

**PRINCIPAL'S
SABBATICAL
REPORT**

TERM 2, 2007

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INTRODUCTION

My sabbatical was based on visits to schools and/or educational institutions. I have therefore taken the simple approach of giving a brief outline of what I observed and discussed in each school. The schools have been identified in this report by type, location and profile rather than name.

Executive Summary

- Education for Enterprise approaches to teaching and learning are more frequently found in New Zealand schools than in those visited across England, Wales, Ireland and Scotland. (In addition to the eight schools visited on this trip, in 2002 I had the opportunity to visit four schools in the UK and ten others in the United States and Canada. At the end of that trip I had drawn a similar conclusion, i.e. in general New Zealand Secondary Schools take a more student-centered approach to teaching and learning).
- Overall, the teaching strategies I observed in classrooms in the schools I visited were more teacher-centered and academically focussed.
- I sensed from my conversations with teachers in the schools I visited that there was a degree of reluctance to adopt an Education for Enterprise approach to student learning. Two factors that were often mentioned were
 - (i) concern about controlling classes and individual students in open learning situations or with group work
 - (ii) difficulty in making close community contacts and the associated compliance paperwork required for field trips, excursions, business/school projects etc.
- In Scotland there has been a concerted effort from the Scottish Executive to encourage (and require) schools to engage students in 'Enterprise' activities. The key attributes they want schools to develop are essentially the same as those proposed in the draft New Zealand Curriculum document. Considerable funding has been made available to schools under the 'Schools of Ambition' project. The schools must apply for this funding and present a proposal for a three year period that supports the development of an 'enterprise' culture in the school.
- While carried out as 'once a year' programmes, projects such as the Scottish Food Challenge activities I observed were certainly engaging the students and staff.
- New Zealand teachers can be very proud of the programmes we provide for students in our secondary schools. I have now had the opportunity to visit over 30 secondary schools in different parts of the world over the past 10 years. I believe New Zealand schools provide many 'real life' experiences for students and many more are being developed and trialled, not just under the heading of 'Education for Enterprise' but simply from our desire to provide the best learning experiences we can for our students.
- I am grateful to the Ministry of Education and the Waimea College Board of Trustees for the opportunity to take Sabbatical Leave.

A final quote from a Scottish Principal which, I think, quite accurately describes the success factor for Education for Enterprise

“for enterprise in education to survive it must be built into the curriculum, be delivered in a cross-curricular way and become part of the expected teaching and learning culture of the school.”

A) Purpose

What are the ways in which schools in other parts of the world are addressing two issues:-

- i) Education for Enterprise
- ii) Raising student achievement

Specifically:

- i) What programmes have schools put in place that incorporate the key elements of 'Education for Enterprise'?
- ii) What specific activities have schools undertaken to raise the achievement levels of their students?

To do this I:

- Visited schools and/or institutions to see:-
 - i) Examples of 'Education for Enterprise' in action with a view to extending current practice in this area at Waimea College.
 - ii) How they have identified and addressed the issue of raising student achievement with a view to adopting examples of good practice where applicable for Waimea College.
- Undertake personal professional development by taking time away from school for reflective thinking.

My findings have been reported by:

- Publishing on the Ministry of Education 'Leadspace' website.
- Written report and presentations to the Waimea College Board of Trustees and staff.
- Presentations to the local Nelson Principals Group and the 'Top of the South' Nelson/Marlborough Principals' Group.
- Presentations to the Nelson Bays Education and Business Partnership and the Nelson Region E4E Project Executive and Advisory Group.
- Presentations to local Rotary Clubs and the Tasman District Council.

B) Programme Outline

I visited schools and/or other institutions in the following places.

- United Kingdom (England, Wales, Ireland and Scotland)

- The Middle East (United Arab Emirates – Dubai, Qatar)

The visits were arranged around where I have colleagues and/or friends who are working in schools and/or education institutions in these areas or through contacts I have in these areas.

