

August 2015

Feedback Summary to Years 7 & 8 Technology Provision Consultation in Greater Christchurch

2013 – Phase 1

In 2013, the Ministry of Education worked with the Canterbury Primary Principals' Association (CPPA), the Association of Intermediate and Middle Schooling (AIMS), representatives from full primary schools and the Canterbury West Coast Secondary Principals' Association (the Principals' Associations) to develop a process to gather the sector's views.

A number of workshops, meetings and surveys with the sector were held between September and November 2013. These included:

- a workshop held in September 2013 attended by approximately 70 Board of Trustee members, principals and technology teachers
- an exercise to design a survey to gain input from students, in collaboration with the NZ Post Primary Teachers' Association (NZPPTA) and the Principals' Associations. This online survey ran between 9 October 2013 and 1 November 2013 and over 2,600 responses were received from students
- meetings with interested learning community clusters
- an online stakeholder survey for the sector and wider community.

Summary reports of feedback from the participants at the workshop and the online surveys were circulated in draft to the Principals' Associations and the NZPPTA for their comment, before being made available to the sector.

Establishment of a Technology Learning Community Cluster

At the workshop in September 2013 participants identified communication between providers, client schools and families and whānau as an important area for improvement. It was agreed that education providers working together in a learning community cluster could be a good vehicle for increased communication and also provide opportunities for collaboration, mentoring, sharing of facilities and resources, bulk buying of equipment and materials and joint problem solving.

A technology learning community cluster was established and the first meeting of the cluster was on 5 November 2013. Approximately 45 principals and technology teachers attended and agreed to set up a page for the cluster on the Greater Christchurch Learning Communities online forum to provide a vehicle for discussion and communication. The cluster has appointed leaders, issues a regular newsletter and is meeting regularly to progress its goals. It has also initiated opportunities for professional learning and development for teachers of technology.

Developing a vision and draft proposals

The views and ideas put forward during the consultation phase were summarised in a draft report, Technology provision for years 7 and 8 students in greater Christchurch – Vision and Proposals. The report included a draft vision for technology provision for years 7 and 8 students in greater Christchurch and made a number of draft proposals.

Draft vision

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.

Draft proposals

Communication and Collaboration

That the technology learning community cluster considers developing best practice guidelines to:

- assist technology providers and client schools to co-construct technology programmes that integrate with students' wider learning and their language, culture and identity
- enhance communication between technology providers, client schools and families and whānau
- facilitate data sharing to ensure students' existing knowledge and experience is incorporated into their technology programme
- encourage seamless transitions into and out of the years 7 and 8 technology programme.

That technology providers and client schools:

- co-construct technology programmes that integrate with students' wider learning and their language, culture and identity
- enhance communication with families and whānau about technology
- facilitate data sharing to ensure students' existing knowledge and experience is incorporated into their technology programme
- encourage seamless transitions into and out of the years 7 and 8 technology programme.

Professional Learning and Development

That the technology learning community cluster:

- develop a professional learning and development programme for technology;
- provide mentoring about technology for teachers and principals.

Choice of Provider

That the Ministry reviews and amends its policies and procedures relating to changing a technology provider/client school relationship to allow more flexible approaches to technology provision for years 7 and 8 students in greater Christchurch.

Transportation and Timetabling

That Technology providers and client schools regularly review transportation and timetabling arrangements to ensure they are meeting the needs of their students.

Feedback from the Principals' Associations

Verbal feedback was received from the Principals' Associations. In summary their feedback was:

- more detailed proposals should be considered to make the most of the opportunity provided by the Canterbury earthquakes to improve years 7 and 8 technology provision for the students of greater Christchurch
- client schools should be surveyed again about detailed proposals and the client schools should be required to identify themselves and take ownership of their responses
- the Principals' Associations were available to work with the Ministry to prepare the questions for client schools. They also undertook to circulate the survey to their members.

