

**An Education Development Initiative
for Northern Wairoa**

**A Research Project Prepared as
Partial Fulfilment of the 1992
KELLOGG RURAL LEADERSHIP PROGRAMME
Lincoln University**

**Mark C Farnsworth
November 1992**

*“An EDI is nothing more than a government
license to close our small schools”*

*A disgruntled Northern Wairoa parent - public meeting
Selywn Park School Hall - 23rd April 1992*

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Stanton's Laws of Dynamic Learning Groups

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I am both geographer, and forester, the first part of the course has been a wake up call to remind me that on-going professional development has to be a core function of one's life.

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Mark C Farnsworth
Upper Lake Rototuna
November 1992

Abstract

This project reviews the government's Education Development Initiative (EDI) as it may apply to Northern Wairoa area in Northland. It is noted that a move by Selywn Park School to change its status is the principle driver behind the proposed EDI. Four EDI viability criteria - Excess Pupil Capacity, Deferred Maintenance, School Transportation & Community Views were selected and examined for their potential influence on the Northern Wairoa EDI. The study also reports on the results of a community survey, which clearly demonstrates that parents/caregivers, and other interested persons are highly resistant to change, and consider that the local school –especially in the rural areas is the centre of community activity. The study has two major conclusions. The first is that the proposed EDI will not get off the ground as it has been predicated on a time generating, defensive strategy of other schools. The second is that the time is right for schools in the area to take stock of education and give serious consideration to undertaking an EDI for the right reasons.

Section One: Education Development Initiatives – EDIs

1.0 Introduction

The government announced, late in 1991, its intention to invite schools through their boards of trustees to consider up taking the opportunity reshaping the structure of education delivery in their communities. In short, a rationalisation in the number of centers delivery education. The policy to facilitate this process is called an *Education Development Initiative* or *EDI* (Ministry of Education 1991a). This policy has been instigated by government to allow parents and caregivers the freedom, independence and choice to improve educational outcomes and standards.

The Ministry has defined the key agents in the EDI process as being: boards of trustees, principals and the local community.

The Ministry of Education has noted that an EDI has three basic principles (Ministry of Education 1992a). These are:

- To strengthen the curriculum for students in each school;
- To reflect the educational preferences of its community;
- To be achieved within existing resources.

The Ministry of Education has also noted (Ministry of Education 1991a; 1992a; 1992b; 1992c; 1992d; 1992e) that the EDI policy offers communities the opportunity to:

- examine the educational needs of the students in their community, through boards of trustees and communities working together;
- consider how schools in their community might be better organised to meet future curriculum needs.

An EDI would take into account changing demographic patterns both within the schools and the district. It would allow for education delivery adjustments to be made to match these changes. As a result educational resources would be distributed more fairly in the community.

The stated purpose of EDI is to improve the:

- delivery of education, taking into account the evolving needs of the curriculum and the qualifications framework;
- access of students to high quality learning opportunities in well-equipped facilities.

The EDI policy is designed to enable school communities to think about how they could better use the educational resources available in their areas and so improve the quality education being offered to their young people. The Ministry of Education projected that EDIs should promote the development of an educational system in a way, which is

relevant to the experiences and needs of students in the 1900's. The Ministry expects that the EDI policy may be attractive to many boards that have excess accommodation and falling rolls. The EDI policy should help encourage communities to rationally consider whether the organisation of their local schools is effective and efficient for providing quality educational delivery in their area (Ministry of Education 1991d; 1992a; 1992c).

To help facilitate board understanding of the policy the Ministry of Education has published an EDI policy framework document. This document has been distributed to all schools who have expressed an interest in becoming involved in the EDI process.

The Ministry has indicated that it will provide incentives for communities who become involved in the EDI process. These include the provision of transitional resource support and the freeing up of 'special resources' to new sites.

1.1 Policy Reaction

The introduction of the EDI policy has resulted in some interesting mixed comment. In some quarters the policy has been welcomed with the clear recognition that there are communities which need to take a rational approach to the deliver of education in their particular communities so that educational resources can be better utilised. In other quarters the introduction of EDI process has been met with open cynicism, with the Ministry being accused of bringing in a policy with the deliberate aim of closing school – especially small schools – and creating community division.

The New Zealand School Trustees Association in October 1991 issue of *STA News* noted:

"The Association wishes to see that communities and boards are able to participate freely in Educational Development Initiatives. A concern has recently been raised that there will be restrictions on the type and number of initiatives that will be acceptable to Government".

The policy is new and as yet untested; only well constructed longitudinal studies will determine the ultimate impact of the policy.

Recommendation

That the Ministry of Education set up appropriate longitudinal studies to determine the long-term impact on communities who implement an EDI.

1.2 Pilot Studies

The Ministry is currently working with four pilot EDI projects. These have been underway since September 1991 (Ministry of Education 1992a). They are located at Levin, Tokanui, Melville and Hastings.

The Ministry has commented that these EDIs are making progress at a rate, which reflects the complexity of each proposal. The Ministry has contracted the Education Research and Development Centre at Massey University to monitor and report on the four pilot projects (see Appendix One).

Appendix Two outlines a model EDI that was suggested in the *Small Schools Review* (Ministry of Education 1991b).

1.3 Kellogg's Study

It is the aim of this research project to review the possible impacts that a proposed EDI may have on a rural service town – Dargaville, and its hinterland – the Northern Wairoa.

Section Two: The Northern Wairoa Education Development Initiative

2.0 Introduction

In April 1992 the Board of Trustees of Selwyn Park Primary School (situated in Dargaville) floated the concept of a possible change of status - a re-capitation i.e. expanding the school to include first form and second form classes. It came as no surprise that the scheme caused considerable concern throughout the educational community of the Northern Wairoa and resulted in a period of very spirited public debate – especially in the local paper the *Northland Times*.

Other boards were quick to indicate that they would adopt defensive strategies in response to the Selwyn Park's move and float reorganisation schemes of their own.

It quickly became apparent that the implications of the Selwyn Park proposal, if it were to proceed, would have considerable flow on effects for all the schools in the Northern Wairoa. It had the potential to force other boards into a school rationalisation programme whether they want too or not.

Any move by a contributing school to re-capitate – Selwyn Park is a contributing school - would immediately place the viability of Dargaville Intermediate School at risk. If one or two contributing schools were to keep their first and second form pupils, thus preventing them from entering the intermediate school, it would effectively cause the demise of the intermediate school.

District concern resulted in public meeting, which was convened by the Board of Selwyn Park to discuss all the different views. The facilitator of the meeting noted in his summing up of the proceedings (*Northland Times* 24th April 1992 (see Appendix Three)) that:

"I have heard too little about educational opportunities during the meeting. Dargaville is a tight community, and it is not possible to do things in isolation. Also, the wider community needs consideration.

While I support the concept of parental choice, this must not result in the unwise use of resources. EDIs and re-capitation must not be about dollars – they must be about children's education".

The Principal of Dargaville High School Mr. Les Sweetman, in an article in the *Northland Times* (*Northland Times* 24th April 1992), expressed his concern:

"When schools go it alone into an EDI, friction in the wider community is the main result. Only when there is a wider long-term plan supported by the majority of the community, can there be any overall advantage. A district such as Northern Wairoa would be an ideal place to work out a district EDI plan. Up to now, there has been some competition, but also a great deal of co-operation, between schools at all levels".

As a direct result of public pressure, the Selwyn Park proposal was put on hold. It was agreed, by all school boards in the district, that the feasibility of a Northern Wairoa based

EDI scheme would be examined and that President of the local branch of the School Trustees Association be asked to act as the co-ordinator.

2.1 EDI Information

2.1.1 School Identification

The proposed EDI would be centered on the schools, which make up what is termed the Northern Wairoa Cluster. There are sixteen schools in the cluster (see Map One)

2.1.2 Viability Criteria

The viability criteria necessary to help determine the restructuring options under an EDI provide an interesting and complex mix. For example they could include:

- Educational viability (the ability to deliver a balanced curriculum);
- Special Character of a school (integrated school);
- Excess pupil capacity;
- Property issues;
- Deferred maintenance;
- Capital works;
- Staffing issues;
- Industrial issues
- Transportation;
- Community issues
- Enrolment and demographic patterns;
- Other relevant factors.

