

An investigation into different models of Yr 9 - 15 education which possibly extend beyond the boundaries of the current secondary school models.

**SABBATICAL REPORT
TERM 3, 2008
Brenda Burns, Principal, Horowhenua College**

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Horowhenua College is located in Levin, Horowhenua, a district which is at the lower end of most socio-economic measures and has a number of students for whom the traditional school education model is not working. The purpose of this research therefore was to investigate alternative models of schooling for years 7 to 15, to identify new approaches which might be translated to Horowhenua to better cater for these students.

Hence the Junior High/Senior High and English Academy models were investigated. These have achieved significant success in providing students in low socio-economic communities with the education, experience and skills to enter the tertiary education system, on-the-job-training or meaningful work. They achieve this by providing specialisation in the senior school and curricula that are tailored to suit particular student, community and business/employer's needs low socio-economic communities. Prior to travelling overseas, three New Zealand initiatives - Albany Junior and Senior High and Sir Edmond Hilary College (Otago) - were also investigated.

The research methodology was to interview staff at selected New Zealand and English institutions to identify how these institutions are organised and how they influence/improve the achievement and opportunities for their students.

As a result of the responses to a Government Green Paper (2003) the English educational system has significantly refocused on Individual Student Needs. Enterprise and business education is a key component of these reforms targeted to ensure that future generations will be successful in society and sustain the country into the future. As part of the implementation package the British Government is injecting large amounts of money into under performing areas. The government mandated that:

- all schools incorporate enterprise education across the curriculum
- 5 days of specific entrepreneurship teaching is required
- all 14-16 yr old students have work related learning as part of the curriculum.

To implement this various structures and Programmes were set up. Some of these were investigated as part of this research.

Business Enterprise Partnerships help schools to deliver the curriculum through involving local businesses with the students. A Business Enterprise Group in Sefton, on the outskirts of Liverpool, which focuses on promoting student entrepreneurship, was investigated.

The Extended Work Programme (for years 10 and 11) is designed for the small group of students (approx 10% of a year's cohort) who are disengaged from learning but are not old enough to leave school. They attend school three days each week and study their core subjects. On Tuesday they attend the Programme centre studying for a diploma in their chosen area and on Thursday they are on work placement in their chosen area. The programme has successfully reduced behavioural issues for these students and has made it possible for them to return to study GCSE if they choose.

The Specialist School System funds and assists schools to deliver excellence in a particular area(s) of the curriculum. Savio High School (Specialist school in Business, Mathematics and ICT) with a catchment area including the dock area of Liverpool was visited. In this programme a key business partner (company) is involved extensively in the system. It provides work placements, summer internships, mentors for students, expertise in curriculum areas and enterprise workshop days. As part of their learning the students become actively involved in all aspects of running a business. The success of this professional business approach in the school is obvious. Students conduct themselves well and GCSE pass rates have increased from 34% to 63%.

The Academies Group: Academies are independent schools set up as charitable companies in which sponsoring companies provide funding, participate in delivery of the curriculum and in the governance of the Academy. This gives sponsors and governors a broader scope to set the ethos and strategic direction of the school and to tackle entrenched low standards in some of the most deprived and underachieving areas of the country. Academies are typically developed in low socio-economic areas where parent education is generally poor but where the communities are no longer prepared to accept their children's failure.

Academies are making a real difference for pupils. They are vibrant schools which pupils want to attend. They are fully inclusive, all ability schools with one or more specialism in particular areas. They admit 10% of pupils each year on the basis of their aptitude for the specialism. In one location the establishment of the Academy has completely turned around the underperformance of the two previous schools that it replaced, as it achieves pass rates of 61%, a contextual value added score in top 10% and Maths at the national average/ Academies visited were:

- City of London Academy, Southwark, London
- Paddington Academy, London
- Harris Academy, Peckham, London
- Macmillan Academy, Middlesbrough
- Kings Academy, Middlesbrough

Careers Academy Group. Career Academies were originally developed in USA and the concept transported into the UK. It takes unmotivated and untrained students into a successful business. In the business environment they learn how business works and see the benefits to be gained from working in business. Hence they become motivated to undertake training and education so that they can become staff in the business and gain those benefits.

The programme provides business knowledge and skills but more significantly it raises the students' aspirations. The programme has run for 30 years in the USA and now 50,000 students are involved in the Programme. Whilst the original programme was designed for the "finance industry" in the last 2 years it has expanded into Health care, Hospitality and IT sectors.

In the UK the senior businessmen driving this programme have developed end qualifications - the Ed-Excel and B.Tech. level 3 - which are equivalent to A level and which are recognised and accepted by employers and Universities.

Visits were made to Head Office in Canary Warf, London and Langley Park Sixth Form College, Sheffield, Yorkshire, a high performing Academy in Sheffield.

The majority of students in the Academies come from deprived homes. Before the instigation of the Programme only approximately 8% of these students went on to further study. Now, through this programme raising their expectations of achievement, 60% go on to further study and a number now go on to University - in the past a University career would have been considered out of reach for these students. This change has occurred over the past 4 years.

Collaborative Schools' Sixth Forms: Three Schools in the Liverpool area are developing a new model based on collaboration between the three schools to enable students to access a wider range of courses. The Deputy Principals in charge of Curriculum work together to develop the procedures and plan the collaboration. Many vocational courses are being developed and connections with other training institutions are being investigated eg. construction / sport / beauty and airline grooming.

Inclusive Education: Holy Family, a Secondary School on the outskirts of Liverpool, recognised a traditional education approach does not suit all students. Hence at Yr 10 & 11 they offer a variety of approaches to engage every student in a meaningful way that provides a pathway to a successful education for the career path that they choose.

