	(n = 181) %
Local principals' association	90
Cluster meetings	72
Informal	71
NZ Principals' Federation	57
NZEI principals' group	23

Other forms of principal collegial contact mentioned were specialist groups, such as intermediate and middle school principals, Māori principals, principals of Catholic schools, and principals of normal schools.

Principals of the smallest schools were least likely to mention the local principals' association. Principals at schools with rolls of 100 students or more were more likely to include the NZ Principals' Federation as one of their contacts with other principals (71 percent compared with 43 percent).

One likely reason for the high proportion of principals attending cluster meetings is that in rural areas the organisation of these meetings is done by the rural advisers attached to colleges of education.

The vitality of clusters varies from location to location, with anecdotal evidence indicating

that the variation is due to the degree of competition felt in a particular locality, and the energy and morale of individual principals. Principals with low morale—and the ones more likely to be facing problems (*see* chapter 9)—are thought to be less likely than prior to the reforms to share any problems with their fellows (*see also* Wylie, 1997c).

Seventy-six percent of the principals felt their contact with their colleagues was sufficient.

Do Schools Get the Advice They Need?

The next table shows principals' judgments of their access to useful advice on the main aspects of school work. Over all, satisfaction has increased somewhat since 1993. Over three-quarters of the principals thought they had satisfactory access to useful advice in 11 of the 19 aspects asked about, compared with 6 of the 17 aspects asked about in 1993. Areas which show particular improvement over 1993 satisfaction levels are the curriculum, audit requirements, and ERO requirements. However, there has been little change in those finding their access to assessment advice satisfactory. Equity issues also remain an area of some uncertainty for principals. We asked about the statements of service performance because of their impending introduction, despite principals' opposition, and their views that these statements will not assist the work of the school. It is interesting that principals feel least well informed about these.

Table 26

Schools' Access to Useful Advice

Topic (n=181)	Satisfactory %	Not sure %	Unsatisfactory %
Financial/accounting system	92	0	6
Budgeting/finances	91	1	7
Art and craft materials	88	5	6
Staff development	88	2	9
Communication with parents	82	6	9
Staff appraisal[n]	82	4	13
Building maintenance/repairs	80	4	15*+
Audit requirements	78*+	6	14
Curriculum	77*+	2	20
Personnel/human resources[n]	77	8	12
School development[n]	77	6	14
Gender equity issues	65	17	16
Special needs children	65	13	17
Individual children's problems	64*-	5	20
Treaty of Waitangi issues	62	17	20
Education Review Office requirements	60*+	12	27*-
Māori issues	59	15	24
Assessment	59	9	31
Statements of service performance[n]	41	11	44

n=new question in 1996 survey.

*=statistically significant changes from comparable ansers in previous years; "+" means an increase, "-" means a decrease.

Principals of high Māori enrolment schools were more confident than others that they were getting the advice they needed on Māori issues (74 percent). Those from the smallest schools were more confident in this area also (81 percent).

Small town principals were less confident than others that their access to advice was sufficient on communication with parents, individual children's problems, Treaty of Waitangi, equity for special needs children, and ERO reviews.

Decile 1–2 school principals were less confident than others that they had access to useful advice on staff appraisal, equity for special needs students, and building maintenance, but they were more confident than others about the quality of their advice on Māori issues.

Thirty-two percent of the principals thought their school was missing out on some needed advice or information, with 12 percent unsure—much the same proportions as in previous NZCER surveys.

Teachers' Sources of Information and Advice

Table 85 in appendix 2 shows that advisers from the teacher support service, and other teachers in the school, are the key sources of teachers' advice and information. Sixty-five percent of the teachers responding rated their experience of the teacher support service as good or better (24 percent describing it as excellent/very good). Twenty percent thought it was satisfactory. Ten percent had had no contact with it, and 3 percent had had problems. Teachers in the smallest schools were most positive about their experiences of the advisory service (50 percent).

Books and journals have also remained important sources of information for teachers. Ministry of Education-funded teacher-development contracts for the new curriculum and assessment frameworks have also become important sources of information and advice.

And the principal? The 1993 survey report documented the decline of the principal as a major source of teachers' information and advice on the curriculum, teaching methods, assessment, and needs of students from another culture. That picture remains much the same in 1996, with the addition of a decline from 51 percent to 39 percent of teachers in the survey citing their principal as a major source of advice and information on the New Zealand curriculum. Thus this trend of a greater distance between principals and their staff in the core work of teaching is confirmed. That this is happening while principals feel they are acting more as educational leaders raises some interesting questions about the nature of educational leadership—does it contain as much managerial work as educational?—and the different perceptions of teachers and principals.

The smaller the school, the more likely it was that the principal remained a major source of teachers' advice on the curriculum, assessment, and teaching methods. Teachers in decile 1–2 schools were less likely than others to mention their principal as a major source of their advice on teaching methods.

More teachers now feel there is some advice or information they need and are missing out on—43 percent, up from 27 percent in 1993, and 17 percent in 1990. Another 15 percent were unsure whether they needed more advice or information.

The table below shows the areas where they would like more information or advice. Most of these also appeared in 1990 and 1993, but stress management is a new topic.

Table 27

Topics on Which Teachers Have Unmet Needs for Advice

Topic (n=361)	%
Stress management	22
Assessment	16
Future teaching career	13
Teacher appraisal	12
Special needs students	11
Particular curriculum area	11
Effective roles and relationships in schools	10
Teaching methods	9
Classroom management	5
Teaching positions available	4

Forty-three percent of the teachers also thought their school was missing out on needed advice or information (up from 36 percent in 1993, and 22 percent in 1990). Another 14 percent were unsure.

Again, the pattern is much the same as in 1993, with the addition of stress management.

Table 28

Topics Which Teachers Identify Their School Needing Advice on

Topic (n=361)	%
Stress management	24
Improving children's social skills	17
Successful roles and relationships in schools	15
Innovation in teaching methods	13
Resolving conflict	12
Staff appraisal	12
Curriculum innovation	11
Financial management/budgeting	6
Equity issues	4

Rural teachers were less likely to feel their school was missing out on needed advice (29 percent), as were those in the smallest schools (25 percent).

Use of the Specialist Education Services

The Special Education Service (as it was in 1996) (SES) was one of the new education agencies to emerge from the reforms. It provides specialist support for schools, particularly for children with special needs, but has also moved into the dimensions of social skills, for example, school-wide approaches to cutting back the incidence of bullying. It also assesses student needs, an assessment schools must have to access Ministry of Education funding for their special needs children.

SES funding levels were heavily cut over the 1991–93 budgets, and have not made ground

since. This showed in a large rise in the 1993 survey for teachers having difficulty getting enough hours to match their children's needs.

In chapter one, we saw that more principals have at least 11 hours of special needs aide help each week in their school, but also an increase in those who think their school needs more special needs aide hours. Now we find that while teachers' experiences have remained steady (and have not improved since 1993), principals are having more problems—time lags in getting information and advice, and SES staff who cannot give the information and advice needed.

Table 29

Principals' and Teachers' Views of Problems with the Special Education Service

	Principals %		Teachers %	
Problem	1993 (n=191)	1996 (n=181)	1993 (n=336)	1996 (n=361)
Insufficient hours for pupils' needs	50	55	42	47
Insufficient SES staff	43	46	n/a	n/a
Time lag in getting information/advice	28	43*+	24	28
Time lag in getting decision	22	18	25	22
Insufficient money allocated to employ	20	24	17	19
teacher aides	8	15*+	11	11
Staff unable to give information/advice				

*+ =statistically significant changes (increase) from comparable answers in previous survey results.

These cumulative frustrations show in teacher and principal ratings of the quality of their experiences of the SES.

Table 30

Principals' and Teachers' Views of Their Experiences of the Special Education Service

	Principals %	Teachers %
Quality	1996 (n=181)	1996 (n=361)
Excellent/very good	15	10*-
Good	23	22
Satisfactory	23	25
Minor problems	21	16
Major problems	17*+	11
No contact yet	6	-

*=statistically significant changes from comparable ansers in previous years; "+" means an increase, "-" means a decrease.

All the schools which had had no contact with the SES were in rural areas. A quarter of the principals of the smallest schools had no contact with the SES.

The incidence of major problems experienced by teachers rose with the proportion of Māori enrolment, from 7 percent of low Māori enrolment schools to 17 percent of high Māori enrolment schools. Teachers in provincial towns also reported a higher incidence of minor

problems than others (43 percent). Thirty-one percent of the teachers in the smallest schools had had no contact with the SES.

The New Zealand School Trustees Association

Eighty-eight percent of primary school boards belong to NZSTA. While it communicates regularly with boards, its material may not always reach individual trustees: 49 percent of the trustees read NZSTA material on a regular basis, and 37 percent read it sometimes. Only 14 percent had never read it. This is much the same pattern as in 1993.

Those most likely to read STA material on a regular basis were chairpersons (74 percent), and those with curriculum, equal employment opportunities, board training, industrial relations, and special needs responsibilities.

Most of the trustees were positive about the NZSTA services made available to boards, though a sizable minority had not accessed its services.

Table 31

Trustees' Views of the NZ School Trustees Association Services

Area	Excellent / very good %	Good %	Satisfactory %	Varies in quality %	Needs improvements %	Do not know/ have no experience %
Newsletter	13	42	19	8	3	10
Industrial/employment advice	14	29	12	4	2	32
EEO advice	7	32	10	3	2	39
Training	11	26	21	13	6	21
Consultation of board of trustees	8	29	13	7	34	14
Help desk	7	18	7	4	4	56

Forty-seven of the trustees made suggestions for improvements; mostly oriented around a desire for improved consultation, communication, or more contact. Consultation of members was the area which trustees thought was in need of most improvement.

Trustee Contact with Other Trustees

Sixty-eight percent of the trustees had some contact with trustees in other schools, somewhat less than the 83 percent in 1993. Fifty-five percent of the trustees responding had some contact with other trustees in local schools, and 13 percent had contact with trustees whose schools were further away.

Summary

In their comparison of the introduction of school-site management in England, some US states,

and New Zealand, Williams, Harold, Robertson, and Southworth (1991) identify the continuation of government-funded channels of advice and support as a key ingredient of the relative smoothness of the New Zealand reforms. The survey evidence shows that much of the advice and information relied upon by people in schools in 1996 remains sourced by the services which are either contracted by government on behalf of schools as a whole (NZSTA and the advisory services), or through their colleagues. These appear to be largely satisfactory—with the exception of the SES, whose problems as experienced by teaching professionals are more ones of insufficient resourcing than inadequate quality.

The trend for principals to be less of a major source of advice for teachers on core teaching work than they were at the start of the reforms is confirmed in the 1996 survey data. It may be that other teachers in the school have assumed the role principals used to have before school-based management, and principals' necessary assumption of new administrative and management roles, but teachers do appear less confident than principals that they have the advice they need.

Stress management is a new topic amongst those identified by teachers as ones they and their school need advice on. This is consistent with the material in the next chapter on teacher workloads, morale, and job satisfaction.

9 WORKLOADS, MORALE, AND SATISFACTION

Looking at workloads in terms of hours, the previous NZCER surveys showed that principals' workloads rose substantially the year after the shift to school management, and stayed at that level. Teachers' workloads have steadily shifted upwards. Trustees' workloads stayed much the same from 1989 to 1993. Workload issues—the hours required to do the new work given to schools, as well as the new work itself— dominated descriptions of job satisfaction, and were identified as one of the main issues facing boards of trustees.

Principals' Workloads

A study of 39 non-teaching primary principals in the Wellington region in 1976 (Coleman 1976) found that only 13 percent worked more than 50 hours a week. In the first year of decentralisation, the national NZCER survey figure showed 65 percent of all primary principals working 50 hours a week or more, and 1 year later a complete reversal of the 1976 figure, with only 11 percent of principals working *fewer* than 50 hours a week. This high workload has continued.

Table 32

Principals' Average Work Hours per Week

Area	1989 % (n=174)	1990 % (n=207)	1993 % (n=191)	1996 % (n=181)
41–50 hours	35	11	12	9
51–60 hours	39	34	46	50
61–70 hours	14	42	36	36
71 hours or more	4	10	7	6

Work hours were connected with several school characteristics and with the school's financial position.

Teaching principals' average work hours were higher than those of their non-teaching colleagues, 61.2 hours a week, compared with 56.9 hours. They were twice as likely as non-teaching principals to note an increase in their workload over the last 12 months, and more likely to think their workload would continue to increase over the coming year.

Principals of decile 5–10 schools were more likely to be working 61 hours a week or more on average (55 percent compared with 27 percent of those in decile 1–4 schools).

Principals who thought their funding was adequate were working 4 hours a week fewer on average than those who thought it was not.

Principals expecting their school to be in deficit by the year's end worked more hours on average each week: 60.6 hours compared with 56 hours for those expecting a surplus, and 58 hours for those expecting their school to break even.

All but 3 percent of the principals said that the amount of time they put into their work was either the same as the previous year (45 percent), or had increased (52 percent, and substantially for 17 percent). This is much the same as in 1993 and 1991.

Their expectations of the year to come were much the same as in 1993—and more optimistic than their answers in both surveys about the reality of increase, suggesting that while principals continue to hope that they can control the level of their work, they cannot always contain it.

Thirty-four percent expected the amount of work they did to increase, 5 percent substantially, while 61 percent thought it would remain much the same. Only 3 percent anticipated a decrease.

As in 1993, many principals felt they were doing more administration and less teaching (59 percent), but also providing more professional leadership (39 percent). Forty percent were working more with their board, as one might expect in the year after an election.

It is administration, however, which takes more of a principal's time.

Table 33

Allocation of Principals' Time

Proportion of time → ↓ Area (n=181)	Average time %	Fewer than 10 %	10–19 %	20–29 %	30–49 %	50–69 %	Over 70 %
Classroom teaching	34	27	20	9	24	33	8
Administration	31	2	16	27	34	18	2
Educational leadership	18	24	34	27	12	4	–
Board of trustees work	11	46	43	10	1	–	–
Own development	6	77	22	1	–	1	–
Property	9	45	43	10	2	–	–

Sixty-one percent of the teaching principals spent more than 50 percent of their time teaching, compared with 2 percent of non-teaching principals. They spent the same proportion of their time on their own professional development as others, but had much lower proportions of time for all the other areas of their work asked about, including working with the school's board of trustees. Interestingly, non-teaching principals' judgments of their relationship with their board tended to be more positive than teaching principals. Thirty-six percent of the non-teaching principals spent more than 50 percent on administration (excluding property).

Principals of schools with rolls of more than 100 were twice as likely as the principals of smaller schools to spend more than 10 percent of their time on property management and educational leadership, and were much more likely to spend more than 50–69 percent of their time on administration.

Sources of Principals' Job Satisfaction

Teaching and working with students remains the most satisfying part of principals' work (46 percent identifying this in response to an open-ended question). A third also mentioned educational leadership, working with staff and school development, and, linked to this, the planning and development of successful systems for the school's management (12 percent).

Principals' other main sources of satisfaction came from student progress and achievements (12 percent), from working with parents and the board of trustees (8 percent), or having a well regarded school (7 percent). Only 3 percent gave administration as their main source of satisfaction.

Actual teaching remains a higher source of satisfaction for teaching principals than for their non-teaching colleagues, and educational leadership, less so. Workload and deadlines were 3 times more likely to be the main source of dissatisfaction for teaching principals than for non-teaching principals.

These sources of satisfaction show some consistency with previous years, with 2 changes. Educational leadership appears more strongly than it has before. In the first 2 years of the shift to self-managing schools, making financial decisions was relished by around a fifth. The novelty has receded, with only 3 percent of principals in 1993 and 1 percent in 1996 giving this as a major source of satisfaction. Growing difficulty in making operational grants stretch to meet school needs may also be a factor in the decline of the new power which came with decentralisation as a source of satisfaction.

Differences in principals' tasks are reflected in differences in the emphasis given to teaching and working with students—falling from 81 percent of the principals in the smallest schools to 27 percent of those in the largest schools; and in educational leadership, rising from 10 percent of those in the smallest schools to 45 percent of those in schools with rolls over 200, largely non-teaching principals. The pattern is similar in looking at the location of the principals' schools: rural and small town principals were around twice as likely to cite working with children as urban principals; but half as likely as urban and small town principals to mention educational leadership.

Sources of Principals' Job Dissatisfaction

What about the sources of dissatisfaction? Administrative work—"paperwork"—heads the list (34 percent), as it has done since 1990, but at almost half the frequency it had then. This indicates that many principals have come to terms of some sort with the additional administrative roles required of them in the shift to school-site management. However the amount of work, the continual demands, deadlines, and interruptions nag at 17 percent of the survey principals as the least satisfying part of their work. Nine percent identified the financial management aspect of their work as the worst.

Dealing with government education agencies, and with parents or their board, each have 13 percent of principals identifying this work as the least satisfying for them.

Nine percent cited dealing with students' behavioural problems.

Principals in the smallest schools were most disenchanted with administration (48 percent), and those in schools with rolls less than 200 (largely teaching principals), their workload. Dealing with social or behavioural problems was more of a source of dissatisfaction for principals of decile 1–6 schools than others (14 percent compared with 3 percent).

Further insight into what matters for principals is given in their answers to our open-ended question asking them to identify up to 3 things about their work that they would change if they could.

Table 34

Changes Principals Would Like To Make in Their Work

Change (n=181)	%
Less administration, more educational leadership	37
Have more support staff/become a non-teaching principal	31
Reduce work demands/responsibilities	28
Improve school resources	20
Change the role of ERO	10
Improve principals' pay	9
Slow down the curriculum changes	6

Slowing down the pace at which the new curricula were being introduced has already begun to occur, and ERO's approach is to be reviewed. Some improvement to the operational grant was made in the 1997 budget. The other frustrations identified in this list, however, have yet to be substantially addressed. They go, however, to the heart of the reforms, and the reasons for them. Were they, after all, simply an exercise to shift responsibility—and cost—on to local communities and school professionals, as part of a wider cost-shifting or reducing exercise? The evidence in this study is that principals continue to maintain as much of their focus on children's learning as they can, yet they still find their workload shaped by administration. This would seem to caution against any further shifting of administrative work to schools, without the extra financial or human resourcing to cover it.

Achievements

We asked principals to identify their main achievements over the past 2 years. The table below shows us what was important to individual principals rather more than the occurrence of the items listed—most schools, for example, received a good report from ERO, and most were engaged in implementing the new curricula.

Table 35

Principals' Achievements 1994–96

Achievement	%
Providing good leadership, planning	31
Good communication and relationships within school	30
Positive learning environment	22
Progress in implementing new (national) curricula	17
Keeping/getting good quality staff	15
Improvements to building or grounds	15
Improvements in student achievement	12
Good school reputation	12
Board of trustees development	8
Good ERO report	7
Growth in the school roll	7
Introduced appraisals	7
Introduction of Māori language or Māori unit	4

Fifty-seven percent of the principals had other hopes and plans which they had not been

able to realise over the past 2 years—including curriculum and assessment developments, building upgrades, staff and trustee development, increasing parent involvement, and having more time for their own family life. Lack of time had been their main obstacle (41 percent), with 23 percent also identifying lack of money (23 percent). Lack of principal and staff time can also be seen as a lack of money, an indication of the work in schools which is not able to be covered by present government staffing formulas and thus, government funding.

Eight percent each also identified lack of board or staff commitment to the project; and 3 percent, lack of staff support from external government agencies (including the Children and Young Persons' Service).

Principals at decile 1–6 schools were more likely to have had a project they could not achieve over the last 2 years than those in decile 7–10 schools.

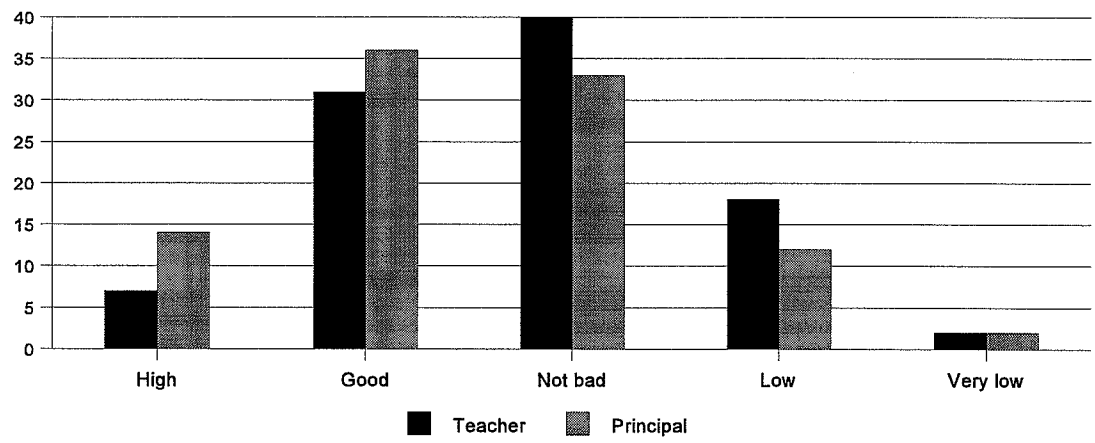
Principals in the largest schools were as likely as others to identify thwarted plans, but least likely to give time as the reason. Time was the main obstacle for teaching principals who had wished to make some innovation.

Principals of the smallest schools were least likely to have wanted to make changes they had not been able to achieve over the past 2 years.

Principals' and Teachers' Morale

Where does this leave principals? One gains a picture from this material of high engagement and high commitment, but also some weariness and frustration. The next figure shows that around half the survey principals described their morale as good or high, and that teachers' morale is slightly lower than that of principals.

Figure 10
Teachers' and Principals' Morale



There was no link between principals' morale level and their average hours per week, their length of service at the school, the number of years they had worked as a principal, or the school's relations with other local schools. But those whose morale was not bad, low, or very low were marginally more likely to report an increased workload over the past year, and around twice as likely as those whose morale was good or high to expect their workload to

increase over the next year. Thus morale appears to be linked to a sense of having some control over one's workload, as well as its amount.

Those whose morale was good or high were:

- less likely to have a particular project they had not been able to achieve over the last 2 years (38 percent compared with 60 percent of those whose morale was not bad, or low);
- half as likely to describe their board as coping or struggling (23 percent, compared with 41 percent of those whose morale was not bad, and 54 percent of those whose morale was low);
- half as likely as those whose morale was low to describe their relations with their board as satisfactory or problematic (9 percent compared with 18 percent);
- more likely to describe their relations with the school staff as excellent or very good (from 81 percent of those with high morale to 38 percent of those with low morale);
- much more likely to expect to remain principal of their school for another 5 years (42 percent of those whose morale was high, 23 percent of those whose morale was good, and 5 percent of those whose morale was not bad, or low);
- non-teaching principals, at large schools, in urban locations;
- at least 30 years old; and
- marginally more likely to be principals at decile 9–10 schools.

Teaching principals were more likely than non-teaching principals to express frustration with their workload, to feel they had too little time to provide educational leadership, and to feel time was against them in trying to make changes.

Teachers with good or high levels of morale worked fewer hours than those whose morale was less than good. They were more likely to think the reforms had had a positive impact in their classroom, on their relations with parents, and with teachers in other local schools.

Teachers' Workloads

Teachers' working hours have steadily risen from an average work week of 45.8 hours a week in 1989, to an average work week of 48.3 in 1996. This is based on teachers' estimates of the hours they work outside the 32.5 hours of the normal class week. The next table shows the pattern of increases over the last 7 years.

Table 36

Teachers' Hours Each Week Spent on Outside Class Hours

	1989 % (n=414)	1993 % (n=336)	1996 % (n=361)
1–6	9	8	8
7–10	28	16	13
11–15	30	24	24
16–20	19	26	31
21–25	10	16	16
more than 25 hours	3	8	8

Senior staff were almost twice as likely as scale A teachers to work more than 20 hours a week outside the classroom. Forty-five percent of the senior teaching staff put in 21 hours or more each week over and above the classroom hours (making a week of at least 53.5 hours).

Teachers with classes of more than 30 students were twice as likely as others to work more than 25 hours above class hours. Those with fewer than 20 students were less likely to be spending 6 hours or more on assessment and report writing. They were also less likely to judge their workload as excessive (32 percent rising to 50 percent of those with classes over 30), and less likely to report their morale as less than good (44 percent compared with 67 percent of those with higher classes).

Teachers who described their workload as excessive were twice as likely as others to be working 21 hours or more a week above class hours.

Only 2 percent of the teachers responding described the amount of their workload as fine, and 26 percent noted that it varied. Thirty-eight percent of the teachers described the amount of their workload as excessive, and 33 percent as bearable.

Rural teachers were least likely to describe their workload as excessive (24 percent), as were those in the smallest schools (13 percent).

Teachers who found their workload excessive were more likely to report a major increase in the amount of their workload, and negative impacts on all the other aspects of their work we asked about: the quality of children's learning in their class, on what they taught, on their teaching style, on their relations with their colleagues, with their principal, on their job satisfaction, and on the quality of their life outside school. They had no more increases in assessment work than others, but they were more likely to report an increase in administrative tasks.

Of those who had been teaching since 1989, 46 percent thought the changes to education administration had a major and negative effect on the quality of their life outside school, and 24 percent, a negative but minor effect. Only 6 percent thought the changes had been positive for their life outside work.

Senior staff were more likely to say the reforms had resulted in a major increase to their workload (82 percent compared with 64 percent of scale A teachers); and a major and negative impact on the quality of their life outside work (52 percent compared with 37 percent of scale A teachers).

Seventy-seven percent of the teachers responding said they were doing more assessment than they were in 1989, and 60 percent reported on increase in the amount of administrative work they were doing. The emphasis on assessment is coming from several sources: the new curriculum framework, and ERO reviewers seeking evidence of student achievement. The next table shows that preparation for classroom time takes more time on average than other aspects of teachers' work, closely followed by assessment and its associated paperwork.

Table 37

Average Hours per Week of Teachers' Outside Class Time Given to Key Teaching and Administrative Tasks

Hours → Task (n=361) ↓	Up to 2 %	2–5 %	6–10 %	11–15 %	16+ %
Preparation for classroom work	11	33	37	10	4
Marking, assessment, and report writing	23	47	20	3	2
School meetings and contact with parents	48	38	4	1	0
Training/staff development/receiving advice	48	14	1	1	0
School administration	49	27	4	1	0
Policy/curriculum	57	18*+	3*+	0	0

*+ = statistically significant changes (increase) from comparable answers in previous survey results.

Teachers' Job Satisfaction

Fifty-three percent of the teachers who had been teaching in 1989 said their job satisfaction had decreased as a result of the reforms; 24 percent reported a large decrease, and 29 percent a small decrease. Twenty-three percent reported an increase in job satisfaction—6 percent a large increase, and 17 percent a small increase. A further 17 percent said their job satisfaction remained unchanged.

What are the sources of teachers' job satisfaction? As in previous years, it lies in teaching, in working with children, and seeing them learn. Forty-eight percent described children's progress as their main source of job satisfaction, 33 percent working with children, and 29 percent teaching and meeting children's learning needs. Other sources mentioned by 5–9 percent were working with their colleagues; planning, organising, and making decisions; and getting positive feedback from parents. But it is the work and relationships with individual children that lie at the heart of teachers' work satisfaction.

Least satisfying for teachers are the aspects of their work that involve administration and paperwork (43 percent). Then comes assessment (24 percent), and their workload, associated stress, and lack of time to do everything that should be done (19 percent). Five to 9 percent also mentioned dealing with children's poor behaviour, lack of parental or community support, having too large a class, and a new one—having too few resources.

What would teachers change about their work if they could? Here are their suggestions, in response to an open-ended question. Most centre around reducing the workload, or making it less intense, with less distraction from simultaneous demands.

Table 38

Teachers' Desired Changes in Their Work

Change	%
Reduce class sizes	29
Change/reduce assessment requirements	26
Reduce administration/paperwork	25
More non-contact time for preparation, etc.	18
Reduce the workload	16
Increase pay/pay parity with secondary teachers	16
More funding/resources for classroom work	14
More time working with children	14
More support staff	13
Fewer non-teaching duties	10
Fewer discipline/behaviour problems	8
Better provision for special needs	7

The Continued Elusiveness of Non-contact Time

Teaching continues to mean direct, "hands on, voice on" work in the classroom. The shift to school-based management has yet to produce any of the increase in time available to teachers to prepare for their classroom work, and to work together in planning and developing programmes which is identified as one of the ingredients of effective schools, particularly when there is an emphasis on whole school programmes (Fullan & Hargreaves 1991), and of educational systems in countries which did better than most in the recent international study of mathematics (Budge, 1997).

Only 37 percent of the teachers had some non-contact time, little different from the 35 percent in 1989. Schools may be purchasing some additional teaching staff, but they did not appear to be using these staff to allow existing staff more non-contact time.

Not all senior staff had some non-contact time: 57 percent did, as did 27 percent of scale A teachers.

