

Ministry's iwi partnerships a flagship for education

The Ministry of Education is partnering with iwi around the country to boost Maori academic performance in a scheme that could be a leader for some much-needed accountability from schools. We look at the Ngai Tahu partnership to see how the scheme is working in the South Island.

When the 2003 school year starts, every South Island school within the Ngai Tahu takiwa (tribal boundary) should receive an advisory kit explaining how to initiate relationships with Ngai Tahu's 18 runanga (local marae-based councils), and stating the iwi's educational expectations.

The kit (Te Kete o Aoraki) is one of the first steps in a process that will, by 2008, have Ngai Tahu children's educational achievements equal to or better than the general population, according to a memorandum of understanding signed 14 months ago by the Ministers of Education, the Secretary for Education, and Ngai Tahu representatives.

The Ngai Tahu memorandum is one of several such arrangements between the Ministry of Education and iwi throughout New Zealand (with 14 more in the planning stages) aimed to boost Maori students' academic achievement.

The education statistics for Maori children are well-known and grim. Maori students leave school earlier and with much lower qualifications than the national

average, or none at all, and the number going on to further education is also much lower.

But, according to Ministry of Education southern regional manager John Mather, there's no reason why those numbers should be so low; and the Ngai Tahu memorandum is set to challenge them.

The memorandum goals focus on:

- getting students to stay in education
- academic success
- learning te reo
- involvement by Maori and Ngai Tahu communities;

and, it says, by 2004:

- all schools in the Ngai Tahu rohe (region) will have established a relationship with one of the Ngai Tahu runanga
- improved parental involvement in the education of Ngai Tahu children will be evident
- runanga will be receiving reports from education providers within their area on Ngai Tahu students' achievement against national education indicators
- Ngai Tahu families will have increased participation in educational governance.

By 2005, the aim is to have Ngai Tahu students showing significant academic improvement; and by 2008, the target is academic performance equal to the general population.

Getting results

It's a steep climb to get there and, Mr Mather said, intensive in time and resources, but already the negotiated initiatives are starting to get results. Mr Mather said one early indicator suggested that suspension levels were already falling.

Each year an annual work programme is put in place to ensure strategic and ongoing development. Key elements of the 2002/2003 programme include:

- resourcing to support runanga in building meaningful relationships with schools
- resourcing to enable the development and implementation of a Ngai Tahu-specific early childhood education strategy
- the development and distribution of Ngai Tahu-specific, language-based educational resources for schools.

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Ministry's iwi partnerships a flagship for education (continued)

Ngai Tahu's manager of education Peter Lyman said that as the partnership develops, the iwi will be looking for specific performance outcomes from schools teaching Ngai Tahu children.

"We have a strategy and a vision to have full, quality, early-childhood education participation from Ngai Tahu families, and all Ngai Tahu students going through to year 13 – and achieving there," he said.

"We've put our stake in the ground. We are moving forward from there. It's a long-term strategy – getting people on the right educational pathways from their early years."

With the partnership just over one year old, one of the main aims of Ngai Tahu's education team is to get reporting systems up and running in schools so that the performance of Ngai Tahu children can be measured.

Iwi data needed

Currently, the Ministry of Education collects data on Maori students generally but not on individual iwi. Mr Lyman said iwi throughout New Zealand need iwi-affiliated data to be able to accurately follow and measure the progress of their whanau.

"We need to know where Ngai Tahu children are and at what levels they're achieving to get a base to start building educational improvement."

Ultimately, Ngai Tahu would like to have sufficient data to monitor individual institutions and to create awareness in them of best – and poor – practice for Ngai Tahu and other Maori students.

"Through monitoring we will be able to offer assistance to institutions if we see they are not meeting standards. This could be through providing resources to meet particular goals."

Though the iwi partnerships framework involves individual iwi partnering with the Ministry, there is much collaboration between iwi as they look for best-practice ways to get academic achievements.

Participating iwi and Ministry officials get together four times a year in hui (meeting) to swap notes and communicate on initiatives. Mr Lyman said iwi are all at different stages of partnership development, and the hui provide valuable sources of information.

Collaboration

Ngai Tahu, for example, is looking at Ngati Porou's (an East Cape iwi) "Curriculum Guidelines" to guide its own thinking in this area; and the Tuhoë Education Authority (in the Bay of Plenty) has offered the South Island iwi, as well as the other iwi partners, its five strategic documents covering all aspects of school operations to use as a guide, Mr Lyman said.