2.2 Selected Viability Criteria

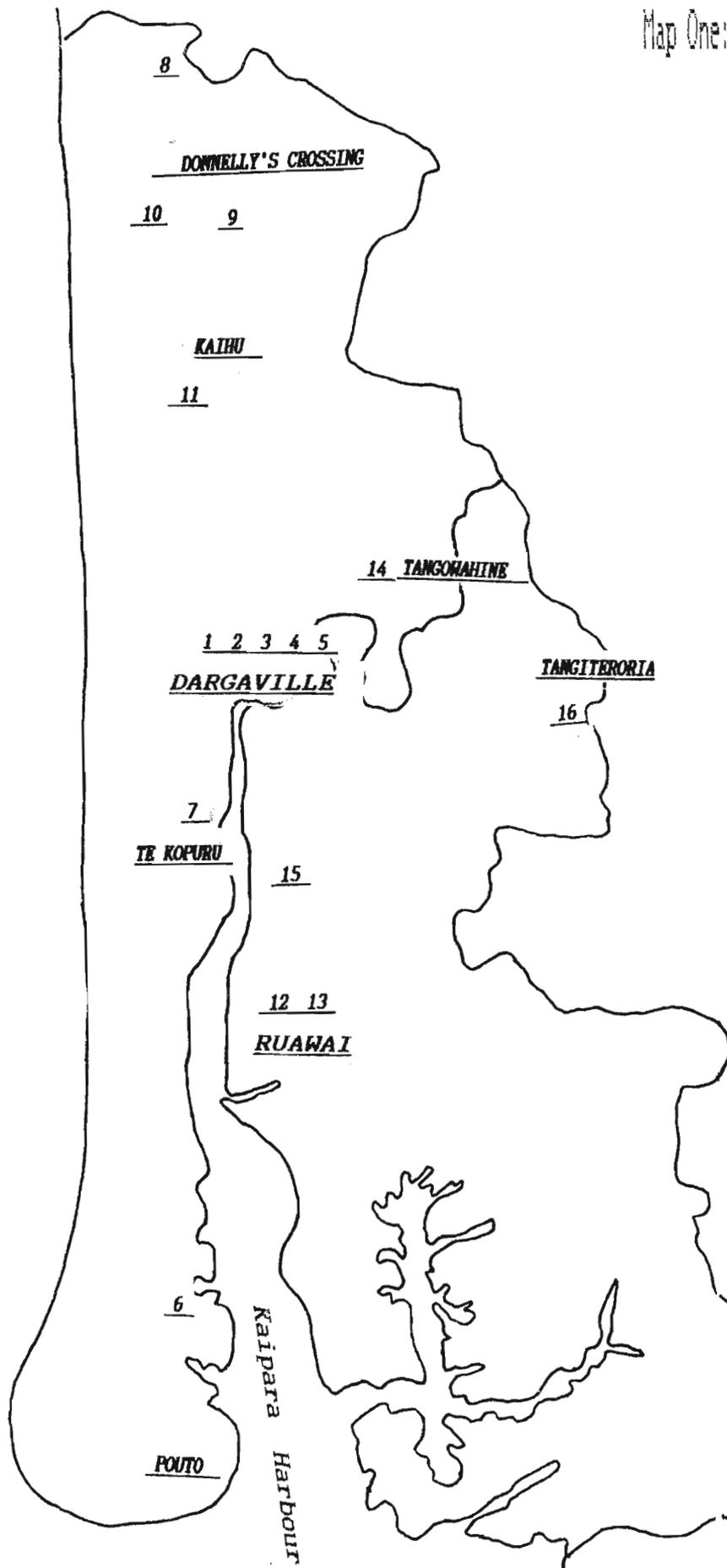
Four of the viability criteria (Excess Pupil Capacity, Deferred Maintenance, School Transportation & Community Views) have been selected and will be examined for their potential influence on the Northern Wairoa EDI.

2.2.1 Excess Pupil Capacity

Anecdotal information suggested that the majority of schools within the Northern Wairoa could take more pupils. In order to validate this point principals were asked to indicate their possible roll and their actual roll. Table One depicts information provided. This table clearly demonstrates that there is considerable scope for a rationalisation of schools to achieve better use of a reduced number of facilities.

Tutamoe school is currently operating at only 29% of capacity. This is in strong contrast to Arapohue School and Dargaville Intermediate School, which are each operating at

Map One: School Location



1. Dargaville High
2. Dargaville Primary
3. Dargaville Intermediate
4. St Joseph's Convent
5. Selwyn Park
6. Pouto
7. Te Kopuru
8. Tutamoe
9. Donnelly's Crossing
10. Aranga
11. Kaihu Valley
12. Ruawai Primary
13. Ruawai High
14. Tangowahine
15. Arapohue
16. Tangiteroria

Table One: Northern Wairoa School Rolls Actual and Potential

Source: School Principals (May 1992)

<i>School</i>	<i>Potential Roll</i>	<i>Actual Roll</i>	<i>% of Potential Roll</i>
Aranga	51	41	80
Arapohue	101	90	89
Dargaville High School	900	670	74
Dargaville Intermediate	245	218	89
Dargaville Primary	450	350	78
Donnelly's Crossing	51	26	51
Kaihu Valley	150	97	65
Pouto	76	44	58
Ruawai College	425	225	53
Ruawai Primary	245	204	83
Selwyn Park	270	230	83
St Joseph's Convent	Figures not obtained an Integrated School		
Tangowahine	76	49	64
Te Kopuru	240	173	72
Tutamoe	51	15	29
Totals	3331	2432	73

89% of their capacity. All schools within the Northern Wairoa cluster have the potential to take more pupils.

The need to rationalise is given further backing when the results of the 1991 Census are reviewed. The Census (Department of Statistics 1992) shows that the population of the Northern Wairoa has only increased by 0.70%. The long-term projections for school rolls is that they are not going to increase dramatically over the next four years. In fact, given the economic conditions of the area, a trend of pupil retrenchment could well continue.

School boards faced with a falling roll find themselves in a very difficult position. Most want to protect the viability of the school, which they govern. A falling roll may just be the catalyst a board requires to force them into patch protection mode by adopting strategies such as re-capitation. Faced with the figures on pupil capacity it could be easy to postulate that Selwyn Park's move to re-capitate is more about patch protection than about improving educational outcomes. Selwyn Park's board may well be exercising strategic foresight in their actions.

The picture is made more complex when consideration is given to the average funding required to educate pupils at different size schools. Table Two portrays the Ministry of Education's figures for the average funding of pupils at selected school sizes. The data in Table Two shows the very high funding cost of educating pupils at a small school. The government has the potential of making very large funding gains by rationalising school into bigger units. A pupil at Tutamoe cost \$7,000 more to fund than a pupil at Dargaville Primary, a massive 380% per pupil more.

Given the very high unit cost of funding pupils at small schools there may come a time when the government suggests that it is not in the national interest to keep the very small schools open. At present the government has given no indication that they are thinking down those lines.

2.2.2 Deferred Maintenance

Even a cursory inspection of many of Northern Wairoa school shows that there is still a large amount of deferred maintenance to be completed. The Ministry of Education's Property Division was contacted in Whangarei and asked to provide a breakdown of the deferred maintenance which was outstanding for the schools in the Northern Wairoa cluster as at 30 June 1992. Table Three depicts the information that was provided. A total of \$888,500 of deferred maintenance is yet to be completed.

It is interesting to note that many of the smaller schools have large amounts of deferred maintenance outstanding. Tutamoe with 15 pupils has \$52,000 outstanding - approximately \$3,466 per pupil. Donnelly's Crossing with 26 pupils has \$165,00 outstanding - approximately \$6,346 per pupil. By way of comparison Aranga school with 41 pupils has only \$14,000 outstanding - approximately \$341 per pupil.

Once again it is easy to postulate that government in the drive to get maximum value out of vote education may be forced into school rationalisation to achieve maintenance savings.

