

# **PRINCIPAL'S SABBATICAL REPORT:**

## **THE IMPACT OF ENTERPRISE EDUCATION FOR OUR LEARNERS**

The purpose of this sabbatical was to investigate and consider;

- the ways in which enterprise programmes are being designed and implemented in primary sector schools and
- how these are enhancing students engagement and capabilities in the key competencies.

**TERM 3, 2013**

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## Executive Summary

- ❖ The Ministry of Education defines Education for Enterprise as: “Teaching and learning directed towards developing in young people those skills, competencies, understandings and attributes which equip them to be innovative, and to identify, create, initiate and successfully manage personal, community, business, and work opportunities, including working for themselves.”
- ❖ Education for Enterprise as an approach to teaching and learning, aims to develop students who are enterprising in the core subjects and across learning areas. It requires a different way of thinking about how we deliver our curricula. It’s a change of approach rather than a new programme, and seeks to utilize ‘real world’ (community and curriculum) and business examples as students make decisions and direct their own learning, build their learning capacity and competencies, become self-motivated and risk takers.
- ❖ Principals and Lead Teachers endorsed the skills and attributes of the Enterprising Attributes that give students opportunities to explore, develop and grow in the Key Competencies. Eg; decision making, thinking through problems, creative and analytical thinking, managing themselves and time and other life skills, and reported marked differences between students familiar with an enterprising approach compared to those new the school and this type of environment.
- ❖ The Key Competencies are central to student learning and enterprise education gives them a real and authentic context, however, this was more effective when there had been explicit and deliberate teaching of the competencies and attributes and the connections between them and the relevance to the real world were made.
- ❖ Rarely was Enterprise Education seen operating throughout a whole school, though a few were able to do so successfully in a Yr 1-8 context.
- ❖ Community and parent involvement and engagement is an added benefit of Enterprise Education and supports Key Competency development.
- ❖ Although many schools in New Zealand are engaging in entrepreneurial and enterprising activities and projects with students, there seems to be a noticeable lack of structure and progressive frameworks around the learning. Explicit teaching of the skills and the associated language around a framework needs to occur, otherwise the valuable learning is lost.
- ❖ Frameworks also provide structure for ensuring the key competencies and enterprising skills are developed over time and opportunities for students to experience and grow in these competencies progress throughout the school.

- ❖ Entrepreneurs need a spirit of resilience, fortitude and courage. These reflect our New Zealand key competencies perfectly. Using Enterprise Education as the vehicle to develop these seems to be a highly effective tool. Our students need to be taught these skills, have opportunity to practice and develop them in authentic and meaningful contexts.
  
- ❖ To make a sustained difference, it is not a matter of adding enterprise education to the curriculum once a week. In fact, it's not about adding anything! It is a change in pedagogy and part of a paradigm shift in thinking as to what our 21<sup>st</sup> century learners need now. It is a change of culture in the way the school environment supports learners to explore and challenge themselves, and for teachers to take on a facilitating role to truly allow our students to become confident, connected, life-long learners who can manage themselves and think in a multitude of ways, who participate and contribute in ways that make a difference while relating to and working with others effectively, and who can apply their literacy and numeracy skills in genuine situations to make a difference in their communities.
  
- ❖ Let us not make what Winston Churchill said so many years ago something we continue to carry on into our 21<sup>st</sup> Century schools.

*“Schools have not necessarily much to do with education ... they are mainly institutions of control where certain basic habits must be inculcated in the young. Education is quite different and has little place in school.”*

*-Winston Churchill*

## **Introduction**

This sabbatical was undertaken in Term 3, 2013. The study was a combination of qualitative and quantitative methodology.

The investigation was carried out through an interviewing process (either face to face, telephone, email) using guiding questions.

The participants included:

- school principals
- classroom teachers
- a selection of primary students

Expert personnel from the University of Oregon were also interviewed.

A literature search revealed little information in relation to research around Enterprise Education and I couldn't find any evidence of work done in the Primary School sector. However, there is a wealth of information regarding Enterprise Education on the Ministry of Education's website, TKI.