Good relationships with Ministry staff are also important for progressing partnership aims, he said.

"Building personal relationships within the Ministry at both the local and head office levels has been nearly as important as the memorandum in getting results.

"It's fair to say that there was some resistance at first, but the Ministry's philosophies are changing; and, as a result of our memorandum of understanding, they are becoming more accommodating towards our ideas for iwi data and performance indicators.

"We feel that the memorandum of understanding has helped put focus and priority on the process: to help identify barriers to educational participation, as well as quality interventions to resolve them and Maori best-practice in schools," Mr Lyman said.

Changed way of thinking

Education secretary Howard Fancy told a Kahungunu conference in Hastings in September that iwi partnerships "reflected a changed way of thinking on how we do things in the education system".

"They help modify policies and help make them work better in practice. They have assisted the Ministry enormously to build a better capability to build Maori perspectives into everything we do.

"Above all, these partnerships are proving to be practical and demanding, and I can assure you not in the least politically correct," he said.

"The iwi partnerships also highlight the challenge for Maori to take responsibility for helping improve the system. Lifting participation in the early childhood area remains a priority, with the Ministry working with some iwi partners and also whanau, communities and providers to take an active part in their children's early learning."

As the Ministry document *Better Relationships for Better Learning; guidelines for boards of trustees and schools on engaging with Maori parents, whanau, and communities* says: "The choice is not whether schools develop a relationship with Maori communities but what the quality of the relationship will be."

It's a message that could, indeed, be a blueprint for the interactions between the Ministry, its early childhood education providers and schools and all New Zealand communities.

Ngai Tahu's website is at: <http://www.ngaitahu.iwi.nz>

Howard Fancy's speech can be accessed at:

<http://www.minedu.govt.nz/index.cfm?layout=document&documentid=7654>

The Ministry of Education's Maori education page is at:

<http://www.minedu.govt.nz/index.cfm?layout=index&indexID=1063&indexparentid=2107>

The Ministry's annual report for 2001 into Maori education, *Ngä Haeata Mātauranga*, is at:

<http://www.minedu.govt.nz/index.cfm?layout=document&documentid=6708>

University and industry “partnerships for innovation” will boost economy

The intellectual power of our universities, the business nous of our industrial captains, and the potential of visionary ideas: a good recipe for economic and social development – but how do you bring them together?

We look at a United States report that highlights some strategies, and two New Zealand initiatives that put them into practice.

In the United States, the government puts millions of dollars each year into a programme that brings universities and industry together to boost innovation. The *Partnerships for Innovation* scheme is now into its third year and works to “connect ... knowledge to innovation and innovation to wealth, economic development and, ultimately, national well-being”.

A report of a workshop on the scheme says innovation appeared to come from activities at the “seams” between disciplines, technologies, and institutions; and that commercialisation was the essential process by which innovations can lead to wealth.

The report looks at solutions for bridging the cultural gaps between academia and business to create successful partnerships.

The report also looks at: resolving intellectual property issues and other conflicts; identifying comparative and competitive advantages; developing partnership tools (visions, performance benchmarks, leadership, etc); developing adequate partnership infrastructures, including human capital and its requirement for “an innovative educational process whose most important

goal is serving the student”.

Education Forum policy adviser Norman LaRocque said the strategies for partnerships could apply equally in New Zealand to polytechnics, private training establishments, wananga and other education institutions, as well as to universities.

“The self-managing nature of our institutions means there is great scope for these types of partnerships.”

He said that while it was likely true that New Zealand had some way to go to match the sort of efforts that the United States puts into its academic/business partnerships, no information was available on their numbers in this country. But there were encouraging signs.

In September, Industry NZ (INZ) signed its first strategic partnership with a university – Canterbury.

INZ general manager southern region



University and industry “partnerships for innovation” will boost economy (continued)

Paul Claridge said his organisation saw the tertiary sector as enormously important if New Zealand’s economic performance was to be improved.

The strategic partnership would help Canterbury University build relationships with industry and be more finely attuned to emerging business trends and developments, Mr Claridge said.

“It will be a powerful driver for commercialisation of applied research occurring within the university,” he said.

“And if Industry New Zealand is serious about supporting our high growth potential businesses and propelling them into global markets, then we have to play a bigger role in guiding skills and talent development.”

