

forTEACHERS IS PUBLISHED QUARTERLY BY THE NEW ZEALAND TEACHERS COUNCIL

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Chris Wood teaching a Year 9 Social Studies class at Wainuiomata High School.

From the Director:

## Making a Difference

Whether teaching in an early childhood setting or a senior secondary school classroom, teachers pride themselves on the difference they can make for a learner. Teachers work hard to become accomplished practitioners. In the process of acquiring this professional education, teachers have often made considerable sacrifices. The New Zealand Teachers Council jealously guards the professional standards in place to ensure suitably qualified teachers are employed in schools and early childhood settings. Qualified New Zealand teachers meet the benchmarks required in most countries, including Australia, Canada and Britain. This is important, as many New Zealand teachers seek overseas teaching experiences. Similarly, there are significant numbers of overseas teachers seeking work in New Zealand. Once again, the role of the Council is to ensure those teachers also meet the requirements for teaching in a New Zealand context.

New Zealand schools and centres also enjoy a strong reputation as safe learning environments for children and young people. The Council has established fair and transparent processes to maintain this status. Furthermore, the Council's work in developing the Code of Ethics provides a blueprint for the profession: these are the values and practices to which the teaching profession aspire.

Of course, the Council does not act simply as a Guardian and Protector, ensuring controlled entry into the profession and disciplining teachers who may be guilty of professional misconduct. The Council promotes the professional learning of teachers that enables growth from a beginning teacher to an accomplished practitioner. To achieve this, the Council has begun the review of graduating teacher standards which define the profile of a teacher graduate. In turn, this work will inform the review of the standards required for full registration.

The hallmark of any profession is a willingness of its members to engage in debate and the pursuit of solutions to identified problems. Lee Shulman (2004), the celebrated American educationist stated:

*Professionalism demands thoughtful, grounded actions under complex and uncertain conditions that are nevertheless guided by, rooted in, and framed by clear professional standards. A professional both acts wisely and can explain his or her actions (The Wisdom of Practice, p.xii).*

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New Zealand  
Teachers Council

*Te Pouherehga Kaiako o Aotearoa*

forTEACHERS COMMUNICATES DIRECTLY WITH TEACHERS AND OTHER EDUCATORS ON ISSUES RELATED TO THE WORK OF THE TEACHERS COUNCIL

Ū ki te ako, tū tangata ai apōpō



Council Chair Joanna Beresford

## The International Face of Teachers Councils

The General Teaching Council of Scotland celebrated its 40th anniversary this year. Matthew MacIver, the Council's Registrar observed, "Our GTC was the first Teaching Council to be set up in the world; 40 years later, many countries have followed or are now following our example. In the last few years, GTCs have been set up in England, Wales and Northern Ireland. In May of this year, one was set up in the Republic of Ireland."

These developments in the United Kingdom are mirrored in Australia and New Zealand. Queensland is at this moment passing legislation that transforms the Queensland Teacher Registration Board to the Queensland College of Teachers. Similar bodies exist in the other states including the New South Wales Institute of Teaching, the Victorian Institute of Teaching and the Western Australian College of Teaching. Teacher registration boards accredit teachers in the Northern Territory, South Australia and Tasmania.

These bodies have been charged with similar responsibilities as the New Zealand Teachers Council, that is "to provide professional leadership in teaching, enhance the professional status of teachers in schools and early childhood education and contribute to a safe and high quality teaching and learning environment for children and other learners" (s 139AA Education Act 1989).

In June of this year, an inaugural International Teaching Councils Conference was hosted by the General Teaching Council for Scotland in Edinburgh. It was attended by Irene Symes, Council member, from Otahuhu College and by the Director of the New Zealand Teachers Council, Dr Peter Lind. Lessons learned from this conference will continue to inform the Council's work.

## Teachers Council Election

How are the members of the Teachers Council appointed? There are three different pathways for representation on the Teachers Council. One is where NZEI, PPTA and STA nominate a person that the Minister of Education then appoints. Four others are directly appointed by the Minister. The third pathway is through direct elections for an early childhood, primary, secondary and principal representative. These elections were held in September and the new Council will meet for the first time in October.

### Results

Visit [www.teacherscouncil.govt.nz](http://www.teacherscouncil.govt.nz) to view the election results. *forTeachers* congratulates the new members of Council and thanks the retiring members for their commitment and contribution.