<u>Locations</u>	<u>Contact Personnel</u>
South of England	Mr Tony Alexander (Head Teacher)
South – Mid England	Ms Hazel Nash (School Matron/Tutor)
Wales	Mr Rory Fish (Lecturer)
Ireland	Miss M Matchell (Inspectorate, Department of Education, Northern Ireland)
Scotland	Stephanie Worrall, Schools of Ambition Project,
Scotland	
Qatar	Mr John Lawson (Principal, International School)
Dubai	Mr John Lawson (Principal, International School)

Purpose in:-	England	}	'Education for Enterprise' and 'Raising Student Achievement'
	Wales		
	Ireland		
	Scotland		
	Qatar	}	'Raising Student Achievement'
	Dubai		

C) Background

Education for Enterprise

I have for a long time, had an ongoing interest in how teachers can improve student engagement by making student learning relevant to real life situations:-

In 2005 I represented the Nelson Principals Group at the Northland Enterprising Teachers (NET) Conference at Waitangi. As a result of this, I made two presentations to the Nelson Bays Education Business Partnership (NBEBP) and convened a workshop at Waimea College for Nelson schools interested in the concept of 'Education for Enterprise' (E4E). Since then the Nelson Regional E4E project has been established and in operation for 2007 (and will continue in 2008 and beyond).

Waimea College currently has some strategies in place to address this:-

- Held staff workshops and provided professional development to help establish an enterprising culture in our teaching and learning practice
- An enterprise 'cell' (group of lead teachers, one representing each faculty) has been established
- An Enterprise Coordinator has been appointed (1MU and Time Allowance) to oversee the development of the programme that will help build this enterprise culture over the next 3-5 years
- A number of departments are involved in E4E projects with business, the service sector, other schools and within our own school.

Raising Achievement

Analysis of achievement data has identified an issue for Waimea College to address. For example in NCEA Levels 1-3 our students are achieving above the national level for all schools but below that of schools of the same decile rating. Waimea College currently has some strategies in place to address these issues:-

- An annual motivational theme approach (e.g. in 2006 - 'Attitude is Everything', in 2007 - 'Be Better Than Before')
- Focus on achieving NCEA standards with merit and excellence rather than just at achieved level
- Junior School GATE programme – mentors, specialist activities, camps)
- Mentoring programme for scholarship students.
- Junior Graduation Programme

D) Report (as follows)

Sabbatical Report 2007

School: A

Type: *Independent (Private) Co-educational, boarding with some day students. Fees equivalent to NZ \$65,000 per year*

Location: *England (Berkshire)*

Profile:

- **Roll:** 650 (Ages 13-18 years)
- **Socio economic status:** (Equivalent to NZ decile 10+)

E4E programmes / observations:

Very limited. Almost all teaching I observed was traditional, teacher- centred and delivered a very academic course aimed at gaining entry to a University (and the more prestigious the better!).

At year 10 and 11 levels students are expected to take part in some sort of 'enterprise activity'. This is done as a day or two of work experience which the students organise themselves. No-one seems to seriously check that it has been done or keep records of what was done. A small number of field trip type activities could fall into the E4E category.

Raising student achievement programmes / observations:

Use a merit / demerit point system at two levels – class and faculty. Class merits given by a teacher in a subject are presented in form class at the end of each week. Faculty merits are presented at assembly at the end of each term.

*Commendations are given at two levels - Housemaster (Tutor/Dean)
- Head teacher*

These commendations are in the form of a certificate and include a letter home to parents.

Other points of interest:

This school has amazing facilities. A golf course, 5 cricket wickets and practice nets, astro turf tennis and hockey courts, spectacular park-like grounds. Boarding facilities and catering were of a very high standard. In spite of this there was, in my opinion, a very average level of teaching delivery that took place. Students were very much spoon fed information to be rote learnt for GCSE and University entrance tests.

An amazing programme of extra-curricular trips was available to places like France, Turkey, Greece, Spain etc.

Small class sizes – largest 20 students.

Summary:

A very academic focus. All students come from high socio-economic backgrounds. Little in the way of 'enterprising' activities. No evidence that the merit and commendation systems encouraged higher levels of achievement (although I am sure they helped build self-esteem).