In October, the Government announced its first capital grant under its new ‘Partnerships for Excellence’ framework – \$25 million towards development of the Auckland University Business School, to be matched by private sector contributions of another \$25 million.

Under the framework the government provides capital injections of \$5 million or more to tertiary providers to fund strategic developments, provided that this funding is matched or bettered by funding from private sector partners.

Auckland University vice-chancellor John Hood has described the government funding as recognition that innovation must be matched by world-class business skills.

The Partnerships for Innovation report, Building a new foundation for innovation, can be accessed at:

<http://www.rand.org/publications/MR/MR1534>

Suggested strategies to identify potential partners

Strategies identified for universities to do this include:

- having “partnership-friendly” university policies – seen to make a big difference in attracting industry partners; universities with such policies should advertise them to attract industry partners
- having multidisciplinary science, technology, and business centres and university-industry institutes – excellent indicators of a “partnership-friendly” environment that could potentially provide effective liaison with industry partners
- technology transfer offices – to evangelise a university’s endowments in science and technology, including its skilled science and engineering workforce, senior researchers, and graduate students
- universities conducting industry needs and capacity assessments to ascertain what type of technologies are needed and commercially viable, and where university researchers can add the most value
- in relatively mature areas of technology, university researchers identifying firms with the most patents in an area
- networks (such as alumni networks) – a source of potential industry partners sympathetic to joint ventures with university researchers
- showcases and industrial research fairs – potentially powerful ways of drawing companies to university events.

Strategies for businesses include:

- focusing on universities with technology-transfer offices, multidisciplinary industry-oriented “centres of excellence,” partnership-friendly policies, or those with many patents or citations in an area of interest
- identifying professors by reputation or publishing record who could be engaged on specific technological problems and invited to submit informal proposals
- industrial fairs – seen as a way of getting academics out of their departments and providing a basis for evaluating their performance and potential contribution to solving an industry challenge
- simply showing up at a research institution and seeing what research has been done and what can be used
- using a consultant to find the best universities for specific work
- using employees who are former graduate students as an interface with universities
- attending meetings of professional and technical societies.

Details on the Canterbury University partnership with Industry NZ are at:

http://www.industry.govt.nz/about-us/media-centre/_release-or-speech-detail.asp?id=182

The Auckland University Business School website is at:

<http://www.business.auckland.ac.nz/>

Details on the business school’s partnership with industry and government is at:

http://www.business.auckland.ac.nz/news/index.cfm?fuseaction=rebuild&subaction=dsp_news_article&pub_id=400995

Innovative insurance for fee-paying students

It's not a lot of hot air, you really can insure your education — with an innovative product on offer to protect students in New Zealand from private training establishments (PTEs) that collapse.

Contractors Bonding Ltd (CBL), which specialises in slightly unusual insurance products, including cover for hot air balloonists, offers student fee protection insurance to approved PTEs and cover to fee-paying, international students.

Under New Zealand Qualification Authority (NZQA) regulations, all PTEs must have measures in place to protect student fees paid in advance. And, under Ministry of Education regulations, any student paying fees must have their tuition course fees protected.

If a school or institution defaults, then under the CBL policy, CBL will either refund the remaining unused portion of the fees to the student, or make alternative arrangements for the completion of the course, at no cost to the student. Its policies' wording is NZQA approved.

Education Forum chairman John Morris said the insurance products were useful tools to help the private education market function better.

"With proper protections in place, the education marketplace is able to freely do what it does best — offer innovative courses that meet the needs of New Zealanders whose educational needs are not met in the traditional education sector.

"The alternative to this kind of insurance would be either less private sector education provision because of students' uncertainties, or hugely bureaucratic reporting and accountability just to prove an institution's financial viability."

NZQA figures show that in the 12 months ended 31 October 2002, 14 private tertiary education providers were shut down because of bad debts or lack of financial viability and one because of a complaint investigation. New Zealand has approximately 860 private tertiary education providers.

The Ministry of Education has a code of practice for the pastoral care of international students that provides a framework for service delivery by educational providers. It requires providers to sign up to the code. Under it, providers must provide fee protection for money paid by students for courses.

The code came into force on 31 March, and a six-month transitional period ran until 30 September to allow providers to sign up.

The code can be accessed at:

http://www.minedu.govt.nz/web/document/document_page.cfm?id=6902

A list of resources for use with the code can be accessed at:

http://www.minedu.govt.nz/index_page.cfm?id=6666&p=1003.1010.6663

If an educational provider is not a signatory to the code, international students will not be granted a permit from the New Zealand Immigration Service and will not be allowed to attend that institution, CBL says.