Table Two: School Type & Size & Average Funding Cost per Pupil

Source: Ministry of Education 1992

School Type by Size (Number of Pupils)	Average Funding (\$)
Primary	
Under 21	9,500
22-50	3,900
51-75	3,000
76-100	2,600
over 100	2,500
Intermediate	
Under 150	3,600
151-200	3,250
201-250	3,000
251-300	2,700
301-400	2,500
over 500	2,200
Secondary	
Under 100	5,800
101-200	5,700
201-300	5,250
301-400	3,900
401-500	3,800
over 1000	3,150
Area	
Under 120	5,600
121-150	5,250
151-200	4,650
201-250	4,100
over 250	3,600

**Table Three: Northern Wairoa Schools Deferred Maintenance
as at 30th June 1992**

Source: Ministry of Education – Personal Communication B Cunningham (May 1992)

<i>School</i>	<i>Amount (\$)</i>
Aranga	14,000
Arapohue	50,000
Dargaville High School	165,000
Dargaville Intermediate	29,000
Dargaville Primary	25,000
Donnelly's Crossing	60,000
Kaihu Valley	32,000
Pouto	8,500
Ruawai College	45,000
Ruawai Primary	160,000
Selwyn Park	76,000
St Joseph's Convent	40,000
Tangowahine	44,000
Te Kopuru	88,000
Tutamoe	52,000
Total	\$888,5000

2.2.3 *Cost Saving Scenarios*

In order to gain an understanding of the potential cost savings which could be brought about a planned school rationalisation a number of different rationalisation models were constructed. Table Four depicts one particular scenario for school rationalisation in the Northern Wairoa. The table gives a clear indication of the funds, which would be freed up. The government would achieve one off savings from the sale of surplus property and another, possible one off saving by not having to carry out programmed deferred maintenance. In reality much of the deferred maintenance may have to be carried out in order for government to sell the property. Considerable on going savings would be achieved by reducing the average funding base per pupil.

Clearly a large number of different scenarios are possible. However even with the limited modeling undertaken, it is very evident that an EDI in the Northern Wairoa area, which resulted in school rationalisation, has the potential to achieve major cost savings to government:

- In terms of deferred maintenance, coupled with the one-off returns achieved through the sale of surplus property (National Business Review 1992).
- By reducing the average per pupil funding base. The money saved here if channeled back into the district could be used to enhance education delivery.

2.2.4 *Provision of School Transportation*

School bus transport remains a contentious issue in the Northern Wairoa, Cooperation has been hammered out over the years, and even minor concessions are hard won. It goes without saying that school bus transportation will be a major issue for any EDI in Northern Wairoa. Most of those in the education community are aware that there is a strong relationship between the choice of transporting pupils to and from a facility and the economics of providing, and the location, of that facility.

Over the years the Ministry of Education (1991c) has constantly reminded, and maintained, that the 'school transport assistance' is, as the name implies, a form of assistance only. It does not remove the obligation of parents/caregivers to ensure that their children get to and from school.

Many parents/caregivers hold the very strong belief that school transportation assistance, by long-term application, has become a right. Parents/caregivers in the Northern Wairoa district see school transport as an essential social service, one which is provided free by the government (Clements & Williamson 1991).

It must be noted that the present school transport assistance policy, as it stands, takes no account of the differing contributions required of parents/caregivers, or of the parents/caregivers ability (in terms of income and wealth) to meet the cost of any transportation shortfall to get their children to school. For example, there are a number of parents/caregivers situated on the lower end of the Pouto Peninsula who would not be able to send their children to school if central government were to change the present funding level of the school transportation assistance to a more user pay base.

Table Four: Northern Wairoa EDI Model

1. *Tangowahine combine with Tangiteroria*

Total number of pupil at Tangiteroria	140
Funding per pupil	\$2,500
Average yearly saving	\$61,600
Transportation Costs the same	
One off saving of deferred maintenance	\$44,000
One off return from sale of surplus property	\$??,???

2. *Te Kopuru pupils are split between Dargaville Schools and Pouto*

Total number of pupil at Pouto	76
Funding per pupil	\$2,600
Average yearly saving	\$56,100
Transportation Costs the same	
One off saving of deferred maintenance	\$88,000
One off return from sale of surplus property	\$??,???

3. *Donnelly's Crossing combines with Kaihu Valley*

Total number of pupil at Kaihu	135
Funding per pupil	\$2,500
Average yearly saving	\$16,600
Transportation Costs the same	
One off saving of deferred maintenance	\$60,000
One off return from sale of surplus property	\$??,???

3. *Tutamoe combines with Aranga*

Total number of pupil at Aranga	56 (over capacity)
Funding per pupil	\$3,900
Average yearly saving	\$107,400
Transportation Costs the same	
One off saving of deferred maintenance	\$52,000
One off return from sale of surplus property	\$??,???

Table Five: Parents' Concerns on School Transportation

Source: NWSTA (Mark Farnsworth & Neville Boon)

<i>Percentage Response</i>	<i>Concern</i>
90	Continued Provision of Transportation
85	Essential Social Service
80	Level Loss – Threat to Viability of the Local Community
75	Level Loss – Increase Pupils Travel time to School
75	Poor Standard of Buses
62	Provision of School Transport attracts Workers to Area
60	Loss of School Transport will devalue land
60	Distrust Government
15	Loss of School Transport lead to close of school

A large percentage of rural parents/caregivers, in the Northern Wairoa Region, are at the bottom of New Zealand's economic multiplier ladder. They are 'price takers' not 'price setters'. If a cost rises they lack the simple ability to be able to pass on that rise.

When the local School Trustees Association¹ prepared its submission on the provision of school transportation a survey of parents/caregivers was undertaken. Table Five summaries the main results of the survey – parents/caregivers concerns. Over 90% of the 30 rural parents/caregivers who returned their questionnaires expressed concern over the provision of school buses. It was note that access to many of the isolated schools would be reduced if the Ministry of Education attempts to rationalise the present school transportation assistance or ceases its role as a school transport operator of last resort. 85% indicated that the provision of school transportation was as an essential social service. If it were not provided then some children would not go to school, the ultimate cost to central government would be more. 65% indicated that they did not trust the present government and that they expected that the government would implement major cuts to the present level of provision of school transportation. The actual viability of many of the smaller isolated school in the Northern Wairoa would be placed at risk under a reduced school transportation regime. It is interesting to note that 15% actually noted that central government may well use or manipulate the provision of the school buses to force the rationalisation (closure) of the area's small rural school. 75% also thought that the present buses servicing the school pupils were below a standard² to cope with the poor road conditions associated with gravel roads.

Parent/caregiver perception that central provision of transportation could be used as a possible threat to the viability of small rural schools was enhanced by the Ministry of Education" review of the economic viability of small schools (Ministry of Education 1991b) which noted:

"the lack of recent reviews of' the 'per capita limit' and 'conveyance allowance limit'".

The review also highlighted the unrealistic expectation of some parents/caregivers that government should automatically assume the full responsibility of transporting children door to door i.e. transporting children directly from home to school each day and back.

If transportation is not provided then parents/caregivers could use the option of the Correspondence School or uplifting a boarding bursary instead of enrolment at the local school.

Parents/caregivers are also concerned that any attempt to consolidate school transportation routes could increase the time their children spend on buses. Has anyone given any form of consideration to the impact on younger children of spending longer period in travel? How does it affect their ability to cope at school?

Recommendation
That the impact of increased transportation time on young children's' ability to learn should be researched.

¹ Northern Wairoa School Trustees Association (President MC Farnsworth; Secretary N Boon)

² This perception is not matched by a reality check, which quickly demonstrated that all buses had the required Code of Fitness from the Ministry of Transport.

The emotiveness of school transportation issues for rural communities is highlighted by Skene (1990), he emphasised that for small schools in the Wellington area the school bus route is seen to be the school's life-blood, defining the community and tying it together. The school is viewed as being central to community life. Any threat to school viability is perceived as being a threat to the community as a whole. Skene also commented that as school bus routes in a district grow smaller, local communities feel that their communities are shrinking.

In order to gain an understanding of how parents/caregivers perceive the worth of their local school a random sample of 50 rural households in the Northern Wairoa were surveyed³. The results of the survey demonstrated that parents/caregivers of Northern Wairoa hold a very similar view to those uncovered by Skene (1990). 80% indicated that any loss of school transportation would result in the closure of their school, which, in turn, would undermine their community structure. The school is perceived as the last tangible structure, which gives community cohesion. 62% of the 8 salaried farm workers who were interviewed indicated that proximity to the local school bus route was one of the most important considerations in them accepting their current job position. It is clear from those interviewed, and anecdotal comment offered, that farmers would perceive that the removal of a school bus service near their property would detract from the property value of their farm. A quick review of classified ads for both the sale of farm properties and for farm workers quickly demonstrates the importance of the proximity of the school bus route (see Exhibit One). An EDI which results in school rationalisation would have important implications for farmer owners/managers trying to attract couples to work on or buy their farms.