Those who did have some non-contact time did not have very much of it: 39 percent had an hour or less, 30 percent 1–2 hours, 17 percent, 3–4 hours, and only 12 percent had more than 4 hours a week. Twenty-one percent of senior staff had 3 or more hours' non-contact time compared with 7 percent of scale A teachers. But the reality for senior staff in primary schools seems to remain that they are mainly classroom teachers, whose extra responsibilities are additional to that work, rather than replacing it. Indeed, we find that they spend just as much time outside classroom hours as other teachers in preparation for classroom work, assessment, and curriculum development, but more time in school administration. One change since 1993 is that senior staff no longer spend more time than other teachers on training and curriculum development outside classroom hours.

Table 39

Teachers' Use of Non-contact Time

Use of Time	Senior teaching staff 1990 % (n=127)	Senior teaching staff 1993 % (n=139)	Senior teaching staff 1996 % (n=120)	Scale A teachers 1990 % (n=237)	Scale A teachers 1993 % (n=189)	Scale A teachers 1996 % (n=241)
School administration	29	38	36	5	13	15
Update pupil records	25	31	19	19	19	17
Discuss work with other staff	21	24	23	15	12	11
Talk to parents	17	24	14	5	7	5
Prepare resources	–	24	19	–	18	26
Test children	21	22	29	12	12	14
Appraise staff	–	21	18	–	0	3
Mark work	–	19	13	–	17	13
Teach other teachers' classes	–	19	18	–	6	5
Plan lessons	19	19	16	17	16	15
Attend management meetings	–	18	13	–	4	3
Develop school policy	23	18	15	3	3	3
Observe other staff	23	17	23	4	4	7
Update teaching skills and knowledge	–	12	8	–	5	8
Discussions with staff in other schools	11	9	7	5	4	3
Maintain library	–	9	4	–	5	12
Tutor teacher[n]	–	–	15	–	–	3
Maintain computers[n]	–	–	4	–	–	2

n=new question in 1996 survey.

Responsibilities Beyond the Classroom

Teachers' work is centred on their individual classes, but all teachers have additional responsibilities within the school. The next table shows that the pattern of most of these responsibilities has remained consistent since the shift to school-based management, and reflects what was already happening in schools before the reforms. There are some interesting exceptions: a growth in the proportion of teachers leading school choirs or orchestras at the same time as a decline in the proportion of teachers involved in cultural clubs and school plays or display days. One would have expected an increase in all these activities, since they allow the school to be showcased to parents and prospective parents, and school promotion has taken on a new prominence with decentralisation and per-student funding. But these are also time-consuming activities, and thus teachers' high workloads appear to prevent their engagement in all of these activities.

This illustrates how different currents in the reforms can cut against one another. In this case, the need for schools to promote themselves and offer something distinctive for their students in the more competitive environment of decentralisation conflicts with the need for senior staff to take on more managerial and administrative roles when schools take on more responsibilities. As we shall see later, it is also the case that many primary schools are not in direct competition, and thus while this conflict between administration, extra provision, and school promotion exists in principle, it may not be real in many schools. The high workloads, however, are real.

The proportion of teachers involved in staff supervision (other than tutoring beginning

teachers) and student counselling also appear to be declining; again these are areas where one would have expected some growth.

Table 40

Teachers' Non-classroom Responsibilities

Responsibility	1989 % (n=414)	1991 % (n=396)	1993 % (n=336)	1996 % (n=361)
Responsibility for a specific curriculum	87	86	83	83
area	–	–	–	81
Playground duty[n]	–	–	56	61
Responsibility for a budget area	–	54	46	44
Development of school policy	44	37	35	37
Sports supervision/training	–	–	–	34
Senior position[n]	–	–	–	31
Syndicate team leadership[n]	–	25	27	25
Fundraising	37	29	25	25
Liaison with group of parents	–	26	23	24
Staff appraisal	27	27	24	23
Library	–	25	21	22
Staff representative on board of trustees	–	–	–	22
Special needs students[n]	31	26	23	21*
School play/display day	–	–	–	19
Tutor teacher[n]	24	20	21	17
Health	–	–	–	17
School patrols[n]	–	22	19	16
Computers	–	19	20	15
NZEI representative	6	15	14	14*
School choir/orchestra	–	–	23	13*
Staff supervision	–	23	15	12*
Student counselling	17	10	10	9*
Cultural club	11	8	9	6
School newsletter				

n=new question in 1996 survey.

*=statistically significant changes from comparable answers in previous years; "+" means an increase,

"–" means a decrease.

Senior staff were more likely to have responsibility for a budget area (82 percent compared with 53 percent of scale A teachers), provide syndicate or team leadership (76 percent compared with 13 percent), supervise staff (35 percent compared with 5 percent), be engaged in staff appraisals (53 percent compared with 11 percent) and in the development of school policy (60 percent compared with 40 percent), be a tutor teacher for training or beginning teachers (33 percent compared with 15 percent), have responsibility for special needs students (33 percent compared with 18 percent), and provide student counselling (25 percent compared with 7 percent). They were also more likely to have responsibility for liaison with a group of parents, for the school's cultural club, and special needs students. However, they shared in the

other responsibilities as well, including playground duty.

One interesting aspect of school work which this comparison shows is that there appears to be no clearcut boundary between senior staff and others; some scale A teachers are involved in most aspects of the work one might think of as senior staff work. Given that senior staff were more likely to take responsibility for school cultural clubs, perhaps the decline in the proportion of teachers responsible for these reflects the additional demands on senior staff since the administrative reforms.

Looking at this list alongside the non-contact hours available to teachers, one also wonders how the tasks outlined here can be accomplished in addition to teachers' classroom responsibilities.

Teachers' Workloads and Morale

Teachers' workloads have a bearing on morale, job satisfaction, and the quality of life outside work. Thirty-four percent of those who described their workload as excessive reported their morale as low or very low, compared with 13 percent of those whose workload was bearable, and 14 percent of those whose workload varied. Thirty-five percent of those whose workload was excessive reported that the education reforms had had a major negative effect on their job satisfaction, compared with 15 percent of those whose workload was bearable, and 11 percent of those whose workload varied. A similar pattern is evident in relation to teachers' quality of life outside work: major negative effects for 60 percent of those whose workload is excessive, 37 percent of those who describe their workload as bearable, and 24 percent whose workload varies.

Parallel patterns were evident in relation to morale, with similar interrelations between morale levels and teacher judgments of the effect of the education administration reforms on their job satisfaction and quality of life outside the school.

Teachers in bulk-funded schools had slightly higher morale than others: 52 percent described it as good compared with 30 percent of teachers in other schools; however, the incidence of those with low morale was much the same.

There was no difference in reports of morale level between senior staff and scale A teachers. None of the scale A teachers whose morale was high, however, were interested in applying for senior positions; most of those who were so interested reported their morale as either good or not bad. Those whose morale was good or not bad were also more interested in holding positions of responsibility than others.

Teachers in the smallest schools were most likely to describe their morale as high (25 percent). This may reflect some of the aspects of small schools which emerge in this survey, such as lower class sizes, more satisfaction with government funding and staffing levels, and more adequate classroom materials.

Trustees' Workloads

The average number of hours given each week to trustee work in the 1996 survey was 3.43 hours, only slightly less than the 3.5 in 1993, but somewhat less than the 4.2 hours of the first year of the reforms. Given that schools were by 1996 familiar with their new responsibilities, were familiar with what would be asked of them in ERO reviews, had systems in place, and were reviewing rather than developing charters and policies from scratch, this average figure

seems a fair indication of the real workload for trustees in primary schools, given their present responsibilities. Trustees most likely to be working 6 hours or more on average each week were chairpersons, those with personnel or staffing responsibilities, finance and fundraising, special needs, and liaison with the school's Parent Teacher Association (PTA). More Māori trustees and those at high Māori enrolment schools were also giving 6 hours or more a week to their school (29 percent compared with 12 percent of trustees in other schools).

Trustees' Satisfaction

What did the trustees responding to this survey identify as the major source of their satisfaction with their work? The next table shows some interesting changes over the years. Just as principals were more excited about their ability to make decisions for their school in the early years of the reforms, so it seems that it was the novelty of being involved in decisionmaking that was important: and now it is how those decisions are made, and what effect they have that trustees think of.

Table 41

Sources of Trustees' Satisfaction with Their Work

Source	1990 % (n=257)	1991 % (n=261)	1993 % (n=254)	1996 % (n=251)
Making decisions about the school	43	33	32	24
Having school running well	0	19	11	23
Seeing progress/improvements	19	25	22	17
Doing things for children	19	27	20	13
Working as part of a team	12	22	17	11
Positive relationships at school	0	7	5	11
Good quality of education at school	0	4	10	10
School community relationships/support	8	9	0	–

The major sources of trustee dissatisfaction were a lack of funding or the need to fundraise (20 percent), paperwork (17 percent), dealing with government agencies (12 percent), the workload (11 percent), meetings (7 percent), and the inability to make progress in the school (3 percent). These remain much the same as previous years, with 2 exceptions: only 1 or 2 now mentioning conflict or criticism, lack of role clarity, or personnel and industrial relations.

Summary

High workloads continue to mark, or mar, the achievement of school-based management in New Zealand. They are particularly high for teaching principals, senior teaching staff, and teachers with large classes. High workloads are also associated with decreased job satisfaction, deterioration in the quality of life outside work, and the attribution to the reforms of more negative than positive impacts.

The original satisfaction of having control over funding allocations and other decisions has worn off, exposing rather more clearly the administrative work which came with the reforms.

This administrative work seems to principals and teachers to have too great a weight in their work, eroding the time and energy they have for the core work of schools, teaching and learning. Teachers have not cut back on their extra-classroom responsibilities to accommodate the new administrative demands. Nor have their non-contact hours been increased.

Trustees' average work hours have been shaved back since 1989, but remain high for volunteers who also have family responsibilities, and are a source of dissatisfaction for trustees.

Again, one returns to the resourcing of school self-management, and the mounting evidence that while schools were probably—initially—sufficiently resourced to carry on their teaching work, they were not adequately resourced for the administrative work that came their way. This could only be accommodated at the expense of other school work, and initiatives to improve that work, such as increasing non-contact time for teacher preparation.

10 PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT, CONTACT, AND SATISFACTION WITH THEIR CHILD'S SCHOOL

The level of parental involvement, and contact with staff, in New Zealand primary schools was already high before the decentralisation which was intended, amongst other things, to increase it still further. Previous NZCER surveys showed that the level of parental involvement and contact remained stable, as did parental satisfaction with their level of contact.

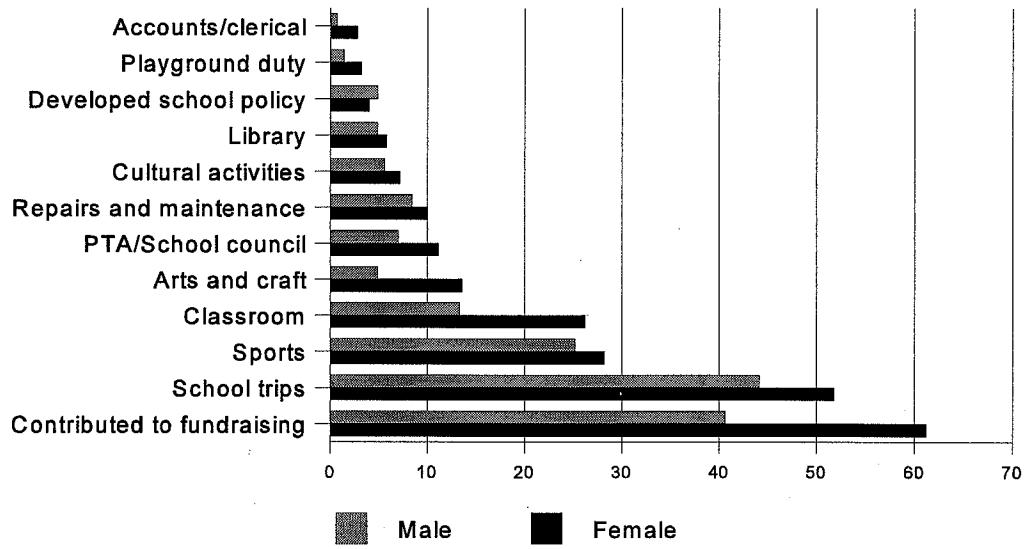
The surveys also showed a stable and high level of parental satisfaction with the quality of their child's schooling, and the information they received about their child's progress and programme. Class size was the parents' main concern in relation to their child's education.

Parental Involvement

Seventy-one percent of the parents responding to the 1996 survey had some involvement in the activities of their child's school. There appears to have been some shrinkage from previous years.

Figure 11 shows that mothers took a larger role than fathers in many school activities, including some areas which have been thought of as more masculine, for example, repairs and maintenance, and sports. But fathers were slightly more likely to be involved in developing school policy.

Figure 11
Parental Involvement in Child's School by Gender



Few of the reasons why parents did not help in their child's school had much to do with the school itself, or its communication with parents. Twenty-six percent of the parents said they had no time to give to their child's school (slightly up from 20 percent in 1993). Five percent also preferred to leave education to the school, 4 percent said the school had not asked for parent help, 2 percent were not comfortable in the school, and 1 percent each would like some training to provide help, were involved in another child's school or early childhood education centre, or had had their offer of help refused by school staff.

Fathers were almost twice as likely as mothers to have had no involvement in their child's school. Lack of time was the reason given by almost all these fathers.

More Pakeha/European parents had some involvement in their child's school than parents from other ethnic groups. Māori parents were more likely than Pakeha/European parents to say they were not comfortable in the school, had not been asked to help, and would prefer to let the school get on with the job of education. The positive aspect of these findings is that 65 percent of the Māori parents responding to the survey were involved; the sobering aspect is that this proportion has not increased over the time of the NZCER surveys, indicating that something more than decentralisation is needed to increase Māori parents' involvement in children's schools. The schools in the parent subsample of this survey were all mainstream, with none of the kura kaupapa Māori whose growth has been rapid[12] since decentralisation and the greater availability of government funding for kura (though this has never matched the number of potential kura). Kura kaupapa Māori do depend substantially on Māori parental involvement.

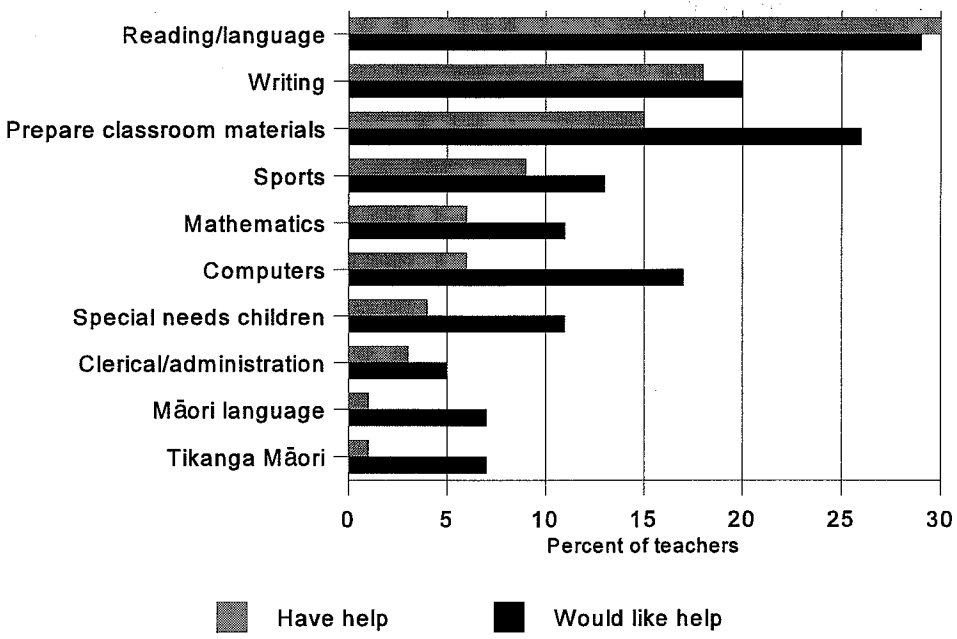
Parental Help in the Classroom

Forty-five percent of the teachers had voluntary help from parents in their classrooms. The level of voluntary help has fluctuated since 1989, when it was 61 percent, to 45 percent in 1990 and 1991, and 52 percent in 1993, but the trend does seem to indicate a lower level of parental help in classrooms since the reforms began.

Forty percent of the teachers responding would like (more) help from parents, much the same as in 1993, but less than the 52 percent in 1989. Teachers who already have some parental help were keener to have more than those who had none. The next figure shows what kind of help parents give teachers, compared with the proportion of teachers who would like help in these areas of their work. Reading is the main area where parents provide classroom help.

[12] From 13 in 1992 to 43 in 1996.

Figure 12
Parental Help in Classrooms



Decile 1–2 school teachers were least likely to have parental help in their classrooms (26 percent), and most likely to want parental help (60 percent, compared with 32 percent for decile 9–10 school teachers). Teachers in low Māori enrolment schools were least interested in having (more) parental help (30 percent).

Parent Involvement in School Decisionmaking and Policy

The next table shows that principals' perception of parental participation in school decisionmaking either remained much the same in 1996 as in 1989, or showed a decline in every area but discipline, which has been the prime issue raised by parents with school boards. Decile 1–4 school principals were more likely to report that their school's parents were not interested in being involved in policy development or curriculum.

The table shows the proportion of principals reporting the participation of different groups in school decisionmaking at their schools. It does not show the proportion of each group who actually take part in these decisions.

Table 42

Principals' Perception of Teachers, Board of Trustees, and Parent Participation in School Decisionmaking

People Involved → ↓Area (n=181)	Teachers %	Trustees %	Parents %	Students %
Discipline policy	87	84*+	51*+	17
Curriculum	87*-	56*-	20	9
Student assessment policy	84	44*-	14*-	2*-
Performance appraisal policy	72	73*-93	2	0
Budget allocation	70	97	15*-	4
School organisation	67	56	10	5*-
Special needs funding allocation[n]	50	36	14	2
Allocation of teachers to classes	46	15	2	0
Māori language funding	38*-93	56	6*-93	0

n=new question in 1996 survey.

*=statistically significant changes from comparable answers in previous years; "+" means an increase, "-" means a decrease.

Discipline is also the policy area that is most likely to attract parental involvement. The proportion of schools reporting general parental involvement in policy development has remained much the same since 1991.

Table 43

Principals' View of Parent Involvement in Policy Development in Their School

Policy area	General %	Some parents %	Not yet %	Not interested %	Not appropriate %	Not involved %
School discipline	27	56	3	7	3	6
Equity issues	18	42	4	23	3	9
Special needs	15	55	6	8	6	11
Curriculum	13	52	4	18	7	6

Trustees' perceptions give a slightly different picture.

Table 44

Trustees' Views of Parent (Other Than Trustee) Involvement in Policy Development and Decisions

Policy Area (n=270)	Most %	A few %	None %	Not sure %
Equity issues	7	15	60*+	10
Curriculum	9	24	55	8
Reporting to parents on school policy and programmes	20	23	48	4
Reporting to parents on student progress	27	17	45	6
Discipline	15	32	43	4
Playground behaviour	13	34	41	6
Healthy schools initiative	14	26	29	16

*+ = statistically significant changes (increase) from comparable answers in previous survey results.

The larger the school, the less likely it was for trustees to report that parents were involved in making decisions about the school's curriculum (38 percent in the largest schools, increasing to 53 percent of those in the smallest schools). Rural and small town trustees also reported more parental involvement in curriculum decisionmaking (49 percent compared with 35 percent of city trustees).

Trustees were less happy with the level of parental involvement in developing school policies: 29 percent thought it was not enough; 27 percent thought it was enough, in some areas; and only 36 percent thought it was generally enough. The larger the school, the less likely it was for the trustees to feel happy with the level of parent involvement in developing policy (26 percent of those in the largest schools compared with 44 percent of those in the smallest schools). Rural trustees were happier than others with their school's parental involvement in policy (44 percent compared with 27 percent of city trustees, and 34 percent of small town trustees).

Trustees from mid and high Māori enrolment schools were less satisfied with the general level of parental involvement in developing school policies (25 percent compared with 45 percent). Forty-two percent of decile 1–2 school trustees were not satisfied with the level of parental involvement in developing school policies compared with 26 percent of others.

Yet most of the parents surveyed had confidence in their school's policy developments and showed little sign that they thought more parents should be involved. Sixty-nine percent of the parents in this survey were satisfied with the way their school was reviewing and developing its policies. Twenty-one percent felt they did not know what was happening. Only 7 percent would like to have more input.

Only 12 percent of the parents said there was an area of school life where they would like to have a say, and felt they did not. A further 5 percent were unsure. These areas included curriculum (4 percent); discipline, the direction of the school, and health and safety (2 percent each); and class composition, the quality of teaching staff, the provision of extracurricular activity, and consultation with parents (1 percent each).

Parents who would like to have more of a say in their child's school were:

- more likely to have tertiary qualifications;
- more likely to feel they did not have enough contact with their child's teacher, the school principal, and the school board;
- more likely to have a concern they would feel uncomfortable about raising with their child's teacher, the school principal, and the school board;
- more likely to want more information from the school;
- more likely to want to change something about their child's education;
- just as likely as others to have some involvement in their child's school, more likely to be dissatisfied with the level of parental involvement in their school, yet less likely than others to know how their board was doing (54 percent); and
- less likely to be happy with the general quality of their child's schooling, yet also less likely to have decided which school they would like next for their child. Where they had made this decision, they were also more likely to say that money, the school's enrolment scheme, or transport would provide obstacles to their child's being able to attend the school of their choice.

Satisfaction with the Level of Parental Involvement

Parents

Sixty-two percent of the parents were satisfied with the level of parent involvement in their school, another 19 percent were not sure, and 18 percent thought it could be improved. This is a higher level of satisfaction than in 1993, but much the same as in 1991 and in 1989, when a national opinion poll conducted for the Department of Education just before the reforms began found that only 15 percent of primary school parents were dissatisfied with the current level of involvement parents could have with their child's school (Heylen, 1989a).

Trustees

By contrast only 29 percent of the trustees surveyed were generally satisfied with the level of parental involvement in their school, and 36 percent satisfied with the level for some areas only. A third were not satisfied. The degree of satisfaction is slightly lower than the 1993 survey results, and somewhat lower than the 1991 survey figures, when 39 percent were generally satisfied, and 25 percent were not.

There has been a noticeable upsurge since 1993 in the proportion of trustees seeking more parental involvement, in all areas asked about other than curriculum development.

Table 45

Activities in Which Trustees Would Like To See More Parent Involvement

	1993 (n=292) %	1996 (n=270) %
Fundraising	26	64
School maintenance	20	43
Sport	19	39
Classroom help	20	37
School clubs/electives	15	31
Policy development	21	30
Board work	13	25
Curriculum development	14	16

Trustees in schools with rolls over 100 showed more interest in increasing parental involvement in fundraising than did those in smaller schools. Twice as many trustees of very low Māori enrolment schools were satisfied with the general level of parental involvement in their school (44 percent, compared with 19 percent). More rural trustees were also satisfied, 36 percent, compared with 22 percent of city trustees. Trustees at decile 7–10 schools were also happier than others with the general amount of parent involvement in their school, 37 percent compared with 21 percent.

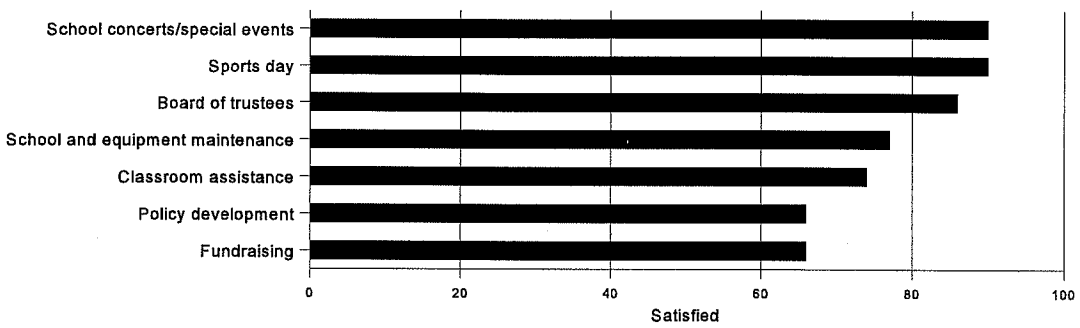
Trustees in decile 1–4 schools were keener than others to have more parental involvement with classroom help and school clubs. Trustees in high Māori enrolment schools were more likely to want to see more parental involvement in all areas asked about other than sport.

Principals

Most principals thought that the level of parental support was satisfactory for the 7 areas of school life that we asked them about.

Figure 13

Principals' Satisfaction with the Level of Parental Help in Their School



Principals of high Māori enrolment schools were less likely than others to feel that the level of parental help was satisfactory in classrooms or in policy development. The higher the school's decile, the higher the satisfaction with parental assistance with classroom work (55 percent rising to 89 percent), fundraising (61 percent rising to 85 percent), and policy development (42 percent rising to 81 percent).

Thirty-four percent of the principals had no problems in getting parent help. Fifty-four percent sometimes experienced problems, and 15 percent had general difficulty getting parental help. Few decile 9–10 schools had difficulty getting parent help (6 percent). Likewise, principals of low Māori enrolment schools were half as likely as others to say there was a problem getting parental help (7 percent).

Principals of small town schools were most likely to report that they sometimes had difficulty getting parent help (86 percent). They were also least likely to describe the level of community support for the school as high (9 percent), and most likely to wonder if the advice they received on communication with parents was adequate (32 percent).

Support from the Community

Most schools had some voluntary support from people who were not parents of children at the school—73 percent. Sixty-two percent considered the level of this support satisfactory, 17 percent were unsure, and 17 percent found it unsatisfactory.

Community support in general was reported by principals as high for 38 percent of the schools, sufficient for 36 percent, variable for 13 percent, and low for another 13 percent.

Principals of high Māori enrolment schools were more likely than others to report low levels of community support (24 percent). More decile 1–2 school principals also reported that community support for their school was low (27 percent, falling to 6 percent of decile 9–10 schools). Rural school principals were least likely to describe the level of co mmunity support as low.

Parental Contact with the School

Parents who worked part time and mothers who were not in paid employment had higher levels of contact with their child's teacher, principal, and the school's board of trustees. Parents who were unemployed or receiving a benefit and those who were in professional jobs were the ones who had less contact than others, had less involvement in the school's activities, were more likely to feel they did not have enough contact with the child's teacher, and were less likely to describe their access to information on their child's classroom programme as good. This pattern applied in the 1993 survey for unemployed parents, but not for professional parents.

Parental Contact with Their Child's Teacher

Seventy-five percent of the parents responding thought they had enough contact with their child's teacher, with a further 7 percent unsure. This is much the same picture as shown in the previous NZCER surveys. Table 46 below shows the consistency of parental contact with teachers since the start of the reforms. The patterns remain stable, rather than showing any increase in contact.

Table 46

Parents' Contact with Child's Teacher

Area	1990 % (n=645)	1991 % (n=701)	1993 % (n=634)	1996 % (n=676)
Talk about child's written report	75	79	81	78
Talk about child's work	81	72	72	72
Greetings when parent takes child to school	64	61	62	64
Informal talk at school functions	51	50	49	41
Informal talk on school trips	48	47	46	38
Discussion about class programme/curriculum	-	32	35	33
At school meetings[n]	-	-	-	24
Parent sees teacher around the community	28	32	35	20
At class meetings[n]	-	-	-	17
Parent helps in classroom	21	20	19	16
Playground/crossing/transport duty[n]	-	-	-	14
Talk about school policy	17	16	18	11
No contact	1	2	2	2

n=new question in 1996 survey.

The main comments made by parents in relation to their views on their contact with the child's teacher was that the teacher was available if needed (14 percent). Four percent noted their own lack of availability during the day. One percent had problems with teachers being unapproachable, and 4 percent wanted more discussion of their child's progress. Three parents thought it was up to the teacher to make the approach to parents.

Parents who felt they did not have enough contact with their child's teacher:

- had around half the number of contacts with their child's teacher as others—twelve the 15 parents who had no contact at all with their child's teacher felt they did not have enough contact with that teacher;
- were more likely to be men (24 percent compared with 15 percent of women); and
- were 3 times as likely as others to have concerns they would feel uncomfortable raising with their child's teacher.

As in previous surveys, only 10 percent of the parents responding had a concern which they would feel uncomfortable raising with their child's teacher. These concerns included class discipline or poor behaviour on the part of children, the curriculum, the quality of teaching, the child's progress, and the teacher's attitude to the child. A few parents also noted that their previous attempts to talk with the teacher about these concerns had failed.

Māori parents were more likely to have an issue they would like to raise with their child's teacher, but would not feel comfortable talking to them about. They were also marginally less happy with the general quality of their child's schooling than Pakeha/European parents.