From these investigations some common key success factors can be identified:

- 1) Strong community involvement in the institution from initial concept to implementation and on-going direction and governance, to make the school deliver the perceived needs of the community. In most places in the UK the initiative for the change has come from the parents in low-socio-economic areas with entrenched underperforming schools. Here the parents and community are no longer prepared to see their children continue to fail.
- 2) Development of a sense of "a new beginning" in everyone involved in the project:
 - a) new purpose designed, quality built school. This demonstrates to the people and community that the "authorities" value the community and are willing to demonstrably support the community's education. Many Principals attributed success to "the physical educational environment provided by the new, purpose designed and built building which is "fit for purpose". One Principal commented "Because the Academy is new from the start it takes on totally new characteristics from day one and hence loses all of the negative things associated with the previous underperforming schools that the students attended. It is a new beginning for staff and students alike".
 - b) A flexible approach to learning and curriculum providing topic specialisations which support students different interests and learning styles and builds in students a pride of the school and a desire to achieve.
 - c) A business like approach to the management of the school that allows the Principal to appoint and develop a staff base that performs. Several Principals identified as a key success factor "the ability to reconsider the appointment of all staff allows the selection of competent managers with high standards – Not all staff from previous schools are reappointed.

- 3) Development of a culture of achievement in the students based on clear goals and outcomes to be gained from education.
- 4) Achieving buy-in to the fundamental principles and operational environment of the institution from all stakeholders: community, staff, students, local authorities, and local (sponsoring) business.

One significant and fundamental success factor identified by a Principal was “Belief that you can improve.”

Brenda Burns
Principal
Horowhenua College

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The opportunity to see a number of New Zealand and overseas institutions in operation has been extremely valuable and I acknowledge the following groups of people:

- Horowhenua College Board of Trustees for their on going support, in particular their generous provision of resources towards travel to Auckland and the UK which added significantly to the value of my experiences.
- The senior staff at the college who stepped-up to ensure that the school ran smoothly in my absence.
- The Ministry of Education for the opportunity to be part of this initiative.
- The Principals, Directors and employees of the various institutions who gave me a considerable amount of their time to answer questions and show me around.

Their collective contributions enhanced my experience and provided me with a wealth of new ideas to improve students learning in the local community.

PURPOSE

Levin is a small town with 12 schools serving the immediate community. Five schools educate students from new entrants to year eights, two are secondary, four are primary and one is an intermediate. The schools work together and communicate well.

Within the community there are across-agency groups working together to improve outcomes for the youth in the town. One is an education forum - a group comprised of representatives of several sectors who are developing a strategic plan for education in the town. I am part of two of these community initiatives.

The purpose of my research was to investigate models of schooling for years 7 to 15, with particular focus on Junior High/Senior High and Academy models that are currently prevalent in England. Academies provide students with the opportunity for specialisation in the senior school and can be tailored to suit student, community and business requirements. They ensure that at the termination of each student's secondary schooling they are well equipped to take their place in the tertiary education system, on-the-job-training or meaningful work.

At the completion of my investigations I will provide details of these two models to the community through the education forum group.

BACKGROUND

During the six years that I have been Principal of Horowhenua College there have been a number of significant changes to the educational environment in which the College operates. Horowhenua College is in Levin, a town of 20,000 people. Recent demographics show there has been a decrease in the number of students of college age throughout the Horowhenua and Manawatu Regions, which has caused a decrease in the number of students at Horowhenua College. This effect has been exacerbated by schools in neighbouring centres bussing students from outside their zone to make up their numbers.

Within this changing environment the overarching College goals have remained constant: to engage students in their learning, to improve communication (including working with the community) and the use of data to inform teaching and learning. However, in 2008, continuing in 2009 our specific goal is "Switching on to Students' Learning" which requires that we look seek improvement and changes in "what" and "how" we do things. Hence, it is intended that the research outlined below will contribute ideas to help us to work towards achieving these goals.

Other important target outcomes for this research include to:

- Keep students at school – reduce requests for early exemptions by engaging students in their area of specific interest.
- Cater for different learning needs between the two colleges currently operating in Levin
- Develop a "difference" for Horowhenua college which is valued by the community
- Improve the retention of students in the local area for their education
- Improve attendance
- Better meet the needs of future employment.
- Identify new ideas for the local community group with which I am working. This group is developing an educational strategy designed to provide a superior education from pre-school to adult education for the Horowhenua District.
- Investigate whether the academy or junior/senior high concepts can be a solution to how the two secondary schools in Levin can work together to provide the best co-ordinated education for the people of the town.

My research methodology was to visit a number of carefully selected innovative New Zealand and overseas institutions with a series of questions designed to identify how they are organised and how they have influenced/improved the achievement and opportunities for their students. These are some of the questions:

- How was the model developed and by whom?
- Who are the sponsors?
- What are the advantages of this particular model?
- How does the model differ from the old model?
- What do they offer to enhance the opportunities available to students?
- How do they cater for individual needs?
- What are the advantages of the different structures?
- What has been the greatest influence on raising achievement?
- Who is involved in the education of the students?
- How do institutions work together?
- Who funds the enhancements?

THE INVESTIGATION

I began by investigating two models which are currently being introduced in New Zealand. The advantages/disadvantages of the model are presented below with some comment.

1) JUNIOR HIGH (years 7-10) and SENIOR HIGH (years 11- 15) SCHOOL:

ALBANY JUNIOR HIGH (1,400 students). The vision for the Junior and Senior High Schools was promoted by the Albany Community, an area of growth on Auckland’s North Shore.

The Founding Principles of the school are based on Gayle Dorman’s “Seven needs of the emerging Adolescent” and every aspect of teaching and learning is based upon these. They are known by staff, students and parents and give a clear way of doing things which is practised by all staff.

Year	Specialist Teaching
7	Mathematics
8	Mathematics and Science
9	Mathematics, Science, English and Social Studies.
10	A secondary model - students can experience Unit Standards and Achievement Standards thus building confidence for senior school.