Current and retiring Council members - back row from left to right: Barbara Arnott, Irene Symes, Irene Cooper, Debra Marshall-Lobb, Barbara Backshall. Front row: Nola Hambleton, Joanna Beresford, Dr Margaret Franken, Patrick Walsh. Council members not above - Dave Robinson and Lyn Brash.

## Code of Ethics/Ngā Tikanga Matatika

The Code of Ethics recognises teachers' position of trust in society and provides a clear statement of the highest ideals of teachers in terms of their professional interactions and responsibilities. These are expressed as commitments to learners, to families, to society and to the profession.

The Code was developed through a process of extensive consultation with teachers and others to establish the values that underpin the teaching profession. Copies were distributed to schools and centres in February and individual teachers are receiving a copy with the renewal of their practising certificate.

Have you been confronted with an ethical issue in your setting? The Code of Ethics provides a guide to resolving such dilemmas. Copies can be requested at [comms@teacherscouncil.govt.nz](mailto:comms@teacherscouncil.govt.nz) or downloaded with supporting information from our website: [www.teacherscouncil.govt.nz/ethics](http://www.teacherscouncil.govt.nz/ethics)





## All Geared Up for the Big Year

There are approximately 90,000 teachers on the Teachers Council data base of registered teachers. Jenny Thomas, Manager Registration, says her team is well prepared now to process the peak renewals of practising certificates. "We have prepared for 30,000 early childhood, primary, secondary teachers and teachers in other settings to apply for registration or renewal in the five months from September 2005 until January 2006."

### Pride in the Profession

Jenny has spoken to many groups of teachers and principals this year since she joined the staff of the Teachers Council. She finds that registration is highly valued. "This is more than

just legal compliance," says Jenny. "Teachers are proud of the standard of professionalism that registration represents. It is more than just sending in a fee – the standards for renewal tell the profession and the community that this teacher has completed a level of professional development and learning and is teaching to the standards set by the Council's Satisfactory Teacher Dimensions and the Code of Ethics." Many professions have similar ways of assuring high standards and safe practice.

### The Registration Team

A quality service is provided by the registration team. "There are new support systems in place and a focus on strategic development and planning for the future," says Registration Team Leader, Meg Jamieson. This forward focus is building on the depth of experience in the team.

## Graduating Standards for Teacher Education Qualifications

What should a teacher education graduate know and be able to do? The Teachers Council is working on this question with a Working Party of representatives from the education sector. Clear standards will be set on what is expected of a teacher qualifying to enter the profession in Aotearoa New Zealand.

### Clear and Consistent Expectations

These standards will enable a graduate to apply for provisional registration and eventually move to full registration. The Satisfactory Teacher Dimensions currently express the standards for full registration and the Council will ensure that the two sets of standards are consistent.

The Council has also commissioned a literature review and critique of teacher standards to inform both this project and a planned review of the Satisfactory Teacher Dimensions in 2006.

## Help to Teacher Education Providers

"This work will be enormously helpful for teacher education providers who will gain a nationally agreed, evidence-based set of standards on which to design, develop and review their pre-service programmes," says Ken Wilson, Senior Advisor of the Teacher Education Team at the Council. "They will be clear about what the profession expects of them." The standards will also inform the criteria that the Teachers Council uses to approve and re-approve teacher education programmes.

### Consultation

In establishing the standards, the Working Party members have considered extensive feedback from their representative groups. A draft set of standards will be distributed for formal and wide consultation throughout the education community. Irene Cooper, Council member who convenes the Working Party, advises that an agreed set of standards will be available for publication in 2006.

## Spring Function

The Council recently invited the education community to a celebratory Spring Function. This evening acknowledged the support received and contributions made to the Teachers Council by individuals and the various education and other agencies across the sector.

This evening also provided the opportunity to farewell and to thank the departing members of Council for their valuable contribution to the Council's work. Attendees endorsed comments by Council Chair, Joanna Beresford, that the New Zealand Teachers Council had now come of age and was advancing its strong professional leadership role, enabling quality teachers and quality teaching.



Top left: Former Director of the Teachers Council, Harvey McQueen, with current Director Dr Peter Lind. Top right: Mitzi Austen, Secondary Futures, and Pamela Hulston, NZQA. Bottom left: Liz Millar (Principal of Hataitai School), Phil Smith (Correspondence School), Nicola Meek (Secondary Futures), Nola Hambleton (Council). Bottom right: St. Patricks College (Wellington) barbershop quartet entertained guests.

# Early Childhood Education Advisory Group



Convenor Nancy Bell

The Teachers Council has established two advisory groups, the Māori Medium Advisory Group and the Early Childhood Education Advisory Group.