Contact with the School Principal

Parents have less contact with the principal at their child's school than with their child's teacher, but this contact satisfied 73 percent of those responding, with a further 10 percent unsure. Again, this degree of satisfaction is consistent with the previous NZCER surveys, as is the picture of the kinds of contact which parents report.

Table 47

Parents' Contact with the School Principal

Contact	1990 % (n=645)	1991 % (n=701)	1993 % (n=634)	1996 % (n=676)
Greetings when parent takes child to school	60	55	53	59
Informal talk at school functions	45	43	42	36
Talk about child	37	34	36	28
See at sports events[n]	-	-	-	25
At school meeting[n]	-	-	-	25
See around community	-	25	27	21
No contact	17	20	17	19
Informal talk on school trips	20	18	20	16
Talk about child's written report	13	14	16	15
Talk about school policy	22	19	23	13
Talk about class programme/curriculum	-	15	17	12
Principal is child's teacher[n]	-	-	-	10
At whānau meetings[n]	-	-	-	2

n=new question in 1996 survey.

Nine percent of the parents responding had some concern which they would like to raise with their school's principal, and another 3 percent were unsure, figures which are consistent with previous NZCER survey results. Their concerns included the principal's manner or need to improve his or her communication, the child's class size, teacher turnover, the class the child was placed in, discipline, the quality of teachers or relievers, a curriculum emphasis, and school fundraising.

Parents who felt their contact with the school principal was insufficient were more likely to have no contact at all with the principal, to be parents who had had a child at the school for less than a year, and were twice as likely to have a concern they would feel uncomfortable raising with the principal.

Contact with the School's Board of Trustees

Parental satisfaction with their contact with their school's board is lower than it is for their contact with school staff, primarily because 40 percent have no contact at all with their school's board. Forty-eight percent of the parents responding were satisfied with their level of contact with the school's board, with another 17 percent uncertain. Eleven percent of the parents noted their own lack of time to take advantage of opportunities for contact with the board, and 4 percent said that the board members were available if the parent needed them. Eight percent of the parents made some criticism of their school board's communication, or lack of it.

Yet only 5 percent of parents had some concern that they would feel uncomfortable bringing to their school's board, with another 6 percent unsure. These concerns included the board's communication with parents, school discipline, fundraising, the curriculum, the need for smaller classes or more staff, or the standard of education at the school. As we have seen in relation to teachers and principals, parents who feel they have insufficient contact were also more likely to have a concern they would be uncomfortable raising with their school board.

As with school staff, parents' contact with school trustees has remained consistent since the start of the reforms, with some decline in the development of school policy, and attendance at board meetings. It is interesting that only half the parents received newsletters or reports from their board. This could be more of an indication of how many come home via children rather than how many are actually produced by boards!

Table 48

Parents' Contact with School's Board of Trustees

Contact	1990 % (n=645)	1991 % (n=701)	1993 % (n=634)	1996 % (n=676)
Received board of trustees' newsletter/reports	53	51	52	46
No contact	33	34	36	40
Took part in working bees/fundraising with trustees	32	29	30	24
Talked with individual trustee about school policy	23	21	28	19
Saw minutes of board of trustees' meetings	20	24	27	18
Saw agenda for board of trustees' meetings	18	20	20	11
Talked with individual trustee about my child	–	9	12	8
Attended board of trustees' meeting	16	14	16	7
Took part in development of school policy	16	11	12	4
Discussed ERO report[n]	–	–	–	4
Took part in curriculum development	–	10	9	3

n=new question in 1996 survey.

Trustees' Contact with the Parents at Their School

Trustees are generally elected by parents, even if they are not parents themselves. A substantial proportion of trustees feel that the key element of their role as trustees lies in their representation of parents. Few have no direct contact with parents. They are less likely now than at the start of the reforms to work with parents to develop school policy, or to contact parents to seek views, either in their homes, or at school functions. Otherwise the patterns have remained much the same since the reforms began.

Table 49

Trustees' Contact with Parents at Their School

Contact	1989 % (n=334)	1990 % (n=310)	1991 % (n=322)	1993 % (n=292)	1996 % (n=270)
Informal discussion with parents who are friends	93	81	83	83	77
Parents come to board meetings	42	42	61	58	51
Trustee helps/works at the school[n]	–	–	–	–	51
Individual parents contact trustee on matters of school policy	55	51	55	58	49
Talk with individual parents unknown to trustee at school function	51	51	59	58	40*
Trustee contacts individual parents known to trustee to seek their views	53	42	52	47	36*
Trustee attends meetings of PTA/home and school association/school council	36	33	34	33	33
Individual parents contact trustee concerning their children	25	30	31	43	32
Trustee contacts unknown individual parents	22	16	20	22	18
Trustee works with parents to develop school policy	–	52	32	26	17*
Groups of parents contact trustee on matters of school policy	11	10	15	20	14
No direct contact with parents	3	1	1	3	3

n=new question in 1996 survey.

*=statistically significant changes (decrease) from comparable answers in previous survey results.

Other kinds of contact with the school's parents mentioned by trustees were working bees and community or public meetings.

Community Consultation

Ninety percent of the trustees reported that their board had consulted its community in 1996. The next table shows the methods used. It is interesting in the context of only half the parents surveyed saying that board newsletters reached them, that newsletters were the most popular form of board consultation.

Table 50

Methods Used in Board Consultations with its School Community

Method	1993 (n=292) %	1996 (n=270) %
Newsletter	75	80
Parents generally invited to board meetings	65	51
Written questionnaire	51	47
Public meeting at school	54	45
Phone survey	14	11
Public meeting in community	14	7
Specific parents invited to join policy groups[n]	–	7
Hui	3	5
Home/cottage meetings	4	2

n=new question in 1996 survey.

Comparison of the 1996 and 1993 survey findings also indicate a slippage in the occurrence of some forms of consultation, particularly invitations to board meetings, and public meetings. Most boards used 3 different methods of consulting their community.

What did boards ask their communities about? The table below shows a similar pattern since 1991, with the exception of decreases in consultation about policy development and curriculum and assessment. There was an increase in consultation on school property matters.

Table 51

Issues of Board's Consultation with School Community

Issue	1991 % (n=322)	1993 % (n=292)	1996 % (n=270)
Policy development	33	23	24
General survey/parent satisfaction	24	21	19
School property	8	7	13
Funding/fundraising	13	9	12
Health/safety	9	7	10
Discipline	8	12	9
Upcoming events/extracurricular activities[n]	-	-	9
Curriculum/assessment	14	12	7
School transport[n]	-	-	6
Wide variety	9	11	5
Staffing matter	0	6	5
Māori education	7	5	4

n=new question in 1996 survey.

There has been a decline in the proportion of parents taking part in their board's consultation. Only 13 percent of the trustees said that at least three-quarters of their school's parents took part, compared with 25 percent in 1993. Twenty-one percent reported participation by less than a tenth of the school's parents, up from 13 percent in 1993.

Trustees at very low and low Māori enrolment schools were more likely to report that at least 75 percent of their parents had participated in their school's community consultation (17 percent compared with 8 percent). Twenty-one percent of rural trustees reported that at least 75 percent of their parents took part in their school's consultation, compared with 6 percent of trustees at schools in other locations.

Thirty percent of trustees at the smallest schools reported that at least 75 percent of their school's parents took part in their consultation in 1996, compared with 9 percent of trustees at larger schools.

Yet the proportion of trustees who felt their consultation with the school's community had been successful remained much the same as in 1993: 36 percent, with another 42 percent saying it had been successful for some issues. Only 6 percent of the trustees thought their methods of consultation had failed.

Consultation with the School's Māori Community

The guide to the National Education Guidelines, which was issued to all school boards in 1997, reminds boards of their legal requirement to "seek and consider the concerns of Māori in the community" (Ministry of Education, 1997, p. 11).

Yet consultation with schools' Māori communities has decreased since 1990, even for high Māori enrolment schools, as the next table shows.

Table 52

Consultations with Māori Community by Topic and Proportion of Māori Enrolment at the School

	Māori Enrolment							
	Very low %		Low %		Moderate %		High %	
Source (n=181)	1990 (n=164)	1996 (n=102)	1990 (n=37)	1996 (n=45)	1990 (n=56)	1996 (n=59)	1990 (n=53)	1996 (n=55)
Māori education funding	15	3	31	2	37	9	38	33
Bilingual units	–	1	–	11	–	9	–	35
Māori children's achievement	–	2	–	7	–	5	–	18
Appointments	–	1	–	2	–	5	–	15
Curriculum	–	10	–	13	–	20	–	15
Māori education policy	18	7	47	9	50	15	47	13
Treaty of Waitangi	23	8	36	13	44	7	55	9
Discipline	0	2	3	2	2	3	17	26
Equal learning opportunity	–	4	–	4	–	3	–	4
ERO report	–	1	–	4	–	5	–	15
All issues	24	6	28	0	22	5	28	15
Staff	–	2	–	4	–	12	–	33
No consultation	–	27	–	20	–	17	–	6

Forty-nine percent of the trustees said their board did not consult with the Māori community, much as in 1993. The next table shows the methods used. All but one of the schools holding a hui to consult parents had high Māori enrolment. These schools were also more likely to issue a general invitation to parents to come to board of trustee meetings.

Table 53

Methods of Board Consultation with Its Māori Community

Methods	1993 (n=292) %	1996 (n=270) %
Board member responsible for Māori liaison	26	24
Ongoing discussions with local Māori community	27	23
Put on school event (e.g., children's concert)	21	18
Board members' individual discussions with individual Māori parents	20	17
School has whānau group	–	15
Close relations with local marae	15	13
Asked Māori parents as a group to develop policy	15	10
Asked individual Māori parents to develop policy	9	7
Sponsored a hui	4	1

Thirty-one percent of the trustees thought the methods used by their board to consult the school's Māori community had been successful, and 21 percent, successful for some areas.

Trustees from high Māori enrolment schools were most confident about the success of their methods used to consult the Māori community: 46 percent thought they had been generally successful.

What Issues Do Parents Raise with Their School Board?

Fifty-seven percent of the trustees said that parents had raised an issue with their board in 1996—somewhat less than the 72 percent in 1993. The next table shows a general decline in the issues which parents raise with their school boards. Matters such as discipline and health and safety remain predominant; others, such as funding and class size—though important to parents, as we saw in chapter 5—appear not to be issues which parents see any point in raising with their board. Thus parents appear to be still holding the government rather than boards responsible for school resourcing.

Table 54

Issues Raised by Parents with Their School's Board of Trustees

Issue	1991 % (n=322)	1993 % (n=292)	1996 % (n=270)
Discipline (including uniform)	15	23	17
Health and safety	11	7	11
Transport	6	6	7
Grounds/maintenance	–	–	7
Dissatisfaction with staff member	8	8	6
Extracurricular provision	9	9	5
Funding (including fundraising/spending)	12	5	4
Future of school	8	5	4
Staffing/class size	4	6	2
Provision for Māori children	3	5	2
Homework	2	3	0

Parents at very low and low Māori enrolment schools were more likely to raise issues with their boards: 65 percent compared with 46 percent of mid and high Māori enrolment schools.

Only 1 percent of the trustees reported that their board took no action when parents raised issues. Half the trustees said their board discussed any issue raised by parents, and 22 percent said parents had come to the board meeting to present their case (down from 37 percent in 1993). Thirteen percent of the trustees said their board had held a special board meeting over the last year, and 8 percent a public meeting (down from the peak of 21 percent in 1993). Sixteen percent of the boards had sought external assistance or advice, and 9 percent had taken the issues raised by parents to the Ministry of Education.

Twenty percent of the boards had altered or developed their school policies as a result of concerns raised by parents. Four percent set up board/parent committees in response, and 3 percent held discussions with other local schools. But quite often the issues were dealt with on an individual basis—the principal discussing the matter with parents (34 percent), or a board member doing so (21 percent, down from 36 percent in 1993).

Eight percent of the trustees said that the principal had taken disciplinary action as a result of parental concerns raised with the board.

Parental Satisfaction with Their Child's School

Eighty-two percent of the parents were generally happy with the quality of their child's schooling, and a further 7 percent were unsure. Eleven percent of parents were dissatisfied. These figures have remained much the same throughout the NZCER surveys. The main reasons for satisfaction were the child's progress and standard of work, the child's enjoyment of learning, the quality of teaching, and the quality of the school climate. Also mentioned were good communication with the teacher, a balanced curriculum, and a class size that allowed their child to get the attention needed.

Parents who were not satisfied with the quality of their child's education were concerned about their child's lack of progress or the standard of their work, class size, lack of attention to individual children, lack of balance in the curriculum, and the boredom expressed by their child.

Parents who were generally more unhappy with the quality of their child's schooling than others tended to:

- be more unhappy with the number of children in their child's class;
- have children in classes with 30 or more students;
- have had a child at the school for less than a year;
- be fathers;
- feel they did not have enough contact with their child's teacher, or their school's board of trustees (but not the principal);
- have a concern they would feel uncomfortable raising concerns with their child's teacher or the school's principal, but not the school's board of trustees;
- want more information from the school;
- have more say about an area of school life;
- want to change something about their child's education (82 percent compared with 27 percent of those who were generally satisfied with their child's education);
- have some involvement in the school, but to think more parental involvement was desirable;
- be more likely to think their school board was struggling;
- have their child attending a school that was not the parent's first choice;
- be no more likely than others to have decided on their child's next school, but to be less likely to think there would be no obstacles to their child being able to actually attend this school; and
- be Māori.

Though most parents were generally happy with their child's education, 35 percent would like to change something about that education, and a further 6 percent were unsure. The main change parents would like to see is smaller classes (11 percent), followed by more specialist help (7 percent), and more challenging work (4 percent). Two to 3 percent each mentioned more teaching resources, a more balanced curriculum, improved communication about children's progress, or a greater emphasis on physical activities. The other changes mentioned varied greatly, for example, some wanting more Māori content in the curriculum, others less.

As with the parents who were generally unhappy with their child's schooling, similar associations with this aspect of parental satisfaction were found between their child's class size,

having concerns but being uncomfortable raising them with school staff and board, wanting more information and a greater say about an aspect of the school, dissatisfaction with the amount of parental involvement, and seeing more obstacles to their child being able to attend the preferred next school, particularly the school's enrolment scheme. Parents who wished to change something about their school were more likely to have a university degree than others, and less likely to have no qualification; their child's school was slightly more likely to be a decile 9–10 school.

Parents were also generally happy with their access to information about their child or the school. Few expressed a lack of interest in school matters, and a sizable proportion thought it was up to them to access the information.

Table 55

Parental Views on Their Access to Information

Subject (n=676)	Good %	Fair %	Info. available if want it %	Not reliable %	Too late to act on %	Not interes-ted %	Not sure %
Child's progress	65	29	–	3	2	–	–
Child's classroom programme	62	30	–	3	4	–	–
BoT discussion and policy making	21*	22	37	3	4	4	24
BoT decisions	25*	22	31	2	4	2	17

*– = statistically significant changes (decrease) from comparable answers in previous survey results.

Summary

Parent and teacher reports of parental involvement in the school both show a slightly lower level of parental involvement for 1996 than in previous years, but it is difficult to decide whether this marks a changing trend. If the trend is changing, it appears to be due to reasons beyond the school, since teacher interest in having classroom help remains as high as ever, parental contacts with the school remain unchanged, and the main reasons parents give for their lack of involvement centre on work and family demands.

Trustees also show a much higher interest in 1996 than in previous years in having more parental support with classroom help, school clubs, board work, and in the resource-hungry areas of fundraising and school maintenance. This may indicate the pressures of their own workloads as volunteers, decreased parental help, or difficulties in making the school's budget stretch as far as it should.

Community consultation occurs in a less intensive manner than it did at the start of the reforms, and less than one might expect given the apparent legal requirements on boards to consult their community, particularly Māori. Judging by the issues which parents raise with boards, boards' action in response to the issues parents raise, and parents' answers on their satisfaction with their child's school, this consultation is probably sufficient, and realistic for

Pakeha/European parents, but not for Māori parents.[13]

While a sizable proportion of parents have little knowledge of what their school board is doing, few are concerned by this, seeing it as their own responsibility to increase their knowledge, rather than the board's. Few parents feel they would like more say in their child's school, though around a third would like to see some changes. Parents' concerns centre around their own child, and thus on class size, specialist help, discipline, and their child's work.

The parental responses to this survey were underrepresentative of ethnic groups other than Pakeha/European and low income parents, and overrepresentative of high income, well qualified parents. Where the responses of these groups differ, it is likely that the results of the survey need some modification before generalising to the parental population at large. For example, it is likely that the results from a representative national sample of primary school parents would show slightly lower parental involvement in their child's school, spending on their child's education, satisfaction with the quality of their child's school, attendance of a child at the primary school of their parent's first choice, and desire to have more of a say in their child's school, or to make changes at that school.

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[13] The number of Pacific Island parents responding was too low to draw clear conclusions from.

PART II
THE NEW ROLES

11 ROLES AND RELATIONSHIPS AT THE SCHOOL

From time to time there is a call for the lines between "governance" and "management" to be drawn more distinctly: but in practice most schools have found their own version of the original model. Where problems about respective roles have arisen (as some must), they were usually resolvable within the school itself. Previous NZCER surveys showed a consistent level of reported problems in the relationships between board and principal or school staff of around 12 percent at any one time. Around 20–25 percent of relationships between principal and staff had some tensions.

Most boards managed their new roles, though not without some difficulty. The proportion of boards struggling with their task was around 5 percent in trustees' reports, and around 10 percent in principals' judgment.

This has remained much the same in 1996, though trustees are more sanguine than in 1993. Around two-thirds of the boards were making steady progress or better, according to principals and teachers; trustees gave a higher figure, 82 percent. A sizable minority of parents simply did not know or felt they could not judge. Most of the teachers who did not know came from urban or small town schools.

Table 56
Views of How Board is Doing 1996

View	Parent % (n=676)	Trustee % (n=270)	Teacher % (n=361)	Principal % (n=181)
On top of task	15	28	22*-	13*-
Making steady progress	32	54*+	42	54*+
Coping	10*-	16*-	22	25
Struggling	3	3	3	8
Do not know	38*+	0	8	0

*=statistically significant change from comparable answers in previous years; "+" means an increase, "–" means a decrease.

Thirty-five percent of urban trustees thought their school board was on top of its task, compared with 23 percent of trustees in other locations. Small town trustees were the ones most likely to describe their board as simply coping. Trustees in schools with rolls over 100 were marginally more positive about their progress over the past year than those in smaller schools.

Perceptions of the board's progress were unrelated to trustees' satisfaction with their contact with parents, the trustees' view of what the key element in their role was, any problems the school had in finding suitable teachers, views of the impact on their school of the last ERO review, or their intention of whether or not to stand again. There was some link with the board's relationship with the principal, with school staff, and with the quality of working relations with trustees, with more positive views of the board's progress being associated with more positive views of these relationships. Boards described as coping were also more likely to be dealing with a major unexpected property problem, to have problems with their

insurance, and ongoing equipment problems.

Non-teaching principals were twice as likely as their teaching colleagues to describe their board as on top of their task, and more likely to describe their own relationship with the school board as excellent/very good—perhaps reflecting the greater time they have for school management, and working with their school board.

Inter-year analysis of principals' perceptions of their board of trustees' progress showed that while boards who were seen as being on top of their task in one survey were as likely as not to be judged the same way 2 or 3 years later, there was no guarantee that the board would not be described as coping or struggling. Only 9 of the 33 boards that principals identified as coping or struggling in 1996 had been in that situation for the previous 2 surveys: 8 percent of the inter-year subsample of 115 schools.

Trustees' ratings of their board's progress also show change over the years. Ten of the 31 boards ranked as being on top of their task in 1996 had been rated as coping or struggling on at least 1 of the previous 2 surveys in 1993 and 1991. Only 2 boards received consistently poor ratings in all 3 survey years.

Relationships at the School

The previous NZCER surveys showed largely positive relationships between professionals and the voluntary boards, among the members of the board, and among staff. This was attributed to the initial emphasis in the reforms on *partnership* between people taking different roles at the school level. The inclusion of the principal and staff representative on the board is likely to make such partnership more viable, by bringing "operational" matters into dialogue with "policy", making sure policy is well informed, and by drawing professionals and parents into one common team with a sense of shared "ownership" of the school. It is also arguable that the exclusion of teacher salaries from the operational grant, and the existence of collective contracts which did not require industrial negotiation between boards and their staff, have been important factors enabling positive partnerships to be maintained throughout the reforms.

It is rare for problems to exist simultaneously in all of the main relationships involving teaching staff and the board. In other words, problems in one relationship do not necessarily mean problems in every relationship. Of the 68 trustees saying that the quality of their relationships within the board, with the principal, or with school staff was satisfactory (at best), or had problems, only 3 identified a less than good quality for all 3 relationships, and 17 identified this for 2 of the 3 relationships.

Of the 86 principals' answers indicating a less than good relationship in any of the 3 relationships between the principal and the board, principal and staff, and within the board, only 8 indicated that all of these were less than good, and 15 that 2 of the 3 relationships were less than good.

Of the 218 teacher responses indicating less than good relationships between principal and staff, board and staff, or teachers and support staff, only 6 percent indicated that all 3 relationships were less than good, and 24 percent involved only 2 relationships—almost all involving the staff-principal relationship. Thus this relationship appears to be pivotal to teachers' perceptions of the other 2 relationships.

Relationships between Principals and Teachers

In 1993, many principals described this relationship as excellent or very good, yet a quarter of the teachers identified some problems. In 1996, principals' judgments were closer to teachers—though still higher over all—and the proportion of teachers identifying some problems was somewhat lower.

Table 57
Views of the Relationship between Principal and School Staff

Quality	Principals % (n=181)	Teachers % (n=361)
Excellent/very good	56*-	43
Good	37*+	29
Satisfactory	2*-	12
Minor problems	5	11*-
Major problems	0	4*-

*=statistically significant changes from comparable answers in previous years; "+" means an increase, "–" means a decrease.

There were a few school characteristics associated with differences in views here. Only a few teachers in schools with rolls less than 100 thought there were problems in the relationship of the principal and staff, compared with 18 percent in larger schools. Rural teachers were most likely to describe the relationship between the principal and school staff as excellent/very good (63 percent). Eighty-one percent of teachers in the smallest schools described this relationship also as excellent/very good, and 67 percent of those in schools with rolls of 35–99, compared with a third of those in schools with rolls of 100 or more.

Principals of integrated schools were more likely than their colleagues at state schools to report problems in their relationship with school staff, and those in decile 9–10 schools were twice as likely to report problems in their relations with staff as others (27 percent compared with 11 percent).

The main problems identified by teachers were lack of communication (8 percent), the lack of a professional relationship (7 percent), lack of consultation (6 percent), and by 3–4 percent each, the poor quality of the principal as manager, an arrogant or autocratic style, and the principal being too stressed or busy.

Some principals indeed felt they were too stressed or busy with administration to provide the educational leadership their role called for. From the principals' perspective, other problems in this relationship were more likely to appear as personality differences, or poorly performing staff.

Fifty-eight percent of the teachers responding described the relationship between the teachers and support staff at their school as excellent/very good, 33 percent as good, 5 percent as satisfactory, and 3 percent identified problems.

Relationships Between Principals and Their Boards

Estimates derived from the previous surveys of how many primary schools were experiencing difficulty in the relationships between school boards and principals gave a figure of around 12 percent. The 1996 survey results show some improvement on this.

Table 58

Views of the Relationship between Principals and Their School Boards

Quality	Trustees % (n=270)	Principals % (n=181)
Excellent/very good	73*+	66
Good	16	25
Satisfactory	6	4
Minor problems	4*-	4
Major problems	1*-	1

*=statistically significant changes from comparable answers in previous years; "+" means an increase, "–" means a decrease.

Seventy-six percent of urban principals described their relationship with their board as excellent or very good; and they were only half as likely as principals in other locations to report minor problems with their board. Principals in the smallest schools were more likely to report a less than good relationship with their board (19 percent compared with 7 percent of others).

The issues identified by the 5 percent of principals who were having some problem with their board included difficulties due to the board members' having insufficient time for their work, problems with the board's interpretation of the respective roles of principal and board, difficulties with personalities, a lack of cohesion on the board, a lack of understanding of education and the work of teaching, some individual trustees having ideological agendas, and others behaving unethically. This set of problems remains much the same as in previous years' surveys.

The solutions offered by principals show some consistency with previous years in the suggestion that trustees would benefit by more training, and that their role needs to be clarified. New suggestions were that more support be given to boards, that there be a reduction in the responsibilities given to boards, and more funding given to schools, including paying trustees for their work.

Only 5 percent of the trustees thought there were problems between their board and the school's principal, half the proportion who thought this in 1993. The main problem identified by trustees in this relationship was that the principal was not a good leader; the other problem to be mentioned by more than a single trustee was that the principal did not communicate well with the board. Previous surveys showed more concern with role definitions. These problems centre more on the principal's role as the pivotal person in the school.

Inter-year comparisons of the principals' views of their relationship with the school board continue to show that while consistency occurs more often than not with relationships regarded as excellent or very good, nonetheless such relationships can deteriorate, or emerge from lower ratings of the relationship. There is less consistency at the lower end of principals' judgments, indicating that few schools remain with less than good relationships over time.

Eight of the 10 relationships between the principal and the board that were less than good in the 1996 survey emerged from relationships that had been good or very good/excellent in the 2 previous survey rounds. Sixty-one percent of the relationships which were excellent or very good in 1996 had been that way in the 1993 and 1991 surveys, 19 percent had been less than good in either of the 2 previous surveys, and 3 percent had been less than good for both the previous surveys.

Trustees' views of the quality of their board's relationship with the school principal also showed variability. While it is more likely than not that an excellent/very good relationship would remain that way for the last 3 rounds of the survey (1991, 1993, 1996), 19 percent of the relationships which were ranked highly for 1996 had been less than good for one previous survey, and 2 percent for both previous surveys. Of the 11 trustees who rated this relationship less than good in 1996, 4 of the relationships had a good or better rating in the previous surveys, and none had been consistently less than good.

Relationship Between School Staff and Their Board

What contact do trustees have with their school staff? Only 3 percent said they had no direct contact. Other contacts show trustees and teachers working together to raise money and improve the school's property, rather more than they develop policies together or share in strategic planning. The table below also shows that a sizable proportion of the trustees were regularly involved in the "core" work of the school.

Table 59

Trustees' Contact with Their School's Teachers

	%
Social functions	74
Individual discussions out of school hours	63
School working bees/fundraising events	54
Individual discussions in school hours	47
Help at the school	33
Working groups to develop policy	29
Strategic planning sessions	16
Working groups to develop curriculum	15
Employed at the school	8
No direct contact	3

Eighty percent of the trustees were satisfied with their level of contact with school staff, 14 percent were not, and 5 percent were unsure. Rural trustees were most satisfied with their level of contact with school staff (92 percent, compared with 79 percent of small town, and 70 percent of city trustees). They were also more likely to describe their board's relationship with school staff as excellent/very good (67 percent). Inter-year comparisons showed similar patterns to the mixture of consistency and change found for the board-principal relationship.

What does the contact between board and teachers look like from the other side of the coin? Only 6 percent of the teachers had had no contact at all with their school's board, much the same proportion as in previous years. We did not ask teachers whether trustees worked in the

school; the table below shows that formal visits by trustees were most common in the first 2 years of the reforms, and have stayed at a low level since then, and that working on policy in joint groups was also most common in the first year of the reforms, when charters had to be developed from scratch.

Table 60

Teachers' Contact with Their School's Trustees

Area	1989 % (n=414)	1991 % (n=396)	1993 % (n=334)	1996 % (n=361)
Talked at school functions	72	71	72	70
Met at staff/board socials	69	66	66	68
Informal contact in community	-	66	64	54
Teacher attended board meetings	-	43	40	43
Developed policy together	67	36	35	28
Trustees visited the classroom	28	11	10	10

Senior teaching staff were more likely to participate in board working groups (39 percent compared with 25 percent of others).

Some kinds of contact between teachers and board members were related to school characteristics of size and location. Teachers in schools with rolls of less than 100 were twice as likely as teachers in larger schools to participate in joint working groups, and somewhat more likely to attend board meetings (probably because more of the teachers responding from these schools were also staff representatives—41 percent) and have informal contact with trustees out in the community. Classroom visits by trustees decreased as the school size increased, from 31 percent of teachers in the smallest schools to 10 percent in the schools with rolls over 300. Rural teachers were more likely to take part in joint working groups with board members, or attend board meetings. City teachers were least likely to have informal community contact with their school's board of trustees (46 percent, compared with 67 percent for others).

But these differences in the degree of contact were not reflected in different levels of satisfaction with teachers' contact with their school's trustees. Over all, this was just as high as trustees: 79 percent satisfied, 12 percent not, and 8 percent unsure. Rural teachers, who tended to have more contact with their school's trustees, were more satisfied than others.

Each school board has one staff representative on it, elected by staff. Staff representatives in our survey were just as likely to be scale A teachers as senior staff, though they had more deputy principals in their ranks. Those who were interested in becoming principals were no more likely to be staff representatives on their school board than others.