Advantages	Disadvantages
Yr 9 maintains strong culture developed with students through yr7 and 8.	Staff employed year by year means work had to be done to build a united team.
Leadership Opportunities in year 10	
The secondary/Primary mix of teachers gives the best of both practices	
Mathematics and Science expertise in junior school	
PPTA Contract for everyone	
Specialist input into all levels at the school.(Teachers enjoy teaching and there have been no problems moving from NCEA workload)	
Whanau Structure with ownership of a building, physically grouped together	
Students “stay young” and do not involve themselves in similar activities to the Senior students	

This is a well resourced, professional environment where students are happy and engaged in their learning. Because all staff are “on the same wave length” and fully understand the principles that guide the teaching and learning in the school the structure works well for the students and staff.

ALBANY SENIOR HIGH (1,500 students)

(In development at the time of my visit)

“Albany Senior High School will provide opportunities for students to pursue their specialist interests and to create meaningful pathways as they step out into the world.” There will be a “specialist day” each week when teachers will work with students offering their own area of passion and/or expertise for students to tap into. The purpose of this time is to encourage and applaud entrepreneurship, independent learning and to the pursuit of excellence in areas of sport, drama, art etc amongst the students. The community is to be involved as are parents and business.

Advantages	Disadvantages
Timetabling geared for senior option choice without the constraints of the junior curriculum.	All staff must be committed to working with students in the “impact projects”
Greater concentration on students learning in a fresh start environment	Staff work only with seniors.
Flexibility of approach with older students who are able to self manage	All staff from Deputy Principal down have Tutor groups and are responsible for Learning mentoring and pastoral care
Staff have 10 weeks after seniors have gone to prepare etc.	Students are given more responsibility for their learning, teachers may feel less in control.
Areas of excellence can be pursued in a timetabled slot.	
A huge variety of pursuits available through the “impact projects” time.	
Students and staff can engage in a different way through working together on areas of interest not traditionally taught in schools with input from outside	

There is a strong vision for learning at Albany Senior High School and the development of the School is focused on this vision.

There are separate boards governing Senior High and Junior High.

2) COMMUNITY COLLEGES

A community model - the school is in three sections all on the same campus with three principals, one responsible for each section.

SIR EDMOND HILARY COLLEGE (Otara)

For years the college had suffered from a poor community perception and consequently local parents sent their students to other schools to remove them from the immediate community and the perceived conditions in the school. However a proportion of the community decide to change this situation around which lead to a new school being designed and built to accommodate the educational needs of the community from pre-school to year 15 all on one campus.

Advantages	Disadvantages
Students do not have to transition between schools	Three separate schools operate.
Teacher/student connectedness throughout their schooling, visits to previous teachers are frequent	
Cross year level interaction eg. some Year 7 and 8 go to year 9 Mathematics lessons	
Extension groups are easily accommodated	
Members of Staff work across all levels eg. Technology, Spanish	
Staff shares information and expertise across all levels	
Good specialist input into core subject areas	
Library is a shared zone with resources for all levels	
Schools borrow from each other within the campus	
Students feel secure and happy within the environment and there are no designated areas or restrictions on student movement.	

Security at the school is necessary to ensure that outside community influences are not allowed into the school grounds. There is a clear vision for education in each section of the campus. This is a "Habits of the Mind school".

With the community involvement this new school has turned the situation around and students are now travelling into the area for schooling.

OBSERVATIONS

These "new" New Zealand Schools are all working closely with the community and have developed models that the community see as being advantageous for the education of their children. The schools all have clear visions of what they want and all staff members are expected to work to ensure that the vision becomes a reality. All students observed were proud of their school and positive about their learning in well resourced, modern surroundings.

ENGLISH ESTABLISHMENTS.

1) BUSINESS ENTERPRISE PARTNERSHIPS

The English educational system has significantly refocused on Individual Student Needs. This was initiated in 2003 with the publishing of a Green Paper calling for comment and subsequent analysis of the responses which lead to the introduction of many new initiatives. As part of this process the British Government recognised the necessity to inject large amounts of money into under performing areas. Enterprise and business education was identified as a key component in the planned reforms to thereby ensure that future generations can be successful in society and sustain the country. The government mandated that:

- all schools be required to incorporate education across the curriculum
- 5 days of specific entrepreneurship teaching would be required
- all 14 -16 yr students would have work related learning as part of the curriculum.

Financial provision was made for 130 Business Enterprise Partnerships to be set up across the country. These groups were intended to help schools deliver the curriculum through involving local businesses with the students at the schools and to deliver some aspects of the educational requirement. It was intended that there would be a Business Enterprise Partnership in every local area. I visited one Business Enterprise Group in Sefton, on the outskirts of Liverpool..

SEFTON BUSINESS ENTERPRISE PARTNERSHIP(SEBP)

SEBP is a private organisation funded from several sources including:

- i) The Learning Skills Council,
- ii) Schools who pay for the services offered
- iii) Small contributions from local sources.

SEBP is one of the more successful enterprises as all of the local schools are employing them, and paying them for their assistance. SEBP offers several programmes that they deliver in schools to meet the mandatory business and enterprise requirements of the curriculum. Each programme is tailored to the specific requirements of the school. The types of programmes offered are:

- **Enterprise Education in Schools.** - to promote entrepreneurship
- **Work placement short term** - facilitating the mandatory 2 week work experience for stage 4 (yrs.10 &11)
- **Extended work experience** - for disengaged year 10 students
- **Teacher Training** - to incorporate the work skills into teacher's teaching.
- **Business Mentoring Programme** - finds local business mentors
- **Training Students** - Prefects, Student Council, Presentation etc
- **Professional Development Placements** - teachers into businesses

There are a number of awards for students that are available through SEBP, these include:

- **The complete award.** - or year 10 and 11 students, similar to Gateways

- **Recognition of Quality Award** - .in recognition of achievement in learning and Enterprise Education.

Sefton Education Business Partnership can be viewed as a “provider” of services and the Schools as “users” of those services. Hence, as a result of meeting with SEBP I visited Formby High School which uses their programmes.