## **Acknowledgements**

I am indebted to:

- my Board of Trustees, (which is a combined Board with Mount Hutt College Methven) for giving me leave and supporting my application.
- the staff of Lauriston School who took on extra responsibilities in my absence.
- the Sabbatical scheme that enables a teaching principal time and space to follow my passions and explore possibilities.
- Professor Yong Zhao and colleagues at the University of Oregon, USA.
- the participants for taking time away from their busy schedules to discuss their experiences for the purposes of this study.
- my mentor and friend, who acted as my "sounding board" and guide.

## **Purpose**

The purpose of this sabbatical was to investigate and consider;

- the ways in which enterprise programmes are being designed and implemented in primary sector schools and
- how these are enhancing students engagement and capabilities in the key competencies.

## **Background**

The Ministry of Education defines Education for Enterprise as: "Teaching and learning directed towards developing in young people those skills, competencies, understandings and attributes which equip them to be innovative, and to identify, create, initiate and successfully manage personal, community, business, and work opportunities, including working for themselves."

Education for Enterprise as an approach to teaching and learning, aims to develop students who are enterprising in the core subjects and across learning areas. It requires a different way of thinking about how we deliver our curricula. It's a change

of approach rather than a new programme, and seeks to utilize 'real world' (community and curriculum) and business examples as students make decisions and direct their own learning, build their learning capacity and competencies, become self-motivated and risk takers.

As part of the framework that supports an E4E approach, the project developed 15 Enterprising Attributes (appendix 1) which provide a depth of understanding into the key competencies and offers students a structured way of building the skills, attitudes and attributes to become enterprising, confident, connected, actively involved learners and citizens in the future.

Lauriston School has had a long history of involvement in Enterprise Education. We were one of the early adopters of PrEP (Primary Enterprise Programme) through Enterprise New Zealand Trust, beginning in 2002. I was a trainer for this programme on behalf of the Trust and supported many Canterbury Schools and teachers to implement this into their schools and classrooms.

In 2006 I was part of team that developed the Ministry of Education initiative called, 'Building Enterprising Students Today' (BEST) This project developed information and resources for school and teachers to use when considering incorporating an enterprising approach to their curriculum delivery, the results of which are available on [www.tki.org.nz/](http://www.tki.org.nz/) under Education for Enterprise (E4E) As a result of this approach, E4E now operates throughout Lauriston School and has become an integral part of our school vision, curriculum and culture.

With schools now being swamped by educational experts, encouraging us to make that 'paradigm shift' in education, (Mark Treadwell, 2008, Sir Ken Robinson, 2010, Yong Zhao, "World Class Learners, 2012, Marc Prensky, "Digital Natives, Digital Immigrants." *On the Horizon*, vol. 9, no. 5 (October 2001), Michael Fullan, "What's worth fighting for in your education, 1998, Andy Hargreaves, "The Global Fourth Way" 2012, Herman Miller "Paradigm Shift: 2006) both nationally and internationally, I was interested to know how well Enterprise Education pedagogy fitted this new thinking and whether the Enterprise Education pathway we were on was heading us towards or away from this ideal.

## **Activities and Information Gathering**

As stated, I held interviews and discussions with Principals, staff and students across a range of deciles (1a – 9), locations and ethnic mixes.

I used the following templates to gather responses;

- Learning conversations around Key Competencies and Enterprising Attributes (Appendix 2)
- Enterprising Attribute discussion questions (Appendix 3)

I also spent several days with Professor Yong Zhao and his colleagues at the University of Oregon in Eugene, USA, who are established as leaders in 21<sup>st</sup> century education and developing creative and entrepreneurial students. This work is more anecdotal.

## Findings

My findings are firstly recorded under the Enterprising Attribute headings and the associated key competency link and I have summarized the responses gathered from all the conversations I had.

Secondly, the learning conversations held with Principals or Lead Teachers is shared in a more narrative form.

- **Generating, identifying and assessing opportunities –Thinking**

- *Do students create learning opportunities? Can they identify an opportunity for learning?*

- Summary

- Few schools I visited are truly allowing students to fully develop this direction in their learning. However, it was apparent that most schools were encouraging more input of student voice and student lead initiatives. This occurred through self-directed Science projects, design and technology programmes creating a product, service or an event.