Staff representatives were usually the teachers who participated in board working parties, and were also twice as likely to have had trustees visiting their classroom or discussing their teaching programme with them. Their views on the usefulness of the school's appraisal scheme and the impact of the school's most recent ERO review were much the same as the views of other teachers who did not work with the board. However, they were more likely than other teachers to feel part of the school's decisionmaking teams, more likely to have actually seen the school's most recent ERO review report, and they gave more favourable ratings of the quality of the relationship between principal and staff, and between the board and school staff.

Around half the teachers had a regular report back from their staff representative, much the same as the first year of the reforms.

Table 61

Teachers' Contact with Staff Representative on the Board of Trustees

Contact	1989 % (n=414)	1991 % (n=396)	1993 % (n=334)	1996 % (n=361)
Regular group report after board meetings	47	46	51	50
Nothing formal	33	29	25	56
Asked to provided information for board meetings[n]	-	-	-	25
Regular group discussion on agenda items before board meetings	25	21	21	16
Individual discussion on agenda items before board meetings	17	14	16	11

n=new question in 1996 survey.

Senior staff were more likely to be asked to supply information for board meetings, and to have individual discussions on agenda items prior to board meetings with the staff representative on the board

Sixty-seven percent of the teachers found their contact with the staff representative satisfactory, 6 percent did not, and 7 percent were unsure; 17 percent were themselves staff representatives.

Views of the Relationship between School Staff and Their Board of Trustees

Again, the overall views of this relationship are positive, with 72 percent of teachers finding it good or better, 82 percent of principals, and 90 percent of trustees. Teachers in the 1996 survey were also judging the relationship more positively than those in 1993, with fewer problems reported.

Table 62

Views of the Relationship between School Staff and Their School Board

Quality	Teachers % (n=361)	Principals % (n=181)	Trustees % (n=270)
Excellent/very good	41	46	59
Good	31	36	31
Satisfactory	19*+	12	6
Minor problems	7*-	4	3
Major problems	1*-	2	0

*=statistically significant changes from comparable answers in previous years; "+" means an increase, "-" means a decrease.

Rural teachers were most likely to describe their relationship with the school board as excellent/very good (54 percent), and small town teachers, least likely (23 percent). Teachers

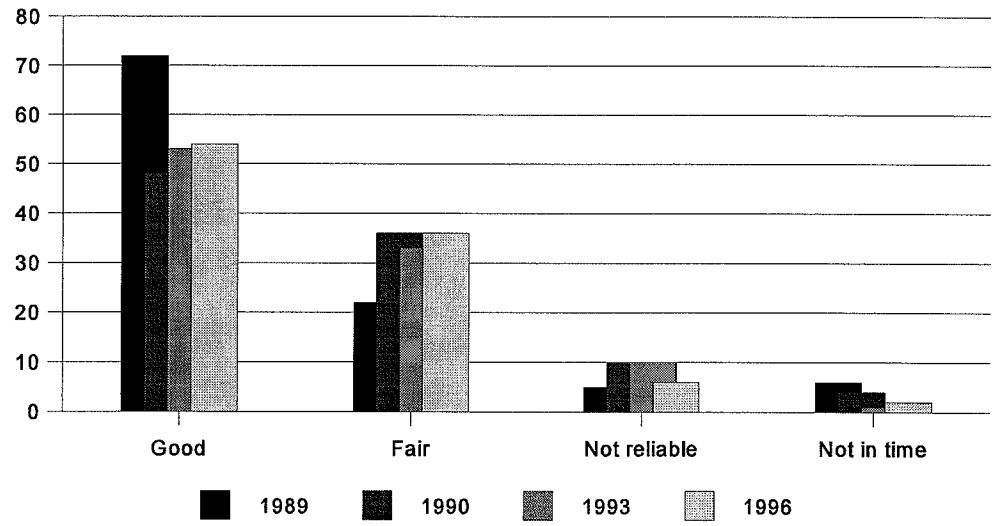
at bulk-funded schools reported more problems in their relations with their school board than others (19 percent compared with 7 percent).

Principals who commented on any problems in this relationship spoke of a lack of contact, a lack of mutual respect or understanding, and a lack of communication or trust. More contact, including board members spending more time at the school or socialising with staff, was recommended, together with the desirability of staff improving the quality of their reporting to the board, and the usefulness of having board training include educational matters. Some principals could see no solution other than a change in board members.

Teachers' Access to Information and Their Part in School Decision-making

Teachers were most positive about their access to information which affects their work at the start of the reforms, but their judgment since then shows a slippage in the quality of this information rather than a large increase in those who find they cannot rely on the information they receive, or that it comes too late for them to use.

Figure 14
Teachers' Access to Information



Rural teachers were happiest with their access to information on matters affecting their work.

The next table shows that teachers felt that for most of the key areas of school life they were either part of the school's decisionmaking team, or listened to by those who made the decisions.

Table 63

Teachers' Part in School Decisionmaking

Area (n=361)	Part of decision-making team %	Listened to by decision-makers %	Views not sought %	No desire to be consulted %
Discipline policy	58	36	10	0
Curriculum	63	22	7	0
Assessment policy	56	35	11	1
School organisation	56	33	16	1
Staff development	51	39	13	1
Budget allocation	49	36	18	2
Appraisal of staff performance policy	38	28	23	2

Around half of the scale A teachers considered themselves to be part of the school's decisionmaking team for most areas other than staff appraisal, and special needs. But they were also twice as likely as senior staff to feel their views were not sought in relation to decisions on budget allocation and school organisation.

Only 16 percent of the teachers thought there were areas of the school in which they were excluded from decisions they should be involved in. These areas covered most of those in the table above.

Relations Among Trustees

Both trustees (88 percent) and principals (83 percent) saw this relationship as good or better. Principals' responses in 1996 show a slightly more positive picture than in 1993.

Table 64

Views of the Relationship between Trustees

Quality	Principals % (n=181)	Trustees % (n=270)
Excellent/very good	43	60
Good	40*+	28
Satisfactory	11	7
Minor problems	8	4
Major problems	1	0

*=statistically significant change (increase) from comparable answers in previous years.

Trustees and principals who faced problems in their board both described uneven distribution of workload, firmly held opposing views, and personalities. Principals' suggestion s for improvement centred around improved communication, training, or a change in board members.

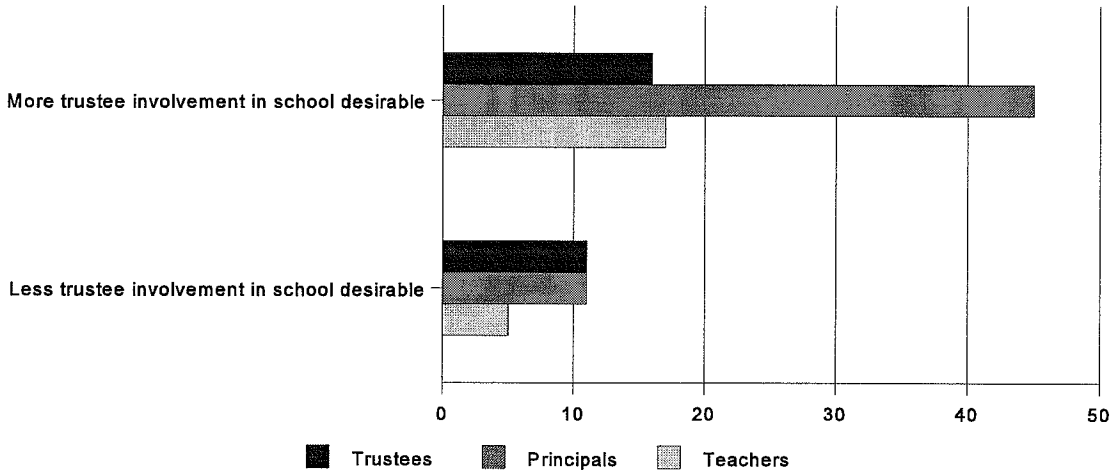
Inter-year comparisons showed slightly more volatility in the internal board relationships than between board and principal, or board and school staff. Only 2 of the 12 internal board relationships ranked less than good in 1996 were ranked by trustees the same way in the previous surveys. In terms of principals' judgments, about 20 percent of these relationships which were rated as excellent/very good in 1996 rated as less than good in the 2 previous surveys. About half the proportion of relationships were rated excellent/very good in all 3 years compared with 62 percent for the principal-board relationship.

Should Trustees Do More, or Less, for the School?

What interest is there in changing trustees' level of involvement in their school? There is less interest in reducing trustee involvement than in increasing it—particularly on the part of principals. Principals of decile 1–6 schools would like to see more board involvement than those of decile 7–10 schools.

Figure 15

Desirable Levels of Trustee Involvement in School



Yet there were some differences between the groups in the areas where they would seek more involvement. The few trustees who commented on the greater involvement they would like mainly mentioned the curriculum and assessment areas, day-to-day running of the school, and more classroom involvement.

Teachers mentioned more hands-on time in the school, but also mentioned contact between board and staff, contact between board members and the school's parents or wider community, and property/maintenance work. Principals were keenest to see more trustees engaged in property/maintenance work and also in financial matters, curriculum, policy development, and hands-on time in the school.

Thus school staff sought more practical help from trustees, a desire which can be understood in the light of the high workloads facing principals and teachers. Yet it was these areas of practical help which were mentioned by the few trustees who identified the areas they would like to cut back their role in. Paperwork and industrial relations were also mentioned as aspects of their role they would like to shed.

Twelve teachers identified these areas where they thought the board could be less

involved—their own professional area, teaching, and, not unrelated, staff appointments. The main areas identified by 17 principals were day-to-day management, curriculum, and industrial relations.

We also asked trustees and principals an open-ended question about what they would change about the role of the trustee. The trustees' main requests were to reduce their workload (13 percent), increase their pay (10 percent), improve their training or the time they had available for the work (9 percent each), have more support from the Ministry of Education, or clearer communications (6 percent), and get more support from parents or the community (4 percent).

The principals' perspective overlapped, but showed some differences, notably in the call for a clarification of the roles of governance (the board), and management (the principal), by 15 percent. Ten percent would like to see boards' responsibility or accountability reduced, 8 percent would like boards to be given more pay, and another 8 percent, more training. Six percent felt boards did not have the competency to make decisions relating to teaching, and 8 percent would like to see more professionals on their boards. Other suggestions also centred around the view that the professional work of schools needed some separation from board of trustees' responsibilities or involvement.

Responses to Issues of Conflict and Industrial Relations

Eighteen percent of the boards had spent most of their time on personnel/industrial work—double the proportion in 1993.

When asked how they had responded to conflict or difficulty within their board, or between board and school staff, 52 percent reported no problem. Most of those who had had a problem resolved it themselves (41 percent). Only 7 percent of those experiencing a problem took no action. Twelve percent each sought advice from NZSTA, the Ministry of Education, or used a mediator. Seven percent went to NZEI. In 1993, when NZSTA was funded to provide regional field officers, 26 percent were using them, and there was no reported use of mediators.

One percent of the trustees reported dismissing staff, employing temporary help from a private firm, or a local school; seeking advice from other schools, or advice from the State Services Commission (which until 1997 had responsibility for negotiating collective contracts with NZEI; this responsibility has now passed to the Ministry of Education).

A slightly different picture emerges in looking at what trustees did when they had a problem in the area of industrial relations, including personal grievances. Half the trustees said their board had not had a problem in this area. Of those who did, 42 percent used the NZSTA service, which is government funded, and free to boards. Twenty-four percent each sought advice from NZEI or the Ministry of Education. Sixteen percent sought legal advice, 14 percent sought advice from another school, and 12 percent took out insurance (somewhat less than the 21 percent in 1993). Eight percent each went to the NZ Principals' Federation, or employed a consultant. Six percent each went to the State Services Commission, or the Employers' Association. Only 4 percent of the trustees whose board had encountered an industrial relations problem thought the board had done nothing about it.

Indeed, although most boards encountered some problem or issue in most areas of their work, they usually felt they could resolve it. The 2 exceptions were finance and property.

Table 65

Trustees' Views of Success of Their Board's Dealing with Problems/Issues

Area (n=270)	Solved %	Partially solved %	Too soon to tell/not sure %	Board unable to resolve/not successful %	No problem/ issue %
Board or board/staff relations	14	7	7	2	52
Industrial relations	23	6	7	2	50
Major policy decisions	22	5	11	2	43
Staff appointments	–	–	–	–	38
Property maintenance[n]	10	20	16	15	30
Financial management	23	21	21	5	27

n=new question in 1996 survey.

Allocation of Board Time

Finance and property also dominate board time.

Table 66

Trustees' Ranking of Time Spent on Major Board Activities by Their Board

Areas	Most time %			Second most %			Third most %		
	1991 (n=322)	1993 (n=292)	1996 (n=270)	1991	1993	1996	1991	1993	1996
Property/maintenance	21	26	27	20	24	24	30	20	17
Financial management	34	26	24	31	25	25	19	20	20
Day-to-day management	28	23	21	15	12	11	16	13	11
Personnel/industrial	6	9	18*+	–	5	8	–	8	15*+
Strategic planning[n]	–	–	11	–	–	10	–	–	8
Policy decisions	16	16	0*–	22	14	9	23	22	17
Curriculum	–	4	1	–	11	7	–	8	10

n=new question in 1996 survey.

*=statistically significant changes from comparable answers in previous years; "+" means an increase, "–" means a decrease.

Board Achievements

In looking at the board's major achievements over the past year, finance and property again come to the fore. Forty-four percent of the trustees mentioned development or improvement of the school's building or grounds, and 16 percent mentioned increased supplies of computers and other technology. Twenty-two percent mentioned keeping within their budget or having good financial management systems, 7 percent winning grants or making more money through fundraising, and 10 percent, increased rolls (which increase school funds).

The next group of achievements identified by trustees was related to the quality of the school: making staff appointments (19 percent), the quality of the school or a good ERO report (16 percent), changes to the curriculum (6 percent), or an emphasis on staff development (2 percent).

A further group focused on the good relationships between people which existed at their school (13 percent), and some spoke of defusing or avoiding conflict (3 percent).

The final group focused on other aspects of board work: planning for the future or developing policies (19 percent), and making the board's work more systematic (7 percent).

Trustees in schools with rolls over 300 were more likely to mention a property project as particularly important for their school. Urban trustees were most likely to report property projects and initiatives involving technology or computers.

Principals' answers to the same question take for granted some of the achievements that occur to trustees, such as making appointments. They were more likely to mention curriculum related work (17 percent) and assessment or reporting to parents or the board (13 percent). But they were just as likely to mention property-related achievements (37 percent) and strategic planning (13 percent).

Both groups' answers are somewhat broader in their scope than in 1993, and the inclusion of strategic planning is new.

Summary

The pioneering excitement and curiosity, and the strong emphasis on the importance of partnership (coming from the government as much as from representative organisations) which attended the introduction of the boards of trustees got the reforms off to a good start in most schools. There is no sign that things have deteriorated since, despite the heavy workloads (chapter 9). Relationships are mostly good. Teachers continue to have a voice in decisionmaking. In most schools, roles are clear; areas of overlap are not cause for concern. Around 5–10 percent of boards struggle with their work, and around 20 percent cope. It is hard to say whether we should expect a higher proportion of boards to be doing better than this: we have no benchmark against which to judge whether this is good enough for the system as a whole, or whether the system needs some changing in order to improve the work of boards.

Funding and property continue to dominate the work and attention of boards, despite efforts a few years ago to get boards to devote more attention to the professional work of schools, especially the curriculum. The higher profile of personnel/industrial relations work in their allocation of time is interesting. Many boards still engage in day-to-day management. Some see this as a sign that trustees do not know how to keep their governors' distance from schools. But it is more consistent with other information we have from this survey about the difficulties schools have in covering all their work and the demands on the human and financial resources available to them. Schools cannot do as businesses do when faced with overload: increase their charges, or discard aspects of their work which are less profitable or more time consuming.

One can also see the overlap between the governance role and school work as an indication of the kind of partnership which makes sense to people in schools. Its harnessing of voluntary energy and attention is particularly important when government funding for education appears to be insufficient, despite more demands being made of education than previously, and more interest taken in its quality and economic role.

12 SCHOOLS AND GOVERNMENT

The last NZCER survey in 1993 showed tension in schools' relationships with government agencies and government. Some tension in these relationships is probably unavoidable when the government funds schools, and calls them to account—particularly when the schools are self-managing.

However, there was also another kind of tension evident, which had crystallised around the issue of bulk funding, or the inclusion of teacher salaries in schools' operational grants. While this was proposed in the initial outline of the educational administration changes, the working group charged with transforming the funding aspects of the outline into practical form recommended the deferral of a decision on this inclusion of teacher salaries in the school grant. It did so because there were concerns that such inclusion would have a negative impact on the very schools that it was originally hoped the reforms would benefit—schools in low income areas. Since 1990, bulk funding has been continually proposed by the government, in a number of forms, and just as continually opposed by the majority of trustees, teachers, and principals. The "logic" of decentralisation might demand that all government funding be given to schools; but to pursue that logic contradicts the core principle of the educational decentralisation, which was that those who are closest to an area affected by a decision are those who are best placed to make that decision. In this case, the decision by those in schools is that the current level of responsibilities devolved to schools is sufficient, that extra responsibilities and powers are not essential to the running of schools and the provision of education.

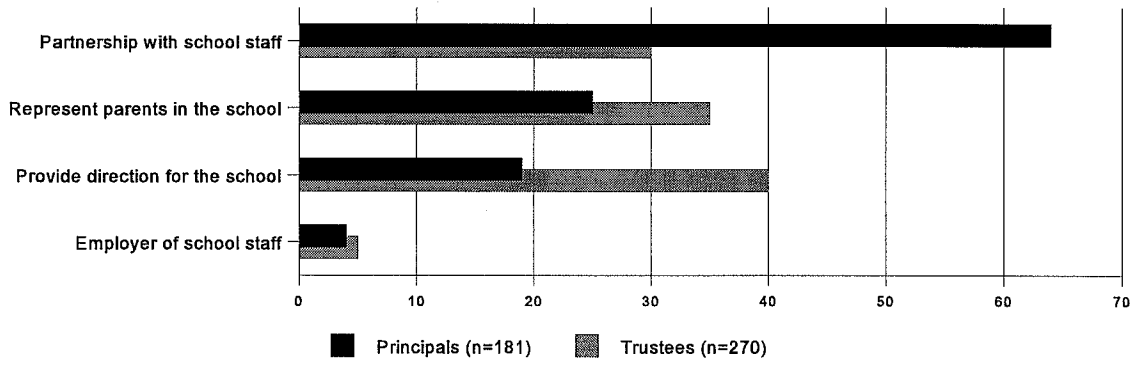
This chapter explores further these tensions, and the questions underlying them. What does accountability mean to people in schools? Whom do governing bodies and school staff see themselves as accountable to?

Accountability

In official descriptions of the roles and responsibilities of boards of trustees, it is their role of employer which is most emphasised. This fits with the wider changes to public sector management. Yet that role barely features when those who have been running New Zealand primary schools since 1989 are asked to identify the key element of the trustees' role, even though there are interesting differences between principals and trustees with regard to their identification of what *is* key to the role.

Figure 16

Perceptions of the Key Element of the School Trustee Role



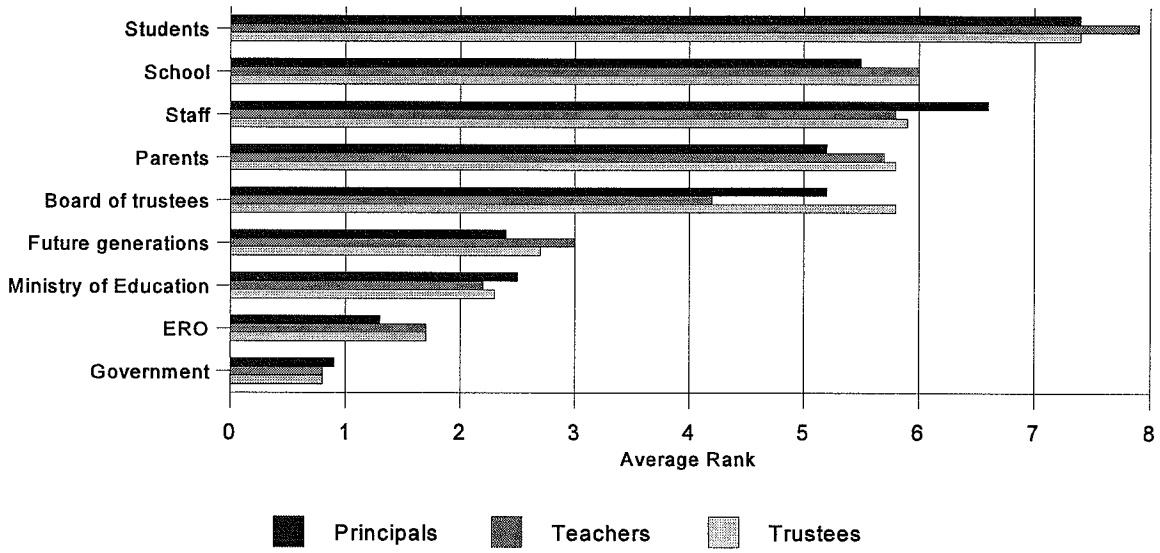
Principals of the smallest schools were less likely to give partnership with school staff as the key element in the role of a trustee (43 percent). Small town principals were most likely to describe the key element as being either that of employer or representing parents (18 percent each).

Trustees in the smallest schools were more likely to see their role as employer of school staff as key (12 percent compared with 3 percent of others). School size also had a bearing on whether trustees identified partnership with school staff as a key element, ranging from 42 percent of those in the smallest schools, to 22 percent of those in the largest schools.

A more shared understanding emerges when we asked the trustees, principals, and teachers in the survey to rank different groups at the school, government agencies, and the government, in order of the responsibility they felt to them. Schools have multiple responsibilities or accountabilities. What is interesting is that the figure below shows that students remain the chief focus of responsibility, while those to whom boards are accountable, and thus school staff in turn through their accountability to boards, come last in this prioritisation. The figure below shows the average rank for each of these. A nine would be the highest ranking, and 0, the lowest.

Figure 17

Trustees', Principals', and Teachers' Average Rankings of Their Responsibility



Note that people in schools feel least direct responsibility toward government, or government agencies: their attention is directed most to those they serve, students, and then to the people and bodies involved in their school. Interestingly, teachers in bulk-funded schools gave their school a higher ranking than other teachers—but a lower ranking to parents.

Statements of Service Performance

Something of this different emphasis at the school level with regards to accountability and the reigning public sector reform model also comes through in principals' views of the new (but not legally compulsory) requirement of schools to provide annual statements of service

performance, starting with the 1997 year. Statements of service performance, which provide (largely) quantitative measures of the achievements of an organisation in terms of its goals for the financial year, have been required of government departments through the Public Sector Finance Act, and have gradually been extended to organisations receiving government funding. Goals for the year ahead are included in departmental forecast reports, and performance against these goals recorded in annual reports. While this approach focuses the work of an organisation, it can also focus its efforts on work that is measurable—and not all work which is needed can be validly or reliably quantified. Flexibility of response to situations which arise can also be reduced (Gregory, 1994; Wilson, 1996). There are also additional compliance costs incurred in having to relate specific expenditure to outputs.

A draft statement of service performance for schools was first gazetted in 1992, but met with great resistance from principals. An amended version was trialled in the next few years. Yet principals remain opposed to this requirement, largely because they cannot see the value to be gained for their students from the extra work entailed. In response to an open-ended question seeking principals' views, only 9 percent thought the statements of service performance would be beneficial or useful. Another 7 percent saw them as simply something which had to be done. Thirty-five percent of the principals thought they would be a waste of time, and made various expressions of frustration, some extreme. Nineteen percent expressed concern about the extra and, they believed, unnecessary work entailed. (Principals' already high workloads are described in chapter 9.) Ten percent could not see how these statements of service performance could improve children's learning, and 6 percent thought that it was impossible to put a monetary value against learning activities. Ten percent sought changes to the format. Twelve percent were unsure about the statements of service performance, largely because they did not know their purpose or value.

Thus the new accountability—derived from a model for large central government agencies–finds little enthusiasm amongst principals. It does not fit with their sense of responsibility which is directed toward students and learning, and the linking of budget sums against goals seems to them to squeeze the nature of learning into a tight, and inappropriate, frame.

One goal of the new statements of service performance is to provide parents with more information about schools so their choice of school can be better informed. But given the comparatively low proportion of principals reporting parental requests to see ERO review reports, one wonders how many parents would actually see, or use, the statements of service performance.

Education Review Office

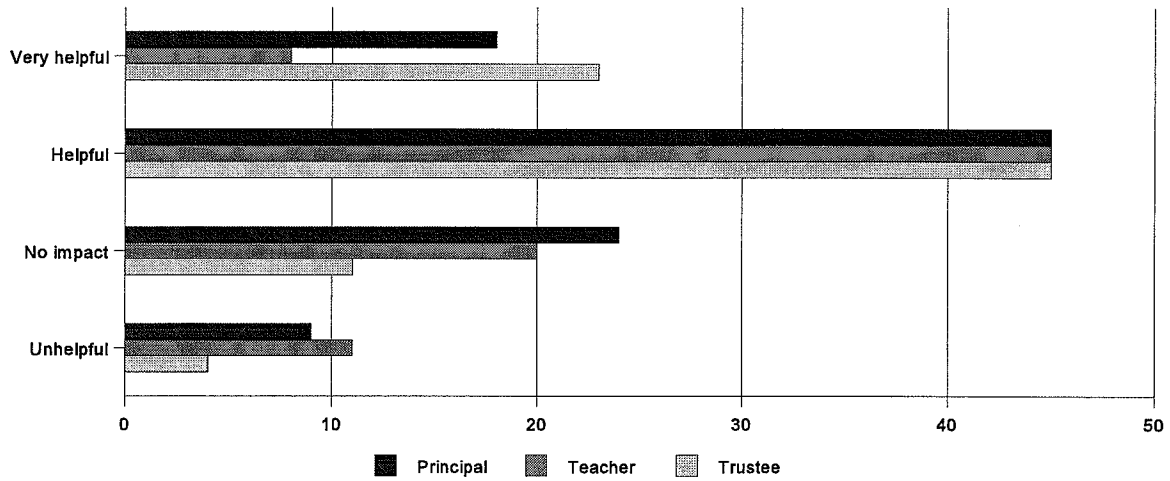
All New Zealand schools have now been reviewed by ERO, in at least 2 formats. Assurance audits focus on board of trustees' compliance with the legislative requirements of schools. Effectiveness reviews concentrate on student achievement. There has been rising disquiet about the nature of these reports, their usefulness, and the media coverage given to some schools which received negative reviews. A recent NZ Principals' Federation survey of its members showed that while most felt their school's review had been positive, most also felt the review would have little effect in their school. ERO reviews were most likely to be used where the school felt confident in the quality of the review team. The survey material suggested that there appeared to be some inconsistencies in the quality of ERO teams, and of their reviews (Wylie, 1997b).

Public expression of disquiet lies behind the current government review of ERO, which is substantially focused on looking at improvements to the current approach within the existing government budget for ERO, rather than making radical changes.

Seventy-three percent of the principals responding to this survey said their school had had an assurance audit since 1993, and 44 percent, an effectiveness review. The largest schools were more likely to have had an effectiveness review than others (65 percent). The proportion of teachers who have seen ERO reports arising from reviews of their school is 77 percent: somewhat lower than one would expect if the reports were to be used to make changes in schools. This may be why teachers were less likely to find their school's last review very helpful.

Figure 18

Principals', Trustees', and Teachers' Views of the Impact of Their School's Last ERO Review



Teachers in the smallest schools were most likely to find the overall impact of their last ERO review very helpful (25 percent); teachers in schools with rolls of over 100 were twice as likely as those in smaller schools to describe the impact as unhelpful. Principals of rural schools were most likely to find the review very helpful (27 percent, compared with 8 percent of urban principals and 14 percent of those in small towns).

Many of the principals who found the ERO review very helpful had made major changes at their school as a result. Minor changes were associated with the judgment that the review had been helpful. Those who thought the review had had no impact on their school were divided between those who had made minor changes, and those who had made no changes at all. Thus principals' perception of the usefulness of ERO reviews is linked to whether they result in information which leads to a change in the school's policies or practices.

Most schools (83 percent) made changes to their policies or practices as a result of their ERO review: most changes were minor (70 percent). Seven percent of principals reported making major changes.

Decile 1–2 schools were marginally more likely to have made major changes as a result of their last ERO review. Schools with rolls under 100 were twice as likely to have made major changes as others. This may reflect several different factors: more difficulty in these schools in keeping compliance with all the legislation pertaining to schools, differences in ERO

reviews relating to school characteristics, or school use of ERO as a (relatively) free source of advice.