2.2.5 Community Issues

Anyone who lives in the Northern Wairoa is aware that there are a number of clearly defined communities. A simple check uncovers that these communities are defined by the geographic area from which the local school draws its pupils – usually the area served by the school bus. It is little wonder that the Northern Wairoa residents consider that the local school bus provides the major linkage within the community (New Zealand School Trustees Association 1991). Skene (1990) gives confirmation that a school gives district coherence, vitality and a wholeness that no other single organisation can provide.

Recommendation

The place of schools in the fabric in rural life should be fully researched. What are the implications of school closure? What are the social effects of a rationalisation of school bus routes? Etc.

The results from the questionnaire dramatically demonstrated that 100% of rural parents/caregivers – irrespective of whether they had children at school or not – considered that their local school is one of the principle focal points of the community (Table 6). It is interesting to note, however, that all of the Maori parents/caregivers surveyed ranked the local marae equal with the school. Perceived identification

³ In order to determine the possible effects which could result from any school rationalisation a questionnaire was drawn up to seek information on: social linkages, including the nature of the communities involvement with their local school. The questionnaire was sent out to 50 rural households in the Northern Wairoa selected at random from the Northern Wairoa Farm Location Atlas. Of the 50 questionnaires 40 or 80% agreed to fill out their questionnaire and be interviewed. (See Appendix Four)

Exhibit One:

Source: New Zealand Herald 12 October 1992



RURAL

WAIROA

382ha approximately 4000 su undulating to steep clean hills. Excellent fencing, near new Lockwood home, 4 stand woolshed, hay sheds, older 3 bedroom cottage. \$420,000 L and B.

444ha, 33km from Wairoa. Sealed road and school buses. Approximately 285ha of medium contour in pasture. Balance second growth and kanuka firewood to supplement income. Presently 2500 su for potential for increased production. Excellent home and gardens, \$320,000 L and B.

606ha. 40ha flat to undulating, balance medium to steep. 12ha deer fenced, wintering over 4000su. Older 4 bedroom home and sheds, near new 4 stand woolshed and covered yards. Only 24km from Wairoa with all services. \$620,000 negotiable.

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Gisborne Office (06) 867-6809



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PRESTIGIOUS SOUTHERN HAWKES BAY STATION

1151 HECTARES — 2845 ACRES FREEHOLD

TO BE HOLD ON FRIDAY
DECEMBER 11 1992 RUAHINE CLUB DANNEVIRKE AT 2.00pm (UNLESS SOLD PRIOR)

SITUATION 45km East of Dannevirke
EFFECTIVE AREA Est 1020 Hectares
CONTOUR Easy rolling, northerly aspect
SUB DIVISION 50 Paddocks plus holding
RAINFALL Annual average 35" to 40
RATES 5.942

IMPROVEMENTS Comfortable 4 bedroom residence. Outstanding woolshed and covered yards, 2 implement sheds, cattle yards, killing house, cottage, airstrip
GOVERNMENT VALUATION As at 1.10.91
Improvements \$305,000
Land Value \$450,000
Capital Value \$755,000

WATER SUPPLY Domestic — Pumped x Spring
Farm — Dams & Streams
COVER Predominantly English grasses
FENCING Conventional post, batten and wire. Little electric
AIRSTRIPE grass airstrip with 200 tonne covered bin
CARRYING CAPACITY Average 9000 stock units
FERTILISER 50 tonne super. Little 3 years prior, then good history
TREES 30 acres pines not pruned. Some native in gullies
SCHOOL BUS Primary 2½ kms. Secondary boarding.

SETTLEMENT & POSSESSION 29 January 1993

CONDITIONS OF SALE Will be available from the Auctioneers

Ben Lomond represents an outstanding opportunity to purchase a well contoured versatile property. This station is currently being farmed as a Merino breeding property with recognition being achieved New Zealand wide. Situated in the heart of a well established breeding area which would produce admirably under conventional methods.

Inspection
Strictly by appointment with the Auctioneers
Williams & Kettle Ltd
Dannevirke (06) 374-8049 Waipukurau (06) 858-9180
and Hastings (06) 878-3156

LICENSED AUCTIONEERS
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Table Six: Survey Results

Community Activity Priority Ranking (1 very high – 5 very low)

Activity	Rural Parents/Caregiver with children at:				Urban Parents/Caregiver with children at:			
	Primary	Intermediate	Secondary	None	Primary	Intermediate	Secondary	None
<i>School</i>	1		1	1	2	2	3	
<i>Marae</i>	1		2	3				
<i>Sports</i>	2 –4		2-3	2	1	1	1	1
<i>Church</i>					3	4	2	2
<i>Community Centre</i>								3
<i>Other</i>	5		4-5	4-5	4-5	3	4-5	4-5

(linkage) with the local school is particularly strong with parents/caregivers who have primary school children at school.

The local school co-ordinates community events via a weekly newsletter. In the case of Pouto School this newsletter is delivered free of charge by the rural mail person to every household in the community. Other community groups – such as the Pouto Rural Fire District- use the school newsletter to keep the community informed of the rural fire risk and to advertise community fire training. The school newsletter plays a vital role in keeping the community informed.

The high commitment of rural residents to the local school contrasts strongly with the perceptions of urban parents/caregivers. Sports events rank as the top community activity for Dargaville based parents/caregivers, both in terms of their perception and in terms of their time allocation. It should be noted that some of the sporting events are centered on the school, however the percentage of school sponsored, weekend, sports events has been steadily decreasing. It is also interesting to note that for parents without children at a local school, in Dargaville, the school does not rank at all as a centre of community importance.

In the rural areas there is an interesting contrast between the perceived importance of the school and the actual time spent on school based activities. A review of Tables 6 & 7 shows that schools rank number one in terms of perceived importance, however in terms of the actual time spent on school based activities the school only ranks 4-5. By way of contrast in Dargaville there is a simple match between the perceived importance of the school and the time spent on school based activities.

2.3 Discussion

Parents/caregivers in rural area are very sensitive to agents of change. As a direct result of the 'new' market economy rural communities have been shrinking at a rapid rate (Smit 1975, Farnsworth 1983). The proposed EDI for this area may appear to be another attack both on rural communities and small schools. It is very evident that parents/caregivers would vigorously resist anything that threatens the viability of their school.

Central government continues to send very clear messages that their policy to reduce government spending is to be maintained. Birch (1992) in a speech to the State Sector Employees noted that any reduction in government spending must be shared, education currently uses almost 5 billion dollars of government spending. It is little wonder that central government is looking for efficiencies and better spending value for the education dollar.

The government has indicated that there is are significant public resources tied up in schools. The Tomorrows Schools approach endorsed and strengthened the notion of community involvement and partnership between the school and its community and central government. That relationship is defined in a signed school charter. Any change in resource allocation must be planned in consultation with the community so as to cater for community needs.

Central government does have the ability to change the rules. It can force change by legislation. It can withhold resources or it can allow a single school within an area to

Table Seven: Survey Results

Priority Ranking of Time Spent on Activities (1 most time – 5 least time)

Activity	Rural Parents/Caregiver with children at:				Urban Parents/Caregiver with children at:			
	Primary	Intermediate	Secondary	None	Primary	Intermediate	Secondary	None
<i>School</i>	4		5	5	2	2	3	
<i>Marae</i>	3			2				
<i>Sports</i>	2		2-3	3	1	1	1	1
<i>Church</i>					4-5	4-5	2	2
<i>Community Centre</i>								3
<i>Trips to Town</i>	1		1	1				
<i>Other</i>	5		4	4	3	3	4-5	4-5

change status (The New Zealand Educational Institute 1992) with the net result that other schools are forced into taking counter measures.

The market economy is competition based, and that same ethic is creeping into schools. Schools may be forced into competition for resources and pupils in order to just survive. Will competition improve the education outcome for our children? Does anyone know? Competition may even cause a shift in the allocation of resources to the socially advantaged away from the socially disadvantaged thus compounding their current problems.