School: B

Type: *Independent (Private). Girls school. Boarding with some day students. Fees equivalent to \$65,000 per year.*

Location: *England (Dorset)*

Profile:

- **Roll:** 450 (Ages 13-18 years)
- **Socio economic status:** (Equivalent to decile 10)

E4E programmes / observations:

Limited. Teaching observed was traditional, teacher centred in most subject areas. The exceptions (interestingly) were in subjects being taught by New Zealanders! The areas of Food Technology and Fabric Technology were both using an Education for Enterprise approach involving community and/or business in their projects. Both classes were being taken by Kiwi teachers.

Work experience was classed as an 'enterprise' activity and students in year 10 or 11 were expected to make their own arrangements (in vacations) to do this. It was monitored and the girls had to keep a portfolio of activities undertaken while on work experience and signed off by employers, parents and teacher.

In Food Technology they were doing a project involving developing a biscuit recipe, marketing and promoting, costing the product, packaging etc (A variation on 'ANZAC' biscuits!).

In Textiles Technology they were involved in a 'wearable art' type project (design, marketing and promotion, cost of staging exhibitions, etc).

Raising student achievement programmes / observations:

The usual traditional prize giving with awards for excellence in subject studies, sport and cultural activities.

A merit award system existed in the boarding hostels to recognise good performance in hostel based activities. The awards were given out by Houseteachers (Tutors/Deans).

Other points of interest:

Very small class numbers. (Largest 18 students, many 10 or less). Excellent facilities although often contained in difficult spaces because of the very old buildings and limitations on alterations. (Largely built from stone and concrete plaster).

Stunning grounds. (Playing fields, courts and in general, landscaping).

An amazing programme of extra-curricular trips was available both within the United Kingdom and overseas, particularly to parts of Europe.

Overall, a very traditional teaching style. Teacher centred, with an academic focus aimed at securing placements in prestigious universities.

Summary:

The small class sizes were an obvious advantage in terms of managing student behaviour (not that there were many issues anyway!). The direction towards university study was a major focus and the most talked about topic amongst the girls that I held conversations with.



School: C

Type: *State Co-educational Secondary School. Day students.*

Location: *England (Devon)*

Profile:

- **Roll:** *2,500 students (Ages 13-18 years)*
- **Socio economic status:** *(Equivalent to decile 5)*

E4E programmes / observations:

A range of activities would fit the 'Education for Enterprise' definition however, these were done on quite a small scale. Certainly the enterprising approach was not a school-wide focus.

Some activities I observed included:

- *Materials Technology projects that involved using experts assisting students to make a gate for a local park.*
- *Young Enterprise group developing a business opportunity (eg photo collection of landscape features in Devon for sale to tourists).*
- *Work exploration opportunities. A special part time school / part time work programme for a small group of academically challenged students involved in community assistance and/or fundraising ventures.*

Raising student achievement programmes / observations:

The school has been through a 5 year 'rejuvenation' under the leadership of current Principal. A strong focus has been on improving standards of dress and behaviour and other things to instil in the school pride back in the students and community.

Such things as restrictive fencing, an overbridge, new uniform, new property construction and upgrades, removal of poorly behaved students, etc have all resulted in a huge increase in school pride and development of a positive culture. Alongside this has been an improvement in GCSE performances, university entrance examinations, higher student retention rates, more students leaving for further training or work having gained high qualifications.

Other points of interest:

Students were very proud of their school and respectful of property. Very little vandalism or litter.

How a simple fence and overbridge (a) got so much attention and (b) were so successful in reducing behavioural issues influenced by outsiders!

How a very big school manages to (a) expect and get high standards of work and behaviour and (b) provide a high level of pastoral care.

Summary:

A more student centred approach in classroom teaching was observed here. Education for Enterprise type activities are having an effect in helping to engage more students in their learning. Student achievement has improved through the staff having high expectations, improving facilities and restoring pride.



School: D

Type: State Co-educational Secondary School. Day students.