Twenty-two percent of the teachers responding did not know whether their board had made any changes after the school's last ERO review. Fewer rural teachers were unsure whether their board had made changes as a result of the school's last ERO review than others (11 percent compared with 25 percent of others). The same pattern did not show up in relation to school size: those in the smallest schools were just as likely not to know what their board had done as a result of the last ERO review as others.

The main areas of change were assessment (37 percent), health and safety (36 percent), and curriculum (28 percent). These are core areas of school's work.

Other areas where ERO reviews resulted in change were personnel policy (13 percent), policies (unspecified) 8 percent, and equal opportunities (7 percent). One or 2 schools had also made changes to their financial policy, their property maintenance policy, principal appraisal, or discipline policy.

Almost all the principals who reported major changes as a result of their ERO review made them in assessment and curriculum; about half made changes to health and safety, personnel matters, and EEO, and only 15 percent to the school's handling of discipline.

Schools which had had an assurance audit were twice as likely as others to make changes to their health and safety policies or provision.

Only 6 percent of the trustees in the largest schools found the overall impact of their last ERO report was very helpful, compared with 33 percent of others. City trustees were also less likely to find their last ERO review very helpful (14 percent compared with 25 percent of rural trustees, and 38 percent of small town trustees).

Urban schools were half as less likely to make changes to health and safety policy or practice as others, and small town principals much less likely to change assessment policy or practice than those in schools in other locations.

The smallest schools were most likely to have had an assurance audit in the last 3 years (95 percent), and least likely to have had an effectiveness review (29 percent, compared with 38 percent of schools with rolls of 35 to 300, and 65 percent of the largest schools). The latter were least likely to describe their ERO report as very helpful (2 percent), and they made fewer changes than reported for other schools. Those in the smallest schools were more likely than others to make changes to their assessment and health and safety policy or practices.

Twenty-two percent of the principals said their local newspaper had published a report on the school's ERO review. Most thought this coverage had had a positive impact on their school; but a quarter of those whose reviews were published thought it had had a negative impact on their school. This is 6 percent of all the schools covered in the survey.

ERO reviews have been seen as a prime source of parental information, particularly important when parental choice of schools is a key component of educational policy. Only 22 percent of the principals said that (some) prospective parents asked to see the school's ERO report; but parents were more likely to want other material about the school, or base their judgment on a visit to the school themselves.

Self-Review

Schools are required by National Administration Guideline 4 to maintain an ongoing process of self-review. Most schools in the survey had a self-review process (61 percent), or were in the process of developing one (34 percent). No information was collected in the survey on the content or process of these reviews.

Relations with the Ministry of Education

In contrast to assessments of the quality of relationships at the school level, described as at least good by around 80 percent of principals and trustees, the quality of relationships between the school and the Ministry received a lower rating. Around half the principals described it as good or better.

Thirteen percent of the principals responding reported their relationship with the national office of the Ministry of Education as excellent, or very good; 31 percent found it good; 30 percent found it satisfactory; 13 percent had minor problems; and 7 percent, major problems—much the same picture as in 1991 and 1993, and an improvement over 1990 (the first year when schools had budgetary responsibilities and the Ministry was newborn).

The main problems described were difficulty in reaching staff, or having too many hurdles to overcome to get information or responses, and the sense that the national office staff were too removed from schools, and lacked real understanding of what happens in schools. Some also commented that the problems they encountered were the result of inadequate funding for the Ministry's work. The main solutions put forward to the problems identified by principals were that Ministry staff should improve their awareness of the reality of school life, perhaps by paying more visits to schools, that communications be improved, quicker action be taken, or the quality of staff improved.

Relations with the district office of the Ministry of Education were described as excellent or very good by 20 percent of the principals. Thirty-one percent found it to be a good relationship, and 30 percent, satisfactory. Nine percent had had minor problems, and 7 percent, major problems.

As with the national office the problems included poor access to Ministry staff, poor communication, and Ministry staff's lack of understanding of schools; but also difficulties with property and funding issues, and poor advice.

The main suggestions made to counter problems experienced by schools were to improve the quality of the district office staff, to provide more staff at the district level, or improve communications.

School Actions To Improve Their Government Funding or Staffing

One of the spurs to the education reforms was the sense that some schools did better than others in terms of their government resourcing because they were "squeaky wheels". But there was little indication from previous NZCER surveys that schools had become passive in their seeking of resources, even though funding has become increasingly formula and roll based, seemingly allowing little room for manoeuvre. The reforms have also encouraged schools to become more entrepreneurial, promote themselves more, and to seek more media publicity: another example of contrary currents within the same reform. One has the impression that

media interest in education has increased since the reforms, though no comparative research has been done.

Only 19 percent of the principals felt no need to take action over the previous year to receive satisfactory answers from the Ministry of Education regarding their school's funding and staff resources. This is somewhat less than the 27 percent in 1993. The most common initiative was to negotiate with district Ministry staff (64 percent). Twenty-five percent bypassed these offices to talk directly to national Ministry staff. The same proportion had discussed the school's capital-works needs with the district committee representative. Twenty-four percent (principal and/or trustees) discussed the school's situation with their local Member of Parliament. Eight percent of schools went to the media with their situation, and at 9 percent of schools, the principal and/or trustees had spoken about the situation to people in positions of national influence. These are much the same proportions as in 1993.

Principals of the low Māori enrolment schools were twice as likely as others to see no need to take action to get satisfactory answers regarding their school's funding and staffing resources. A parallel trend was evident with school decile: 9 percent of decile 1–2 school principals saw no need to take action, rising to 26 percent of decile 7–10 schools.

Principals of the smallest schools also saw less need to take action than others (43 percent saw no need). This is paralleled with the rural school principals: 29 percent saw no need to take action, compared with 13 percent of urban principals, and 9 percent of those in small towns.

Teaching principals were 3 times more likely to feel they had no need to take action to get satisfactory answers to their school's funding and staff resources.

Taking the school's problems to the local Member of Parliament was more common amongst urban schools, and those with rolls of over 200. Negotiation with national Ministry of Education staff rose from 15 percent of the low Māori enrolment schools to 44 percent of the high Māori enrolment schools. However, low Māori enrolment schools were just as likely to approach their local Member of Parliament, media, or people with national influence to try to improve their school funding or staffing.

Principals of decile 1–2 schools were twice as likely as others to negotiate with national Ministry of Education staff in order to receive a satisfactory answer regarding the school's staffing and funding. Only 9 percent of these principals felt there was no need to take action for their school in these resource areas, compared with 21 percent of others.

Principals of schools with rolls over 200 were twice as likely as others to discuss their school's situation with their local Member of Parliament, or bring it to the attention of people in positions of national influence.

Only 15 percent of the principals who thought their government funding (which excluded staffing for all but the bulk-funded schools in the survey) was inadequate had taken no further action on funding and staffing, compared with 40 percent of those who thought it adequate.

Principals who had problems in their dealings with the central office of the Ministry of Education were more likely than others to take their school's resourcing problems to their local Member of Parliament. Half the principals who discussed their school's resourcing problems with their local Member of Parliament also described the situation to the media, and half discussed them with people in positions of national influence.

The same sense that schools are not so much agents of the Ministry as (some kind of) partners can also be seen in principals' attitudes to Ministry of Education or ERO deadlines

for the receipt of information, though these attitudes are somewhat more responsive to school timeframes than they were in 1993. Government agency deadlines were always met by only 35 percent of the principals. Another 41 percent (up from 27 percent in 1993) said they met most of these deadlines. Nineteen percent would meet the deadlines if the school felt it was important (a decrease from 27 percent in 1993), and 10 percent if they had the time (a decrease from 17 percent in 1993). The comments made here expressed frustration at the short length of time which the Ministry sometimes allowed for replies, and the desire for the Ministry to match schools' responsiveness to its requests or demands with equal responsiveness to queries from schools.

We also asked trustees whether they thought the Ministry of Education should be doing more, or less, in relation to board work. Thirty-seven percent of the trustees felt the Ministry of Education could be doing more for some aspects of their work, 21 percent disagreed, and 36 percent were not sure. The 2 main areas identified by those who would like more Ministry support were property and funding, closely followed by improved communications.

Only 8 percent of trustees felt the Ministry of Education should be doing less in relation to their board's work, though another 40 percent were unsure. Of the 22 trustees who made comments here, the main call was to reduce paperwork, reduce the workload and add no further responsibilities, and slow the curriculum changes.

Bulk Funding and School-Site Bargaining

While bulk funding of teacher salaries and school-site bargaining may fit the model of public sector reform, how desirable are they at the school level?

Only 14 percent of the trustees responding to the 1996 survey thought that their schools should be bulk funded, or that each school board should have the responsibility for negotiating salaries and employment conditions with its teaching staff—school-site bargaining. Sixteen percent were unsure.

Not all of those who supported bulk funding of teacher salaries also wanted the site-based bargaining which has followed or accompanied its introduction in other parts of education—kindergartens and the tertiary sector. Sixty percent of the 14 percent supporting bulk funding wanted site-based bargaining also, 27 percent did not, and 14 percent were unsure.

Trustees' comments here centred around their views that these responsibilities did not fit their role. The responsibilities belonged to the government. Trustees noted that they were volunteers—and amateurs (this was a major concern voiced in relation to taking on school-site bargaining). Trustees were also concerned about the additional workload these extra responsibilities would give them, the negative effect they thought it would have on their relations with school staff, and their perception that this move would allow the government to cut its funding to schools or force boards to make unpalatable budget decisions.

Those who were in favour of bulk funding thought it would allow them to pay teachers in relation to performance, and give them more flexibility; those in favour of site-based bargaining also gave flexibility as a reason, or mentioned that this move was logical, given the board's role as employer.

Trustees in favour of bulk funding or doing their own negotiations on pay and conditions with staff did differ from others in what they thought the key element was in their role as a trustee—not, as one might expect, placing the employer aspect to the fore—but in providing

direction for the school (twice the proportion of others), and in seeing their partnership with school staff as essential (half the proportion of those who do not want the responsibility of salary negotiations or bulk funding).

Those in favour of bulk funding were also:

- more likely to think their school's government funding adequate, and
- half as likely to think the Ministry of Education could be doing more for boards.

Those in favour of taking on school-site negotiations were also more likely to think their government funding was adequate.

The May 1997 NZSTA survey of boards (Wylie, 1997a) also shows that only a very small minority of boards were interested in site-based bargaining, and that only 3 percent were considering bulk funding (on top of the 10 percent who have already chosen this option).

That survey also showed that boards wanted the government to address their concerns about the adequacy of resources, school staff workloads, and teaching quality and supply. Changes to their own role were the lowest priority. Boards felt that school staff were the source of their greatest support, and the government the least. They felt that school staff and NZSTA had the greatest recognition and understanding of their role; the Ministry of Education slightly more than their school community, but again, the government least.

Summary

This distance between the government and boards is likely to owe something to the under-resourcing felt at schools, and the increased workload which came with decentralisation. But it can also be related to the disparity between the current public sector model of management, based on contractual, hierarchial relationships, and what actually works at the school level in terms of partnership between professionals and trustees, and in terms of the dominance of administration in principals' workloads at what may be the expense of the core work of the school, children's learning.

The research material therefore raises substantial questions about the necessity for imposing the full public sector model on schools, and the value of doing so.

The survey material indicates that while ERO reviews have not been the source of major change in many schools, they have been very useful for small, rural schools, that is, the schools which are the most isolated. They have also focused schools' attention on the legislative requirements of them, and ensured that most have at least achieved compliance. Thus the value of external reviews would appear to be related to their content, and the availability of other sources of information and stimulus to schools.

PART III
THE IMPACT

13 CURRICULUM AND ASSESSMENT

Before decentralisation, New Zealand primary schools enjoyed a rich combination of guidance, resourcing, and local latitude with regard to curriculum and assessment. National curriculum guidelines were broad. The guidelines and accompanying resources were usually trialled over some time, with significant contributions made to their refinement and development by their use in the classroom, and related staff development. The guidelines were not seen as centrally imposed so much as nationally developed. The resources were free to schools, but their use was not mandatory, and schools could make their own choice of resources, including books.

The reforms were intended to provide schools with the impetus to shape their curriculum to meet more local needs, and to make innovations. After the reforms, it was not until the 1993 NZCER survey that teachers reported changes in their curriculum, and an increase in assessment. This partially reflects the fact that the first few years of the reforms were preoccupied with the assumption of new roles and responsibilities. But it also points to the importance of central curricula in curriculum development, since this was the year when the New Zealand curriculum framework was brought in, with mathematics and science the first areas to be revamped. But the framework does not simply update curriculum areas. It is more specific with the ground that should be mastered before progression to a new level, and it makes stronger links between curriculum and assessment.

Schools cannot ignore the new curriculum framework. It is included in the National Administration Guidelines as the requirement to "implement learning programmes based upon the underlying principle [of the Curriculum Framework], the stated essential learning areas and skills, and the national achievement objectives."

Kura kaupapa Māori schools were some of the schools doing the most innovative curriculum work, though severely constrained by resources, since these were having to be developed at the school site.[14] One of the most telling signs of the importance of national curriculum development and resourcing to sustainable innovation is that the new framework now includes Māori medium curricula, with accompanying resources, and professional development.

Teachers' Reports of Curriculum Change

Only 4 percent of the teachers responding said there had been no change over the past year to the curriculum they taught, much the same as in 1993. Sixty-eight percent reported some change, and 24 percent, only a small change. New entrant teachers were slightly less likely than others to have made changes to their curriculum over the past year and, if they had, to have made only small changes.

The 2 leading reasons for change were also much the same as in 1993: the NZ curriculum (76 percent) and to meet children's needs (66 percent). Other notable reasons given by teachers

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[14] A study of the burgeoning charter school movement in the US shows the difficulty of curriculum development at the school level when schools are also responsible for their own administration. Though these schools are set up to provide alternatives to existing schools, they are often dependent on ready-made curricula. (Wohlstetter & Griffin, 1997).

were (Ministry of Education) curriculum or assessment contracts (37 percent), to match the children's level of learning (32 percent), to develop the teacher's own skills (30 percent), to satisfy ERO (30 percent also), or to match school charter objectives (29 percent). Only 17 percent mentioned a curriculum change occurring to meet parental interest.

Fifty-four percent of the teachers in decile 1–2 schools were spurred to make changes in their programme because of their involvement in a Ministry of Education curriculum or assessment staff development contract. These teachers were just as likely as others to participate in a curriculum contract, but were much more likely to be taking part in an assessment contract (45 percent). Thirty-seven percent of the urban teachers were involved in an assessment contract, compared with 28 percent of their colleagues in small towns, and 23 percent of those in provincial towns or rural areas.

Teachers in decile 1–6 schools were more likely than higher decile schools to have made changes to their curriculum to meet parental interest, or to match the objectives in their school charter. Teachers in provincial towns were around twice as likely as others to say the change had been made to match their school charter

The next table shows the changes that occurred in primary teachers' programmes during 1995. These changes were much the same as they were in 1993, when the NZ curriculum framework was introduced, but show a greater contrast to the pattern found in the 1991 NZCER survey. Perhaps this indicates that the new framework is not only the key factor in the amount of change, but has also influenced the kind of changes which were visible between 1991 and 1993, but did not occur between 1993 and 1996. These include notable increases in the integration of subjects, more emphasis on social and basic skills, and more use of computers between 1991 and 1993. Perhaps it is the deterioration in funding which principals and trustees report which accounts for the fact that more teachers are not reporting a (continual) increase in classroom computer use. Harris (1997) also notes the importance of continuing technical support and professional development in integrating computers into classroom work.

Table 67

Changes to Curriculum

Changes to Curriculum	1991 % (n=396)	1993 % (n=302)	1996 % (n=361)
More emphasis on assessment	-	51	63
More use of computers	39	56	56
Change to subject syllabus	4	44	44
More integration of subjects	17	41	42
More emphasis on social skills	17	33	39
More emphasis on basic skills	14	24	29
More Māori language	22	34	26
More teaching of English to children whose English is a second language[n]	-	-	14
More education outside the classroom	8	12	9
More religious/moral education	4	3	6
Introduction of a language other than Māori or English	-	2	4

n=new question in 1996 survey.

Teachers in mid and high Māori enrolment schools were around twice as likely as others to

be using more Māori language. Small town teachers were most likely to be using more Māori language (40 percent). Forty-three percent of teachers in decile 1–2 schools reported more Māori language, compared with 25 percent in decile 3–8 schools, and 12 percent in decile 9–10 schools.

Most of those who were teaching more English to non-English-speaking children were in cities, and none in rural schools.

Teachers in the smallest schools were less likely to have more of an emphasis on assessment (38 percent); they were also the least likely to have taken part in an assessment contract (13 percent), or to mention ERO as the reason for making changes to their programme (6 percent).

These changes to curriculum did not appear to have any noticeable impact on the patterns of time spent on different curricula areas (appendix 3). The one exception was in junior classes, where more teachers were spending more time on assessment (the median shifted from 2–3 hours in 1993 to 4–5 hours in 1996), and slightly less on reading.

Parents were not a major trigger of curriculum change. Not did parental interest in the curriculum their child was experiencing increase with the continual change in programmes reported by teachers. Fifteen percent of the teachers said the parents of the children in their classroom were generally more interested in the curriculum than last year (much the same as in 1993 and 1991), and 18 percent said a few of the parents were more interested (slightly less than the 28 percent in 1993 and 1991). Parents were more interested in the children's work if the curriculum changes had included more Māori language, more integration of subjects, more education outside the classroom, and, marginally more interested if there was more computer use. They showed no more interest than previously if there had been more emphasis on basic skills, social skills, or assessment.

Thirty-three percent of the teachers reported that their school had held parent evenings to introduce parents to the changes in the curriculum. Other school responses to the NZ curriculum are shown in the next table.

Table 68

Teachers' Reports of School Responses to the NZ Curriculum

Response	(n=361) %
Staff attending outside courses	89
Internal staff development	83
Developing resources	81
Changing assessment	70
Have/had a curriculum contract	61
A new programme in development	36
Held parent evening(s)	33
Have/had an assessment contract	31
Introduced a new programme	31

Teachers in the smallest schools were much less likely than other teachers to have had internal staff development related to the NZ curriculum (19 percent). They were least likely to have introduced a new programme (13 percent): the larger the school, the more likely it was

to introduce a new programme (up to 40 percent of teachers in schools with rolls of 300 or more). Urban teachers were more likely than others to have held a parent evening to introduce the NZ curriculum.

Eighty-three percent of the teachers responding thought they would need further professional development to support the new curricula for mathematics, science, and technology.

The main impact of the NZ curriculum on teachers' own work, mentioned in response to an open-ended question, was an increased workload (36 percent). Twenty-four percent thought it had had a positive impact, for example, making their work easier to plan. Sixteen percent had changed their teaching style in response. Thirteen percent each spent more time on planning, or more time on assessment.

Forty percent of the teachers thought the NZ curriculum would enhance a particular curriculum or assessment emphasis initiated by their school since 1992; 43 percent thought they would have to alter a school initiative to match the NZ curriculum, and 2 percent, that they would have to drop the initiative. This pattern is much the same as in 1993. The fact that the NZ curriculum was incompatible with only a small proportion of school-based initiatives suggests both that the NZ curriculum is not a radical approach, alien to existing practice in New Zealand primary schools, and also that few schools were using decentralisation to embark on radical change themselves.

Twenty-one percent of the teachers would like to make some curriculum innovation themselves. The barrier they identified was not the NZ curriculum, but lack of time (21 percent), lack of money (14 percent), lack of (other) staff commitment (4 percent), and for only 2 percent, a lack of board of trustees' commitment.

Teachers in schools with rolls over 100 were twice as interested as others in making their own curriculum innovations.

Rural teachers were less interested in making their own changes to the curriculum (11 percent).

Only 5 percent of the decile 9–10 teachers reported that money was the reason why they could not make a desired curriculum innovation compared with 22 percent of decile 1–2 teachers.

Assessment

Eighty-six percent of those teachers who were still teaching the same class or level had increased the amount of assessment they did in the past year. Fifteen percent of the teachers had changed their class or level—3 times the figure of the 1993 NZCER survey, and congruent with the picture of increased teacher turnover reported in chapter 5.

What were the effects of this increased assessment? The main benefit was that teachers gained a better picture of individual children (40 percent). Thirteen percent also made changes to their curriculum. But this gain came at the cost of less time: for attention to individual children during class (44 percent), for preparing and planning lessons (39 percent), and covering the curriculum (29 percent). It also meant more work for the teacher outside class hours (59 percent).

Teachers with classes of fewer than 20 students were less likely to note that they had less time to give attention to individual children, or cover the curriculum . The teachers most likely to report less time for preparation were those teaching classes in the standards. Form 1

and 2 teachers were least likely to report that they had made changes to their curriculum as a result of their increased assessment.

There have also been some changes to assessment practices since 1993:

- less use of running records by teachers of children in the standards and forms 1 and 2 since 1993;
- a decrease of around 25 percent in the use of the primary progress records (introduced in 1990 but never mandatory), at all levels of primary school;
- an increase in the use of children's own assessment of their work; and
- at new entry level, the use of school entry checks and standardised tests have both increased by almost 20 percent since 1993.

Table 69

Assessment Procedures Reported by Teachers

	New Entrants % (n=68)	Juniors % (n=107)	Standards % (n=97)	Forms 1&2 % (n=33)
Running records	97	100	66	70
School entry checks	94	59	19	24
Work samples/portfolios	91	93	92	82
Behavioural observations	81	78	80	79
6-year reading net	78	88	17	3
Essential skills observations	72	65	70	79
Primary progress record	69	63	61	52
Curriculum checkpoints	69	69	60	67
Learning outcomes/goals	65	67	70	64
Profiles	62	62	51	52
Standardised tests	53	65	90	88
Individual education plans	49	38	40	39
Self-assessment	43	57	73	82
Behavioural checklists	34	31	28	36
Spelling tests	31	68	91	88
General ability/IQ tests	4	5	7	21

These changes in assessment owe something to the new NZ curriculum. The increase of school entry checks and standardised tests may be linked to ERO's emphasis on schools showing what contribution they have made to children's learning. The introduction of the School Entry Assessment kit which will assess literacy, oral language, and numeracy may also be a relevant factor in these changes. This is intended to provide teachers with a picture of new entrants. It will also provide data at the national level, though the tests are not mandatory.

The number of different assessments used by teachers raises some questions. While it shows that teachers are using assessment both to help them decide children's needs and report their achievement, one wonders whether some methods are producing the same information. Teachers identify increases in assessment in their workloads, and as a major source of

dissatisfaction with their work. What benefits are gained in relation to the costs? More research on assessment and its use by teachers seems desirable.

The proportion of teachers saying that their assessment procedures were devised outside the school has almost halved since 1993. Fifty-eight percent of the teachers gave their school as the source of most of their assessment procedures, 44 percent, themselves, and 23 percent, sources beyond the school. Teachers of students in the standards or forms 1 and 2 were more likely to devise their own assessment procedures.

Aggregation of Assessment Results

While New Zealand teachers are used to assessing individual children in relation to their individual learning needs, it is only recently, and largely triggered by the education reforms' emphasis on increased accountability and evidence of achievement, that they have begun to bring together individual results to compose a profile of a class or group of children. In 1993, around half the teachers in the NZCER survey aggregated individual results. In 1996, most were doing so: 40 percent for the whole class; 49 percent for some curriculum areas (usually reading and mathematics), and 10 percent for some groups of children.

New entrant and junior class teachers were less likely to aggregate their children's marks to obtain a class profile (31 percent, compared with 52 percent of those in the standards, and 61 percent of those teaching forms 1 and 2). The latter were less likely than others to aggregate individual results for some curriculum areas only.

Half the principals said that individual students' results were brought together to provide a school or class profile. Forty-eight percent said this aggregation was used to make reports to the school's board, and 33 percent said it was used in the school's development plan. Only 15 percent of the principals reported no aggregation of student results. Principals of high Māori enrolment schools were less likely to use aggregated assessment results in reports to their board (35 percent). Aggregation of results was half as likely in the smallest schools as others.

Reporting to Parents

Thirty-four percent of the teachers thought they were doing more reporting of children's work and achievements to parents than the previous year. This figure has remained consistent in the NZCER surveys. Again, the cost is an increased workload (90 percent of those who increased their reporting to parents). But there appeared to be more benefits in increasing communication with parents than in increasing assessment: it improved the teacher's understanding of the children she or he taught (53 percent); enabled some children to make better progress, and brought the teacher closer to parents (48 percent each); increased parent confidence in the teaching (43 percent); and increased the teacher's own confidence in his or her work (26 percent). Teachers who had increased the amount of reporting they did to parents also thought that there was generally more interest in child's progress compared with the previous year's parents.

Around two-thirds of the parents responding described their access to information on their child's progress and classroom programme as good, and most of the rest, fair. Dissatisfaction was only voiced by around 6 percent.

Parental Discussions of Their Child's Report with the Teacher

Sixty-seven percent of the principals reported that at least 75 percent of the school's parents discussed their child's report with the teacher. Eighteen percent had between 51 and 74 percent of parents discussing the child's report; 4 percent between 26–50 percent; 5 percent between 11–25 percent of the parents; and 5 percent, less than 10 percent of the parents at the school.

Most principals (around 80 percent) in low and mid Māori enrolment schools reported that at least 75 percent of parents discussed their child's report with the teacher. This was less likely to occur in mid Māori enrolment schools (59 percent), or high Māori enrolment schools (48 percent).

Forty-two percent of the principals of decile 1–2 schools said that 75 percent or more of the parents discussed their child's report with the teacher; this contrasts with 87 percent of the decile 9–10 principals.

What Role Do Trustees and Parents Play in School Curriculum?

Fifty-six percent of the principals in the survey thought that their board was involved in decisionmaking on the curriculum in the school—much as in 1993, which showed a large increase over the 35 percent of principals who thought this in the first year of the change to school self-management. The next table shows that there has been an increase since 1993 in trustees' perceptions of their involvement in their school's curriculum and assessment. Trustee involvement in curriculum is mostly in the aspects of monitoring and planning within a context of school development, one of the key responsibilities of school boards, rather than hands-on involvement, though this too shows some increases.

Table 70

Trustees' Perceptions of Their Board's Role in School Curriculum and Assessment

Role	1993 % (n=292)	1996 % (n=270)
Regular updates of school activities at board meetings	83	97*+
Discuss school activities/programmes with regard to school development plan	60	71
Discuss student performance data with regard to school development plan	18	40*+
Join staff in working groups on specific curriculum areas	12	17
Subcommittee works with school staff	8	16*+
No role	10	2*-

*=statistically significant changes from comparable answers in previous years; "+" means an increase, "–" means a decrease.

Parents' involvement in curriculum has changed little since the shift to school self-management (*see* chapter 10). Curriculum does not feature prominently among the issues that they raise with board members or identify as a prime reason for dissatisfaction with the quality of their child's education.

Summary

The main driver of curriculum change within decentralisation appears to be national initiatives—their requirements and their resourcing. From a cost-benefit perspective, which includes professional time and energy, national development is likely to be a more efficient way of developing curriculum and keeping it relevant.

Parental interest does increase with some curriculum changes, and with increased reporting on children's progress. But it does not shape the curriculum, nor inspire change. Perhaps this is because there was already a high level of parental satisfaction with the general quality of their child's schooling in New Zealand's primary schools, a satisfaction level which has not changed since the reforms.

This picture of change is, of course, dependent on survey data, and our understanding of curriculum innovation and continuity needs to be fleshed out by case studies of different schools. Nonetheless, it raises some questions about the rationale for decentralisation based on making schools more responsive to parents, where parents are sometimes talked of as the main "customers" of schools. A recent international comparison of curriculum change in other decentralised education systems also notes the importance of the central educational agencies, and suggests that:

> . . . even when real decentralization is achieved and there is full local participation, education may still remain the same. Three conditions are required for local actors to change (the content of) education profoundly: they must be discontented with the current content; they must be able to distinguish between changes that will have profound effects and those that will merely adjust certain processes or content; and they must be able to make changes (that is, have resources, authority, and technical skills). (McGinn, 1997, p. 48)

The increase in assessment since decentralisation fits with the new emphasis on accountability, through reporting to board, parents, and through ERO reviews, as well as the growing emphasis in the educational research literature on the benefits of analysing and using (valid) assessment results to gain insight into children's needs in the classroom. But the material in this chapter raises the question of whether the benefits of increased assessment are being undermined by the time it takes from work which is just as important as assessment and its analysis in meeting children's learning needs.

14 POLICY AND PROVISION— INTEGRATION, COMPETITION, AND CHOICE

This chapter deals with 2 of the key ways in which decentralisation was to sharpen school practice and provision: through the greater integration of school policy and practice, and through competition for students.

Integration of School Policy and Practice

Charters

Charters were originally intended as the linchpin of school accountability to the government, and to the school community. Mandatory sections relating to curriculum and the improvement of educational provision for students from disadvantaged groups were included, as well as encouragement for schools to consult with their communities in order to tailor their provision more to the needs identified by those communities. There were mixed feelings about the charters from the beginning because of this joint inclusion of "top-down" requirements and individual school devising, and because many did not see the value of school policies, other than showing compliance.