In this issue of *forTeachers* we are profiling the Early Childhood Education Advisory Group, convened by Nancy Bell, CEO of Te Tari Puna Ora o Aotearoa/New Zealand Childcare Association. There are nine members in the group, nominated from a range of early childhood settings, employer and manager groups, teacher education providers and the teachers union. Although valuing diversity, the group members have in common their passion for promoting professionalism in the sector.

An exciting development is the Government's 10 year plan for early childhood education in Aotearoa/New Zealand, *Pathways to the Future: Nga Huarahi Arataki*<sup>1</sup>, which aims to lift quality and increase children's participation. The strategic plan sets out milestones to transform early childhood education into a fully qualified and registered part of the teaching profession. By 2007, 50% of teachers in each setting must be registered and by 2012 the figure increases to 70% with the remaining 30% enrolled in a recognised teacher

education programme.

"Central to improving quality are a range of initiatives to increase the number of qualified, registered teachers in each early childhood education setting," says Nancy. "Research conclusively tells us that there is a clear link between teacher qualifications and quality of learning in early childhood education."

The Teachers Council welcomes this new initiative. New Zealand is a forerunner for the rest of the world in its approach to early childhood education. Many countries view early childhood as care rather than education. In New Zealand this changed in 1986 when services for early childhood care and education both came under the umbrella of the then Department of Education. As educator



From left to right - Ben, Jedd, Cha'nel and Roman at Portobelo Preschool, Cranmer Centre, Central Christchurch.

Professor Ann Meade has written, "Babies are born ready to learn from day one. Infants' and young children's learning is as important as school or adult learning."<sup>2</sup>

Recent research, such as the *Competent Children*<sup>3</sup> longitudinal study, continues to support the importance of early childhood education in terms of academic and social outcomes in later stages of development.

A key challenge for the early childhood sector and for the Teachers Council is informing teachers about registration and helping them to access robust advice and guidance programmes. To this end the Council has identified a number of actions in its own strategic plan. One such action is the revision of the *Towards Full Registration* publication to include the special requirements of early childhood settings.



Left to right - Gary Davies, Sarah Bell, Leavasa Scott and Seine Samuvalu students at Victoria University of Wellington College of Education School of Early Childhood Teacher Education.

<sup>1</sup>Ministry of Education, 2002. <http://www.minedu.govt.nz>

<sup>2</sup>Anne Meade (2002), 'Early Childhood Vital to Early Education Scheme', in *The New Zealand Herald*, 19 September.

<sup>3</sup>Wylie, C. et al, (2004). *Competent Children at 12*. New Zealand Council for Educational Research. <http://www.nzcer.org.nz.pdfs/13248.pdf>

# Professional Learning

In its broadest sense, a professional learning community, or community of inquiry, would include educators, researchers and policy makers working and learning together to support effective teaching and learning. This is the vision of Professor Alan Reid, University of South Australia, talking at the NZEI, PPTA and ACSA conference about quality teaching in Melbourne earlier this year. "I understand inquiry to be a process of systematic, rigorous and critical reflection about professional practice, and the contexts in which it occurs, in ways that question taken-for-granted assumptions. Its purpose is to inform decision-making for action. Inquiry can be undertaken individually, but it is most powerful when it is collaborative."<sup>1</sup>

This collaborative form of professional inquiry can happen in many different ways. One is where teachers meet to engage in critical dialogue about their practice. Another, increasingly familiar in New Zealand schools, is where teachers engage collaboratively in critical data analysis in order to interrogate their practice.

One school that is serious about developing a professional learning community is Wainuiomata High School. The focus of their professional learning during this year has been to improve the achievement of their students by focusing on literacy through the teaching of writing genres in differentiated classes across all curriculum areas.

At Wainuiomata High School, professional learning is structured on a weekly basis with an hourly morning session. Each session begins with teachers sharing strategies, ideas or resources. "We have found that this spreading of ideas and reporting back on our successes and failures has meant that everyone is learning more. It's infectious!" says Brenda Service, the Deputy Principal responsible for professional development. The rest of the session focuses on the effective teaching of writing through a workshop lead by a member of staff with expertise in that area.

To embed this professional learning, every staff member develops a personal action plan where they try a strategy, set goals for themselves and follow a cycle of inquiry.

The aim is for all staff to feel confident with teaching explanation writing. They are drawing on principles learned from previous professional development initiatives including Assessment to Learn, Differentiated Teaching and Co-operative Writing Strategies.