- **Generating and using creative ideas and processes – Thinking**

- *Do students use their imagination to consider possibilities? Are they forthcoming with new ideas and ‘what if’ thinking?*

- Summary

- Children have little difficulty in being creative if given the freedom and right conditions to do so. Many schools found it difficult to contain and manage student’s enthusiasm and ‘creative juices’. I gauged for some schools, this was a dis-incentive to giving students the opportunity, unfortunately.

- **Identifying, assessing and managing risks – Thinking**

- *Do students consider what could go wrong? Are they able to work around these barriers?*

- Summary

- This competency was not as well developed with students in the school visited. If it is explicitly taught, students of all ages can consider such consequences. In some schools students were contributing and completing their own Risk Analysis and Management, RAM, forms.

- **Identifying, solving and preventing problems – Thinking**

- *Are they able to reason through problems logically and systematically? Can they plan ahead to avoid them?*

- Summary

- Identifying and solving problems are more easily developed as students work through established school processes. They usually have mentors, role models and buddies there to support them in playground situations. Inquiry

models also often have steps where problems are considered as they go. Thinking ahead to prevent problems is less evident.

- **Monitoring and evaluating – Thinking**

- *Are students reflective? Do they revise work as they go and check on progress against the plan?*

- Summary

- It seems if this is integral and part of the classroom and school practice, which it was for most of the schools visited, the students revise and check progress against plans on an on-going basis. For example; looking at progress to date, will the timeline be met, checking the roles students had and did they still 'fit', reflecting on criteria set and making changes along the way. For schools not yet operating at that level, there seemed to be little competency in this area with students.

- **Using initiative and drive – Managing Self**

- *Do students stick with a challenge? Do they lock onto tasks? Are they able to take personal responsibility?*

- Summary

- When students are engaged through truly authentic contexts and have ownership of the learning and the outcomes from that, initiative and drive and personal responsibility is high. As one student said, "you make sure you stick with your responsibilities."

- **Matching personal goals and capabilities to an undertaking – Managing Self**

- *Do students understand themselves as a learner? Do they know their strengths and capabilities?*

- Summary

- Being aware of themselves as learners, understanding strengths and capabilities, allows students to develop competency in selecting suitable roles for various tasks. However, they need to be given the opportunity to do so to find out these things sometimes. Also in this area is the balance between self-esteem and confidence and discovering a skill or talent.

- **Working with others and in a team – Relating to Others**

- *Can students use a range of roles in collaborative work? Do they listen to others for understanding? Are they able to draw out the best in others?*

- Summary

- Students seem to have a multitude of opportunities to work in teams as they take charge of house groups, assemblies etc. However, working in a team should not be confused with leadership. Skills here are more effective when roles are developed and clearly understood and exercised across a range of learning situations.

- **Negotiating and influencing – Relating to Others**

- *Are they able to persuade others? Are they able to resolve issues and reach an agreement?*

### Summary

These skills are less practised within an enterprise environment it seems. Children younger in age seem to want to 'stick to their guns' rather than be influenced to change position. Using a decision making tool/graphic organiser takes the emotion away. The teacher needs to take the role of facilitator and let the students resolve the issue or problem.

- **Being fair and responsible – Relating to Others**

- *Do students take ownership of their actions/learning? Are they considerate of the rights of others in their decision making?*

### Summary

I believe this attribute is quite reflective of the values of the school and the school culture. If it is deemed important and is reflected in everyday school practice, then students are considerate. There needs to be open explicit discussions on how decisions will affect others in all areas of the curriculum and classroom operations.

- **Identifying, recruiting and managing resources – Participating and Contributing**

- *Are students able to capitalise on school and community resources? Do they manage these with care and resourcefulness?*

### Summary

This was not an overly strong attribute across the schools visited. Many students were unaware of the need to be resourceful and just expected others to provide. Some classes were connecting with the community regularly and knew how to work around getting what they needed.

- **Planning and organizing – Participating and Contributing**

- *Do students plan what they have to do and make sound decisions based on the task?*

### Summary

Schools and teachers are gaining in confidence to 'hand over' more the decision making to students, allowing them to develop the skills of planning. It is a natural part of the learning process for those schools that have developed an enterprising culture. The use of timelines were critical for students and older students reported how much they enjoyed discussing all aspects before making a decision.