CBL's website is: **<http://www.contractorsbonding.com/>**

A 2001 discussion paper on student fee protection from education consultants Education Directions can be accessed from: **<http://www.ed.co.nz/docs/studfeep.pdf>**

Gateway scheme's success sees expansion

The government's Gateway programme that enables senior school students to start national qualifications while on work experience is expanding to 38 new schools around the country.

Gateway currently caters for over 1000 students in 24 schools, and involves over 200 employers. An additional \$1.8m provided in the Budget this year will fund the scheme for a total of 62 schools.

An evaluation of the scheme can be found at:

<http://www.skillnz.govt.nz/new/gatewaynews.htm>

Increased skills no ‘economic Viagra’

Upskilling, a much used 1990s buzzword, has been well-publicised as a key to employability during the past decade – but do more skills inherently boost economic productivity? We look at a report that says that is not always the case.

In recent years, as developed economies have competed for advantage in the “knowledge economy”, much attention has been placed on people developing skills for the more knowledge-intensive production and more service-oriented and technology-focused work deemed necessary to succeed globally.

Research in an Australian Productivity Commission report released in October, however, points towards the finding that although skills may be important they have not been the major driver behind a productivity surge experienced in Australia in the late 1990s.

The report, *Skill and Australia’s Productivity Surge*, says that though there was large growth in skills in the 1990s it contributed only around 3% to the 1.7% a year growth in multifactor productivity from 1993-94 to 1997-98.

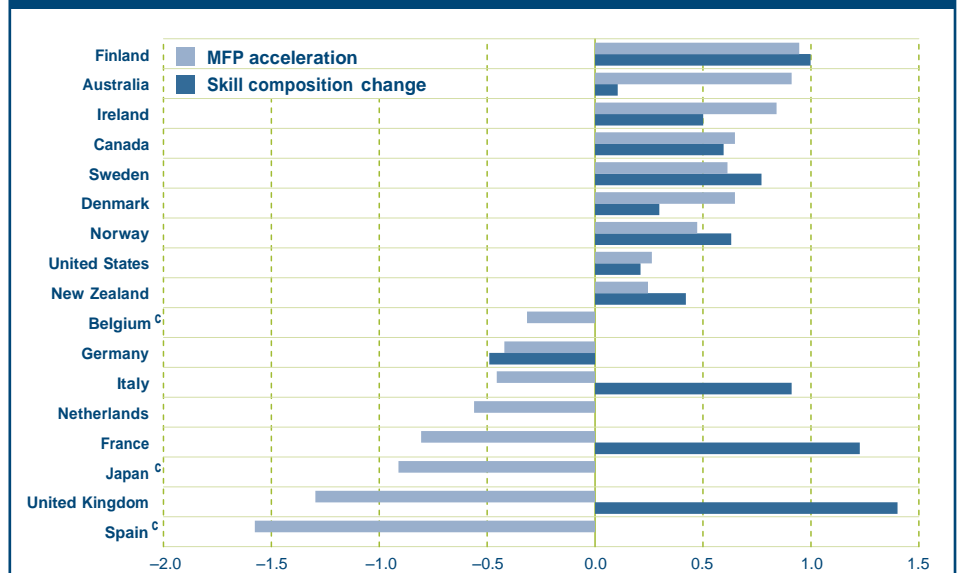
The report says the demand for skilled workers in Australia increased faster than the demand for unskilled workers during the 1980s and ‘90s, but only in line with the relative supply.

The strongest growth in skill (measured in terms of educational attainment plus work experience) came in the late 1980s and early 1990s; skilled employment rose from 38% of total employment in 1980 to around 58% in 2000; and in the 1990s, skilled employment grew by 3% a year, while unskilled contracted by 0.8% annually.

Compared to other countries,

Change in MFP growth between the 1980s and the 1990s^a and skill composition change^b between 1985 and 1998

Percentage points and per cent per year



- a Change in MFP growth is the change in average annual MFP growth rate between the 1980s (1980 to 1990) and the 1990s (1990 to 1999).
- b Educational attainment measure. Does not include work experience and is therefore not directly comparable with the measure in table 2.
- c Data for skill composition change are not available.