Recommendation
How does inter-school competition within the state sector affect educational outcomes? This needs to be researched.

Popular schools may well exclude children who are more difficult and expensive to teach.

It has been argued that education is a public good, therefore central government has a responsibility to fund education (Austin 1992). Austin notes that education is both a private good and a public good, and perhaps is best described as a private good with positive externalities to society in general. An educated person can:

- calculate their income tax owing;
- conform to the law because they know what it is;
- support long-run policies of central government rather than populist flimflam.

Education is the best investment a nation can make (Austin 1992). It is argued by many that in New Zealand education is a right not a privilege. However there is a counter argument which notes that the provision of free education for all is not a right rather it is a method used by central government to even-up society. One aspect is very clear – irrespective of the socio-economic background of the child, every New Zealand child has the expectation of an equal access to education. Given the socio-economic infrastructure of the Northern Wairoa Region there is no viable alternative to a centrally, government funded, education system.

The government designed the Education Development Initiative (EDI) policy to enable school communities such as the Northern Wairoa to think about how they could better use the educational resources available in their area, and how to improve the quality of education being offered. The policy allows the total community to play a part in the decision making process. It goes without saying that the process must involve the specific community of any school that may be under direct consideration for change, or an assessment of viability. Involvement must incorporate the communities of all schools who are likely to be affected by a change.

The Selywn Park re-capitation proposal created a storm of protest. It became very obvious that parents/caregivers and other interested persons within the Northern Wairoa where threatened by the proposed change. Their immediate reaction was to either adopt a 'covered wagon defense' (Farnsworth et al 1992) or inertia, with the principle aim of maintaining the status quo at all cost.

If the EDI is to proceed then it will be necessary to ensure that a climate of co-operation is created. Such a climate will allow all options to be explored, and informed debate to take place. The underlying aim of the whole exercise is to ensure that educational outcomes are improved and that there is equity in terms of education opportunity for all children in the area.

At this point in time the payoff from the application of an EDI would appear to be at the best uncertain. The uncertainty is compounded by the reality that an EDI will impact on the social infrastructure of the local area, with the general perception that major shifts in local social linkages will result.

Section Three: Other Central Government Reviews

3.1 Introduction

Two other central government reviews could have a major impact on school rationalisation and hence the Northern Wairoa EDI.

Taskforces have been set up to:

- Develop a long-term policy on school property;
- Review the provision of school transportation.

3.2 School Property

The property taskforce is charged with reporting on two critical matters in relation to school property:

- What type and distribution of education property will best support the delivery of school curriculum in the future, promote educational achievement and meet the government's obligations to ensure access to 'free' primary and secondary education.
- What structure of management will best supply and support property to the education community.

3.3 School Transport

The government also has a review team undertaking a detailed review of all aspects of school transportation.

3.4 Comment

Although both these reviews are independent of any EDI undertaking they both have the very real potential to impact on, or even result in forced EDIs, especially once the results of the findings have been reported back.

It has been noted that the Education Development Initiative policy stands separately. It brings together all the issues of education (including school property and transportation) need at the community level.

Section Four: Concluding Remarks

4.1 Study Summary

As with many research undertakings this project has raised more questions than it has answered.

In determining the possible effects that the proposed EDI would have on the Northern Wairoa some interesting factors have been uncovered. In particular the study has highlighted some important differences in social linkage between rural communities and the urban area of Dargaville.

It has graphically re-enforced the notion that the rural school is considered to be one of the prime focal points of the local community.

Recommendation

That the trends determined in this study be the subject of a detailed study as the data sets used are very limited in size scope and distribution

The study has:

- Highlighted the perceived importance of the local school in the structure of rural communities. At the same time it has clearly indicated that there may be a lack of understanding of the actual place that a school may have in the social dynamics of a rural area. The question has to be asked – *“are schools just an icon, which should be protected at all cost”?*
- Underlined the general distrust that residents, in the Northern Wairoa, have of central government. This is a distrust of government as a general distrust rather than ‘party’ directed mistrust. Most moves by central government, even with Ministerial reassurances (Smith 1991) are viewed in a highly cynical manner. It became very evident that parents/caregivers and other residents held the view that an EDI may be nothing more than exercise in cutting costs. The EDI process would shift the responsibility of making the hard decisions on school rationalisation to the local level, thereby shifting both the economic cost and social cost to local persons.
- Raised the issues of equity in the provision of education. Under an EDI would disadvantaged children miss out education? Would all parents/caregivers be able to transport their children to new bus pick up points? Would they be able to meet the costs of a user pay transportation network?
- Clearly demonstrated that parents/caregivers are highly resistant to change. They like what they know. On one hand parents/caregivers will strongly resist any attempt to close their local school but, on the other hand, will strongly support any move that would enhance their school, even if it is at the expense of an adjacent school. This dichotomy has the potential to generate considerable social conflict.

4.2 An EDI for Northern Wairoa

Should the Northern Wairoa have an Education Development Initiative?

There are compelling reasons which re-enforce the need for an EDI:

- The EDI process would allow the education community to address the education needs of the community in new and innovative ways. Few communities are presented with such an exciting opportunity. A 'clean canvas approach'.
- Schools in Northern Wairoa have excess pupil capacity. There is a gross under utilization of the capital invested in schools - especially property. An EDI would result in a saving in deferred maintenance. It would improve economies of scale thereby improving educational outcomes, as larger schools would be able to offer, and afford, an increased range of services.
- There has been a prolonged decline in rural population levels since the early seventies. School roll numbers have dropped. It is projected that rural population decline will continue. An EDI should result in improving the economies of scale and result in a better utilization of educational resources.
- A well structured EDI would allow all members of the education community to play a productive part in the process. It would prevent the dislocating effects of an individual school attempting change – such as a change of status, on an ad hoc basis.
- An EDI would result in some social dislocation however the affected community would adjust rapidly to the change. In many isolated areas the school remains the centre of the local community, this vital factor would have to be carefully considered in any EDI.

4.3 The Proposed EDI for Northern Wairoa

The current, proposed, EDI for Northern Wairoa is doomed to failure. It will not get past the 'need analysis' phase. It has been predicated on base, which will not allow it to proceed in worthwhile or constructive manner.

Schools in the Northern Wairoa have only agreed to a Ministry of Education facilitated review of the need for an EDI as a defensive strategy against the indicated move by Selywn Park School to change their status. By agreeing to the review the schools have brought for themselves a window of time in which they can marshal their forces in opposition – especially political opposition. These schools know that their parents/caregivers will strongly resist any attempt to close the local school. The local MP and the local Mayor will not be able to stand the political heat, which will be generated.

4.4 A look to the Future

Northern Wairoa needs to plan for the future. Hard questions need to be asked:

- Is the present system of educational delivery the right one for this area?

- Is the present educational delivery meeting the needs of all sections of the community? For Maori? Rural children? etc
- Could we improve educational outcomes by thinking beyond our traditional squares?
- Even small changes could result in major governance efficiencies. Why, for example are there two boards servicing, respectively Dargaville High School and Dargaville Intermediate when the schools are almost on the same site?

The time is long overdue for a comprehensive review of education delivery in Northern Wairoa. We need to take stock right now. We need to put aside our highly protective, parochial views and see if we can improve educational outcomes for our most valuable resource – our children.

“There are compelling reasons which re-enforce the need for an EDI in Northern Wairoa.”

*Mark Farnsworth – President Northern Wairoa School Trustees Association
National Councillor New Zealand School Trustees Association
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Appendix One: A Programme to Evaluate the Education Development Initiative

Source: Ministry of Education (1992e)

A1.1 Introduction

The Education Research and Development Centre at Massey University has been contracted by the Ministry of Education to research the four pilots EDIs - Hastings/Flaxmore, Eastern Southland, Levin and Melville.

A1.2 Methodology

Each situation has been treated as a stand-alone project with its own distinctive problems, opportunity structure, lines of communication and history.

The primary source of data for the programme has been derived from three distinct groups of people:

- Boards of Trustees;
- School Principals
- Parents/caregivers and others in the community who have expressed an interest in the EDI.