- **Being flexible and dealing with change – Participating and Contributing**

- *Do students adapt and/or change their work as they proceed? Are they able to get over disappointments and move on?*

### Summary

Students who are placed in situations to experience change, challenges and disappointments and have opportunities to discuss and learn from it are better equipped to deal with life in a world of constant change.



• **Collecting, organizing and analysing information – Using Language, Symbols and Texts**

*- Are they able to pull out the main learning points? Can students sort information to make sense of it?*

Summary

These are skills and attributes developed through literacy programmes first and foremost, however, opportunities need to be given to students through research processes and across other curriculum.

• **Communicating and receiving ideas and information – Using Language, Symbols and Texts**

*- Are students able to share their learning effectively with others? Are they able to take in ideas and pick up habits/competencies from other people?*

Summary

Students are engaged and motivated to share their learning after the term or block of work. There were a variety of ways of doing this, some more enterprising than others. Students liked it when they got to decide how to share this. The concept of 'imitation' whereby students adopt methods, habits or values from others was not taught explicitly or something considered at the schools visited.

**Learning Conversations**

**A description of Enterprise Education at the School**

- There was a range of ways Enterprise Education was implemented in the schools visited. For many, skills and attributes were developed through an inquiry approach. This too was variable as some schools had a very structured self-designed process while others had used a 'model' from elsewhere and were more flexible in their approach.
- For some Enterprise Education was fully imbedded in the school and occurred throughout the year, while others 'did' enterprise at a specific time within a particular topic.
- Rarely was Enterprise Education seen operating throughout a whole school, though a few were able to do so successfully in a Yr 1-8 context.
- Following up with some schools that I'd trained, disappointingly, I found that maybe only 1 or 2 classes operate an enterprise programme. The skills, competencies, understandings and attitudes learnt were not utilized in their next class or developed further. It is doubtful whether students would retain these if not given the opportunity to practice them in the future.

### **How well does Enterprise Education/Inquiry contribute to the development of key competencies?**

- All Principals, Lead Teachers and participants strongly agreed that Enterprise Education contributes to the development of the key competencies.
- It was felt that the key competencies were central to student learning and that enterprise education gives them a real and authentic context, however, this was more effective when there had been explicit and deliberate teaching of the competencies and attributes and the connections between them and the relevance to the real world were made.
- Participants endorsed the skills and attributes of the Enterprising Attributes that give students opportunities to explore, develop and grow in the key competencies. Eg; decision making, thinking through problems, creative and analytical thinking, managing themselves and time and other life skills.
- Letting the students take charge of their learning and the projects was deemed the best way to experience the key competencies.

### **What differences are observed between experienced students and students new to Enterprise?**

- Principals and Lead Teachers reported marked differences between students familiar with an enterprising approach compared to those new to the school and this type of environment.
- The major differences were:
  - ❖ Inability to collaborate with others
  - ❖ Students were less forthcoming with generating ideas
  - ❖ Students tended to show less curiosity and lacked depth in their questioning
  - ❖ New students were more likely to stand back, were unsure of how to take action, and lacked independence.
- As one Principal put it, “they expect everything to be done for them.”

### **What other educational benefits are evident through an Enterprise Education approach?**

- Community and parent involvement and engagement was a common response in this area. Parents got excited about their children’s projects and presentations. In fact, many schools reported having trouble backing the parents off from doing too much for the students!
- What came out strongly was that Literacy and Numeracy had authentic contexts for students.
- Levels of student engagement was very high.
- Teachers reported how pleasing it was to see student’s growing confidence in what they can achieve for themselves.

- There was a much deeper understanding by students of what it takes to be a leader, a planner or a decision maker, and of financial literacy and how the world works.
- Students who have experienced an enterprising approach have an openness others do not. They are more open to criticism as they see that as constructive and are more open to ideas.
- Participants reported an increased ability in students to make connections in their learning. They are more able to question in an enterprising environment without fear, leading to more innovation and creativity.
- A 'product based learning' outcome made the learning, projects and presentations more relevant and authentic to the students. They could see that they could make a difference and effect change.