Feedback from NZPPTA

Feedback from the NZPPTA included a number of concerns it had with the process which had been followed, as well as the Vision and Proposals Report. In summary, the feedback covered:

- perceived bias in the Stakeholder Survey questions
- that the Stakeholder Survey responses and the draft Vision and Proposals Report reflected the views of local primary Principals and made no attempt to consider the views of the people delivering the technology curriculum
- its belief that the views of current technology providers had been ignored and that it needs to be understood that it is the technology teachers who are experts in the delivery of the technology curriculum not the primary principal
- failure to acknowledge the financial and practical sense of consolidating provision at specialised technology centres
- major concerns about the funding and staffing implications of allowing client schools flexibility to change provider
- lack of consultation regarding the delivery of the Health and Physical Education Curriculum. All foods programmes delivered at years 7 and 8 are responsible for the delivery of the food and nutrition practical lessons as stated in the Health and Physical Education Curriculum.

Feedback from learners – Student voice

From 9 October to 1 November 2013 the Ministry ran a student exercise to gain input from students on their thoughts and ideas about technology provision. At final count a total of 2,675 responses were received, 987 students completed the exercise online and 1,688 via hard copy. This equates to approximately 24.83% of the 10,773 Year 7 and 8 students enrolled in greater Christchurch schools.

For about half of the responses students did not state their Year level at school, for those students that did approximately 50% were Year 7 students and the other 50% were Year 8 students. Only 54 responses came from students in Years 6, 9 and 10. Please also note that the survey did not require participants to specify whether they currently access technology at their own school or through a separate technology provider.

Almost unanimously students who responded to the exercise enjoyed technology and thought it was 'cool', 'awesome' and 'fun'. This enthusiasm for technology led to approximately 80% of students wanting to spend more time doing technology. They wanted to have more time to finish their projects and they were open to the idea of doing technology in blocks of days in a term or more sessions in a week.

Students who responded strongly endorsed the more traditional technology subjects of cooking, textiles, metalwork and woodwork. But they also requested that their technology learning include a wide range of other topics, such as architecture, electronics, graphics, programming and robotics. Some topics they would like to do such as drama, dance and science are not technology subjects. A small number of students wanted to be able to choose the technology projects they did and have more 'hands on' projects with less theory.

Students were also asked where they would like their technology learning to happen. The majority of students responded in favour of specialised technology spaces with specialist technology teachers. Most students who favoured specialised technology spaces indicated that they were happy to travel to a technology centre. A number of students took the time to note that they would like technology to include more fieldtrips to see technology in action, such as visiting a restaurant kitchen or a workshop.

Feedback from the Education Advisory Board

In summary the Education Advisory Board was concerned that the draft report did not capitalise on the opportunities for major change in technology provision in greater Christchurch. The Board supported the work related to integrating technology learning into overall student learning and ensuring professional development for technology teachers.

It also recommended that more consideration be given to:

- how provision of technology learning in the future would need to change to align with emerging technologies
- developing a collaborative approach to technology provision with local businesses
- ensuring a continuum of technology learning through all school years, not just years 7 and 8.

It was the Board's view that further consideration and evaluation should be undertaken of more detailed technology provision options. These options included:

- shifting the balance of technology provision away from specialised providers to user schools
- establishing a single network of technology provision for Greater Christchurch. The Board envisaged that the network could be owned and governed by the user schools and managed/operated as a single integrated network

- developing a technology delivery model that combines some provision on site at a small number of specialist facilities with those facilities also having significant outreach and mobile delivery at user schools
- establishing a single technology provider which is independent of the user schools
- aligning technology provision with each (or multiple) LCCs
- using the existing technology resources and facilities that exist within other organisations to provide some or all of the required technology facilities. These organisations may include CPIT, secondary schools and businesses.

2014 – Phase 2

Following the feedback from the Principals' Associations, the NZPPTA and the Education Advisory Board, the Ministry acknowledged the need for further discussion to:

- develop more innovative proposals for technology provision
- provide another avenue for technology teachers to put their views forward
- create greater sector ownership of the final outcomes.