FORMBY HIGH SCHOOL : **The Extended Work Programme (EWP) for years 10 and 11**

The EWP programme is designed for the small group of students (approx 10% of a year’s cohort) who are disengaged from learning but are not old enough to leave school. As with any complex group of students their specific needs demand specific attention.

Students begin the EPW programme in year 10 and continue in year 11. They attend school three days each week and study their core subjects. On Tuesday and Thursday they are out of school, one day at the college studying for a diploma in their chosen area and the other on work placement in their chosen area. They keep work diaries which are monitored fortnightly and can gain credits towards level 1 or 2 GCSE qualifications.

However, this causes a timetabling dilemma:

- because they are out of school for 2 days each week it is too difficult to place them back into other classes as they had missed a significant amount of work.
- This disengaged group of students as a class for core subjects proved too difficult.

The answer therefore is to give them priority in timetabling. Hence the school timetable is arranged so that all classes have core subjects only on the days when these students are in school. In this way they can be incorporated into any school class.

The programme has successfully reduced behavioural issues for these students and has made it possible for them to return to study at A level GCSE if they choose – this year one is doing A level Science.

2) SPECIALIST SCHOOLS

The Specialist School System is based on a school demonstrating excellence in a particular area(s) of the curriculum. In order to be recognised for this a school must then:

- Write a bid around this topic.
- Raise £50000 – from sponsorship, usually from a key business partner(s)
- Submit the bid to gain government support in this case £100000 plus £1275 per pupil annually.

I visited Savio High School for which the catchment area is the Dock area of Liverpool – which operates under this system

SAVIO HIGH SCHOOL (Sponsor Alliance & Leicester Group) **Specialist school in Business, Mathematics and ICT**

Savio is part of the specialist schools group and delivers its chosen specialisation - enterprise education – to the primary and secondary schools in the area through a City Learning Centre. This was a college building on their campus that they gave up to allow the Centre to be developed.

Such centres are a key component of the Specialist School concept and are viewed as beacons for education and innovation. They are developed to high specifications - in the case of Savio to a business standard in technology, décor and facilities. They operate with a skeleton staff and are available for use by all sectors of the education and business community. The facility is booked through a Centre reception.

Another key concept in the system is that every curriculum area has a business and enterprise focus. For example, Social sciences focus on sustainability and the history of enterprise, Science on sustainability and are building bio-domes to grow vegetables for the elderly etc. There is also a focus on presentation and research, with students making regular presentations to business partners.

The key business partners are involved extensively in the system, providing work placements, summer internships and mentors for students and expertise in curriculum areas and enterprise workshop days.

As part of their learning the students become actively involved in all aspects of running a business. For example Media studies the junior students have taken over the production and marketing of the School newsletter – they update the news letter that appears on the parent room screen and seek advertising to raise money. The school shop, school bank and breakfast club are all run by students.

Involvement of non teaching professionals is key to the success of the system and consequently HR managers of large companies, journalists, University graduates, entrepreneurs, members of the Chamber of Commerce are regular visitors to the college. They view their involvement as their Corporate Social Responsibility. Many of these non teaching professionals work directly with the students.

The school also has strong links with John Moore University particularly in the languages area with video conferences with Spain, France, Italy, China.

Enterprise education is part of the curriculum from year7 onwards and all staff are involved. Each year level comes up with business ideas and the top three are presented to the year group who then choose the one that they will be involved with. Business Mentors, the head of Business at the college and the business advisor in the school all work together to develop and operate the business with the students.

The success of this professional business approach in the school is obvious. Students conduct themselves well and GCSE pass rates have increased from 34% to 63%.

3) THE ACADEMIES GROUP

The Academies Programme was conceived and introduced by David Blunket (Secretary of State) in March 2000 in a speech on transforming secondary education. The first projects were announced in the September 2000.

Academies are:

- publicly funded, independent local schools that provide a first class free education.
- all ability schools established by sponsors from business, faith or voluntary groups working with partners from the local community.
- Purpose built either to replace underperforming schools or in areas where more school places are needed.

In 2006, the English Government considered any secondary school where fewer than 30% of pupils gained 5 or more GCSEs in grades A* - C (including English and Maths) as a potential Academy project. Local authorities were also authorised to consider the Academy model for under performing schools in their area – in some areas Local Authorities fund local schools.

Whilst Local Authority Maintained schools have similarities with Academies there are important differences. Academies are independent schools set up as charitable companies. This gives sponsors and governors a broader scope to set the ethos and strategic direction of the school to tackle entrenched low standards in what are some of the most deprived and underachieving areas of the country.

In Academies, Governors have responsibility for:

- Appointment of the Principal
- Administration of the Academy's Finances
- Employment of staff including authorisation of appointments and/or changes to employment terms and conditions
- Approval of personnel policies and procedures

An Academy Trust is responsible for the development and governance of an Academy. The members of these Charitable trusts include the sponsor of the Academy, the chair of the governing board, a representative of the Secretary of State and other members - members personal liability is limited to £10. The management of the school is delegated to the governors (directors).

This structure has similarities to the New Zealand system, but the composition of the boards is quite different. Members of the governing body must be stakeholders and must include:

- a parent,
- a local authority appointed governor,
- The Academy Principal in an ex-officio capacity.

They may also include

- a teacher and/or a member of staff and a community representative(s).
- Most Academies have a second parent representative and are able to appoint more if it is appropriate to do so.

Because Academies are typically developed in low socio-economic areas where parent education is generally poor there are usually few parent representatives on the Board of Governors. However, parents can still have an influence on the life of the school in other ways. For example,

at Peckham Academy (SE London) attendance at Parent evenings has increased from 40% to 80% and there are two meetings per year for each student.

Raising standards

Academies “*raise standards by innovative approaches to management, governance, teaching and the curriculum. The involvement of sponsors from the voluntary and business sector or faith groups will allow them to bring their skills and expertise to the Academy.*” (David Blunket)

Management of Academies

The management of an Academy is vested in an appointed Principal, chosen for his/her experience, creativeness and proven record of success. The Principal is appointed well ahead of the academy opening and works with sponsors to develop a rigorous school development plan. This defines the new institution and how it will achieve the required raised standards.