Australia’s skills growth has been low; but growth in productivity has been high, and factors other than growth in skills appear to provide the main explanation for productivity growth (including international differences) in the 1990s, the report says.

It says there does not appear to be a strong correlation across countries between strong labour productivity growth and movements towards skilled workers. Some countries with large contributions of skill

change, such as France and the United Kingdom, do not have very high labour productivity growth. Ireland, with the highest labour productivity growth, does not have a very large skill contribution.

The table above, taken from the report, shows a range of OECD countries’ multifactor productivity (MFP) and skills growth. The table shows that New Zealand’s growth in skills outstripped its growth in productivity.

The average level of education may

Increased skills no 'economic Viagra' (continued)

be important in productivity. The report says that some countries with relatively high average education levels – Australia, Canada, the United States and the Nordic countries – have also experienced relatively strong diffusion of information and communications technology (ICT). This group of countries has also had an acceleration in MFP growth. To the extent that ICTs are a factor in acceleration in MFP growth, levels of education may have contributed indirectly to productivity acceleration.

However, the contribution of ICT uptake to productivity acceleration, though significant, is still relatively small. The ICT-related gains in Australia have been perhaps 0.1 or 0.2 of a percentage point of annual MFP growth, the report says.

Despite the findings, the report says education and skills clearly remain important for long-run growth and for meeting the changing pattern of demand.

Increased skills can influence productivity growth by directly raising workers' output per hour and increasing innovation rates through fostering the absorption and development of technologies.

Education Forum adviser Norman LaRocque said skills and education were very important to a country's national development but were not the only things that mattered in boosting economic growth.

"Higher skills are important but they are no economic Viagra. Wider reforms, in areas including taxation, regulation and immigration, are also crucial steps," he said.

The Productivity Commission is the Australian government's principal review and advisory body on microeconomic policy and regulation. The productivity surge report can be found at:

<http://www.pc.gov.au/research/staffes/saaps/index.html>

Higher education a better investment than interest rates, OECD says

Higher education provides measurable returns for individuals well in excess of the potential rate of return if the money used for university study is instead invested, according to a new OECD analysis.

On the basis of an "estimated private internal rate of return" taking account of factors including the time taken to earn a degree, tuition costs, and taxes, an investment in higher education is an attractive way for an individual to improve wealth-building prospects, says the latest edition of the OECD's annual *Education at a Glance*.

In all countries, the report shows that this private rate of return is higher than real interest rates, and often significantly so. At the low end of the scale, in 10 countries for which comparable data are available, it stands for men at around 7% in Italy and Japan, rising to between 10% and 15% in Denmark, France, the Netherlands, Sweden and the U.S, and to 17% in the U.K.

Taking into account both higher average earnings and lower risks of unemployment, university graduates stand to earn substantially more over their working lifetimes than people who end their education at secondary level.

Details on the Education at a Glance report can be found at:

<http://www.oecd.org/EN/document/0,,EN-document-0-nodirectorate-no-12-36038-0,00.html>

Russian and Middle Eastern students targeted for NZ

Trade New Zealand has been targeting Russia and the Middle East as a source of students for New Zealand's export education industry.

Earlier this year, Trade NZ held six education expos in Russia and it hopes to have about 300 Russians studying here by the end of this year.

In September, a joint education mission went to the Middle East to promote New Zealand as a study destination. It was the sector's first promotional foray into the region.

There are more than 70,000 foreign fee-paying (FFP) students in New Zealand, and about 85% are from East Asia. Trade NZ estimates FFP students will inject \$1.5 billion into the economy this year.

The Trade New Zealand press releases are at:

http://www.tradenz.govt.nz/page_Article/0,1300,1340%252D3763,00.html
http://www.tradenz.govt.nz/page_Article/0,1300,1340%252D3835,00.html

An Education Forum briefing paper on export education with more information on foreign students and the economy is at:

http://www.educationforum.org.nz/upload/pdf/briefing_no_4.pdf

Student loans boost tertiary education participation

When the student loan scheme annual report for 2001 was released last month, there was negative comment from some quarters. But is the negativity justified, or is the scheme delivering benefits to the country?

In the 2001 academic year, the report shows, 148,174 students borrowed \$908.9 million, and at 30 June 2002 the net total of all loans outstanding was \$4.75 billion. The average cumulative loan owing to Inland Revenue is \$12,643.

Some groups point to debt figures that they say are constantly going up as evidence of the scheme's failure.

