

Technology Provision for Year 7 and 8 Students in Greater Christchurch

Scenario Workshop Discussion Document

August 2014

This document has been prepared for the scenario discussion workshops to be held in Christchurch in August 2014.



Scenarios for Discussion

Background

August 2014

The Canterbury earthquakes have provided a unique opportunity to look at education provision in greater Christchurch and do things differently. This includes technology which is currently delivered via a number of different arrangements.¹ As part of the announcements about the closures and mergers of some schools the Minister of Education, Hon Hekia Parata, announced short term arrangements for the provision of technology for year 7 and 8 students at affected schools. These short term arrangements have been put in place while the sector works together to consider technology provision for year 7 and 8 students in greater Christchurch in the long term.

In order to consider this, the Ministry worked with the Canterbury Primary Principals' Association, the Association of Intermediate and Middle Schools, the full primary school group and the Canterbury West Coast Secondary Principals' Association to develop a process to gather the sector's views. This process was developed to provide a number of different opportunities for interested parties to put forward their views and ideas.

Process

The first step in this process was a workshop for principals and technology leaders held on Tuesday 24th September 2013. Approximately 70 Board members, principals and technology teachers attended.

The next step in the process was an exercise to gain input from students on their thoughts and ideas about technology provision. At the workshop held in September 2013 a small group of participants considered what questions would best draw out the student voice on technology. They formulated a number of questions and these were also used to develop the questions in the student exercise. The exercise ran from 9th October to 1st November 2013 and over 2,600 responses were received. These responses were collated into six volumes, which are available from the Christchurch office of the Ministry, and summarised into a Summary Report.

Meetings were also held in term 4, 2013 with interested learning community clusters to discuss technology in a cluster context. The aim of these meetings was twofold – to inform clusters of the work and to seek their views on technology provision for year 7 and 8 students.

During the process there was support amongst the sector, including students, for the specialisation of technology within the current system, including the specialisation of teachers and teaching spaces. It was acknowledged that specialist technology teachers and spaces have the ability to provide students with a range of resources that they cannot access in their own school. However, this does not mean that the current arrangements could not be improved. Areas identified for enhancement included:

- design focused programmes rather than a product focus
- communication between providers, client schools and families and whānau
- integration of technology with students' wider learning
- more flexible provision of specialist teaching and spaces via timetabling and transportation
- more choice for students and client schools

¹ In this report 'technology' refers to those subjects taught as part of the technology strand of the New Zealand Curriculum. Most often this includes hard materials such as metal work and woodwork, soft materials such as sewing and cooking.



Vision

A vision for technology provision that emerged from the process is:

Students will be critical thinkers able to solve problems with creative and innovative solutions using a range of technologies. To do this technology provision in greater Christchurch will be student centred, integrated across the curriculum, flexible, effectively delivered and appropriately resourced.

These words came from the following ideas expressed by most participants at the September 2013 workshop:

- Students should be guided to be critical thinkers, problem solvers, innovative and creative
- Technology should be student centred, integrated with the New Zealand Curriculum and focused on the design process
- Technology should be effectively delivered and appropriately resourced
- Provision needs to be flexible to allow:
 - A wide use of technologies that will change in the future
 - Timetabling that fits with student learning
 - Less student travel
 - Flexibility of provision to allow the most appropriate model of provision for the student
 - For learning that is authentic, real and relevant
 - Activities that support contexts of learning occurring at school
 - Access to specialist skills and spaces when and where needed
 - Connection to the local community

The next step in the process was an online stakeholder survey to gain the views of the sector and wider community. The questions for this survey were developed with input from stakeholders. This stakeholder survey ran from 12th November to 29th November 2013 and 122 responses were received. These responses were also summarised into a Summary Report.

Current work:

The most recent step in the process has been the development with Principals' Associations and the Education Advisory Board of possible provision scenarios for further discussion. These scenarios will be set out in more detail at the workshops being held in Christchurch in August 2014. The intent of these workshops, using a scenario planning approach, is to generate agreement of future arrangements for the provision of technology for year 7 and 8 students across greater Christchurch that will most effectively deliver the vision expressed above. The scenarios are provocations designed to generate discussion by participants.

At the workshops, participants will be asked to consider four different scenarios, discuss what the sector would get from each scenario and why that is important, how that scenario supports the vision and what needs to happen to bring it to reality. Based on discussions you have had as you worked through the four scenarios, you will then be given the opportunity to describe an alternative fifth scenario.

In relation to thinking about how to bring a scenario to reality, there are some factors that participants will need to consider. These factors include, but are not limited to:

- Staffing challenges
- Current resourcing for Year 7 and 8 technology
- Resources and equipment required to deliver technology in a rapidly changing environment

We would point out that what often happens during scenario planning is that all starting scenarios are eventually rejected and a new scenario that incorporates the acceptable parts of each starting scenario is developed and agreed. Some refer to this as being the 'and' 'and' scenario.



Next Step

Following the workshops, feedback obtained will be analysed by the Ministry and a plan will be drafted. The plan may include one of the scenarios discussed at the workshops, an iteration of a scenario or a new scenario that emerged from the workshops.

This will be distributed to all schools with Year 7 and 8 students and key stakeholders by the end of September for final comment. Following this, a report for consideration by the Minister of Education will be developed, which is likely to be by the end of November.



