



# Small Schools Newsletter

**June 2007**

Kia ora

I promised after the last meeting to send a newsletter out to you all to ensure that those who are unable to attend cluster days are still kept in the loop. I apologise for the delay in getting this to you.

## Waitaria Bay Meeting -Minutes

**Date:** Thursday 10 May  
**Present:** Odette, Karen, Kerry, Dave, Cheryl & Mike, Tania, Nicky  
**Apologies:** Selena, Alison  
**Agenda Items:**

- **Thank You's**

Thanks expressed to Mike for braving the storm to get everyone there safely, Odette for hosting us and Alison for the fantastic job she has done coordinating these cluster days. Alison was happy to now give that task to Nicky to oversee.

- **Nicky's Role**

Nicky briefly clarified her role, acknowledged the great work that Darren and Helen had done as rural advisers and explained the reason for the change in title from *Rural Adviser* to *Adviser to Schools*. Nicky stressed the importance of booking ahead to ensure you get dates that worked for you and instead of a 'popping in when passing' model preferred to make appointments and respond to requests. The group also supported this approach as found arriving unannounced frustrating.

- **Focus for Future Meetings**

Together the format and future professional development ideas for the group were discussed. It was agreed to meet Week 9 (Thursday- release day) of each term and at each session the PD focus decided for the following meeting. It was suggested that one meeting per year to be held in Kaikoura. The Sunshine Coach would be made available and booked ahead for those days.

- **PD Ideas**

Ideas suggested for possible PD focus included looking at workload issues and solutions, systems analysis of experienced principals, new curriculum, KC's, and a 'Tour of the Town' to see models of best practice.

- **Workload Issues**

A sharing session about the huge workload issues facing teaching principals and a focus on possible solutions discussed. I have attached the LeadSpace *Managing Your School* guidelines that have practical step-by-step advice on how to deal with a range of school management-related issues. The *Facing the time challenge* guideline may be helpful.

- **REAP Resources**

Nicky shared some new resources available from the REAP Loan Library. Email, fax or phone in requests and I will ensure they get to you. I appreciate the difficulty trying to get to REAP during office hours so am happy to pop down and unlock during the weekend if I am around. Home mobile is more reliable over the weekend 027424889 . Any resource you would like REAP to buy let Nicky know.

- **MPA Meetings and Conference**

Nicky urged everyone to ensure that they are keeping in contact with their 'buddy' and promoted the networking/PD benefits of attending MPA meetings if possible. Portage conference keynote speakers were shared and a plea for support of Cheryl Doig sessions to be held in Kaikoura 21 August and Blenheim on 22 August. To enable all staff (including principals) to attend the Blenheim session we have arranged for the bus to Portage to collect everyone from the Elim Centre straight afterwards.

## NZEI U1 – U4 and Rural Principals Conference

I recently attended the NZEI U1-U4 Rural Principals conference in Christchurch. It was aptly named 'The Great Balancing Act'. From the workshops I attended there were some exciting things happening in some schools that I felt would be worth visiting next year as a small schools cluster. This is something for you all to consider and discuss further at our next meeting. Selena and Karen also attended the conference and were keen to see a bus trip south.

Within our own schools, our small schools cluster and also other Marlborough schools I believe it is important to ensure we also share and celebrate the wonderful things that are happening locally. Opportunities to do this will also be built in to our future cluster days.

More information about the conference will be included in my next newsletter that goes out to all primary schools at the start of each term.

## Next Small Schools Cluster Meeting

At the last meeting at Waitaria Bay we decided to visit Kaikoura in term 4 and for our next meeting to have a 'Tour of the Town' to visit schools involved in the KC's pilot programme last year and also to spend time with these principals discovering their time saving tips! The schools we hoped to visit were Springlands, Witherlea and Fairhall.

I have spoken with some of you and on reflection feel it may be better to look at this option in term 4 due to staff changes and Murray will be away on leave. We also have a MPA meeting in Kaikoura term 4 so perhaps it would be better to timetable our annual visit to Kaikoura for term 3. If you are all happy with this I have a possible PD option for next term.

At the NZEI conference I briefly visited Amberley School. Many of you are familiar with the SPINZS 1 and 2 CD's (Successful Practice in New Zealand Schools) that were the result of collating successful ideas and practice from 200 schools throughout New Zealand. The CD develops a whole school development process which helps promote effective leadership and teaching practice. Roger Hornblow has developed a 2 day "Building a Learning School" course for principals or principals and staff to develop the potential of the CD in your school.

I have pencilled Roger in for a session with us on **Thursday 13 September** (Week 9 Term 3) **in Kaikoura**. The Blenheim team could pile into the Sunshine Coach compliments of REAP and Roger is able to travel up from Amberley which would keep the costs minimal. If as a cluster you are keen for another session with Roger this could be arranged in Blenheim for yourselves and also an after school session for your staff if requested.

***Let me know if you are not happy with this idea or if the dates clash with anything.*** If I don't hear from you I will presume you are keen for this to happen and more details will be sent out early term 3.

## Cluster Groups

Just to clarify who belongs to each cluster group and ensure all U1 and U2 schools are included in the small schools group I have listed them below from the information given at our last meeting. This is mainly for me but let me know if you have been popped in the wrong cluster or excluded!

### Small Schools Cluster

Canvastown School  
Grovetown School  
Koromiko School  
Kaikoura Suburban  
Linkwater School  
St Joseph's School  
Wairau Valley School  
Waitaria Bay School  
Ward School  
Woodbank School  
Hapuku School  
Lynton Downs School

### Pelorus Cluster

Canvastown School  
Havelock School  
Linkwater School  
Rai Valley School  
Waitaria Bay School

### Wairau Cluster

Blenheim School  
Grovetown School  
Koromiko School  
Mayfield School  
Spring Creek School  
Tua Marina School

### Picton Cluster

St Joseph's Picton  
Picton  
Waikawwa Bay  
Koromiko School  
Linkwater

## Congratulations!

Congratulations to Odette on completing her masters and graduating in May and to Cheryl who has also completed her masters but yet to trot across the stage! A huge achievement on top of a teaching principal's workload.

## Farewell

We wish Margaret Jones farewell as she returns to Nelson and thank her for the contribution she has made to Linkwater School. A warm welcome to Andrew Leverton who starts next term and I know you will make email or phone contact to welcome him to Marlborough.

Remember to let me know if **Thursday 13 September** does not work for you as our next cluster day in Kaikoura. Hope you all have a relaxing holiday and ensure you plan some time for you.

Nicky



Nicky Halligan  
Adviser to Schools-Marlborough  
REAP House  
19 George Street  
Blenheim 7240  
Ph: 578 7848  
Fax: 03 578 9777  
Email: [nicky@reapmarlborough.co.nz](mailto:nicky@reapmarlborough.co.nz)