Academies are able to attract and retain the very best of staff by providing excellent working conditions with opportunities for professional development and flexible staffing structures. In setting up the Academy there are opportunities to employ specialist, new staff to address specific needs in the new institution.

Academies are re-born schools, usually built on Local Authority land, in some cases on sites where sub-standard housing has been demolished. Often the old school replaced by the Academy is demolished and new housing developed thereby bringing further rejuvenation to the area. In addition, the money gained from the new housing has provided the local Authorities with a funding stream to compensate for the cost of building the Academy.

Academies are making a real difference for pupils. They are vibrant schools where pupils want to attend. They are fully inclusive, all ability schools with a one or more specialism in a particular areas. They admit 10% of pupils each year on the basis of their aptitude for the specialism.

Critics have called the development of Academies “Privatisation by the back door”. However, Principals interviewed in this research reply “NO!! it is by the front door”. They view it as education for all, none selective and note that it is making the difference. Local communities where Academies have been developed are no longer prepared to accept failure.

ACADEMIES

The first impressions when visiting any Academy are:

- Being confronted by serious Security. Visitors are held at the front gate and not admitted until their credentials have been checked. This is an essential reality of providing a safe environment for students and staff in low socio-economic areas where crime, including murders, are common occurrences. In some Academies visited evening activities were over by 7pm so that those attending can safely get home whilst it is still light.
- The quality and design of the new, purpose built buildings, internal environments, teaching resources and general presentation of all of the Academies is outstanding. The standard of dress of both staff and students was professional and the expectations of the pupils in all aspects were high.
- The Leadership in the Academies obviously comes from the top - the management teams had clearly defined portfolios for which they took full responsibility. The whole focus, from the Principal down, was obviously on the achievement of the individual student. All of the staff were clearly proud of the work they were doing and the relationship they had with their pupils.

Students have full use of all facilities and staff mixed freely with the students both during school hours and in after school activities.

- The average age of staff in the London Academies is 30 or less. This is not by design but is an availability issue - many experienced staff choose not to work in London. As staffing is bulk funded in England the Principals have been able to employ many ancillary staff to allow teachers to concentrate on the Teaching and Learning

CITY OF LONDON ACADEMY, SOUTHWARK, LONDON (1,100 students)

Specialism: Sport, Business and Catering

Sponsor: Ernst and Young

The Principal explained that the London CBD can be seen from the upper levels of the school buildings, but, like their parents, many of the students had never been into London even though it was a short tube ride. Other pupils had been kept home as companions for their single parent. Hence, as they only know the life that their parents lead how can they be expected to raise their aspirations to achieve and succeed when they don't know how.

This Academy is succeeding – this year's exam results had at last reached the required improved level. The principal attributed this improvement in part to having raised the students desire to achieve by expanding their knowledge and experience above that within their normal existence. He described this as 'filling the gap' and giving the students the experiences that the children of the "VOLVO driving parents" have. These experiences include visits to central London. In addition, because the only professionals that students would normally see in their lives are teachers and the doctor they visit local businesses and businesses are also involved as mentors and in providing programmes which broaden the pupils' experiences.

The Academy is now a pilot institution for the AQA Baccalaureate Exam.

PADDINGTON ACADEMY, LONDON

Specialism: Media and Performing Arts (BBC community) and Business

Sponsor: Peter

Like the City of London Academy, the Principal of Paddington noted that "opening the students' eyes to see what is out there" is essential to raising the students desire to achieve. This requires a lot of involvement with the community, but this in itself presents problems.

The Academy is located in an area of London where much of the community has is transient – just moved into this area or in the process of moving out. 92% are recent immigrants who want to work hard and value education, but are not familiar with English language, schooling or systems. One of the biggest challenges is to break down the cultural barriers that have in the past, and still today, keep girls from education.

The belief in this college is that if a student comes up against a barrier it must be removed. This approach appears to be working as this year 91% of the students achieved at or above their expected grade. However, the school has to provide massive security to ensure that the students are safe, but despite this they believe that "having fun" is an important ingredient for students to learn.

The choice of their specialism in Media and Performing arts was partly based upon the proximity of a number of BBC staff who live in a nearby area. Involving these skilled media people in the activities of the school on a voluntary basis has significantly contributed to the success of the students in these subjects.

HARRIS ACADEMY, PECKHAM, LONDON

Specialisms: Business/Enterprise and Performing Arts
Sponsor: Harris

Security was extreme at this Academy as it is situated in one of the poorest and more notorious areas of London. There are two dominant gangs in the area, Peckham Young Guns and Shower Chicks, but students are not allowed to wear "colours" in the Academy. These gangs have a significant control on the area – taxi drivers will not come into the area as so many have been robbed whilst there. 60% of the students at the Academy are eligible for free school dinners and 85% are of Caribbean or African ethnicity. The remainder are from different ethnic groups with new refugees are still arriving.

Where possible staff are appointed from the local community and between them they speak 40 different languages.

There are close links with the primary schools in the area and their students attend for lessons in the specialist areas offered by the Academy. All students study specialist subjects from their day of arrival at the Academy. Because there is a higher proportion of funding allocated to the areas of specialisation there is extra time allocated to them in the timetable.

The Academy has a very low ability intake and did not meet the floor target in English and Maths (30%) over recent years. However they are now in the top 10% of schools in the country on a measurement called "adding value". This year English went from 38 to 50% and for Maths from 23 to 29.1%. Students who need extra English and Mathematics are catered for in years 9 and 10.

There are 200 staff at the school but only 90 of them are teachers. In common with other Academies, the college atmosphere was purposeful, professional and focused on student learning. Success for the students is definitely a reality in such a positive atmosphere. Student involvement with the community is outside the college and trips are planned for students outside the classroom. Otherwise, for safety reasons, the community are not allowed in the Academy.