Location: Wales (North Wales, Llandudno)

Profile:

- **Roll:** 600 (Ages 11-18 years)
- **Socio economic status:** (Equivalent to decile 6)

E4E programmes / observations:

At year 10 and 11 there is a significant amount of careers advice and guidance in addition to work experience opportunities that are classed by the school as Enterprising activities.

Careers Wales publishes a handbook of activities for students to complete that help them plan for a career.

There are also what I would describe as Life Skills and Transition type programmes that the school refers to as 'enterprising' activities.

There are some 'Education for Enterprise' activities in Technology and Business Studies classes. For example, Design and Build projects based around a project making outdoor furniture suitable for use in a local park.

Raising student achievement programmes / observations:

There are no (other than the usual award style systems schools have) special programmes in place to raise achievement. However, the school was relocated into new buildings only a year ago and there has been a notable improvement in student behaviour, pride in the school and uniform. Data gathering work in the junior school indicates a higher standard of achievement.

Other points of interest:

A school that has been relocated from very old deteriorating buildings to new ones. The buildings are spacious, there are very good specialist facilities and all rooms have interactive whiteboards, data projectors and teacher desk top computers. Students have personal ID cards for attendance monitoring, cafeteria credits, library issues. There are very extensive grounds/playing fields of which approximately half are all-weather (astro turf) surfaces.

(The old site was bought by a supermarket chain who also built the new school buildings which are on a 25 year lease!)

While ICT facilities were very good, the usage by teachers and students was not. Lack of provision for the professional development for teachers was an issue here.

Summary:

An interesting 'new' school. Would be very interesting to revisit in 5 years to see if the culture shift has been sustained.



School: E

Type: State, Co-educational Secondary School. Day students.

Location: Northern Ireland (Belfast)

Profile:

- **Roll:** 1,000 (Ages 11-18 years)
- **Socio economic status:** (Equivalent to decile 8)

E4E programmes / observations:

A school that has specialist status in the area of languages and is involved with another local school and some European schools in providing special language programmes for their students. These programmes are designed to develop high level ancient and modern language ability in students. The 'enterprising' activity is the part that involves students organising shared programmes via the internet and visits to other countries.

Raising student achievement programmes / observations:

A very academically focussed school. High levels of expectation that students will perform to the best of their ability. No special programmes or systems are focussed on raising achievement. Very good (yet somewhat traditional) facilities.

Other points of interest:

Despite advanced communication, they had clearly overlooked my visit. I was given a very short (and restricted) visit of the grounds. I was not invited to meet and talk with students or staff.

Summary:

The school has a very good reputation for high level academic achievement and the curriculum offered at all levels reflects this in that the range of subjects offered is narrow and all courses have a GCSE achievement focus. I cannot comment on teacher or student activities as I was not invited to observe or meet them.

They have a school-wide theme or focus each year that has either a pastoral care or an academic flavour. (For 2007, it is 'be tolerant').

Special awards are given to students who are seen to be contributing to others, the school and improving their own performance in line with the theme. Awards include certificates, gifts, public acknowledgement.

This is a small school and each student has established, from the time they enter the school, an education plan for their time at the school. It is reviewed twice each year as is their performance against the plan.

Other points of interest:

On the day I visited, the students in S1/2 were working on a 'Food Challenge' enterprise project (running over a week while senior students were sitting examinations). The challenge was based around what is involved in developing a food product from the raw material. In this case, they were working with a local salmon farm. The students' final product was cubes of smoked salmon on skewers with a range of fresh fruit dips. (The product was great. I tasted plenty. Imagine smoked salmon cubes coated in blueberry, raspberry or strawberry dips!) Over the week the students had been involved in the science of sea-farming salmon, developing a recipe, costing, marketing and promoting the product. All work was undertaken in teams and had a competitive element to it.

Summary:

A very dynamic, small, community-centered school. The Education for Enterprise approach is very much in evidence here. The school has a very student-centered approach to teaching and has excellent community support in a whole range of activities.



School: G

Type: State, Co-educational Secondary School. Day students.