Education Forum policy adviser Norman LaRocque said the level of student debt was small compared to other types of debt and should be viewed in that context.

"The reported outstanding student loan debt is \$4.75 billion. This amounts to just 6.3% of the \$72.9 billion that was outstanding in mortgage and credit card debt at June 2002," he said.

Loans win-win

Mr LaRocque said the student loan scheme was a win-win proposition for students and for the government. The loan scheme provides students with the financing they need to invest in human capital. And it does so on lending terms that simply would not be available from commercial banks.

The scheme also allows the government to fund growing numbers of tertiary students at a comparatively low cost – only 23 cents per dollar borrowed.

"While loans may represent a liability to students, they are offset by an asset, namely the human capital generated by their tertiary education investment.

"It's fair to ask students to pay for their education given that those with a tertiary

qualification receive a healthy return on their investment in the form of higher lifetime earnings and other benefits," Mr LaRocque said.

One recent estimate suggests that, over a lifetime, a New Zealand male degree holder can expect to earn \$140,000 more – in present value terms – than a male with no qualification, and for a woman with a degree it's \$69,000.

Unemployment rates also bear witness to the advantages of tertiary education. The rate for unemployed degree holders in 2000 was less than a third of that for those without a qualification, he said.

Mr LaRocque said New Zealand was not alone in struggling with burgeoning tertiary education costs – governments the world over were pondering how to fund tertiary education and the trend was towards more private financing, through measures such as increased fees and greater use of student loans.

Between 1995 and 1998, seven out of 17 OECD countries saw the private share of spending on tertiary education increase by more than 20%.

Increased spending

Mr LaRocque said recent changes to the student loan scheme such as the interest write-off during study had increased the cost of the scheme significantly, while doing little to achieve participation goals or provide funding to improve quality. Calls for further softening of the scheme should be resisted by the government.

"Focus should instead be on giving students relevant information about how the scheme works, removing the interest rate holiday – as was proposed by the Tertiary Education Advisory Commission – and examining options such as income targeting the living cost component of the scheme."

The Student Loan Scheme Annual Report can be accessed at:
<http://www.ird.govt.nz/aboutir/reports/slsannual2002.pdf>

A paper by Nicholas Barr of the London School of Economics on changes to the loan scheme in 2000 is at:

<http://www1.worldbank.org/education/tertiary/barr.pdf>

An OECD report, Next steps for public spending in New Zealand: the pursuit of effectiveness, has comments on the loan scheme. It can be accessed at:

[http://appli1.oecd.org/olis/2002doc.nsf/linkto/eco-wkp\(2002\)23/\\$FILE/JT00130148.PDF](http://appli1.oecd.org/olis/2002doc.nsf/linkto/eco-wkp(2002)23/$FILE/JT00130148.PDF)

The final chapter of an Education Forum report, Shaping the tertiary education system – an assessment of the second report of the Tertiary Education Advisory Commission, by Norman LaRocque, discusses the loan scheme and can be accessed at:

<http://www.educationforum.org.nz/upload/book/ShapingTheTertiaryEd.pdf>

Quote of the month:

"If we want world-class universities, we will have to have some privatisation. If Britain wants second-rate universities, we can keep going as we are. The country has to decide. We're in big trouble at the moment."

Warwick University economics professor Andrew Oswald, quoted last month in the Education Guardian. For more on this topic, see our British university privatisation briefs on p.11

Commercial property conversions for education continue apace

The *Dominion Post* reported recently that, according to a survey, 11% of all Auckland CBD commercial property was occupied by educational institutes. This compared with 2% in Wellington.

Early childhood report a "hatchet job"

A report suggesting non-profit preschool centres are of higher quality than privately owned for-profit centres, because non-profit centres have higher ratios of teacher-qualified staff, has been described as a "hatchet job".

Early Childhood Council (ECC) chief executive officer Sue Thorne said the report, commissioned by the NZ Council for Educational Research and released earlier this month, was a "hatchet job on our sector" and "an unwarranted attack on centre managers and staff".

The ECC represents 800 independent private and community-based education and care providers with about 40,000 children and 5000 staff.

Business NZ chief executive Simon Carlaw said the use of the teacher-qualified staff ratio was misleading.

"Many centres with high ratios of teacher-qualified staff, like kindergartens, offer only short sessions, while in most full-day centres, children will spend as much time, if not more, across the day in contact with qualified teachers.