MACMILLAN ACADEMY, MIDDLESBOROUGH (1,450 students)

Specialism: Outdoor Education and Science

Sponsor: None (129/130 Academies have a sponsor)

Under the 1997 Labour Government City Technical Colleges (CTC) were encouraged to convert to Academies, but 15 CTC's did not accept this conversion – MacMillan was one of these. The 3 key differences between CTC's and Academies were in:

- i) The Governors
- ii) Admission policy
- iii) Different approach to Education of Special Needs

Several years ago MacMillan was offered a £13.25 million building and refurbishment fund and so became an Academy. Consequently, this academy was quite different from most as it is not a new purpose built facility, but rather incorporated the old school as part of the new building. Unusually this Academy does not have a sponsor and hence there was no "outside" influence in the conversion to an Academy.

They have an Outstanding label and are a leading edge school in applied vocational learning. They work with other schools in the area helping lower achievers to improve their outcomes. Because of their success placed at the Academy are much sought after and competed for. Last year there were 840 applicants for the 220 places available and the intake for the academy was 51% from out of zone. Only 23-25% of the students have free school dinners a statistic which characterises the Academy above the lowest socio-economic grouping.

The Academy also has the School Centred Initial Teacher Training facility (SCITT) which is a training school for teachers. This caters for 14–16 students and operates in a partnership with local secondary schools including 3 Academies.

SCITT takes mature students from a range of backgrounds and gives them intensive training followed by a period working alongside teachers in the classrooms of the partnership schools. The students gain their qualification whilst in these schools. This successful programme provides a stream of well trained teachers in Mathematics, ICT and Science for the 10 local schools in the partnership.

MacMillan Academy focuses on high standards, with every level of presentation set at the highest level. Last year 92% of the students gained grade A*-C passes at GCSE, compared to the National Average of 57%

KINGS ACADEMY, MIDDLESBOROUGH (2003)

Specialism: Business and Enterprise

Sponsor: Sir Peter Vardi (Self made Millionaire)

This academy is one of a group in which values play a large part. The Academy was started when two underperforming schools (pass rates at these schools were 22-23% and 17-18%) were closed. As part of the establishment of the Academy the staff from the old schools had to apply for re-appointment. As many of these staff did not want to come to the new academy they did apply for their jobs, others were simply not re-appointed. This thereby allowed the Principal a relatively free hand in selecting the staff for the new Academy, a factor to which he attributed some of the success of the Academy.

At set up the academy received £2 million from sponsor and £25 million from the Government. The annual operating budget is £8million, 80% of which goes on wages. Staff conditions are excellent, they are paid above the National pay scales, teaching load is 15 hours contact per week and they have free lunch with the students everyday.

The sponsor has set a number of relatively stringent conditions which have contributed significantly to the Academy's success. For example, the sponsor expects excellence in teaching – the top performing 5% of staff are identified as are the worst 5%, who know that if they do not improve performance their employment will be terminated

In terms of the students 30% get free dinners and approximately one third diagnosed ADHD.

The establishment of the Academy has completely turned around the underperformance of the two previous schools that it replaced, as it achieves pass rates of 61%, a contextual value added score in top 10% and Maths at the national average

When asked what produced this turn around the Principal attributed it to:

- The physical educational environment provided by the new, purpose designed and built building which is "fit for purpose"
- Because the Academy is new from the start it takes on totally new characteristics from day one and hence loses all of the negative things associated with the two previous underperforming schools that the students attended. It is a new beginning for staff and students alike.
- The ability to reconsider the appointment of all staff allows the selection of competent managers with high standards (only 2 of the managers from the previous 2 schools came to the Academy)

- The identification from the start of 7 core values which form the basis of a clear ethics and values set that are instilled into the students
- Strict school – 70% from non traditional family unit
- Belief that you can improve

4) CAREERS ACADEMY GROUP (Head Office), LONDON

Director: Martin Drain, CITIGROUP Centre, Canary Warf

The concept of Career Academies (American name National Academy Foundation) was developed in USA, 30 years ago as a business initiative devised and lead by Sandy Gile – Chairman of American Express. He could not find enough trained people in Central Manhattan to staff his business. However he recognised that there was a large number of kids hanging around the area who, because of their home environment, had no concept of work, or business and were therefore unmotivated and untrained. He took some of these kids into his business with the intention that by being in the business environment they would begin to understand what work and business was about. Hence, from this, they would become motivated to undertake training and education so that they could become staff in his business.

To support this he arranged for the local John Jewey High school to give 16 – 19 year olds business education in the class room. He also arranged for his company, American Express, and others to give opportunities for these students to work in their businesses during the holidays.

Senior managers from these businesses were invited to have input into the curriculum taught at John Jewey High School and staff from the businesses volunteered to be mentors to the students. Whilst the original intention of the scheme was to train students to work in American Express, it succeeded so well in motivating the students that most wanted to go to University to further their studies (Brooklyn kids do not go to University!).

The result was that whilst the programme had given the students business knowledge and skills more significantly it raised the students' aspirations. Thirty years later 50,000 students are now involved in the National Academy in USA. Whilst the original programme was designed for the "finance industry" In the last 2 years it has expanded into Health care, Hospitality and IT sectors.

Transfer of the concept to the UK

Several Principals from the UK investigated the USA programme, recognised its benefits and discussed setting up similar [programmes in UK. However, whilst the education authorities were not specifically against the idea they were not prepared to fund the concept.

They had learned from USA that the programmes would not succeed unless businesses and businessmen were involved. This lead to the global Chief Executive for CITIGroup setting up a pilot programme in UK 5 years ago. This was run under an independent charity called UK Career Academy Foundation, which trades as the Career Academies UK, chaired by the CEO of CITIGroup. This organisation is overseen by an advisory Board with members who are senior managers in companies such as Credit Suisse, FSA, BUPPA, Legal firms, BPR, Astra Zeneca, all whom were selected for their ability to involve other people/companies and to raise funds.