Interviews were structure to allow all participants to express their own views and concerns and to elicit comment on key topics, which had been pre-determined in consultation with the Ministry of Education. The aim was to achieve research consistency and to ensure that there is congruency between case studies with respect of the question asked. Topics included:

- Establishing the stakeholders in the project, their interests and concerns;
- Identify the stimulus for change;
- Outlining the benefits that are predicted in the proposed change. In terms of both curriculum and resources.
- Outlining the provision made for minority groups and special needs education;
- Determining the use of resources
- Recording general comments and opinions about EDIs and the problems which may be generated.

A1.3 Project Summaries

A1.3.1 Overview

There are clear links between all of the pilot EDI projects but the nature of the processes are quite different. Schools involved in the projects have to be mindful of four, interactive, units of change:

- the individual;
- the school;
- the workflow;
- the political system.

Each unit must be evaluated to ensure that the learner gains substantially from the planned changes.

The adoption of change seldom occurs without an advocate, and the advocate in these projects is quite clearly the Ministry of Education.

A1.3.2 Hastings/Flaxmere

This EDI is proceeding. The process has resulted in some very high profile media comment.

A1.3.3 Eastern Southland

The process in this community has, in the main been successful, and the people have been able to retain a large measure of control over the whole procedure.

There have been tensions and differences to resolve.

The process has now reached the stage of formal agreement with all parties.

A1.3.4 Levin

The process has reached a major decision point. The Educational Planning Group will now step back from actively promoting change and a new group, representing those four organisations that signed a Memorandum of Agreement, will begin to talk with each other. It is unlikely that the community generally would support the change presently indicated. Some movement could be made in establishing a mechanism for managing the development of wider choices and programmes in the senior secondary school.

Discussions may also take place about procedures for better co-ordinating educational provisions across the various other institutions within the town. This may/could lead to some boards merging.

A1.3.5 Meville

The boards of the intermediate school and secondary school have combined but the schools are operating as single units. Negotiations with the Ministry of Education over such matters as intermediate staff salaries are at present continuing.

It is vital that all issues are resolved in a manner that will allow precedents to be built for future amalgamations as this EDI may be seen as the model for future developments.

Appendix Two: A Suggested Stepwise Procedure for Education Development Initiatives

Source: Ministry of Education (1991b)

A2.1. Step One Identification

It is the responsibility of central government through the Ministry of Education (MOE) – the central planning agency most directly involved to provide an overview of the processes of reorganisation. The complete picture should not be lost sight of in handling of specific cases. Those groups, which are most directly affected by the possible changes, should be involved in the process as early as possible so as to reduce anxiety and suspicion.

District offices of the Ministry of Education are well placed to identify within their district clusters of schools, which could be scrutinized for possible reorganisation or rationalisation.

Self-identification could also be made by individual schools or clusters of schools

A2.2 Step Two Formation of a Consultative Group

The District Manager of MOE could convene a small group of people directly concerned with the possible outcomes of any decision to investigate a particular cluster of schools. A number conduits for community consultation are possible:

- Community Forums (no longer required);
- Joint consultative committees consisting of regional officers, board of trustee members and staff. Members of this group could be elected or appointed, or a combination of election and appointment.
- The community could be left to decide for itself, following ground rules to determine its own preferences for schools in the area.

A2.3 Step Three Selection Criteria

A checklist of relevant factors could serve as a starting point for making determinations about possible dispersion of schools and types of schools. Because of local variations it is essential that the checklist is not used as the only criterion for reaching decisions about reorganisations. Additional factors will need to be considered.

A2.4 Step Four Methods of Providing Education

Apply the criteria to each school and arrive at a recommendation for rationalising the provision of education in the area.

All interested parties would need to have an opportunity to contribute to the decision making process. The committee would need to meet and fully consult with both individual schools and their specific communities as well as with representatives of the whole cluster of schools, at each stage of the process.

A final brief report, containing the recommendations would be forwarded to the district office of the Ministry of Education for consideration

A2.5 Step Five Appeal Procedures

An independent group would be set up, as required, to hear appeals. The role of the group would be clearly defined so that the Ministry of Education and/or other agencies are not required to play dual or possibly conflicting roles.

A2.6 Step Six Implementation of Change

It is envisaged that an implementation phase of about one-year would be needed to allow and changes to be made. Including:

- Allowing staff affected to have time to make alternative career arrangements;
- Allow time for the community to undertake any changes i.e. planning for redirecting pupils or improving and providing alternative services such as building which may be required for the new provisions and so on...

Appendix Three: Press Articles

Source: Northland Times

Schools told to think of children

Is giving the parents of one school the right to choose which school their Form 1 and 2 children attend, more important than the impact this could have on other schools?

This was the thorny question that 115 teachers, parents and school trustees had to grapple with at last night's public meeting called by Selwyn Park School, which is considering applying to offer Form 1 and 2 classes next year - a process called 'recapitation.'

In the words of Selwyn Park interim BOT chairman Geoff Nickerson, this topic has produced "dense smoke blowing out of the portals of other schools", but last night's meeting produced little aggressive confrontation, and was kept on a tight rein by facilitator Mark Farnsworth.

The meeting provided little specific detail, and no resolutions were taken, but a suggestion by Dargaville Intermediate BOT trustee David Milner, that Selwyn Park should pursue the recapitation proposal for lodging in 12 months time to allow more research and discussion, appeared to gain some support, including that of the Selwyn Park chairman.

Opening the discussion, Mr Nickerson queried why the issue had created strife, saying Tomorrow's Schools allowed people a choice, and once the issue of recapitation had been raised, his board was obliged to investigate it.

In calling last night's

past few weeks."

She said the proposal had been costed out by the board, and if necessary, she would teach for the six months before the Ministry began paying for any extra teachers required.

No overcrowding was anticipated, as an extra 30 children could be accommodated with little change, and a further 30 without interfering with the school hall.

She hoped Selwyn Park children would be able to take manual training at the Intermediate - if not, the high school would be approached, and failing that, an offer had been received from a Whangarei Intermediate - "but if Dargaville Intermediate refused, they would be shooting themselves in the foot," she said.

Mrs Goldie stressed that the parents who had voted for recapitation, were asking for a choice - not making a commitment to send their children to Selwyn Park.

She said any application to recapitate had to be lodged by May 1, but could always be withdrawn later.

In a written submission read to the meeting, Dargaville Intermediate principal Neville Boun expressed his concerns over the likely effects on his school, which he said holds an important place in Northern Wairoa education.

He said recapitation is likely to reduce the Intermediate roll, and in turn, less funding for staff, would lead to a reduction in the school's overall

Another person disturbed about the friction between schools was Kevin Mason, a businessman and Dargaville Primary School parent, who stressed that the Northern Wairoa needs to be competing against Whangarei and Auckland, rather than within its local community.

"Improvements to the Intermediate School Manual were only possible through pooling of all schools. To put this at risk is incomprehensible," said Mr Mason.

Arapohue principal Phil Straw called on Selwyn Park parents to reject recapitation, saying that while much more information is needed, the effect on country schools could be "quite marked."

Poua BOT chairman Rob Bishop also saw risks for his school, particularly those involving manual training which is carried out at the Intermediate.

Northland STA chairman Peter King said the Selwyn Park proposal should have been discussed by all principals and boards before last night's meeting. "Once the parents take sides, so do the children."

Ministry of Education spokesman Jim Craig explained that the Ministry would process an application to recapitate, but the decision rested with the Minister.

He said an application must be the result of parental choice; show that the wider community had been consulted; that requirements for items

meeting, the school was fulfilling its obligations to discuss the impact on wider education throughout the Northern Wairoa. He asked for restraint, and for the topic to be debated without malice.

Outlining the school's actions, principal Noeline Goldie explained that late last year, she had become aware of a group of parents keen to have their children stay on at Selwyn Park for another two years.

When a letter was received asking the BOT to research the issue, the board had conducted a survey to establish the level of interest, with 93 per cent of parents responding, and 65 per cent of these voting in favour of recapitulation.

The next step was consultation with the community, and Mrs Goldie rejected claims that this should have been done before the survey.

"There is no doubt that if the interest had been less than 50 per cent, the whole issue would have been abandoned by the board," she said.

She denied that the recapitulation issue had been initiated by herself, or other staff, to protect jobs, saying the roll, which is currently above 200, has to fall to 185 before the school is in any danger of losing a teacher.

"I believe I was appointed on the assumption that I, along with the rest of the board, would listen to our school community, and as far as possible, realise their hopes and wishes as regards the education of their children.