## My Learnings/Implications

### Research

- There is a general lack of research to show to what degree Enterprise Education enhances student capacity and empowerment of the key competencies. Work by Claxton, Pannells, & Rhoads, (2005) found that many different definitions and measures of creativity and entrepreneurial capabilities, along with the differences of experiences in different schools, made any findings very tentative.
- The degree to which schools enhance or decrease student outcomes through enterprise education is unknown, since the creativity, innovation, delivery and measures of such programmes, by their very nature, are so varied between schools, as was the case with this investigation.
- What is known, however, is that outcomes from individual schools and classrooms show students highly engaged in real life authentic contexts and taking responsibility for their own learning.
- Studies have shown and 21<sup>st</sup> Century Learning video clips report that the highest percentage scores of genius level at creativity and divergent thinking occur in 5 year olds and that there is a sharp decline in capabilities in this area during the primary years. We manage to systematically stifle and crush the very skills we are now trying to develop!

### Enterprising Environments and Frameworks

- Although many schools in New Zealand are engaging in entrepreneurial and enterprising activities and projects with students, there seems to be a noticeable lack of structure and progressive frameworks around the learning. Students could talk freely about the activity or project, but very few could describe the skills and capabilities learnt or make connections to the key competencies or where these could be used in the future.
- Explicit teaching of the skills and the associated language around a framework needs to occur, otherwise the valuable learning is lost. Students

are highly engaged in the activity or project, but describe it as 'fun' or 'really cool' without the learning being recognised.

- Frameworks also provide structure for ensuring the key competencies and enterprising skills are developed over time and opportunities for students to experience and grow in these competencies progress throughout the school.
- The inherent danger, however, in constructing frameworks and 'rubric' type documents is that it becomes too structured and limiting on the creative and innovative entrepreneurial environment.
- I believe one of the most important keys to be operating an enterprising environment and developing the key competencies is establishing a framework of language which is explicitly used and taught across a range of curriculum contexts.
- Programmes that are built around an educational approach called 'product or project based learning' (PBL) have great merit and are becoming more common in 21<sup>st</sup> Century school environments. Here meaningful and rigorous tasks give students voice and choice and opportunity to develop capabilities in the Key competencies and enterprising skills.
- Authentic contexts result in students producing and making things that have value for a real audience, things that matter. This is the fundamental difference from traditional 'projects', which children often enjoy, but don't connect to the learning or the skills practiced. They do what they need to do to get the grade or the mark.
- This approach builds deep content understanding, motivates and engages learners, gives rise to collaboration and community of inquiry through tackling challenging problems and questions and is led by the students.

#### Entrepreneurial Mindset and Spirit

- ❖ Enterprise is about solving problems creatively. The World Economic Forum (2011, p. 5) had this to say, "Entrepreneurship refers to an individual's ability to turn ideas into action and is therefore a key competency for all, helping young people to be more creative and self-confident in whatever they undertake." They talk of the 'new survival skills' in the 21<sup>st</sup> century as being effective communication, curiosity, and critical thinking skills. I believe creativity, collaboration, self-confidence and risk taking needed to also be included.
- ❖ Entrepreneurs also need a spirit of resilience, fortitude and courage. What are the implications for us as school leaders in setting our school environments and cultures to develop such attributes?
- ❖ These reflect our New Zealand key competencies perfectly. Using Enterprise Education as the vehicle to develop these seems to be a highly effective tool. Our students need to be taught these skills, have opportunity to practice and develop them in authentic and meaningful contexts.
- ❖ To make a sustained difference, it is not a matter of adding enterprise education to the curriculum once a week. In fact, it's not about adding anything! It is a change in pedagogy and part of a paradigm shift in thinking as to what our 21<sup>st</sup> century learners need now. It is a change of culture in the way the school environment supports learners to explore and challenge themselves, and for teachers to take on a facilitating role to truly allow our students to become confident, connected, life-long learners who can manage

themselves and think in a multitude of ways, who participate and contribute in ways that make a difference while relating to and working with others effectively, and who can apply their literacy and numeracy skills in genuine situations to make a difference in their communities.

- ❖ That said, schools can begin to move down an enterprising pathway by introducing the associated language and activities that initiate students into this way of operating. Teachers can invite more student voice into their classrooms, allow students to drive the task and make decisions, to make mistakes and learn from them. Resources to assist teachers can be found on TKI; <http://education-for-enterprise.tki.org.nz/Resources-tools-templates>

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