Location: Scotland (Highlands)

Profile:

- **Roll:** 350 (Ages 13-18 years)

- **Socio economic status:** (Equivalent to decile 2)

E4E programmes / observations:

This school was one of the first to receive funding a few years ago under the 'Determined to Succeed' initiative (the Principal described this as a total disaster as it was nothing more than a political statement/promotion that received no funding or resource support!)

It is one of the current 'Schools of Ambition' that has had to (successfully) prepare a plan and submit it for funding. The school receives £100,000 per year for three years to put their plan into action. Most is being used to support two projects – a 'community interest' project that has developed a small school farm on site. It has a full-time teacher, manager, is largely horticulture based and is used to support a teaching and learning programme for students who are at risk of failing (exclusion).

The second is a 'youth projects' scheme that employs a full-time Youth Director who encourages and supports enterprising initiatives that students or staff come up with. Examples are: Food Festival, Drama Production, School Signage, ICT Workshops for the community, charity fundraising, work exploration, Smart Business activities.

Raising student achievement programmes / observations:

Despite the outward appearance of the school buildings, a big push has been made in recent years to lift the pride students and the wider community have in the school. It has not been easy as it has not been seen as a preferred school for some time. However, they have established, and successfully use, a system of merits/demerits in which students earn awards and rewards. Performance in national examinations has been showing a gradual increase and this is attributed to the improvement in pride in their school by students (uniform, higher expectations, inside facilities) and the use by many teachers of more student-centered approaches to teaching which includes, in some areas, the Education for Enterprise approach.

Other points of interest:

My first impression of this school was one of dilapidated buildings. I quickly began to see it in a much more positive light once I had met and had conversations with a number of students, teachers and the Principal. A classic case of 'when the going gets tough, the tough get going'.

I was very impressed with the level of personal care and attention given to the students, many for whom school would be their daily sanctuary.

Summary:

This school is a contrast of appearances and activities. From the outside it has a very dreary, run-down appearance and barren (but tidy) grounds. On the inside, the maintenance and appearance is much better. The difference is a result of

responsibilities. (The outside maintenance is the responsibility of the local authority, i.e. City Council. The inside is the responsibility of the school from its operational funding).

Students come from very low socio-economic backgrounds, with many solo parent, blended family and beneficiary dependant homes.

I found the students overall to be very positive about the school and how it provided for them both in teaching programmes and pastoral care.

The recent development of a school farm project on site has brought a number of benefits to the school and students. (Funding support, links to the local agricultural and horticultural sectors, opportunity to involve parents/caregivers and the wider community, a focussed programme of 'real-life' learning for a group of challenging students).



School: H

Type: State, Co-educational Secondary School

Location: Scotland (Aberdeen)

Profile:

• **Roll:** 1,200 (Ages 13-18 years)

Socio economic status: (Equivalent to decile 8)

E4E programmes / observations:

A number of activities are referred to as enterprising activities by the school (yet in New Zealand would be considered normal practice and have been part of our programmes for quite some time). These include: careers visits to different workplaces; universities and careers fairs; work experience and transition to work programmes; Young Enterprise business activities.

Raising student achievement programmes / observations:

The usual traditional prizegiving with awards for excellence in academic subject studies, sport and cultural activities.

A junior leadership programme operates where these students assist with school service of some sort and are acknowledged for this in an award ceremony.

There is a culture of working for academic excellence in the school which has a tradition of good GCSE results and promotes an expectation of this from students.

Other points of interest:

On the day I visited, junior students (Year 9 & 10) were involved in the 'Scottish Food Challenge' programme.

The students were divided into groups of 4-5. Each group had a task to achieve in the morning sessions. For example: marketing, promotion, costing, designing brochures, creating slogans/jingles, creating and testing a recipe., In the afternoon, the groups worked together to make a final presentation for judging.

The challenge was based around a traditional seafood chowder recipe called 'Cullen Skink'. (It was great by the way!)

Summary:

A strong academic focus. Students generally come from high socio-economic backgrounds. There is a strong feeling amongst students and staff that high academic performance is important and expected. Facilities are very good and the school has a history of several hundred years, sharing a number of successful scholars (whose achievements are also used to role-model/promote achievement.