"I and the board have listened to our school community, and 65 per cent are telling us they want a choice of where to send their children for their Form 1 and 2 years."

Mrs Goldie congratulated the BOT and staff for "standing in strength and dignity against the very public hostility shown them over the

education quality.

The school's pupil support programme would likely be the first affected, and the pupil improvement programme would be reduced or weakened, he said.

Also, the core specialist unit recently established with a \$15,000 MOE grant would be at risk.

"In the long term, recapitulation could mean a wastage of the resources built up at the Intermediate to serve Form 1 and 2 pupils arriving there," warned Mr Boon.

"The issue of recapitulation hasn't been fully canvassed, and the educational outcomes for the pupils of Dargaville Intermediate, and the wider community, have not been studied at all; nor has the possible wastage and duplication of resources and teaching personnel."

Mr Boon, along with Intermediate BOT chairman Mike Andrews, and Arapohue principal Phil Straw, was critical of the amount of information provided by Selwyn Park, and the lack of time to make submissions.

"We can't make submissions if we don't know what we are submitting to," said Mr Andrews.

However, a Whangarei resident with recapitulation experience, said consultation in Dargaville appeared better than in Whangarei, where they had to "shoot at ghosts."

Te Kopuru BOT chairperson Robyn Guy said her board had too little information to make a submission.

Facilitator Mark Farnsworth said he believed Selwyn Park was "fulfilling the required procedures almost to the letter," and he complimented the school for "at least holding a consultative meeting," which had not always happened in other areas.

Dargaville High School principal Les Sweetman was one of a number who expressed concern over the divisive effects of recapitulation.

like manual training could be met; and how any extra staff and equipment can be provided.

In response to a plea from Selwyn Park parent Anahira Pumipi, who wanted to hear more from the parents and not "the guns", comments varied from "wanting the choice"; that children stood less chance of being 'lost' if they stayed on at the same school; and a suggestion that the process was creating too much hassle.

"My children need the best available. At the moment they don't have that choice. If Selwyn Park can't provide it, my children will go to the Intermediate," said one parent.

Summing up, Mark Farnsworth said he had heard too little about educational opportunities during the meeting.

He said Dargaville was a tight community, and it is not possible to do things in isolation. Also, the wider community needed consideration.

"While I support the concept of parental choice, this must not result in the unwise use of resources. E.D.I.s and recapitulation must not be about dollars - they must be about children and education.

"Selwyn Park has the right to make a decision as they see fit, and you should make submissions to them, the Ministry and me," he said.

This morning, Mrs Goldie said Selwyn Park parents have been given an opportunity to change their original votes if they now see things differently, and any changes, plus last night's meeting, will be discussed by the Selwyn Park BOP on Monday.

Mrs Goldie praised Mark Farnsworth's chairmanship, saying he had done a superb job in keeping a potentially confrontational meeting under tight control.

Selwyn Pk school to consider recapitulation

Selwyn Park Primary School is considering the possibility of offering form one and two classes next year, in competition with the Dargaville Intermediate.

Under the Education Development Initiative, which aims to give schools greater independence and choice, primary schools can apply to 'recapitate' by adding Forms 1 and 2. The Government provides operational funding for the extra pupils, but the school must provide the buildings and equipment.

Selwyn Park School is currently asking the parents of its pupils whether or not they are in favour of a Form 1 and 2 in 1993.

A copy of the school's newsletter, number 92/10, says the Board of Trustees had received an approach from a parent, asking that the issue be researched. The newsletter states that the school has the teaching space to accommodate Forms 1 and 2.

"We need to hear back from all of you on this one. We need also to set a definite and relatively short time limit for you to discuss it amongst yourselves, and, if you choose, the principal/staff of the Intermediate, and myself and the staff of Selwyn Park School," said Principal Noeline Goldie in the newsletter.

The voting form included a list of the advantages for both Intermediate and F1 and F2 primary schools, and

parents were asked to return the forms by April 10, because if a majority wanted recapitulation, an application had to be with the Ministry of Education by May 1.

When asked to comment, Mrs Goldie declined, but referred the Times to Mark Farnsworth, Northern Wairoa School Trustees Association president. However, it was not possible to contact him yesterday.

Dargaville Intermediate principal Neville Boon said yesterday that his school has had no official contact from Selwyn Park School over the issue, but both he and some of the trustees have had concerns expressed to them over the prospect of Selwyn Park recapitulating, and he expected his board to make a statement next week.

Mr Boon said there is no minimum number of students required for the Intermediate to remain viable, but if pupil numbers did fall, so would the funding for staff, which could affect the standard of learning offered.

Children from outlying schools coming to the Intermediate for music and manual training might also suffer.

Mr Boon said the school would have the option of providing extra classes, for example, Standards 3 and 4, to retain numbers, but he was unable to say whether this would happen. However, he said this option has been carried out in Whangarei.

Principals at rural schools close to Dargaville expressed some unease at the prospect of Selwyn Park recapitulating. The main concern appeared to be the possibility of a reduction in the quality of woodwork, art, music and manual training provided at the Intermediate for these schools.

"Dargaville Intermediate provides these services in a very worthwhile way, and we are very pleased with what we are getting. If the Intermediate loses numbers, these excellent programmes could be affected," said Arapohue principal Phil Straw.

He believes the issue of recapitulation affects all schools in the Northern Wairoa, and he stressed the need for wide consultation before any moves are made.

He suggested the "EDI" might be considered as a means of closing small schools, following a Government review on the viability of these.

At Kaihu Valley Primary School principal Kevin Pivac said recapitulation is a whole new concept for everyone, and most seemed to still be "groping in the darkness."

"Ultimately, a community has the right to do as it wishes with its school," he said.

"The most immediate, and possibly the only effect on us, would be the continued availability of manual services at the Intermediate, but at least we have our own facilities here if we have to use them."

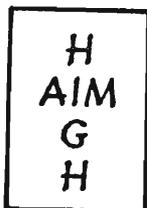
Te Kopuru Primary also felt the main impact would be on manual classes.

Dargaville High School principal Les Sweetman was in Whangarei, and could not be reached for comment concerning the possible impact on his school.

Dargaville Primary School has no plans to recapitate, and principal Alan Peden hopes recapitulation doesn't become established in Dargaville.

Footnote: An article in which DHS principal Les Sweetman outlines his views on recapitulation, appears on Page 3.

Fax & Phone: School - ~~XXXX~~ 0-9-439 8888
Principal - ~~XXXX~~ 0-9-439 7262 A.H.



SELWYN PARK SCHOOL

96 Gordon Street,
DARGAVILLE

Our Ref.

3/5

15 April 1992

The Chairperson
Pouto Primary School Board of Trustees
R.D. 1
TE KOPURU

Dear Sir / Madam

Our Board of Trustees have just completed the survey requested by our school community on the issue of recapititation for Selwyn Park School. The result of this survey shows that 65% (of 93% of votes returned) are in favour of recapititation.

Accordingly, the Board, responding to the expressed wish of the school community they represent, must now take a further step towards considering recapititation, in the form of a public meeting at which the wider community can put their point of view.

This letter is being sent to all local school Principals and Chairpersons inviting them and their boards to make written submissions on the issue of Selwyn Park School recapititating. These submissions will be read and considered at the Public Meeting to be held Thursday 23 April 7:00p.m., in the Selwyn Park School Hall.

The meeting will be facilitated by Mark Farnsworth, Northern Wairoa School Trustees Assn. Mary Sinclair and Jim Craig from the Ministry of Education will be present to answer general questions put by members of the public, as will Murray Neighbour, Principal of Raurimu Ave, Whangarei, a school which recapititated this year.

Yours faithfully

Geoffery Nickerson
Secretary
Board of Trustees

Appendix Four: Project Questionnaire

Section One: School Involvement

1.1 Do you have children at school? Yes No

1.2 How many children do you have enrolled at school?
(i) Primary:
(ii) Intermediate:
(iii) Secondary:

1.3 Please name the schools your children attend
(i)
(ii)
(iii)

1.4 Please rank your involvement in your children's school on a scale of 1 to 5.
1 being high. 5 being low.

Primary	1	2	3	4	5
Intermediate	1	2	3	4	5
Secondary	1	2	3	4	5

Please feel free to Comment:

1.5 How often do you visit the school? Please tick the appropriate category

More than once a week

Once a week

More than once a month

Once a month

More than once a term

Once a term

More than once a year

Once a year

Never

1.6 Please rank the level of community support for your children's school on a scale of 1 to 5. 1 being high. 5 being low.