The National Education Guidelines remain mandatory components of the charter every school is still required to have, but they were broadened in 1993, largely through a softer emphasis on some of the equity aspects of the original guidelines.

Forty-six percent of the principals said they had recently revised their charter. A further 32 percent were in the process of revising it, and 22 percent were not. Almost twice as many decile 1–2 school trustees said they had recently revised their charter as others (63 percent).

Whether or not their school's charter was a working document was a judgment open to quite different interpretations: 76 percent of the trustees said it was, 58 percent of the principals, and 34 percent of the teachers: little different from the 1993 findings. This suggests that the charter is more of a focus for those in the school concerned with policy, planning, and reporting to outside agencies than those focused on teaching and learning per se.

Yet the views of these 3 groups on the impact of their school charter were reasonably similar. These views of the impact of school charters do not show them to have quite the core place in school life that was originally intended. Teachers were less likely to relate it to school planning than trustees, perhaps because they were thinking of programme planning and school organisation. Principals were most likely to think it had had no effect, and trustees to think it had helped the allocation of resources within the school.

Table 71

Views on Effects of School Charters within School

Effect	Trustees % (n=270)	Teachers % (n=361)	Principals % (n=181)
Helped in development of school policies	52*-	50	52
Helped school planning[n]	39	26	31
School already doing what was in charter	25	19*-	24*-
No effect	5	9	18
Helped allocate resources[n]	23	16	15
Changed school administration	6*-	7*-	14*-
Increased parent participation in school	10*-	9*-	12*-
Increased equitable education	13	7	10*-
Led to some curriculum changes	10	12*-	8*-
No effect—not important to funding/review agencies	4	1	3

n=new question in 1996 survey.

*=statistically significant change (decrease) from comparable answers in previous years.

School Development Plans

School development plans put charters into action as a form of planning. Eighty-two percent of the principals reported that their school had a school development plan or a strategic plan: much the same as in 1993. This was likely to cover curriculum (87 percent), staff development (83 percent), property management (81 percent), finance (71 percent), board of trustees' training (48 percent), staffing (41 percent), and school promotion (25 percent). School development plans have yet to achieve the integration of budget with activities which has been recommended to boards, and which would fit with the public sector management model, itself derived from business models.

This interpretation that schools have yet to achieve integration of school planning and activity through budget allocation is given further support by the fact that only 37 percent of the principals said that their school development plan helped them stay within their budget. Seventy-four percent of the principals thought their school development plan was useful in keeping them on track generally, and 13 percent said that outside demands and changes made it difficult to keep to their plan.

Policies To Address Disadvantage

How well have the national charter objectives translated themselves into specific new policy or provision for groups felt to have been ill served by education before the reforms? The table below shows that there has been no growth in such programmes since 1990, and indeed some decline in policy or programmes for Māori students, and in anti-sexism policies.

Table 72

Programmes or Policies To Counter Disadvantage

Programme/Policy	Some %	In Development %	None %	
			1990 (n=207)	1996 (n=181)
Māori education programme—all students	75	10	-	15
Mainstreaming of students with special needs	50	4	48	44
For gifted students	49	14	47	38
For Māori students	41*-	10	38	49*+
Anti-sexism	33*-	4	52	64*+
English as a second language	30	5	70	64
Anti-racism	17	6	72	78
For Pacific Island students	4	3	84	92

*=statistically significant changes from comparable answers in previous years; "+" means an increase, "-" means a decrease.

Programmes or policies for Māori students were most likely to occur in high Māori enrolment schools (74 percent, compared with 42 percent in mid Māori enrolment schools, and 24 percent in low and low-mid Māori enrolment schools). The lower the school decile, the more likely it was for some particular provision for Māori students to occur. Such provision was least likely to occur in rural areas (29 percent), as was provision for students whose English was a second language, mainstreamed students, and gifted students.

Schools with rolls of fewer than 100 were least likely to have programmes or policies for either mainstreaming students, or for gifted students (50 percent of schools with rolls of 100–299 had the latter, and 83 percent of schools with rolls over 300).

Most of the programmes or policies for students whose English was a second language were in schools with rolls of 100 or more (26 percent, rising to 63 percent of schools with rolls of 300 or more).

Integrated schools were less likely to have programmes or policies for children whose English was a second language.

This picture confirms the trend emerging from the 1991 and 1993 surveys of the importance of direct government encouragement to address the needs of these students. If schools did not develop policies or programmes in the initial days of the reforms, when there was such government encouragement, preceded by the then Department of Education's support in the 1980s for change through its resource provision, and professional development for the areas of Māori education and anti-sexism, then they were not going to do so left to their own devices. This may be for several reasons.

- High workloads. Principal and teacher responses to our question about initiatives they had not been able to introduce found that lack of time was a major factor.
- The lack of government support through funding, resources, or professional development. There is little targeted funding available for programme initiatives for these groups. In the case of provision of Māori students, there has been a tightening of criteria limiting funds to those making most use of the Māori language, an approach based on rationing limited funds rather than, until recently, expanding the funds to be used for this purpose. The lack of targeted funding, coupled with few curriculum resources available to schools at no cost, and loose accountability in terms of government scrutiny of the charters, sends messages to schools that provision for these groups is not a government priority.
- While most principals, teachers, and trustees espouse equality, there is continued ambivalence about analysing children's progress in terms of group membership rather than individuality, and in terms of providing "special" programmes. This may in turn be linked to the underresourcing of schools which was identified in chapters 4 and 5.
- While decentralisation was aimed at making schools more responsive to their parents, it is in fact difficult for schools to be responsive to minority groups—to be seen to provide for one group more than is provided for students as a whole. Minority groups may also be reluctant to press their case.
- Some schools do not have Māori or Pacific Island students, or those whose English is a second language. They are unlikely to develop provision until they have such students. Nonetheless, it is interesting to contrast the provision for gifted children—only 38 percent of the schools had no provision for this group—with the lack of provision for anti-racist policies or programmes, 78 percent. Is it that offering something for gifted children enhances a school's attractiveness to parents, while anti-racist policies seem to schools to have little promotional value?

Changes to Assessment, Reporting, and School Promotion

The increased accountability of schools which came with the reforms places new requirements on schools: to provide more evidence of student achievement, to provide more information to parents, as well as consult them, and to keep or increase student numbers, in order to maintain funding levels and school viability. The next table shows that most schools have now made some changes to their assessment and appraisal practices, but rather less to their staff development, information to parents, or their school promotion.

Table 73

Changes in Assessment, Reporting, and School Presentation as a Result of the Education Reforms

Area	Major change %			Minor change %			No change %		
	1991 (n=186)	1993 (n=191)	1996 (n=181)	1991	1993	1996	1991	1993	1996
Student assessment	22	37	66	47	48	29	29	13	2
Staff appraisal	–	59	61	–	30	33	–	8	6
Internal monitoring and evaluation of school/class programmes	19	35	55	53	51	39	27	12	3
Staff development[n]	–	–	44	–	–	41	–	–	18
Reporting student achievement to parents	11	16	38	41	53	43	47	29	18
School promotion/marketing	19	23	22	51	40	41	28	34	31
Presentation of school/class programme to parents	6	7	21	42	57	55	50	32	20

n=new question in 1996 survey.

The schools most likely to have made changes to their school promotion were urban schools, and those with rolls over 100. Yet principals who were in competitive situations were no more likely than those in schools with co-operative or friendly relations with other local schools to make major changes to their assessment, reporting, staff development, internal monitoring—or school promotion. Indeed, there was no association between a school's making changes to its self-promotion, and changes in its roll since 1989: schools which had gained students since 1989 were no more likely to make major changes than those which had lost students.

The main forms of school promotion additional to previous practice were school brochures and pamphlets (22 percent), and regular newsletters or articles in local papers (20 percent). Principals also mentioned parental and staff involvement in the community (10 percent), open days or tours (7 percent), and working through other schools (4 percent, mainly intermediates).Two percent mentioned signs or uniforms.

The smallest schools were the ones most likely to have made major changes to their assessment as a result of the reforms (86 percent). Decile 1-2 schools were less likely than others to have made major changes to their staff development policies as a result of the reforms.

Principals noting major increases in teacher workloads at their school were more likely to have also made major changes to student assessment at the school (67 percent), the school's staff appraisal process (60 percent), and internal monitoring and evaluation (58 percent) than to staff development (45 percent), the reporting of student achievement to parents (40 percent), presentation of school/class programmes to parents (22 percent), or the school's self-promotion.

There were also some associations between the degree of change in some areas, and principals' perceptions of teacher morale. The items in which major change had been made at

the school which had the most association with decreases in teachers' morale, as principals perceived it, were student assessment (69 percent), staff appraisal (65 percent), and internal monitoring and evaluation (61 percent).

Thus accountability-related changes in assessment, appraisal, and internal monitoring and evaluation carried costs in terms of workload and morale. As we shall see in the next chapter, there was little association between having made such changes and principals' perceptions that the reforms had a positive impact on teaching or children's learning.

How Real Is Choice and Competition?

The reforms occurred just before an expansion of the school-aged population in many, but not all, areas. Only 17 percent of the principals reported that their school roll in 1996 was much the same as it had been in 1989. Fifty-five percent of the survey schools had increased rolls—31 percent by a large amount, and 24 percent, a slight increase. Twenty-five percent of the schools had lost students—11 percent, substantially, and 14 percent, slightly.

What was the main reason for these changes in school rolls? Sixty-nine percent noted general population changes in their area. While the educational reforms were intended to increase competition between schools and enhance parental choice, only 19 percent of the principals felt that changes in student preferences accounted for the movement in their school's rolls. This reason was most likely to be given by principals in the lowest decile schools, and those with more than 30 percent Māori enrolment (30 percent each).

Schools that gained students more than others tended to be:

- urban schools (43 percent had substantially increased rolls compared with 24 percent of schools in other locations); and
- the largest schools, with current rolls over 300.

Schools which lost students more than others were:

- the lowest decile schools (36 percent);
- schools with more than 30 percent Māori enrolment (40 percent); and
- schools with current rolls under 35 (57 percent).

Relations with Other Local Schools

Table 74

Views of Relations with Other Schools

	Principals %	Teachers %	Trustees %
Co-operative	52	36	49
Friendly	53	61	58
Some competition	21	17	15
No contact	1	6	1

Principals could describe their relations with other schools as both co-operative and

competitive (16 percent of those describing it as competitive) and, rather more frequently, as both friendly and competitive (30 percent). Only 54 percent of the competitive relations were nothing but competitive—11 percent over all. Thus competition was rarely the only strand in schools' relationships with each other.

Competition between local schools was most evident for principals at either end of the decile scale: it existed for 20 percent of decile 1–4 school principals, and 24 percent of decile 9–10 principals, but only for 10 percent of those in decile 5–8 schools.

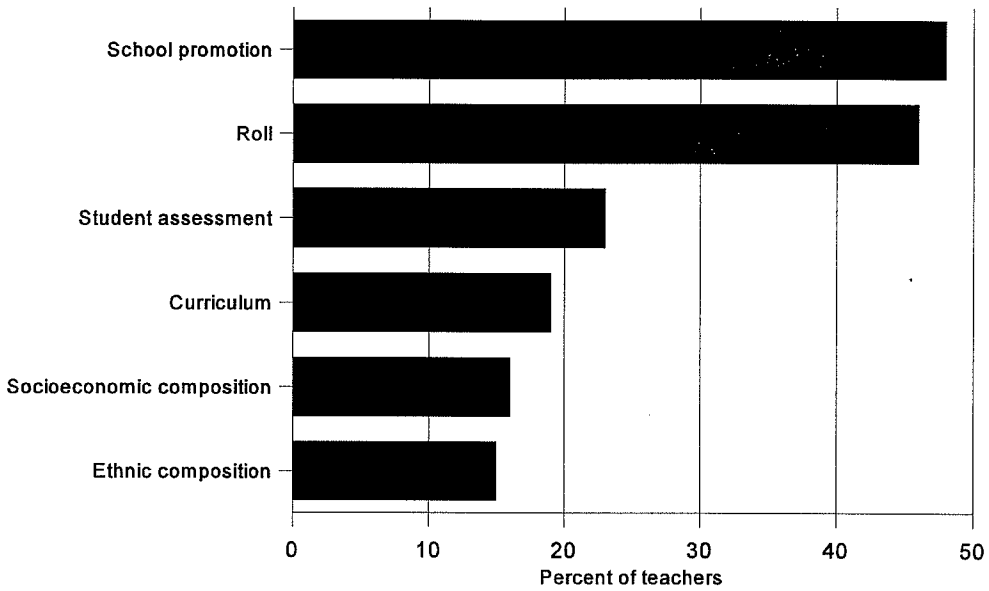
Teachers from decile 9–10 schools were least likely to describe their school's relationships with other local schools as co-operative (19 percent). Rural teachers were most likely to say it was co-operative (60 percent, compared with 23 percent of urban teachers, and 39 percent of those in provincial or small towns).

A similar pattern operated in relation to school size: 69 percent of the teachers in the smallest schools described their relationship with other local schools as co-operative, falling to 26 percent of those in the largest schools. Size, however, made no difference to teachers' descriptions of the relationship as friendly.

Slightly less than half the schools in the survey had made changes in their own school as a result of the actions of other local schools—more in relation to school promotion and roll size than core aspects of school work.

Figure 19

School Changes as a Result of Actions at Other Local Schools



Principals of the smallest schools were more likely to find the impact of the reforms on their relationships with other local schools had been positive. They were marginally more likely also to say that they had changed their curriculum and assessment practices as a result of other local schools' actions since 1989.

The actions of other local schools had more of an impact on roll numbers for state schools

(48 percent compared with 10 percent of integrated schools); similarly in the areas of school promotion. All the schools saying they faced some competition from other local schools were state schools. Thus different kinds of school were in different situations in terms of competition.

Urban schools were more affected by other schools' actions in the areas of school promotion. Rural schools were most likely to describe their relationship with other local schools as co-operative (63 percent): but just as likely to report there was some competition, or no contact.

Decile 1–2 school principals thought their school had been affected by other schools' actions since the reforms in the aspects of ethnic composition of the school roll, and numbers on the roll.

The actions of other schools in the area had led to changes in ethnic composition for more medium Māori enrolment schools (22 percent), and high Māori enrolment schools (33 percent), and in socioeconomic composition for all but the very low Māori enrolment schools (17 percent for low and medium Māori enrolment schools, 28 percent for high Māori enrolment schools).

School Promotion

Seventy-two percent of the principals felt that more prospective parents visited the school now, 46 percent that there had been an increase in parents asking to see material other than ERO reports, but only 22 percent thought there had been an increase in prospective parents asking to see the school's ERO report.

Rural schools and the smallest schools were least likely to have had more prospective parents visiting the school, asking to see ERO reports, or asking to see other material about the school. The latter was more likely as school size rose (to 69 percent of the largest schools), but there was no relationship between school size and parental interest in seeing ERO reports.

School Capacity

Only 11 percent of the survey schools did not have places on their roll for all students who applied. Such schools were 5 times as likely to be integrated schools, half as likely as those with spare capacity to have ethnically mixed rolls, and more likely to have mainly Pakeha/European rolls (67 percent compared with 41 percent).

However, 23 percent of the schools over all had an enrolment scheme, setting criteria for applicants. Most of these were based on residency within a defined geographical area, and current sibling attendance. Half those with an enrolment scheme also used previous sibling attendance at the school as a criterion. A third also used the principal's discretion, with 7 percent of those with an enrolment scheme also using the discretion of the board of trustees. Integrated schools looked for religious affiliation. A few schools used special needs as a criterion. No principals indicated the use of academic achievement, sports involvement, arts involvement, or English as a first language. Anecdotal evidence has indicated that these are used to select students at some schools, but perhaps these come into the unspecified area of the principal's discretion.

Eighty percent of the integrated schools had enrolment schemes, compared with 20 percent of state schools. Thirty-seven percent of the urban schools had an enrolment scheme,

compared with 11 percent of rural schools, and 19 percent of schools in small towns and cities. The larger the school, the more likely it was to have an enrolment scheme (rising from 10 percent of the schools with rolls of less than 35, to 46 percent of those with rolls over 300). Thirty-six percent of low Māori enrolment schools had an enrolment scheme, double the 17 percent for other schools). Decile 9–10 schools were marginally more likely than others to have an enrolment scheme (34 percent compared with 20 percent).

Thirty-five percent of the principals thought their school could take more students if it was given more buildings. However, 43 percent of the principals did not want to increase their capacity: they thought the roll was large enough. The smallest schools were the ones whose principals felt the least need to add buildings in order to increase the school's capacity.

Some important questions arise about the existence of competition, and its nature in schools, from looking at the impact of schools on each other, patterns of roll loss, enrolment schemes, and lack of interest on the part of many primary principals in expanding their roll beyond the capacity of the school's existing buildings.

These indicate that competition for students is not widespread amongst primary schools,[15] does not trigger changes in the core work of school, as one of the rationales for the reforms anticipated it would, and does not take the form of a desire for continual expansion. However, it does have an adverse effect on those schools serving groups which have not been well served previously by the school system. The data on which schools are likely to have enrolment schemes also fit in well with parental answers relating to choice of school, indicating that not only does the new system disadvantage schools serving those who need more educational attention, but that this group does not find it any easier to access preferable schools under decentralisation than under the previous system.

Taking these two sources of information on competition and choice together also shows that what is less preferable about the "losing" schools in the reform is the populations they serve. Better education appears to be identified with schools whose students have educated, or qualified, parents. The research literature on school mix and school effectiveness (e.g., Thrupp, 1996) supports this association—that the "social capital" which comes from a school's students and their parents has much to with the ability of a school to provide educational opportunity. Yet the reforms are based on assumptions of a level competitive playing field, and on school accountability for student performance.

Does competition improve school performance? The survey evidence suggests it does not. Schools in competitive situations had not made any more changes to curriculum or assessment than others, and their principals did not report greater positive impacts as a result of the change. Principals at schools with reduced rolls since 1989—the losers of competition—reported fewer positive impacts for children's learning than others, though they were just as likely as other schools to have made changes to curriculum, assessment, reporting, and marketing.

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[15] Advertisements provide one indication of the depth of competition. A recent study of the advertisements for educational institutions appearing in Canterbury daily newspapers showed that only 1 percent of Canterbury state primary schools advertised, compared with 20 percent of secondary schools. Thus competition appears to be more of a reality for secondary than primary schools (Williams & Skoko, 1997).

Principals who described their school's relationship with other schools as co-operative were more likely than those who described it as friendly, or competitive, to report positive impacts on children's learning at the school which stemmed from the reforms.

Parents' Perceptions of Choice

Eighty-five percent of the parents said that the school through which we approached them to take part in the NZCER survey was their first choice. The main reasons preventing others from access to their preferred school were transport, the school enrolment scheme, and cost (4–5 percent each).

Parents whose child was not attending the school of their first choice were more likely:

- to have had a child at the school for less than a year, or in the new entrants class;
- to feel they did not have enough contact with their child's teacher or the school's trustees—but not to feel there was a concern they would feel uncomfortable raising with them;
- to be unhappy with the quality of their child's schooling (26 percent compared with 8 percent of the parents whose child was at the school of their first choice);
- to want to change some aspect of their child's education at the school (49 percent);
- to be Māori or Pacific Island in origin;
- to have their child currently attending a decile 1–4 school (23 percent compared with 11 percent of those whose child attended a decile 5–10 school);
- to have their child attending a mid or high Māori enrolment school (20 percent compared with 12 percent of those whose child attended a very low or low Māori enrolment school);
- to find cost an obstacle to their child's attendance at the school they would have them next attend.

Sixty-six percent of the parents had decided which school they would like their child to attend next, much the same proportion as in 1993. Nineteen percent had not made this decision, and 14 percent were unsure. Fifty-one percent of the parents whose child was in a new entrants class had already decided, as had 53 percent of those whose child was in the junior classes, 70 percent of those in the standards, and 80 percent of those in forms 1 and 2. The 1993 NZCER survey found a slightly higher proportion of new entrant parents had made this choice (63 percent) but much the same proportions for other parents. The 1996 figure is consistent with the finding for 1995–96 in the second phase of the Competent Children study in the Wellington region, which found that by the time their child was aged 6, 48 percent of the parents had made the choice of the secondary school their child would attend (Wylie & Thompson, forthcoming).

The fact that choices had been made some years before the next change of school poses some interesting questions about the effect of school promotions, and the ability of schools to change parents' minds by increased school marketing in time to turn around falling rolls.

Sixty-three percent of those who had made the decision on their child's next school could see no obstacle to their child's attendance. Twenty-one percent mentioned money, 20 percent a school enrolment scheme, and 13 percent transport.

Māori and Pacific Island parents were more likely than others to mention transport.

Thirty-nine percent of the parents were putting some money aside for their child's future education. The main comment made here was that the family did not have enough money to put aside for this reason. Asian parents were more likely to be putting money aside than others (56 percent).

Summary

The main role of charters and development plans appears to be to provide schools with frameworks for policy development and planning. They do not seem to operate as documents of accountability, nor to activate some of the changes in educational provision that were intended by some of the reform architects. Thus while they have their uses for self-managing schools, their usefulness is not as broad—or deep—as expected. Perhaps this says something about the practicality of expecting something like the charter to be the "engine" of school accountability and improvement. Yet it also suggests that continual government support for the initiatives it believes schools should be taking is necessary, and that there are limits to schools themselves making what would be, for some, and in some areas, far-reaching changes. Could we expect more from schools if workloads were reduced? One suspects that while this would help, a multi-pronged approach has the best chance of success.

Most of the parents in our sample had their child at the school of their first choice. This is likely to be an overestimate nationally, because of the underrepresentation of low income parents in the sample, and because our subsample of schools, while providing a good cross section, does not provide a representative sample of parents or areas (such as central Auckland, where there are insufficient schools to allow local attendance, let alone the exercise of choice). If the reforms were to extend parental choice, then all parents should feel they have a choice, particularly those from the groups whose situation the reforms were to improve. Yet it is these very parents who were more likely to feel they did not have a choice of school or—and it amounts to the same thing from the parental perspective—could not access the school of their choice.

Seven years after the reforms, competition is neither prevalent or pronounced in NZ primary schools.

Competition does not seem to be making a positive difference for schools in low income communities, with high proportions of Māori enrolment. Where competition exists, it is not associated with changes to curriculum and assessment, but rather more with school promotion and roll size. Thus any reliance on competition to improve the quality of learning in New Zealand primary schools or the access of disadvantaged groups to a full range of schools seems misplaced.

15 THE IMPACT ON LEARNING

In looking at the impact of the reforms on children's learning, we are still largely reliant on the perceptions of school professionals, since no systematic national monitoring of children's learning was done before 1989. Student data are now being collected through the innovative National Education Monitoring project, which began its first 4-year cycle in 1995. Those data cannot give us a "before" and "after" comparison, but they do show that the disparities in student achievement related to children's home circumstances and ethnicity, which the reforms were intended to remedy, are still marked.

Principals' Perceptions

It was not until the 1993 NZCER survey that principals' views of the impact of the reforms showed a shift from around half finding no impact to a substantive proportion noting minor improvements at their school to the quality of children's learning, teaching content, teaching style, the relations between the principal and teachers, and major improvements to the relations between teachers and parents. Twenty-three percent of the principals thought the educational reforms were linked to a major positive gain for the quality of children's learning at their school. The next table shows further shifts towards a more positive appreciation of the benefits of the reforms, particularly for changes in the content of teaching, and a related decline in those who see no impact, or find it hard to tell what impact the reforms have had.

In broad terms, around 30–35 percent of principals see no real linkage between the reforms and what has happened at their school; around 12 percent see a negative impact for most aspects other than relations between teachers and parents (20 percent), and relations with other local schools (30 percent). This last figure is the only judgment of negative impact that has increased since 1991, when it was 15 percent. Around 50–60 percent of principals see positive impacts.

Table 75

Principals' Views on the Impact of the Tomorrow's Schools Changes on Their Schools

Impact → Area ↓(n=181)	Major +ve %	Minor +ve %	No impact %	Hard to tell %	Minor -ve %	Major -ve %
Quality of children's learning	34*+	18	19	18	5	6
Relations between teachers and parents	12	36	18	14	14	6
Relations with other local schools	8	24	19	17	23	7
Teaching content	28*+	43*+	13*-	6*-	8	4
Teaching style	18*+	38*+	23*-	11	9	3
Relations between principal and teacher	15	34*+	20*-	16	14	0
Relations between teachers	12	30*+	26	17	12	2

*=statistically significant changes from comparable answers in previous years; "+" means an increase, "-" means a decrease.

What lies behind these judgments? We looked at several likely sources: the changes made in the school, relations with local schools, roll changes since 1989, the existence of enrolment schemes, and judgments of the adequacy of government funding and staffing.

Principals at schools whose relationships with other local schools were co-operative, including the sharing of resources, were most likely to describe a general positive impact on the quality of children's learning at the school (43 percent compared with 26 percent for those in friendly or competitive situations).

Conversely, principals at schools which were in competitive situations with others were more likely to report negative impacts on the content of teaching at the school (22 percent compared with 8 percent of those with co-operative, resource-sharing relations), and, not surprisingly, on their relations with other local schools (54 percent, compared with 33 percent of those with friendly relations, and 13 percent of those with co-operative relations).

Those who had lost students were less likely to think the reforms had had a positive impact on children's learning at their school, on teaching styles, or on teacher-parent relations, and much more likely than those whose rolls had risen or remained much the same to note a general negative impact for their students (16 percent compared with 3 percent).

A quarter of the principals of schools whose rolls had decreased substantially thought the reforms had had a major negative impact on the teaching content at their school, compared with 1 percent of others (including those whose rolls had fallen slightly).

Principals at schools with enrolment schemes judged the impact of the reform on their school in much the same pattern as those without, except that they were more likely to feel there had been no impact on their teachers' teaching style.

There were no associations between principals' perceptions of the impact of the reforms at their school, and the changes they had made at the school, except that those who noted no impact were less likely to have made any changes. Yet those who felt the reforms had had positive impacts were just as likely as those who saw negative impacts to have made major changes, for example, in their reporting to parents. The only exceptions to this pattern were that those who saw major improvements to the teaching style in their school were more likely to have made major changes to the reporting of student achievement to parents, and those who saw a negative impact on their relations with teachers were more likely to have made major changes to the school's staff appraisal process.

Principals who considered their school's 1996 government funding inadequate were more likely to report minor negative impacts on the content and style of teaching in the school, and relations between teachers, but not on the overall quality of children's learning.

Those who considered their school's staffing inadequate for the year to come were marginally less likely to report that the quality of children's learning had generally benefited from the reforms, or that teaching styles, and relations between teachers and parents, had been positively affected. They were more likely to note negative impacts from the reforms on their relations with school staff, and on relations between teachers at the school. This could be due to the extra demands made of existing teachers.

Teachers' Perceptions

Teachers' views on the impact of the reforms also shifted from mostly neutral expressions in the 1989, 1990, and 1991 NZCER surveys to more positive views in the 1993 NZCER survey. Job satisfaction and the quality of their life outside school were the areas of exception. Teachers were even more positive about changes to their teaching content, style, and the quality of their students' learning in 1996; but their feeling that the reforms had decreased their job satisfaction and the quality of their own lives outside work remained.

Table 76

Teachers' Views on the Impact of the Education Administration Changes

Impact→ ↓ Area (n=361)	Major +ve %	Minor +ve %	No impact %	Hard to tell %	Minor -ve %	Major -ve %	Not teaching in 1989 %
Teaching content	24*+	33*+	9	9*-	6	4	13
Teaching style	18*+	30*+	19	7*-	5	2	12
Quality of children's learning	14*+	25*+	24	12	6	2	12
Relations with principal	11	12	33	11	8	6	13
Relations with parents	10	20	37	9*-	5	2	12
Relations with fellow teachers	10	17	37	11	6	3	12
Relations with support staff	10	14	45	12*-	1	1	12
Relations with other local teachers	6	11	42	15*-	7	2	12
Job satisfaction	5	15	8	7	25	21	12
Quality of life outside school	2	2	11	5	21*-	41*+	12

*=statistically significant changes from comparable answers in previous years; "+" means an increase, "-" means a decrease.

Senior staff were marginally more likely to report positive gains for children's learning which they thought were related to the education administration reforms.

Teachers who had made some changes to their curriculum—large or small—were more likely to report that the reforms had a positive impact on the quality of children's learning in their class than those who had made no curriculum changes. As well, they were more likely to report that the reforms had brought a higher workload, and were marginally more likely to report that they had brought more assessment.

A higher proportion of teachers who made a substantial change to their curriculum also reported a major positive impact on the content of their teaching and on their teaching style, and more positive impacts on their relations with teachers in other local schools.