A recognisable Qualification

All of the people driving this concept were senior businessmen, hence they understood if this scheme was to have value for students and end-user employers, it must have an end

qualification that would be recognised and accepted by employers and Universities. They therefore developed the Ed-Excel and B.Tech. level 3 which are equivalent to A level.

The Ed-Excel took 3 years to put in place and become accepted. It is not a qualification for high-flying academic students, nor is it a “traditionally academic” course and most of the course content is assessed internally. However it is now recognised and accepted by the businesses which are the intended end-users of the people holding the qualification - in this way it has succeeded.

Lewisham College, St George Monash and Guilford college were pilot schools which tested the Academy concept. There are now 100 career academies around the country assisted by 15 staff in the UK Career Academy Foundation.

The operations of the UK Career Academy Foundation has now grown so large that it requires operational staff to manage:

- 250 FTSE 350 companies and other organisations that support the programmes
- local school who provide the classroom training
- recruitment of local companies to become involved in the programme throughout the UK.

How it all works

The Career Academy is a franchise operation. This means there is control of the brand and new entrant Schools are trained to run the new academies to a specific prescribed model. The Academy is a separate function within a School, but is not the whole of the School - 10 students are needed to start the programme but total numbers can not exceed 20. The group of students within the Academy become a team and are thereby recognised in the School as doing something different.

Any school anywhere in UK can apply to set up an Academy but it must meet certain criteria:

- None-selective.
- Only state schools - Not privately funded
- Located in an area with social needs (some exceptions)
- Must have local support for the concept and application.

If accepted the school must appoint an Academy co-ordinator to do the extra work. This is rarely the school careers person but more commonly the business studies teacher. To be accepted to be an Academy a school must have local businesses which are prepared to be associated with the programmes. However, there is no commitment from these companies to employ students at the end of the programme, or to supply funds to the programme.

Each Career Academy must have a specialist business function subject(s) – finance, IT, marketing and communications, with the curriculum agreed with the group and the school. As part of the programme, during the summer holidays, each student must undertake an internship which is usually held in one of the companies associated with the programme. These internships are seen by students as the “jewel in the crown” as they are paid employment.

In London it is planned to have one Academy per borough – currently there are already 28 Academies serving 33 boroughs. Because of the range of potential business functions that an Academy can select it is feasible to have two academies in each borough.

Student Selection criteria.

Because of the success of these programmes there are many more applicants than places available, hence there is a necessary selection process. Students must fit the following criteria:

- Demonstrate potential - not necessarily the brightest students but must have potential that can be developed
- Represent the school well
- Academically middle achieving.

The businesses that are associated with the programmes are involved in the interviews of prospective candidates.

70-75% of the students who have been on the programme have gone on to University whereas previously only 30-40% of them would have considered this as a possibility. Of the other 25%, 15% go into work and the other 10% either stay on at School to do level 3 qualifications or go travelling etc. Very few say "business is not for me".

Funding.

Funding is raised from Public and Local Government sectors – Government contestable funding, regional Development Agency funding and LSC funds for recognised courses. Local businesses provide funding as they view Academies as a pipeline employment source or with other benefits (tax breaks). Some funds come from pure philanthropy. Some businesses supply support in kind as part of their corporate social responsibility by allowing their staff to work with students as part of their paid staff development. For some companies this has become part of the employer brand. Participating staff do not have to be senior in the organisation and it is an easy sell to employees as the company view this as a step on the management ladder. Other in-kind support is given by providing internships for students within local companies.

Local advisory boards.

The Academies are grouped into "clusters" by area (London), or Region (outside of London). There are a number of Local Advisory Boards, each having a London head office manager as a member, which work with the Academy clusters to ensure that they follow the Franchise "rules".

After visiting the head office I visited a well performing Academy in Sheffield.

LANGLEY PARK SIXTH FORM COLLEGE, SHEFFIELD, YORKSHIRE

Director of the Business Academy Programme: Bernadette Edge

College students apply to be part of the Academy programme - in 2008 the Academy has a group of 11 students of almost as many nationalities. The Academy is supported by a small advisory board of local but influential business people who meet monthly. Two students attend each board meeting to report on their experiences on the course. Local business support to the Academy is in kind rather than money with the businesses providing mentors and internships for students during the holidays. The internships are paid employment.

In addition to the Academy Director, there is an Academy Programme Coordinator responsible for assisting with the organisation of the students, the trip programme, speakers, hand outs, advise, mentors and social events etc.

Students are matched with a mentor and it is the student's responsibility to set up 8 meetings per year with the mentor and keep a record of the prescribed mentoring process.

Before starting an internship the students are given £150 to purchase a suit and given a briefcase full of “goodies”.

The majority of students in the programme come from deprived homes. Before the instigation of the Programme only 8% would have gone on to further study. Now, through this programme raising their expectations of achievement, 60% go on to further study and a number now go on to University - in the past a University career would have been considered out of reach for these students. This change has occurred over the past 4 years.

5) COLLABORATION OF SCHOOLS' SIXTH FORMS

Deputy Principal, Curriculum at Deyes High School: Kath Edmonds

Three Schools in the Liverpool area, Deyes High School, Maricourt High School and Maghull High School are developing a different model, based on collaboration between the three schools to enable students to access a wider range of courses. The Deputy Principals in charge of Curriculum work together to develop the procedures and plan the collaboration.

The advertising for this programme states:

“Become part of a successful, flourishing and vibrant community of over 850 Sixth Form Students. Opportunities for all students. Choose from a wide range of over 40 courses. If you would like to join our forward looking Sixth Form community contact one of the Schools Receptions..... “

The same schools are part of a group called MADCOS – Maghull and District Community of Schools – made up of 16 local primary schools and the 3 high schools.

This group:

- share ideas
- share good practice
- work together - Primary Schools gain from working with the High school
- Juniors benefit from coming in to secondary schools for activities.