"The ratio simply shows that privately-owned centres have more general staff to support those qualified teachers. In fact, for-profit centres have an average of 20 children per 'teacher qualified' staff member, while kindergartens have an average of 28 children per 'teacher qualified' staff member.

"The research seems to ignore the fact that it is the quality of outcomes that matters – not whether a centre is for-profit or not-for-profit," Mr Carlaw said.

The report, Differences between community owned and privately owned early childhood centres: a review of evidence, NZCER 2002, is at:

<http://www.nzcer.org.nz/pdfs/11743.pdf>

The Business NZ press release is at:

<http://www.businessnz.org.nz/>

The ECC press release is at:

<http://www.scoop.co.nz/mason/stories/ED0211/S00012.htm>

Value shown in targeted workplace learning

The Workplace Literacy Fund is achieving its objective of providing foundation learning opportunities to people who had missed out on those essential skills, according to Associate Education (Tertiary Education) Minister Steve Maharey.

A Skill New Zealand evaluation of the fund was released in October.

The \$500,000 Fund was established by the government in July 2001 to assist employees to gain work-related literacy skills and to promote the value of workplace learning to employers and tertiary education organisations. Ten firms from six different industry areas participated in the jointly funded, workplace-based projects.

Details of the fund can be found at:

<http://www.skillnz.govt.nz/programmes/literacy/litfund.htm>

The evaluation can be found at:

<http://www.skillnz.govt.nz/publications/WorkplaceLiteracyFundReport.doc>

Fears that zoning will shut poor kids out of new Auckland high school

A largely Maori and Pacific Island primary school community fears its children's education will suffer and home values fall because they are excluded from a new high school's enrolment zone, the *New Zealand Herald* reported earlier this month.

The school concerned – Chapel Downs Primary – is on the outskirts of Otara, in Manukau City, one of New Zealand's poorest communities.

A reshuffle of zones, as a result of a proposed six-lane eastern highway and the new school – Botany Downs Secondary College – due to open in 2004, looks set to force Chapel Downs students out of the Howick schools they had been progressing to and back into lower-decile Otara schools, including Tangaroa and Sir Edmund Hillary Collegiate.

Most of each year's Chapel Downs 100 school leavers, representing about 27 nationalities, go to Howick Intermediate but will be excluded from that school also when it introduces an enrolment scheme next year, the *Herald* reported.

In another *New Zealand Herald* story, in October, parents with children at the popular Maungawhau Primary School in Mt Eden were reported to be angry at plans to chop the size of the school's zone, which it was said could chop \$40,000 off the price of a \$400,000 house if excluded from the zone.

For more information on zoning, an Education Forum briefing paper is at:

http://www.educationforum.org.nz/upload/pdf/briefing_no_3.pdf

Radical Christchurch high school gets go-ahead

Former Christchurch mayor Vicki Buck has gained approval for a secondary school to be run along similar lines to a radical primary school in Christchurch, *The Press* reported this month.

The school, known as Unlimited, is to open in Term 1 next year for Year 9 and 10 students. The roll was expected to grow to 400 within its first three years.

At the primary school, Discovery 1, children are encouraged to pursue learning in the environments and the ways that are most effective for them. They are not required to be at school all day, wear uniforms, or be grouped by age.

The Press reported Ms Buck saying that Unlimited would establish partnerships with two Christchurch secondary schools, Hillmorton High and Hagley Community College, as well as the Christchurch Polytechnic, to enable Unlimited students to access four curricula and attend different schools for certain subjects.

Australian state to rank schools on exam results

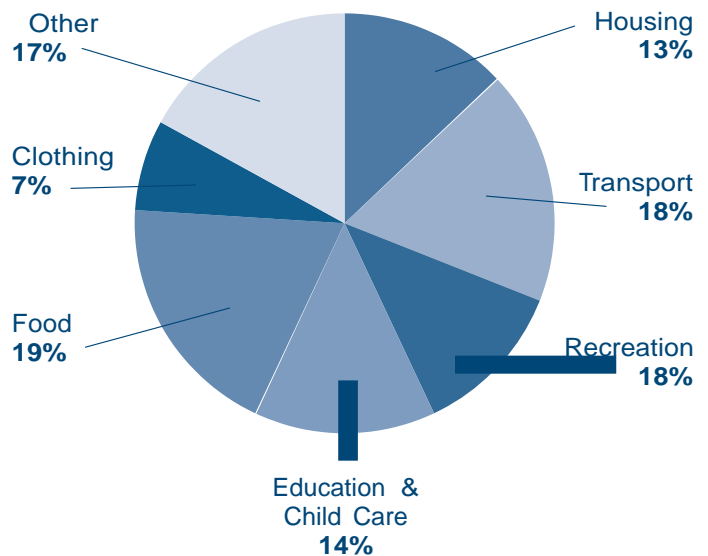
The Victorian state government in Australia is to publish unprecedented information about every high school in the state, *The Australian* reported in October.