Four workshops were held in Christchurch at the end of August and beginning of September 2014 to which all interested stakeholders (technology providers, client schools, principals and teachers and organisations) were invited. UC Education Plus were contracted to facilitate these workshops.

A number of scenarios based on the recommendations from the Education Advisory Board for technology provision were developed for discussion at the workshops. These scenarios were:

1. home school provision, where technology is provided to years 7 and 8 students in their home school
2. modified central provision, with a small number of centralised providers and years 7 and 8 students attend the closest to their home school. These facilities would have outreach and mobile delivery capability for 'user' schools
3. modified status quo, where all existing technology providers are retained with the client schools having more opportunity to change provider
4. learning community cluster provision, where learning community clusters determine technology provision for all years 7 and 8 students within their cluster.

The following themes were identified from the written feedback as areas participants identified as important (in no particular order of priority):

- specialist staff
- choice/competition between schools
- integrated curriculum
- better use of student time especially in respect to the travel time required
- equity – resourcing, teaching, facilities
- student centred learning
- professional learning and development
- collaboration – between schools, within learning community clusters
- connection to community
- wider range of technologies on offer

The analysis of the feedback showed that the importance of specialist staff was the single unifying factor identified by every group across the four workshops. This ‘theme’ is directly linked to comments related to professional learning and development and pre-service teacher education, and specialist facilities and equipment.

Many of the themes were consistent with comments received during the work with the sector and students undertaken in 2013. In particular, engagement with the sector identified concerns with current provision to students at years 7 and 8 technology which was described as lacking innovation and being variable across the many providers. Some teachers of technology at secondary schools reported needing to re-visit Levels Three and Four of the curriculum at year 10, as students come with differing experiences and levels of knowledge.

Based on feedback received from the sector during 2013 and 2014, the Ministry developed a draft plan (Appendix 1) including two proposals for the provision of years 7 and 8 Technology in Greater Christchurch.

- Proposal one: By 2017, establish one technology centre provider with several hubs located strategically over greater Christchurch (Christchurch, Selwyn and Waimakariri). This facility would also offer outreach options supported by mobile units (staff and plant)
- Proposal two: By 2017, establish one technology centre provider with several hubs in each of the Christchurch, Selwyn and Waimakariri areas
- These facilities would also offer outreach options and mobile units (staff and plant).

The majority of the sector is supportive of the draft plan while identifying some aspects that will need further investigation. The need for the establishment of a sector work group whose main task would be to consider the operational aspects of the plan was identified. The sector working group or groups will include representation from both client and provider schools, key stakeholders and technology education experts.

2014 – Phase 3

The Ministry attended three meetings where the draft plan was discussed. Feedback from these meetings is listed in the table below.

Meeting with Selwyn schools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supportive of the draft plan • Favoured the establishment of a centre in the Selwyn district
Canterbury AIMS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mixed support for the plan • Concern that current clients of intermediate schools technology centres would lose their right to exercise choice in where their students accessed technology education • Concern that a principal would not have employment or management responsibilities for technology staff working out of their school.
Meeting held by Technology Learning Community Cluster	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mixed support for the plan • Questions about the intent of the draft plan, including implementation • Clarification that it was proposed that schools offering years 7 and 8 technology exclusively to their own students would continue to be employers of the technology teachers and retain the right to use their staffing allocation as they see fit

Forty five written feedback responses were received including representation from 43 named schools. This is approximately one third of the 124 schools in the greater Christchurch area that enrol years 7 and 8 students. The breakdown of this feedback is 12 outside technology provider schools, 27 client schools and 3 inside technology provider schools.

Additionally, comments were received from the Canterbury Primary Principals' Association (CPPA) representing a total membership of 203, which is inclusive of 102 Principals of full primary schools in the three districts. The comments were broken down into 27% from Christchurch, 19% from Waimakariri and 17% from Selwyn.

The majority of responses (25) provided support for the draft plan, 13 responses gave qualified support for the draft plan and four responses were opposed to the draft plan. The four responses opposed to the draft plan were from intermediate schools – two of these are current years 7 and 8 technology provider schools, the other two provide for their own students only.