Teachers who had increased their assessment over the past year were also more likely to report a positive change on what they taught, and on how they taught.

Summary

There are 2 important aspects to the reforms which can be gleaned from looking at principals' and teachers' judgments of their impact over the years. First, that teachers and principals have taken a neutral rather than negative stand toward the reforms. Despite the cost in job satisfaction and personal life, they are prepared to see and acknowledge the benefits they associate with the reforms.

Second, these benefits are seen in what happens in classrooms, not in the relations of people at the school, be they professionals or parents. These relationships have not changed since the start of the reforms and, as noted in chapter 11, have remained largely unproblematic. However, the reforms are linked by some principals to a deterioration in their relations with other local schools.

It took around 4 years for the reforms to be linked with positive gains at the school level. Two interpretations suggest themselves. The shift to decentralisation did distract attention from the core work of schools for several years, and it was only when people at schools had come to grips with their new responsibilities and roles that they could focus on that work. One could perhaps argue that it was the contrast with the white-water pace of the first few years of the reforms that has made the period after them more rosy. But this does not fit with the second likely reason for positive gains to emerge: the new curriculum. This started to make demands on teachers and principals by 1993, but also offered them a new lease of professional development and new resources, focused on children's learning rather than administration.

16 DOES DECENTRALISATION CHANGE THE PICTURE FOR DISADVANTAGED STUDENTS?

A major reason for New Zealand's educational decentralisation was to improve the educational opportunities and achievements of children from groups who stayed at school for shorter periods, gained fewer qualifications, and showed a lower performance than one would expect. The benefits of decentralisation were to come through:

- bringing parents into the school with the power of trustees,
- competition with other schools for students, and funding,
- making each school more accountable for the performance of its students, through the mandatory components of the charter, which asked schools to collect evidence of achievement by ethnicity, gender, and home socioeconomic backgrounds, and then to set out the steps the school would take to improve the performance of groups of students who were doing less well than others.

In addition, as part of the reform's emphasis on parental choice, "groups of parents representing at least 21 children will be able to withdraw from existing arrangements and set up their own institution, provided that they meet the national guidelines for education" (Minister of Education, 1988, p. 2).

Quite a number of schools in low income areas had received additional staffing before the reforms, and these arrangements continued until TFEA was introduced. This provides funding rather than staffing, in line with the decentralisation principle that schools are best placed to make decisions, including the allocation of resources. Some schools found that TFEA allowed them fewer staffing resources than they had previously enjoyed.

With decentralisation, the principle of providing these schools with resourcing additional to that of other schools continued. It first took the form of a special needs funding pool, for which schools had to apply, and then, with the development of the socioeconomic decile ranking which gave a consistent basis of measurement, and did not rely on either the quality of a school's application or school staff having the time to apply, TFEA funding was automatically given to schools which met the criteria. Schools can challenge their decile ranking, and some have had it changed.

Without this additional funding, low decile schools would be much worse off than others, since they raise less than others from their parents and community, and their property management costs are higher. Indeed, the gaps here may be growing. In 1994, the average per student sum raised by low decile primary schools was 73 percent of the figure raised by high decile schools, and in 1995, 68 percent. In 1994, low decile primary schools average per student cost for property management was 4 percent higher than high decile schools; a year later it was 11 percent higher (Minister of Education, 1996, 1997).

Previous NZCER surveys found that, despite their extra Ministry of Education resourcing,

schools in low income areas and/or with high Māori enrolment[16] continued to face greater problems than their counterparts in more favoured areas, for example, more children facing deterioration in home resources as the economic restructuring of the country took hold, and poorer student health. Often they had a lower base of parental involvement and community support than others, reflecting historical differences in community use of schools, especially when educational qualifications were not necessary to find steady employment providing adequate income.

This chapter brings together the material from the 1996 survey which shows continuing differences between these schools and others. These differences suggest that the impact of the reform's spurs for improvement for educational provision for disadvantaged students has either been minimal, or negative.

Home-based Resources

Children do not come to school as empty vessels: they come shaped by home experiences and resources.

In 1993, only 35 percent of the principals had seen no change in the economic circumstances of their students over the last 2 years, and 6 percent noted an improvement. The rest noted a decline. In 1996, the picture looks more sanguine, with 44 percent noting no change (whether starting from a lower baseline in 1991 or not), 35 percent a decline, and 5 percent an improvement.

The main effects of declines in children's home circumstances noticed by principals were a negative effect on their health, unsettled home life, less money available for the school, behavioural problems, and a negative effect on their concentration. Schools used their own funds to pay for student activities parents had formerly paid for, or cut back their outside trips and requests for money. The children's home situation also had an impact on staff workloads and stress. Some schools had a greater turnover of children on their roll, or decreased rolls, and some principals linked deteriorations in children's home circumstances to falls in student achievement.

Teachers' Perceptions of Children's Health

Only 48 percent of the teachers responding to the survey thought that the health needs of all the children in their class were attended to. Forty-three percent put the proportion of children in their class who had some unattended health problems at less than 10 percent. Two percent thought it between 11–19 percent, another 2 percent between 20–49 percent, and 1 percent, more than 50 percent.

Decile 9–10 school teachers were the most likely to report that all their children in their class were having their health needs attended to (64 percent, descending through the deciles to 32 percent of decile 1–2 school teachers. Eleven percent of the decile 1–2 teachers reported that between 11–50 percent of their children's health needs were not being met; 5 percent of decile 3-6 teachers, and 1 percent of decile 9–10 teachers.

A similar trend was evident in relation to the proportion of Māori enrolment in a school.

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[16] There is a considerable overlap between these groups: 78 percent of high Māori enrolment primary schools are also decile 1–3 schools.

Other school characteristics are also related here, matching the distribution of high Māori enrolment and low decile schools (table 85, appendix 1). Fifty-seven percent of rural teachers reported that all their children were having their health needs attended to, compared with 43 percent of urban teachers. A similar pattern followed for children who came to school hungry on a regular basis: 78 percent of rural teachers had no children in this situation, compared with 56 percent of urban teachers, 57 percent of provincial town teachers, and 59 percent of those in small towns.

The larger the school, the more likely it was that there were some children in the school whose health needs were not being attended to (from 31 percent of teachers in the smallest schools to 57 percent of those in the largest schools), with a similar pattern for children coming to school hungry on a regular basis (rising from 25 percent of teachers in the smallest schools to 43 percent of those in the largest schools).

Teachers' Perceptions of Children's Hunger

It is difficult to learn on an empty stomach, difficult to teach hungry children. Sixty percent of the teachers thought that none of the children in their class came to school hungry. Thirty-one percent estimated that less than 10 percent came to school hungry, 3 percent, between 11–19 percent of their class, and 1 percent thought that between 20–49 percent of their class came to school hungry.

Again, we see the same patterns as we saw in relation to children's health: 79 percent of the decile 9–10 school teachers had no children in their class coming hungry to school, falling to 29 percent of the decile 1–2 school teachers. A similar pattern was found in relation to the proportion of Māori enrolment in the school.

The Extra Difficulties Facing Schools Serving the Disadvantaged

The survey data show some of the extra obstacles more likely to be faced by these schools. Other problems additional to those faced by other schools continued in 1996, despite some government action to address some of the issues. In summary these are:

- *In relation to property:* poorer quality classrooms, less adequate recreational space, more vandalism, and an increase in property management costs.
- *In relation to funding:* lower levels of funds raised locally, despite greater efforts, and lower proportions of parents paying the school fee/donation.
- *In relation to staffing:* more difficulty finding suitable staff; more employment of non-registered teachers; more days when classes were without a teacher; more difficulty finding relieving staff; and teachers more likely to be thinking of changing careers.

For other aspects of school resourcing and provision, decile 9–10 schools were often separated from others by the higher quality of their resources, or their lower level of problems.

Truancy

A final example of the extra obstacles and costs faced by schools serving disadvantaged students is truancy.

Seventy-five percent of the schools had no truancy, or very little. Twenty-two percent of the schools had taken some initiative to reduce truancy. School funds were the main source of funding (12 percent), followed by government funding (8 percent). Only 1 percent received funds from the local community for this purpose, and none in our sample had received money from local businesses. Five percent of the schools were sharing the funding of their scheme with other schools.

The main method of combating truancy was a daily monitoring of absenteeism (10 percent). Six percent used a truancy service or officer, and 5 percent used home visits, sometimes by a school staff member.

Fifty percent of the high Māori enrolment schools had no or very little truancy, as did 73 percent of medium Māori enrolment schools, and 90 percent of the very low and low Māori enrolment schools. Most of the high Māori enrolment schools had initiatives in place to address truancy, half using school funds, the other half government funds. There was a parallel pattern of truancy in relation to decile (58 percent of the decile 1–2 schools had no or very little truancy, rising to 92 percent of decile 9–10 schools).

The incidence of truancy was related to school size: 95 percent of the smallest schools had no or very little truancy compared with 69 percent of the largest schools.

Rural schools were just as likely to face truancy, but less likely to have initiatives to combat it (10 percent).

School-based Resources

A multivariate analysis of aspects of resourcing over the 1990,1991, and 1993 surveys found significant associations between resourcing and the school characteristics of low socioeconomic status of the community served by the school, and high Māori enrolment. In this report, we focus only on some school-based resources which could be expected to improve with the reforms. These factors are the level of community support for the school, ability to get parental help, the proportion of parents paying the school donation/fee, and the school's ability to find suitable teachers. The frequency data showed that these resources were lower in low decile and high Māori enrolment schools. The analysis of variance shows highly significant relationships between these low levels over all, and the socioeconomic composition of the school's community, and the school's proportion of Māori enrolment.[17]

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[17] The technical details: The SAS analysis uses 4 tests of significance: Wilks' Lambda, Pillai's Trace, Hotelling-Lawley Trace, and Roy's Greatest Root. All 4 tests showed significant overall relationships of the 4 questions with socioeconomic status and proportion of Māori enrolment. The Wilks' Lambda results are reported below.

Socioeconomic status of school community:
1990 F(12, 484) = 4.0029, p=0.0001
1991 F(12, 437) = 5.4694, p=0.0001
1993 F(12, 455) = 6.2250, p=0.0001
1996 F(12, 429) = 3.3908, p=0.0001

Proportion of Māori enrolment
1990 F(12, 484) = 5.2759, p=0.0001
1991 F(16, 505) = 5.5462, p=0.0001
1993 F(12, 455) = 5.7161, p=0.0001
1996 F(12, 429) = 2.8318, p=0.0009

The preceding chapters looking at the impact of the reforms show no extra gains for the schools serving disadvantaged children. If the reforms had worked as their architects thought they should, then one would expect to see principals and teachers at these schools reporting more positive impacts on teaching and children's learning than others. They do not. On the other hand, they do not report more negative impacts. Thus the survey evidence indicates the reforms have made little progress in closing the gaps in school-based resources (parent, community, and staff), or in closing the gap for children's learning.

Competition between schools has had a negative impact on the schools serving the disadvantaged, as we saw in chapter 14. Nor does it seem to have altered other schools' provision of programmes and policies for Māori students or those from low income groups, or made a wide range of schools more accessible for these students.

Summary

Had the spurs to the reforms worked as intended, then one should expect to have seen some positive changes in the schools that serve disadvantaged students. School-based resources have not increased at these schools: involving parents as trustees of the board does not of itself bring substantially more financial or human resources into these schools, either to bring them up to the levels enjoyed by schools more favourably placed, or to surpass those levels. Competition is favouring the already favoured schools.

Closing the resource gaps between schools serving different populations, the gaps between middle class students' educational attainment and others, and the gaps between home and school "cultures" is no easy task. The gaps are complex in origin. For example, it is only within the last 10 years that the opportunities for reasonably paid and secure work requiring no educational qualifications have become severely constrained. Now education has become more important for all parents and students. Attitudes to school remain ambivalent for many. Family financial and human resources (or "human capital" as well as monetary resources) do play a leading part in the experiences and opportunities available to children before they reach school (e.g., Wylie, Thompson, & Kerslake Hendricks, 1996). To make more resources available to children at home, one would need to look at the availability of work, remuneration for work, housing costs, and health costs. It was perhaps rather ambitious of the architects of the educational reforms to expect that the reforms alone could make a substantial difference to schools and students. And certainly, acknowledging the force of external factors in students' lives should not mean that schools serving the disadvantaged retreat into fatalism.

Yet it cannot be said on the evidence we have available to us on the reforms that decentralisation in its present form, with its spurs of accountability, competition, and parental involvement through boards of trustees, is likely to narrow these gaps.

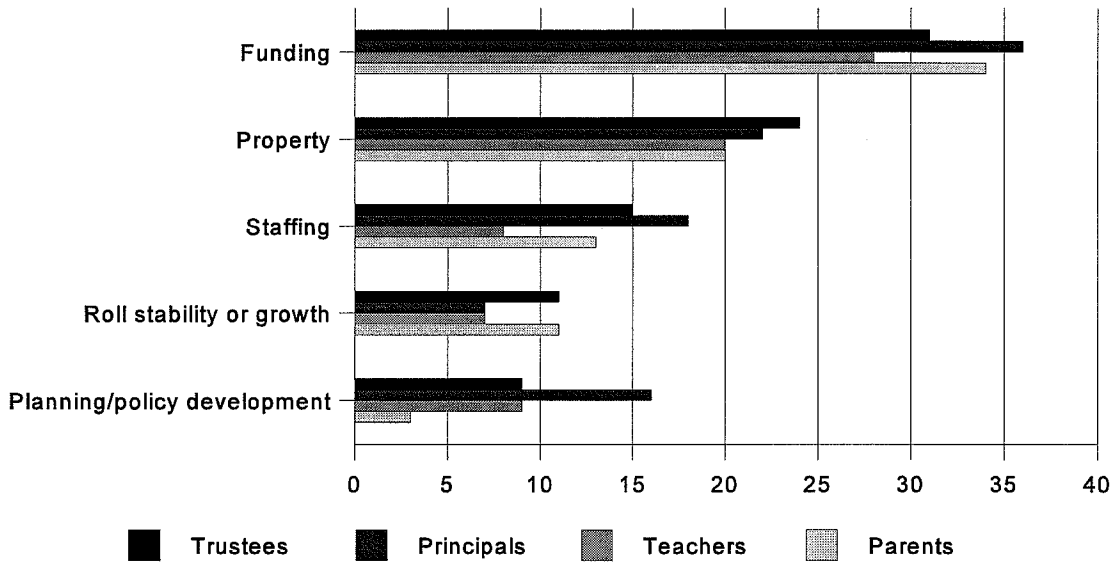
17 ISSUES

Funding and property were identified in the previous NZCER surveys as the two major issues facing boards of trustees. They continue to dominate school perceptions of the issues at both the local and national levels of educational provision.

The Major Issues Facing Boards of Trustees

In answering the same, open-ended question asking people to identify the 3 major issues confronting their school's board, some common themes emerged, as well as some interesting differences. Trustees focused on issues and tasks; principals and teachers also mentioned the way the board worked, and some professional areas of the school's work. The figure below gives the main issues.

Figure 20
Views of the Main Issues Facing Their School's Board



Principals also identified a group of issues concerned with the board itself: the board workload, or the time board members could give to board work (20 percent), the role of the board (18 percent), training needs of the board (11 percent), and getting enough trustees on their school's board (8 percent). Other issues they identified were the school's own self-review (10 percent), curriculum or assessment (9 percent), relationships and communication with staff (8 percent), an upcoming ERO report, or the implementation of recommendations arising from it (7 percent), and the future viability of the school (5 percent).

Trustees mentioned their board's composition, structure, or training (11 percent), the future of the school, curriculum or assessment development, staff appointments, relations with the

staff (7 percent each), parental and community support and technology improvements (6 percent each), or a decision on bulk funding (5 percent).

Teachers also identified the board itself (its structure, composition, or need for training), its workload, its relations with staff, a need for the board to become more informed about education (5–7 percent each), curriculum (6 percent), staff appointments (6 percent), and an ERO review, the need for more parental or community support, or the future viability of the school (3–4 percent each).

Other issues identified by parents were staff appointments, parent and community support, discipline, the school's future, the quality of teaching, health and safety, the board's relations with the school staff (3–5 percent each), and the board workload, its composition, the lack of pay for board members, curriculum development, bulk funding of teacher salaries, school transport, and technology development (1–2 percent each).

What Should Change in New Zealand Education?

There was a marked commonality in the answers given here from the 4 different groups.

Parents

The issues which parents raised to their boards were mainly concerned with internal school matters, not the underlying resourcing for the school. The next table shows that it was the resourcing issues which loomed largest when they were asked for their suggestions for change.

Table 77

Parents' Suggestions for Change to NZ Education

	%
Decrease class sizes	35
Improve funding/resources	25
Improve teachers' pay/working conditions	17
Improvements in curriculum/assessment	13
Greater specialist assistance	11
More discipline/stricter procedures at school	10
More teachers	9
Back to basics	9
Improve teacher education/quality	8
Ensure good quality education for all	5

Other concerns raised by 2–3 percent of the parents responding included improving the status of teachers, decreasing teacher workloads, reducing the paperwork required of schools, a change of Minister, and no bulk funding of teacher salaries

Trustees

Trustees also put increased resourcing at the head of their lists of the changes they would like to see. Note their emphasis too on teaching staff.

Table 78

Trustees' Suggestions for Change to NZ Education

	%
Improve funding	33
Improve teachers' pay	12
Improve teacher education/quality	7
Ensure good quality education for all	7
Increase special needs funding/provision	7
More support for education/valuing of education	7
Reduce paperwork	5
More assessment of teachers	5
Back to basics	5

Trustees' other suggestions included keeping education free, or not dependent on parental income; shifting away from a competitive, market-based model; providing more support for rural small schools; increasing parental input; making improvements to Māori education; and placing more emphasis on excellence.

Teachers

Teachers continue the theme of improved funding. They also cited their pay and working conditions, and shared the parental interest in smaller class sizes.

Table 79

Teachers' Suggestions for Change to NZ Education

	%
Improve funding/resources	21
Decrease class sizes	19
Improve teachers' pay/working conditions	19
Greater specialist assistance	16
Slow down pace of curriculum implementation	14
Improve curriculum/assessment	13
Improve teachers' recognition/status/morale	11
Change the role of ERO	7
Ensure good quality education for all	7
Reduce paperwork	6
More training/professional development	6
Improve teacher education/quality	5
Decrease workloads	5
Better support for parents/families	5

Teachers' suggestions for improving New Zealand education also included increasing the number of teachers, moving education away from a business model, and improving trustee training.

Principals

Principals focused on resourcing, workloads, and the curriculum.

Table 80

Principals' Suggestions for Changes for NZ Education

	%
Improve funding	30
Improve teachers' pay/working conditions/workloads	29
Change the role of ERO	22
Slow down the pace of curriculum implementation	19
Improve curriculum/assessment	19
Make more specialist assistance available to schools	15
Improve teachers' morale and status	12
Move away from a business model	8
Decrease class sizes	7
Increase professional development	7

Other areas for action mentioned here were training for boards, an improvement in staffing numbers, and a decrease in the Ministry of Education's reporting requirements.

Summary

There is no escaping the conclusion that, for those who must make the reforms work at the "chalk face", increased government resourcing, coupled with decreased workloads, are the keys to improving educational provision. While school self-management has tapped voluntary resources, and increased professional staff hours and local fundraising, there are some barriers that schools cannot surmount on their own.

18 SELF-MANAGING SCHOOLS: WHAT HAVE WE LEARNT?

New Zealand primary schools have been "Tomorrow's Schools" for over seven years. There is no doubt that, at one level, school self-management is viable in New Zealand. Schools continue to operate, teachers to teach, and students to learn. Crises leading to the appointment of a commissioner, divided communities, and conditions which make it difficult to concentrate on teaching and learning do occur, but they are not common. The cumulative material from the NZCER national surveys undertaken in 1989, 1990, 1991, 1993 and 1996 allows us to explore what makes the new system work, and what its achievements have been. It also allows us to look at what has not been achieved, at the tensions and difficulties associated with this particular system of school self-management, and explore what could be done to ameliorate them.

Does "Tomorrow's Schools" Work in Practice?

The simple answer is yes. Schools can make allocative decisions, including staff appointments. Professionals and parents can usually work together through the framework of the board of trustees to make decisions for and about their school. The core work of schools has continued, in most schools, with little disruption.

What Makes School Self-management Work?

Most directly, school self-management works because of the high workloads taken on by principals, the increase in teachers' workloads, the voluntary time given by trustees, and the additional money which schools have raised. The reforms shifted both some power and responsibility to the school level, with a commensurate need for schools to provide additional human and financial resources to do the new work. High school workloads and more attention to local fundraising have also been a feature of decentralisation elsewhere (Levacic, 1997; Townsend, 1996).

The ethos of partnership among school staff, and between school staff and the school board, has also been an important lubricant for school self-management. So too was the already high level of parental confidence in the quality of New Zealand education, and the relative openness of New Zealand schools to parents. Thus few schools began the new era by having to confront a backlog of parental suspicion or adversarial relations.

The new system did not have to start from scratch, with each school having to create its own curriculum, or become accustomed to a sudden new latitude of decisionmaking. Individual schools did have to grapple with the new framework of budgeting, and devise their own charters and policies. They did not do this in isolation. Many used models or guidance from government-funded sources: initial training sessions for the first boards, then ongoing support and advice from the teacher support services, and the School Trustees Association. NZEI, the primary teachers' union, also provided materials and advice which schools found helpful.

Another important reason why the introduction of school self-management was relatively

smooth is that New Zealand primary schools were used to operating with a considerable degree of latitude before the reforms. To give one example, extra staffing provided through the 1:20 policy to new entrant and junior classes in schools serving disadvantaged students or schools under population pressure was not to be used to create new classes. More often than not, schools did exactly that (McDonald et al., 1989). Curriculum documents were broad; the government supplied a range of free resources but also allowed schools to choose (or make) their own. Commonality often came through the resources, developed with teachers, and through government-funded professional development. Thus when the reforms came in, teachers were largely confident about their work, were used to making local adaptations, and had reasonable resources which were suitable for classroom use.

The shift to school-site management did not necessitate schools having to invent their own curricula or resources. It allowed them to continue as they were accustomed to, until the introduction of the new curriculum framework some 3 years after the reforms began. The inclusion of levels in the new framework, and the threading of essential skills through different curriculum areas made this a more specific curriculum than teachers were used to—but still allowed the local flexibility they had enjoyed before the reforms. What teachers found hardest about the new curriculum framework was the swiftness with which the new curricula were introduced, one following hard on the heels of another. Also, they were sometimes introduced without the level of teaching resources and professional development to accompany them that had previously allowed teachers to make earlier curriculum changes in their classrooms on a sound footing.

What makes the reforms work, therefore, is a combination of appropriate government support and development of suitable resources and frameworks, and local initiative, effort, and a desire to do well by the children in the school. These elements are not essentially different from the previous system. However, the way they are combined is new, and this new combination of local and central contributions to education does make significantly greater demands of people in schools.

The survey findings suggest that school self-management in New Zealand owes much to what preceded it, and the contribution of these elements in the new system.

There is little sign in the survey material that some of the new elements, such as increased competition and managerial accountability, have had the positive impact they were intended to have.

Competition

Competition for students —funding—was to spur schools on to make themselves attractive to parents and students.

Only 21 percent of the survey schools felt they were in competition with other schools, and half of these also described their relationship with other schools as co-operative or friendly. Schools in competitive situations were mainly urban, and twice as likely to be at either end of the socioeconomic spectrum as those serving middle income areas. Schools in competitive situations had not made any more changes to their curricula or assessment than others, and their principals did not report greater positive impacts for students or the school as a result of the reforms. Principals who described their school's relationship with other schools as co-operative were most likely to report positive gains for children. Principals at schools with reduced rolls since 1989—the losers of competition—reported fewer positive impacts for

children's learning. Yet changes to marketing, curriculum, assessment, and reporting to parents occurred just as often at these schools, indicating that they were just as responsive to the new environment. These schools were more likely to be serving low income communities and have high Māori enrolment.

Boards do address the physical appearance of the school to enhance the school's attractiveness. But only 22 percent of the survey schools had made major changes to their school promotion since the reforms began. The survey data show little evidence that improving school promotion increases school rolls, or is linked to positive changes to teaching content, style, and the quality of children's learning at the school. Patterns of parental involvement and support were much the same for schools responding to the new environment by more deliberate self-promotion, and those which continued as before.

Seven years after the shift to school self-management, there is little evidence that competition or promotion are widespread amongst New Zealand primary schools. Nor do they seem to have a positive impact at the school level. Indeed, the converse appears to be true. The survey material therefore raises some important questions about the utility of competition for improving educational quality and opportunity for previously disadvantaged groups. Similar trends have been found in England, and similar questions raised (e.g., Levacic, 1997; Whitty, 1997).

Managerial Accountability

Managerial accountability under decentralisation formally operates at 2 levels: first, the principal is accountable to the school's board of trustees for the performance of the school; second, the board itself then becomes accountable to the government, through its accounts, annual reports, and regular external review. However, the survey material suggests that these formal accountabilities are less important at the school level. Principals and trustees are in agreement that being an employer is not the key aspect of the trustees' role. They feel that their main accountability is to students at the school, not to the government agencies which fund and review them. The voluntary nature of the trustee role has much to do with this sense of distance from the model of formal accountability. So too does the shared purpose of professionals and parents. This shared purpose was strengthened by another aspect of the reforms, the inclusion of both parents and professionals on school boards. We see in school boards the meeting of 2 of the reforms' contrary currents: the "citizen" model, pushing for more parental involvement in schools, through partnership, and the public sector reform model, with its emphasis on hierarchical accountability and contractual relationships.

Charters are used at the planning level, but school staff perspectives would indicate that they have little impact in classrooms. Principals view statements of service performance with both suspicion and frustration: as an administrative requirement rather than as a springboard for school improvement.

The aspect of managerial accountability which seems to have had the most positive impact at the school level is regular school inspection by an outside agency, which, while seeking compliance with legislative responsibilities, also places emphasis on school effectiveness, within the terms of schools' own plans and goals. The survey material suggests that this has

fostered more whole-school development. However, the integration of practice with planning and goals is still in its infancy, despite emphasis on it from the Education Review Office and the Ministry of Education.

Most changes made by schools as a result of ERO reviews appear to be minor rather than major.

The possibility that the school's ERO review reports will be published and receive media coverage has probably spurred schools to do their homework before ERO reviews. We have no research on whether or not schools receiving poor media coverage as a result (fewer than one might think) take action which benefits their students, or what notice parents of potential students take of such media coverage in making their choice of school.

The survey material gives no clear signs that the new accountabilities are having a major impact on schools. This might suggest to some that the new accountabilities should be firmer than they have been: that "sticks" of sanctions for poor performance would produce the desired results. But this raises questions of how one would define the desired results, and measure them in a valid and consistent way: no easy task in education. In addition the recent Schick review of the public sector reforms expressed concerns about the danger of "management by checklist", creating a culture of compliance rather than leadership and judgment (Wilson, 1996), and the additional financial costs of compliance (Mulgan, 1996).

Accountability *is* a key element of what makes the reforms work, but it is a professional rather than managerial or market (competitive) accountability.

The Achievements of the Reforms

Undoubtedly school self-management did bring new energy and focus into primary schools. It has increased the local financial and human resources available to schools. It has made teachers pay more attention to what they do and why, and to their communication with parents. Many principals and teachers do see positive gains for children.

The reforms have been less successful in improving educational opportunity for children from disadvantaged groups: some small headway has been made in some areas (for example, kura kaupapa Māori), but resource gaps remain evident, particularly for schools serving low income and/or Māori children.

Tensions and Difficulties

It is likely that schools began the reforms with insufficient resourcing for all that was expected of them by the government. One indication of this under-resourcing from the start is the deferred maintenance backlog, which will have taken a decade of work before it disappears. Another is the lack of administrative support in primary schools which meant that principals, senior staff, and trustees have had to take on many administrative tasks. Private sector advice both here and in England warned that decentralisation was not—or should not be—cheaper over all, because of this very need to cover the new costs of the extra administrative work given to schools.

The cost has been borne by those in schools. One suspects that these costs are cumulative in nature, as indicated by the growing frustration and weariness of continually high workloads which cannot be contained at the local level.

It does not help for the advice, so often given by the government and government agencies,

to be in the form of "work smarter, not harder". If this was possible, it would have happened by now. Nor does it help to urge people in schools to "complete the picture" by accepting bulk funding of teacher salaries. What concerns people in schools are teaching resources, funding, and property. Government has improved staffing ratios, and funded much of the deferred maintenance. It has made minor increases to the operational grants. Yet these positive responses by government have been undermined by the hard work required by schools and teacher and trustee representative groups to achieve them. People in schools wonder if "completing the picture" is more important to the government than learning from the realities of the reforms as they have taken root in schools, and modifying the original model in the light of the evidence we have of what has made the reforms work, and what the reforms have not been able to achieve.