Professor Reid is adamant that the notion of inquiry is not a project or the latest fad. He sees it as a way of professional being. "The question that needs to be asked is not whether educators should be inquirers into professional practice, but how they can become more so and how they can continue to build their inquiry capacities throughout their professional lives."<sup>2</sup>

In New Zealand, a question being addressed within the Teacher Professional Learning and Development Best Evidence Synthesis is, how do teachers learn and sustain this learning in their practice, in ways that impact positively on learner outcomes. Dr Helen Timperley, lead writer for this BES<sup>3</sup>, is aware that teachers engage in a lot of professional development that does not make any difference to social, cultural or academic outcomes for learners. To identify just what the critical factors are, that do make a difference, is proving a daunting, but fascinating task.



Janette Melrose and Dona Keyes, Wainuiomata High School, focus on feedback for explanation writing.

<sup>1</sup> Reid, A. (2004). *Towards a Culture of Inquiry in DECS*. Draft paper from Professor Reid, sent to NZTC June 2005.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid, p.2.

<sup>3</sup> Directed by Dr Adrienne Alton-Lee at the Ministry of Education, both NZEI and PPTA, as well as the New Zealand Teachers Council, are part of the contract management group for this BES.

## World Teachers' Day

UNESCO's World Teachers' Day on 5 October acknowledges the vital contribution teachers make to society. It is celebrated internationally in over 100 countries. The main theme for this year, launched by Education International, is the importance of providing teachers with quality teacher education before they enter the classroom. Equally important is the quality of continuing professional learning that teachers engage in. Effective teacher education has a long-lasting impact on the quality of education for all learners.

As World Teachers' Day falls during the holidays in New Zealand, the UNESCO Associated Schools Project Network is hosting a celebratory evening on Thursday 13 October. This will include

an address by Dr Peter Lind, the Director of the New Zealand Teachers Council.

To mark World Teachers' Day, NZEI has launched a special initiative to support teacher colleagues in the Solomon Islands. The Solomon Islands are recovering from a difficult period of ethnic tension and NZEI is collecting donations to help fund a building for the Solomon Islands National Teachers' Association.<sup>1</sup>

For Teachers would like to hear how your school or centre celebrated the day. Please send us your pictures or reports of events to: [comms@teacherscouncil.govt.nz](mailto:comms@teacherscouncil.govt.nz)

<sup>1</sup> Donations can be sent to NZEI, PO Box 466, Wellington. Cheques should be made out to NZEI Te Riu Roa, with 'Solomon Islands Fund' written on the back.

# Teachers Matter!

This is the key message from the recently released OECD report: 'Teachers Matter: Attracting, developing and retaining effective teachers.'

Even though New Zealand did not take part in this exercise, there are many parallels with issues facing the profession in New Zealand. For example:

- All countries' need for high quality schooling for all students is more important than ever.
- Teachers' work involves challenging, multi-skilled and complex practices and knowledge.
- The enthusiasm and morale of the profession are important influences on future teacher supply.
- Large numbers of new teachers will be entering the profession in the next decade.
- The quality of the initial preparation and initial experiences in teaching is critical if we want to keep them in the profession and benefit from their potential to help revitalise the profession.

## Thinking Proactively at the Teachers Council

Professional projects the Council is engaged in to address such issues facing New Zealand teachers include:

- Providing beginning teachers with a useful resource by transforming the induction kit, *Towards Full Registration*, to include the contexts of kura and early childhood education settings.
- Working with a reference group to monitor the joint Teachers Council and Ministry of

Education Initial Teacher Education research project. This emerges from the Teachers Council commitment to supporting provision of quality pre-service teacher education.

- Co-steering a joint research project on the Status of Teachers which is beginning to reveal interesting trends about perceptions of teachers and teaching which are more positive than teachers themselves appear to believe.
- Working closely with the Ministry of Education, the education unions and the School Trustees Association, to develop the kinds of professional learning communities that teachers need to engage in, to gain a deeper understanding of teaching and learning and what that means for diverse learners and diverse teachers.
- Commissioning a critical literature review which analyses the links between teaching standards and the learning of teachers.
- Participation in several reference groups within the Best Evidence Synthesis research project is providing an important knowledge base which relates to teaching quality, teachers' own professional learning and centre and school leadership.

The connections between the quality of teachers' own learning and the quality of learning they can then support for children, young people and adult learners, is a key focus both in New Zealand and internationally. In New Zealand we use the term education rather than training to apply to teachers' learning. Nonetheless, the theme for this year's World Teachers' Day is well chosen.



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