Most respondents who gave support or qualified support to the draft plan noted that they supported a change rather than remaining with the status quo and that they wished for the learning needs of students to be at the forefront when decisions are made.

There was general support for:

- the notion of a central provider and hubs
- the vision in the draft plan
- a wide representation on any sector working group
- any resourcing or staffing allocation that is generated through technology provision for years 7 and 8 students be used for that purpose only
- the continuation of specialist teachers and facilities.

A third of comments supported the notion that schools could continue to choose to offer years 7 and 8 technology to their own students only while the remainder urged caution about this stating that it could undermine the model by threatening its viability.

Key issues or questions that were raised included:

- the need for proportional representation of client and provider schools on any working party
- special consideration for schools already engaged in property redevelopment so that this does not pre-empt the outcome of any final decisions
- the need to reconsider the proposed governance and management of staff and that teachers at any 'hubs' located at schools should contribute to that school's staffing
- consideration for an existing provider/client arrangement which has worked to the satisfaction for both parties over 10 years
- the risks to a central provider or to the delivery of the curriculum if too many schools were able to opt out and provide for their own students
- agreement with the provision for schools to opt to deliver to their own students

- a desire from the Christian Schools' Network to provide technology for years 7 and 8 students from a special character perspective
- the Ministry needs to optimise the current network rather than create an oversupply of facilities.

Four respondents stated that the current system works well and there is no desire in the sector to make change. These respondents referred to the work that the Technology Learning Community Cluster is doing in relation to teacher professional development, and felt that support for this group would be sufficient to address some of the issues about delivery of the curriculum identified through the various workshops and surveys.

The sector was asked to respond to a number of questions, including the benefits and the challenges to schools and students that would arise from the draft plan.

Possible benefits	Possible challenges
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extend teaching to include the science curriculum • Make links with secondary schools, tertiary providers and industry, • Opportunities for regional teacher training and professional development and learning • Investigate more equitable funding, resourcing and staffing through a centralised provider • Use of a centre outside the hours of 9am to 3pm. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensuring the needs of students and the New Zealand curriculum and the vision developed by the sector remained paramount in any decisions, • The impact on staffing at schools who currently provide years 7 and 8 technology for students from client schools, • Identifying which schools might be thinking of providing only for their own students and the impact on this on the financial viability of a large central provider • The conflict between a desire to collaborate and providing choice for schools.

The sector was also asked their view on whether there should be one technology centre for all of Christchurch, Waimakariri and Selwyn, or one for each district. The majority of comments supported a centre in each district.

Kaiapoi Borough School and a new school to be built in Rangiora West were suggested as sites for a centre for Waimakariri.

Lincoln Primary School was suggested as the site for Selwyn. The new Rolleston secondary school which is due to open in 2017 was also suggested as a possibility but only up to the point that the school will start taking year 12 students in 2020 as there will be surplus space in the school up until that time.

Most responses suggest placing the hubs at schools with existing technology facilities. There was some support for hubs at secondary schools but more support for placement at intermediate schools.

Summary

Throughout the two year engagement with the sector there have been frequent references to a range of issues and concerns with the current provision and organisation of years 7 and 8 technology in greater Christchurch. These concerns include:

- ineffective use of student learning time through the travel required to access a provider
- the lack of connection between current provision and students' current learning and their community context
- desire to access a wider range of technological learning and knowledge
- the ability to change providers
- the allocation and use of client school generated staffing by current providers
- lack of opportunities for professional learning and development in the technology curriculum.

The potential of a single provider to strengthening teaching and learning of the technology curriculum for years 7 and 8 students was identified by many respondents. Other potential benefits that were identified included:

- developing support for delivery of the technology curriculum in years 0 – 6
- ensuring effective transitions to secondary technology curriculum
- promoting collaboration across schools
- opportunity to extend the range of technologies taught
- supporting teaching and learning in science
- economies of scale can be achieved through a single provider.

Appendices

Appendix 1

The Draft Plan

Appendix 2

Report to the Sector