Tomorrow's Schools Tomorrow, and Tomorrow . . .

The reforms are now in their eighth year. Long enough to identify continuing trends which warrant attention. The evidence from this series of national surveys is that while some of the spurs of the reforms have worked as intended, albeit at a high local cost, others have not. Two alternative scenarios for the future of the reforms suggest themselves.

The first scenario would continue along present lines, with no change to the model.

Bulk-funding would be introduced to all schools. Competition and managerial accountability would be relied on to spur schools to make improvements, and increase the educational opportunities available to students from low income homes. The full public sector reform model of managerial accountability could be pressed upon schools by making boards advisory only, thus blocking the "citizen" current of the reforms, and the basis for partnership between professionals and parents at the school level. It would be too expensive to replace voluntary trustees with paid government appointees, and politically unpopular to do so, or to eliminate boards altogether.

Government would acknowledge it has a role in teacher and school supply, and in providing support to schools, but would ration the resources put into these roles, and make support contestable or contractual. Sanctions for non-performance of struggling schools would therefore become more likely, if ineffectual.

Curriculum development would continue at the somewhat slower pace it has taken in the last year, but in much the same manner, providing some professional and resource development, but less cohesively than before the reforms.

The estrangement of schools and government agencies would also continue. Principals and teachers would increasingly feel the weight of cumulative and high workloads, and have less energy and attention for their work. Teaching and the principalship would become increasingly unattractive careers, particularly in struggling schools. The quality of New Zealand education would be in danger of erosion. Disadvantaged students would remain disadvantaged.

The second scenario would harness those elements of the reforms which appear to have had positive impacts. School self-management would be a means to an end, rather than an end in itself. And it would be only one of the means used to work towards a continually enriched

quality of education, in all schools. There would be a close scrutiny of the assumptions behind the present model—particularly the value placed on managerial accountability, contractual relationships, and competition—through a thorough and open analysis of the growing national and international research literature on the impact of these tools. My own understanding of that literature suggests that policy based on such an analysis would refocus the New Zealand reforms to put more energy into curriculum, teaching methods, and parental involvement and support for children's learning, and less on administration.

What would this mean? This second scenario would result in little change to the composition and role of school boards—possibly an increase in the number of staff members on boards. The emphasis on whole school development, including achievement goals for learning, would be strengthened, through the fostering of a number of different approaches, backed by resources, the linking of schools taking similar approaches, and more sharing of initiatives and professional development. School self-review would be one part of the process of whole school development. External review would be geared to supporting this process, in the form of "critical friends". Accountability would be centred on professional accountability, which would be strengthened by the focus on school and professional development.

The negative aspects of competition would be redressed through several approaches. First, by putting substantial, long-term effort into improving schools in low income areas, and encouraging parental involvement and support through curriculum and child-centred approaches. Second, by revisiting zoning and enrolment schemes, and ensuring that all local students had first priority at any given school, with any remaining places allocated by random ballot.

Government-funding for schools and their support would increase to the point where principals' and teachers' workloads were reduced to a level which was sustainable in the long term, to the point where principals could leave some administrative work to support staff (though the amount of administrative work required of schools would also decrease under this scenario), and where teachers had enough preparatory time for their work. Teachers would be engaged in national curriculum and resource development, and teacher and trustee representatives participate in policy development with government agencies. It is likely that this convergence would save time—and money. Along with reduced workloads, the respect shown teachers and principals by their inclusion in policy and curriculum development would make their work more attractive to newcomers, and more sustainable in the long term.

Gradually, the educational achievement of students from disadvantaged groups would approach, if not match, that of other students. The overall quality of New Zealand education would improve, and education would become more able to bear the increased expectations we now place on it.

The second scenario seems to me the more productive and more efficient road to take. But it does require an open mind toward the appropriateness and utility of some of the assumptions behind the reforms, toward the empirical research literature, and toward the respective roles of schools and government. It is the growing gap between schools and government that is one of the saddest aspects of the reforms. Yet if we can close that gap, New Zealand has its best chance of making the most of self-managing schools.

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APPENDIX 1

Characteristics of Survey Responses

Table 81
Principals

	1989 Sample schools %	1996 Ministry school statistics %	1996 returns %	1993 returns %	1991 returns %	1990 returns %	1989 returns %
Type							
Full	53	53	52	50	46	52	46
Contributing	40	40	43	44	45	43	46
Intermediate	7	6	4	8	7	6	8
Size							
1–34	17	17	12	15	15	16	15
35–99	26	24	22	22	25	25	24
100–200	20	22	27	20	19	20	21
200–300	16	18	16	19	19	17	20
300+	22	24	24	23	20	22	20
Location							
Urban	39	46	42	42	41	42	41
Rural	44	39	41	42	39	39	41
Minor urban	13	10	12	12	12	14	12
Secondary urban	5	6	6	4	6	5	6
% Māori							
<8%	42	33	31	33	50	52	45
8-14%	19	17	19	14	13	12	19
15-29%	15	23	23	23	16	16	17
30%+	22	28	26	29	20	20	19
Authority							
State	91	90	95	92	89	91	92
Integrated	9	10	6	8	9	9	8
SES—Decile							
1–3	–	31	27	–	–	–	–
4–6	–	28	29	–	–	–	–
7–8	–	20	17	–	–	–	–
9–10	–	21	26	–	–	–	–
Returns							
N	–	–	181	191	186	207	174/239
%	–	–	*76*	*79*	*78*	*87*	*75*

Table 82
Teachers

	1989 Sample schools %	1996 Ministry school statistics %	1996 returns %	1993 returns %	1991 returns %	1990 returns %	1989 returns %
Type							
Full	53	53	47	48	39	45	44
Contributing	40	40	46	42	52	44	47
Intermediate	7	6	8	10	10	11	9
Size							
1–34	17	17	4	3	7	4	4
35–99	26	24	17	20	17	19	17
100–200	20	22	25	27	19	26	28
200–300	16	18	21	25	26	23	23
300+	22	24	33	24	30	28	28
Location							
Urban	39	46	53	53	55	51	54
Rural	44	39	25	26	24	26	24
Minor urban	13	10	16	17	14	16	16
Secondary urban	5	6	6	5	7	7	6
% Māori							
<8%	42	33	34	32	50	45	39
8–14%	19	17	19	16	16	15	23
15–29%	15	23	24	30	16	18	18
30%+	22	28	23	22	17	22	20
Authority							
State	91	90	90	89	90	92	90
Integrated	9	10	10	11	8	8	10
SES—Decile							
1–3	–	31	28	–	–	–	–
4–6	–	28	32	–	–	–	–
7–8	–	20	16	–	–	–	–
9–10	–	21	25	–	–	–	–
Returns							
N	–	–	361	336	396	373	414/546
%	–	–	66	*62*	*73*	*68*	*75*

Table 83
Trustees

	1989 Sample shools %	1996 Ministry school statistics %	1996 returns %	1993 returns %	1991 returns %	1990 returns %	1989 returns %
Type							
Full	53	53	52	56	48	53	54
Contributing	40	40	42	37	39	39	41
Intermediate	7	6	6	7	8	8	5
Size							
1–34	17	17	23	15	12	18	16
35–99	26	24	22	27	25	24	26
100–200	20	22	23	23	16	21	23
200–300	16	18	16	16	22	16	16
300+	22	24	22	19	25	21	19
Location							
Urban	39	46	41	39	41	39	36
Rural	44	39	42	44	37	44	44
Minor urban	13	10	11	13	14	13	14
Secondary urban	5	6	6	5	5	5	7
% Māori							
<8%	42	33	39	37	51	53	45
8–14%	19	17	17	17	12	12	18
15–29%	15	23	23	24	15	18	15
30%+	22	28	21	22	17	17	22
Authority							
State	91	90	91	93	87	92	91
Integrated	9	10	9	7	8	8	9
SES–Decile							
1–3	–	31	26	–	–	–	–
4–6	–	28	27	–	–	–	–
7–8	–	20	18	–	–	–	–
9–10	–	21	29	–	–	–	–
Returns							
N	–	–	270	292	322	310	334/476
%	–	–	57	*61*	*68*	*65*	*70*

Table 84

Representativeness of Parental Response by School Characteristics

Characteristics	Survey Respondents				National Roll Figures			
	1990 %	1991 %	1993 %	1996 %	1990 %	1991 %	1993 %	1996 %
Location								
Urban	62	65	64	59	66	67	67	68
Secondary Urban	2	3	2	8	8	9	14	10
Minor Urban	18	17	8	11	13	11	11	13
Rural	18	15	27	22	12	13	14	8
Māori %								
<8%	48	38	53	56	27	30	28	30
8–14%	25	34	6	19	21	19	17	18
15–29%	18	18	26	15	28	27	26	25
30%+	9	10	15	10	24	24	25	24
Type								
Full Primary	19	20	28	23	32	35	37	37
Contributing Primary	58	57	63	55	53	50	49	50
Intermediate	23	23	9	22	15	15	14	13
Size								
<35	4	3	3	3	2	2	2	2
35–99	9	9	11	9	8	9	9	8
100–200	19	19	16	19	17	18	19	17
200–300	20	20	22	19	26	27	26	20
300+	49	49	48	50	46	44	44	52

Table 85

Relationship of School Socioeconomic Decile Rating to Other School Characteristics—Ministry of Education 1996 National Data

	Decile 1–3	Decile 4–7	Decile 8–10
Māori Enrolment			
<8%	4	26	68
8–14%	5	24	22
15–25%	23	36	7
30%+	69	14	2
Location			
Rural	28	44	44
Minor urban	14	11	3
Secondary urban	6	9	3
Urban	52	37	49
Type			
Full	48	54	55
Contributing	43	39	41
Intermediate	8	7	4

APPENDIX 2

School Sources of Information and Advice

Table 86

School Sources of Information and Advice 1996(1)

Source (n=181)	Curriculum		Assessment policy and practice		Staff development		Communication with parents	
	1996 %	1990 %	1996 %	1990 %	1996 %	1990 %	1996 %
Advisers	96	52	73*-	96	90	35	24
Books, articles	91	57	64	82	2	43	24
School's own teachers	90	65	71	83	76	72	64
Other schools	54*-93	–	43*+93	–	24	–	11
Specialist Education Services	51	17	9	0	26	18	17
Cluster group	46	48	24*-	80	34*-	39	9*-
College of education	42	17	24	57	49	12	7
NZ Principals' Federation	41*-93	22	12*-	51	26*-	15	7*-
NZEI	40*-93	21	11*-	58	17*-	14	8
Ministry of Education	40	25	25	52	17*-	30	12*-
School community	38*-93	20	15	38	11-	54	31*
Consultants	28	–	17*+93	–	29	–	7
NZ School Trustees Association	26*-93	8	7	30	11*-	16	12
Education Review Office	22*-93	21	22	14	9	6	9
Kaumātua/kuia	16	–	4	–	6	–	10
University staff	14	4	4	0	–	–	–
Psychologists	–	20	7*-	0	12	–	–
No one	–	6	3	0	1	5	9
PTA[n]	–	–	–	–	–	–	29

n = new question in 1996 survey

* = statistically significant changes from comparable answers in previous years; "+" means an increase, "-" means a decrease.

Table 87

School Sources of Information and Advice 1996(2)

Source (n=181)	Individual children's problems		Equity for special needs children		Treaty of Waitangi issues		Gender equity issues	
	1990 %	1996 %	1990 %	1996 %	1990 %	1996 %	1990 %	1996 %
Advisers	53	32* -	32	22	4	20* +	20	7* -
Cluster group	14	11	6	6	6	2	8	2
College of education	3	3	4	4	9	4	9	2
Books, articles	36	39	27	19	48	15* -	42	15* -
School's own teachers	82	71	52	44	47	29* -	45	35* -
NZEI	3	2	10	3	16	3	24	
NZ Principals' Federation	3	4	6	3	7	3	10	7* -
NZ School Trustees Association	1	1	3	1	4	2	9	4
Education Review Office	1	2	5	3	5	3	9	12
Ministry of Education	14	15	24	23	19	4* -	22	6
School community	25	17	18	10	33	17* -	18	10
Specialist Education Services	56	78* +	47	60* +	0	0	2	7* -
Māori teachers	–	–	–	–	31	28	–	2
Local Māori community	–	–	–	–	47	37* -	–	–
Local marae	–	–	–	–	12	23* +	–	–
Kaumātua/kuia	1	12	–	3	–	17	–	–
Children's parents	85	78	36	35	–	–	10	1
Department of Social Welfare	40	50* +	–	–	–	–	–	5
Public health nurses	86	80	–	–	–	–	–	–
Visiting teacher	–	33	–	–	–	–	–	–
No one	–	2	17	19	11	34* +	23	–
Consultants	–	6	–	–	0	3	–	42* +
Other schools	–	17	–	8	–	3	–	1
Private providers	–	–	–	5	–	–	–	2

*=statistically significant changes from comparable answers in previous years; "+" means an increase, "–" means a decrease.

Table 88

School Sources of Information and Advice 1996(3)

Source (n=181)	Art and craft materials		Building maintenance repairs		Financial/ accounting system	
	1990 %	1996 %	1990 %	1996 %	1990 %	1996 %
Advisers	30	34	11	7	11	11
Cluster group	8	5	20	1*-	32	2*-
College of education	5	7	2	0	6	1
Books, articles	23	36*+	16	8	20	10*-
School's own teachers	61	61	28	40*+	22	36*+
Private firms	45	46	58	69*+	38	48*+
Education service centre	60	20*-	50	25*-	46	44
Parents	–	–	64	39*-	39	17*-
Voluntary people	–	–	51	37*-	21	13
No one	10	11	4	1	1	3
Other schools	–	9	–	4*-93	–	5*-93
Board of trustees	–	11	–	65*-93	–	74
Ministry of Education	–	–	–	55	–	–
PTA[n]	–	–	–	–	–	17

n=new question in 1996 survey.

*=statistically significant changes from comparable answers in previous years; "+" means an increase, "–" means a decrease.

Table 89

Teachers' Three Major Sources of Advice and Information

Sources (n=336)	NZ curriculum	Specific curriculum Area	Teaching methods	Assessment	Needs of students from different culture	Communi-cation with parents	School management and organisation	Conditions of employment
Advisers	65*+	72	48*-	51	27	9	20	4
Other teachers in school	55	60	65	58	47	59	54	45
Curriculum contract[n]	50	32	18	24	–	–	–	70
Principal	39*-	26	25	50	18	66	80	–
Books and journals	37	43*-	43	30*-	26	7	14	11
Teachers in other schools	15	22*-	42	25	16*-	11	11	14
University/college lecturers	8	18	14	9	5	2	6	2
Assessment contract	7	11	4	13	–	–	–	–
Community contacts	1	1	1	1	15*-	12*-	2	1
NZEI	3*-	1	1	1	1	0	8	70
Trustees	1	1	0	0	1	12	25	24
Parents	0	0	0	0	18	32	4	0
Subject association	3	7*-	6	3	–	2	2	1
Private firm	1	3	1	1	0	–	2	1
Ministry of Education	8*-	–	–	7	–	–	–	–
Kaumātua/kuia	–	–	–	–	11	–	–	–
None	0	1	2	1	16*+	7	4	3
ERO[n]	0	0	1	4	1	1	4	–
NZSTA[n]	–	–	–	–	–	–	3	6

n=new question in 1996 survey.

*=statistically significant changes from comparable answers in previous years; "+" means an increase, "–" means a decrease.

APPENDIX 3

Classroom Time Spent on Different Curriculum Areas

Figure 21

New Entrants—Average Hours on "Core" Subjects

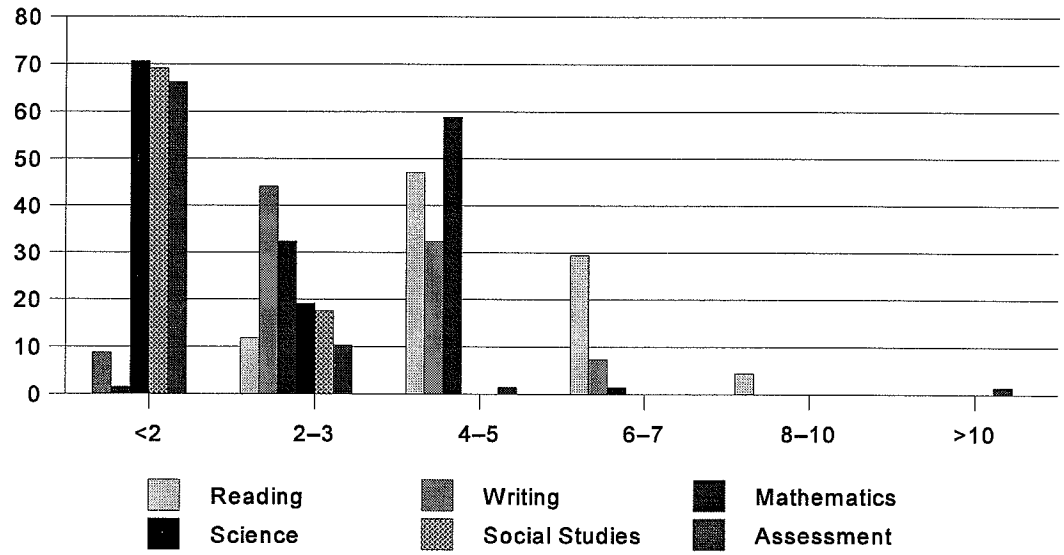

Figure 22

New Entrants—Average Hours on Other Subjects

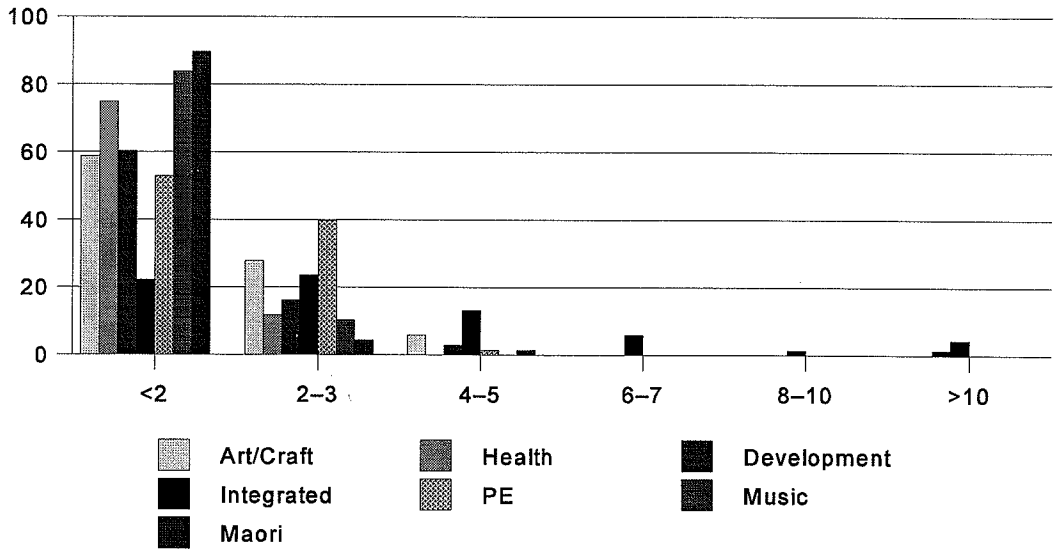

Figure 23

Juniors—Average Hours on "Core" Subjects

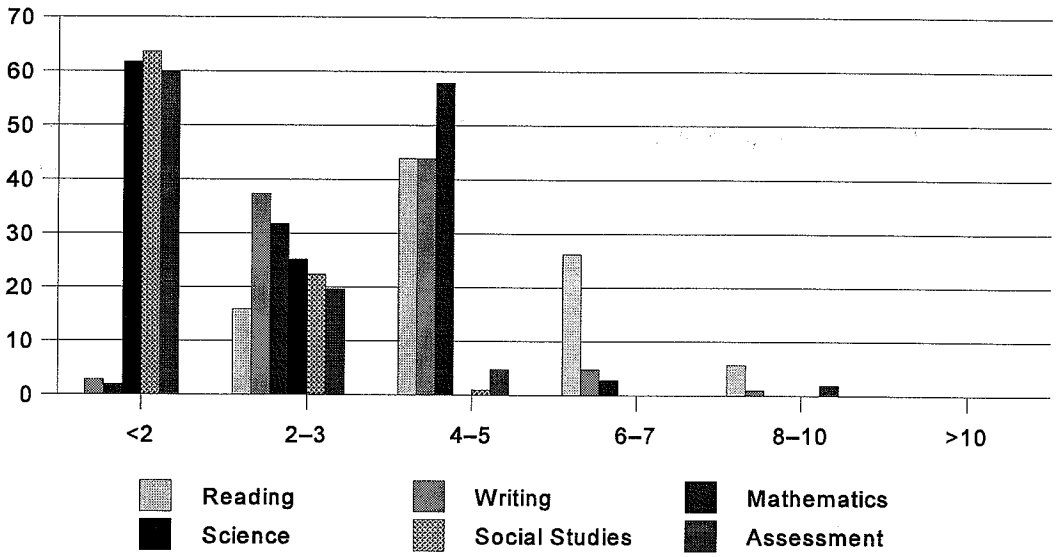

Figure 24

Juniors—Average Hours on Other Subjects

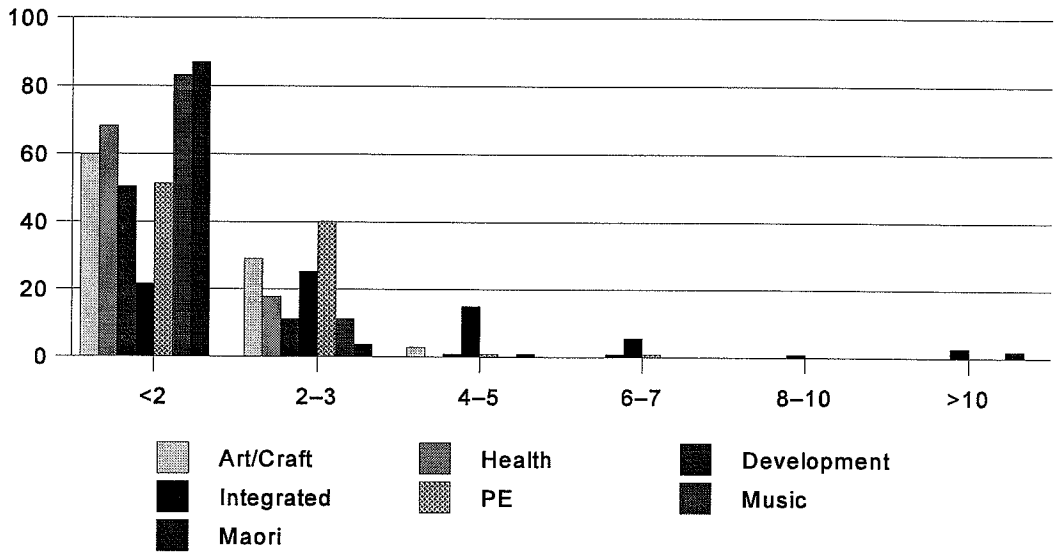

Figure 25

Standards—Average Hours Per Week on "Core" Subjects

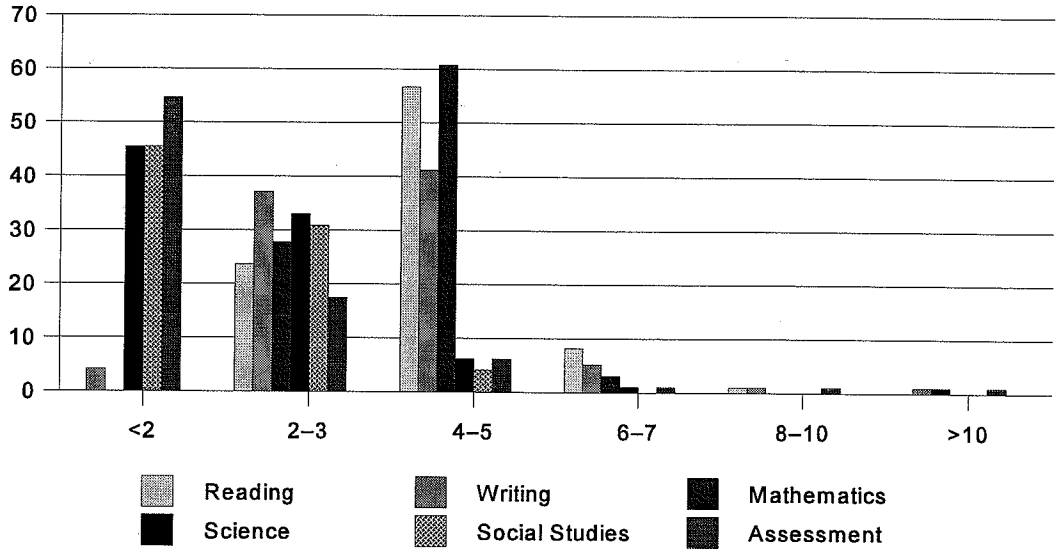

Figure 26

Standards—Average Hours Per Week on Other Subjects

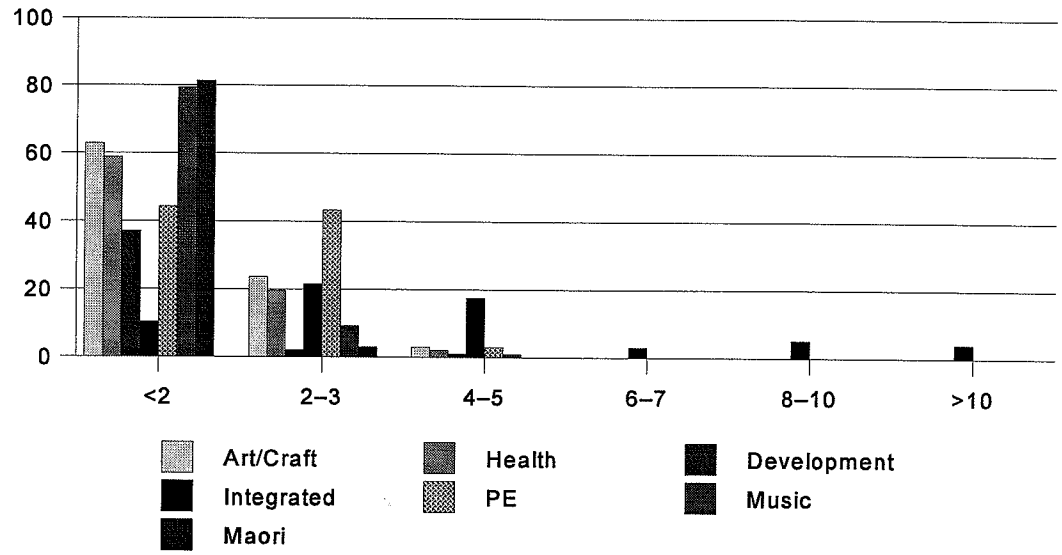

Figure 27

Forms 1 and 2—Average Hours Per Week on "Core" Subjects

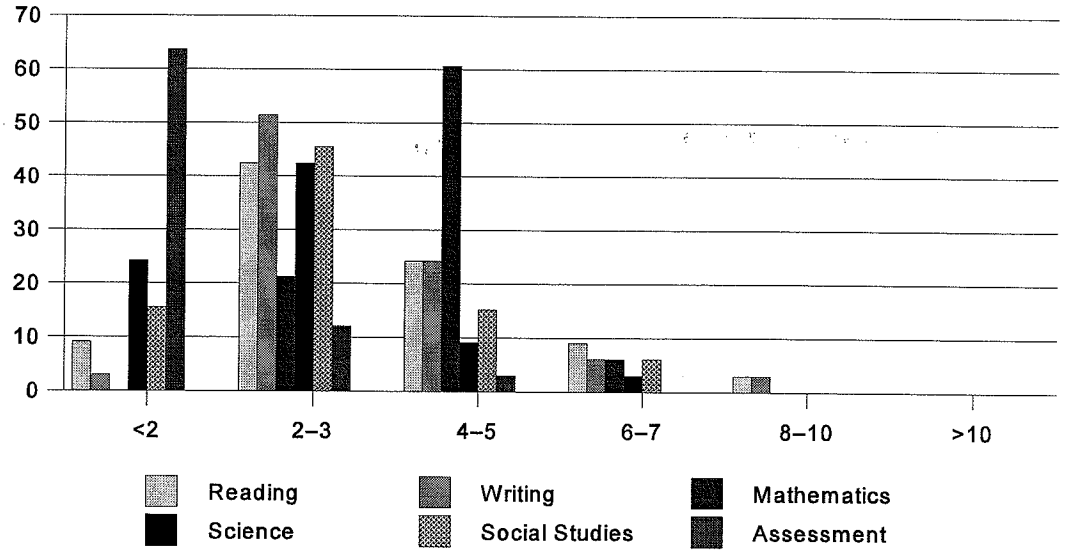

Figure 28

Forms 1 and 2—Average Hours Per Week on Other Subjects