Primary	1	2	3	4	5
Intermediate	1	2	3	4	5
Secondary	1	2	3	4	5

Please provide comment on your ranking:

1.7 Please indicate the proportion of parents/caregivers involved in activities at the school.

<i>Primary</i>					
Not sure	0%	<25%	25%-50%	50%-75%	>75%
<i>Intermediate</i>					
Not Sure	0%	<25%	25%-50%	50%-75%	>75%
<i>Secondary</i>					
Not Sure	0%	<25%	25%-50%	50%-75%	>75%

Please feel free to Comment:

1.8 Please indicate the proportion of the local community involved in activities at the school.

<i>Primary</i>					
Not sure	0%	<25%	25%-50%	50%-75%	>75%
<i>Intermediate</i>					
Not Sure	0%	<25%	25%-50%	50%-75%	>75%
<i>Secondary</i>					
Not Sure	0%	<25%	25%-50%	50%-75%	>75%

Please feel free to Comment:

1.9 Please rank the involvement of the community in school activities since the introduction of the *Tomorrow's Schools* approach

Not sure less About the same Greater

1.10 In what ways has the involvement of the community changed?

1.11 What are the major issues which your schools faces:

1.12 Do you have any general comments about the implementation of *Tomorrow's Schools* in your school and the local community.

Section Two: Community Involvement

2.1 Please list and rank the community/recreational activities you are involved in order of importance.
1 being high & 5 being low.

- 1:
- 2:
- 3:
- 4:
- 5:

2.2 How much time would spend on the activities listed above? Please circle the appropriate category.

	<i>Activity</i>				
More than once a week	1	2	3	4	5
Once a week	1	2	3	4	5
More than once a month	1	2	3	4	5
Once a month	1	2	3	4	5
More than once a term	1	2	3	4	5
Once a term	1	2	3	4	5
More than once a year	1	2	3	4	5
Once a year	1	2	3	4	5

2.3 Do family members play a sport Yes No

2.4 Please list the sports in order of importance.
1 being high & 5 being low.

- 1:
- 2:
- 3:
- 4:
- 5:

2.5 How much time would spend on the sporting activities listed above? Please circle the appropriate category.

	<i>Sport</i>				
More than once a week	1	2	3	4	5
Once a week	1	2	3	4	5
More than once a month	1	2	3	4	5
Once a month	1	2	3	4	5
More than once a term	1	2	3	4	5
Once a term	1	2	3	4	5
More than once a year	1	2	3	4	5
Once a year	1	2	3	4	5

Please feel free to comment:

2.6 How often do you visit the Dargaville? Please tick the appropriate category

- More than once a week
- Once a week
- More than once a month
- Once a month
- More than once a term
- Once a term
- More than once a year

Once a year

Never

Section Three: Education Development Initiative (EDI)

3.1 Are you aware that the government has an EDI Policy Yes No

3.2 Do you know what the EDI process involves Yes No
Please comment:

3.3 What are the main issues, which are generated by an EDI?
Please list the issues in order of importance.
1 being high & 5 being low.

1:

2:

3:

4:

5:

Please comment:

Stanton's Laws of Dynamic Learning Groups

M.C.Farnsworth; J.A.Williason*; G.M.van Reenen**

1. Introduction

Early in 1992 Laurie Stanton (Personal Communication) advanced his theory of a "Covered Wagon Defence" to account for a group reaction to an individually set task which had been perceived by the group as being a two-way threat to:

- the maintenance of the group;
- the "well being" - "balance" of individual group members.

Stanton rationalised that the group had moved rapidly through the Stages of group development and had entered stage four - the grouping phase (Beal et al, 1962; - Huddle Stage). Active group members had perceived that the task had the potential to cause the group to regress back to the first phase - stage one. As a result the group could face major re-entry barriers as it tries to progress back up through the group development phases.

2. Stanton's Theory

Stanton's Theory has its basis in the defensive strategy adopted by the group and clearly demonstrates the "*principles of group solidarity*" (Hechter 1987). The strategy is characterised by a number of distinct facets:

Threat Recognition - which triggered active expressive members (dominate?) to initiate individual counter measures.

Defensive Mode - whereby active members sought consensus for their actions, marshalled defences and co-ordinated group resources.

Polarisation Phenomenon - whereby active members overcame the very real tendency of the rest of the group to polarise information flows (i.e., extreme views were contained

* Kellogg's New Zealand Rural Leadership Programme Course XI, Lincoln University, February 1992

(Brown, 1988)).

Protection Mode - when the group adopts a tight defensive mode (defensive circle), and threatened members are placed in the position of least risk.

Rationalisation Phase - active group members will rationalise their actions once the threat has been countered.

3. **Dynamic Laws**

The authors found validation of Stanton's Theory in their observations of the 1992 Kellogg's Leadership group when the group was faced with a task which they perceived to have the potential to upset the group's newly acquired equilibrium. The authors have advanced Stanton's basic concept and constructed four basic laws to account for the actions and reactions of dynamic learning groups.

4. **Stanton's Laws**

4.1 *Law One*

When a task is perceived by some active expressive members (dominate) of a learning group as having the potential to adversely affect the personal environment and well-being of group members, the perceivers will marshal the resources of the group to form a defensive 'circle'. Scouts assess the potential implications of the threat and will as required, harass the "enemy". Other active members of the group will counsel and condition the at risk members and further prepare the group's defences. Special agents will be employed to reason with the "enemy".

As the perceived threat recedes the total group will try to rationalise the process.

4.2 *Law Two*

Active, expressive members (dominate) of a group will try to create interpersonal space and will move to fill that space. The speed of movement is directly related to environmental stimuli. Over stimuli will dramatically decrease the speed of further movement.

4.3 *Law Three*

Active, expressive members (dominate) of a group will initiate actions to reinforce the central tendency for the maintenance and justification of the indefensible status quo.

4.4 Law Four

Group activity and inter-personal reactions can be explained by the following linked functional equations:

4.4.1 Individual ego is a direct function of the standard deviation of the height of group members.

4.4.2 Group cohesion is inversely related to individual ego.

4.4.3 Group tension is directly related to individual ego plus an X factor.

4.4.4 Group interaction

$$= \frac{\text{Group Cohesion}}{\text{Individual Ego} * \text{Group Tension}} \frac{1}{X}$$

X = the number of women on the course.

5.0 Conclusion

The development, maintenance and cohesion of a dynamic learning group is fundamental if group training is to be successfully implemented. Trainers need to be vitally aware of Stanton's Laws (especially Laws One and Two) when setting group tasks which have the potential to disrupt the "well being" of individual group members or the cohesion of the total group.

6.0 References

Beal, G.M.; Bohlen, J.M.; Raudabaugh, J.W.; 1962: Leadership and Dynamic Group Action Iowa State University Press; 365pp

Brown, R.; 1988: Group Processes Basil Blackwell; 295pp

Hechter, M.; 1987: Principle of Group Solidarity University of California Press; 219pp

Stanton, L.R.; 1992: Personal Communication

Observations: This 'paper' was developed *on course* through a reactive process as the result of the authors commitment to the 1992 Kellogg's Rural Leadership Course. The paper is a direct result of the actions of the course trainers whom implemented a task which had the potential (perceived) to cause disruption to group harmony as a result, some course members adopted, and implemented, a defensive strategy to counter the perceived threat. Laurie Stanton - a course member - advocated that the strategy adopted was a similar to a covered wagon defence. Individual group members were aware that the group had implemented a defensive strategy and the recognition of this action resulted in considerable good natured discussion and speculation.

The paper is clearly deficient in a number of important areas:

- The phases of group development (bonding) needs further expansion.
- The task which caused the whole action should be fully outlined.
- Consideration needs to be given to the timing of the task in relation to the phase of group development i.e. had the task occurred at a later stage in the course would there have been the same reaction?

The paper was fun to develop. It resulted in some interesting interplay between course members and its ultimate presentation provided lively entertainment.

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The authors also acknowledge and thank both Dr. Alastair McArthur and Mrs. Colleen Mills for the on-going success of 1992 Kellogg's Rural Leadership Course.