The High School offers Science and Mathematics Specialism

At present the timetable allows for only one option to be part of the collaborative model.

The Timetables for all three schools have the same day pattern in Yr 12 after break until lunch time is 1 period and eventually they want all 6th form to have same timetable across the board.

Schools are cooperating on staffing allocation.

The structure allows for new subjects to be introduced but some subjects are offered both within the school and in the shared option line eg. Economics, theatre studies etc.

Many vocational courses are being developed and connections with other training institutions are being investigated eg. construction / sport / beauty and airline grooming. Offering such requires great flexibility and the school is introducing many new ideas.

6) Inclusive Education

Holy Family a Secondary School on the outskirts of Liverpool

Principal – Mrs Maggie Seddon

Inclusive Work - “Valuing every person”

It has been recognised in all schools that the traditional approach to education does not suit all students. At Keystage 4 (Yr 10 & 11) Holy Family offer a variety of approaches to attempt to

engage every student in a meaningful way that provides a pathway to a successful education for the career path that they choose.

The various programmes include:

- a) Pathways approach for disaffected students would not cope with full diet of GCSE(course work rather than exams)
- b) The Traditional Route Eng / Mx / RE / Lang / 3 options choice
- c) Curriculum plus (10 – 15 pupils in Yr 10 + 11)
- d) 3 day Eng., Mx, ICT, PE (1 hr) RE and a Community project eg. link with Jospice and 2 days at college Hugh Bird, a Tertiary College, doing subjects such as Hair beauty, Brick laying, IT etc the school pays the College £850 per student, similar to STAR and GATEWAYS
- e) Alternative curriculum (11 from Yr 11) this year (3 in Yr 10)
Off site – back for ½ day literacy and numeracy. At the end of the course students tend to stay out sometimes employed by the work placement employers.
- f) Adult Literacy and Numeracy qualification equivalent to 1 GCSE functional skills

Networker – Jan is responsible for the business monitoring systems for all of the alternative programmes involving employers and tells of some amazing success stories.

School inclusion Network Group: This is a group external to the school called “SING”. This group puts on programmes for kids during the year. It is a youth service and there is a youth worker who is involved in the programme. They provide a students support network and run extra curricular activities across Merseyside eg: Comedy Trust run after school sessions this builds self confidence and is a competition to find stand up comedian of the year. Yr 8 → Yr 12s – learn stand up comedy perform at the school and the finalists go on to a wider competition sponsored by a news paper group.

Oakmore Community College, post 16 students come and mentor seniors and parents also volunteer. The next steps for the school are

- Primary Plus – yr 11 being targeted to help with re-motivation they plan to offer a 6 week programme 1 day in this school then go off site for a whole range of activities all about social skills and
- a back to work skills courses for young fathers

All new ventures need funding and in UK, schools put in a bid, similar idea to contestable funding in NZ and now the school wishes to apply for Business and Enterprise specialist status – young fathers would benefit and others need to be identified for the bid.

The environment in the school was one of innovation and determination to never give up on a student. EVERY CHILD MATTERS FRAMEWORK is obvious in all that they undertake.

CONCLUSIONS

It is clear that in all of the schools visited in the UK that the main driver for their development, and ultimate success, is recognition by all stakeholders that “the status quo is not working” and “the needs of the students are not being met”. Consequently all stakeholders are prepared to identify, and buy-in to, a different model and approach.

Some essential elements of achieving this turn around are:

- Central Government and Local Authorities giving a clear mandate to raise the standards in the areas where the schools are failing, underpinned by
- Provision of
 - new purpose built buildings
 - strong , visionary leadership
 - highly skilled Management teams
 - bulk funding which allow principals to have flexibility and in most cases appropriate numbers of support staff
- The process for appointment of staff to the new institution which necessitated that existing staff apply for their own positions with no guarantee of reappointment. This has allowed Principals and Boards to appoint strong teams of staff who share the vision of the institution.
- Provision of opportunities for students to experience the world beyond their immediate environment. This increases their knowledge/awareness of their opportunities and hence raises their aspirations above and beyond the restricted geographic, religious and ethnic paradigms of their parents.
- Requiring high, professional standards of personal presentation from all involved with the institution, including the students. The students in most cases went from no or shabbily worn uniform to a formal uniform. Staff dressed as business professionals.
- Creativity in programmes and timetabling so that the needs of the students were catered for.
- Setting up, maintaining, valuing and acting upon the opinions and needs of the community from the very conception of the academies.
- Having an institution wide commitment to the student which translates into never giving up on a student

In the case of the Auckland Schools they have been designed with full involvement and support of the community and hence show many of the same success features as the Academies, in that they are:

- providing new purpose built buildings
- providing strong , visionary leadership
- providing highly skilled Management teams
- appointing strong teams of staff who share the vision of the school
- requiring high standards of personal presentation from students and personnel
- being highly creative
- working with and listening to the community
- designing courses to suit the students needs

The involvement of external providers in the UK schools has meant that specific and innovative programmes ensure that opportunities, particularly with business and work placements, are made available to all students regardless of their circumstances and their background.

Specialist schools are sharing their expertise and their facilities with other schools in their area and improving opportunities for students whilst raising the standards for schools in their community.

The teacher training programmes in the schools

- the graduate return to teaching schemes are ensuring that some of the best are working with the students adding current knowledge to the mix and enriching the student's learning, raising their awareness of the outside world
- The school teacher training programme where teachers work alongside trainees for a year has enhanced the experiences of both trainees and students and schools in an area are training teachers to meet the local needs.

It is a clear and common theme from every institute and group interviewed that they have high expectations of all students and realising those expectations requires innovation, risk taking, collaborating with other providers and involving the outside world in education.

I now look forward to working with my staff, parents, the local council, community, and students in Levin to consider options for our community, within the restrictions of resources and time.

Brenda Burns
Principal

Horowhenua College.