From December, Victoria will publish details of the number of students in every high school who pass the Victorian Certificate of Education, which will allow high schools to be ranked from highest to lowest on the basis of their Year 12 results.

All you need is love and \$A450,000 to raise a family in Australia

A report from AMP in Australia estimates it will cost around \$A448,000 in today's dollars to raise two children from birth to age 20, with more than \$50,000 going to education and childcare.

The estimated cost distribution is pictured below:



The report can be found at:

[http://www.ampgroup.com/group/ampgroup.nsf/AttachmentsByTitle/B20.10.4+22941+Natsem+Report+Oct.pdf/\\$FILE/B20.10.4+22941+Natsem+Report+Oct.pdf](http://www.ampgroup.com/group/ampgroup.nsf/AttachmentsByTitle/B20.10.4+22941+Natsem+Report+Oct.pdf/$FILE/B20.10.4+22941+Natsem+Report+Oct.pdf)

Iran may let foreign universities open branch campuses

Iran's parliament has approved legislation to allow foreign universities to open branch campuses for the first time since the 1979 Islamic revolution, *The Chronicle of Higher Education* reported last week.

The bill is now being reviewed by the Council of Guardians, which under Iranian law determines whether legislation violates Islamic principles. Officials predict the council will approve the measure. According to officials, inquiries about opening up branch campuses in Iran have come from universities in Australia, Britain, and Cyprus. The legislation will not exclude American universities, the *Chronicle* reported.

Differential fees needed to compete with world's best, say elite British universities

Britain's elite universities are threatening to lead a breakaway from state-funded higher education if the government waters down plans allowing them to charge top-up tuition fees worth thousands of pounds, *The Times* reported in October.

Top universities have argued that they will never compete with the world's best unless they are allowed to charge "differential fees" for tuition. These could be as much as £15,000 a year, in addition to the £1,000 already paid by students from richer backgrounds.

University privatisation in Britain "unstoppable"

The privatisation of British universities is "unstoppable", British academic, economist and long-time advocate of top-up fees Andrew Oswald was reported to have said in the *Education Guardian* in October.

Professor Oswald, from Warwick University, said such was the momentum towards a privatised system that some universities could become private by 2011. He said Britain should have some private and some public universities. Taxpayers didn't want to fund high-quality universities, because most didn't go to them.

"If we want world-class universities, we will have to have some privatisation. If Britain wants second-rate universities, we can keep going as we are. The country has to decide. We're in big trouble at the moment," *The Education Guardian* quoted Professor Oswald.

Saudi conference flags higher education as a key to national development

A conference in Saudi Arabia last month looking at 'future visions' for the Saudi economy targeted higher education as a key driver. Under World Bank auspices, Education Forum adviser Norman LaRocque delivered a presentation to the conference discussing international trends in higher education.

Vocational and higher education should get closer, says research body

Closer links between vocational education and higher education are vital in developing learning pathways and providing greater access to education, the Australian National Centre for Vocational Education Research (NCVER) says.

The NCVER article, with links to numerous vocational education websites and online reports and research, is at:

<http://www.ncver.edu.au/articles/insight/issue8/linkages.htm>

Websites of the month

Education Directions, a Wellington-based education consultancy, has one of the most comprehensive lists available of New Zealand tertiary education providers.

The private providers are listed at:

<http://www.ed.co.nz/linkspri.htm>

The public institutions are listed at:

<http://www.ed.co.nz/linkspub.htm>

The Adam Smith Institute: a leading innovator of market economic policies based in London. Since 1977, it has played a key role in the analysis and development of public policies. The Institute's main focus has been "introducing choice and competition, in extending the influence of markets, in giving ordinary people the chance to help frame their future by their choices, and in redesigning public services in ways that inject innovation and customer responsiveness into their delivery".

The institute is at: <http://www.adamsmith.org/>

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