

Kia ora,

Our best wishes go out to early childhood education centres and schools in Canterbury as you begin Term One. May 2015 be a year of achievement and success for you all.

This month we mark four years since the February 2011 earthquake when many of our schools had to share school sites and classrooms because of the damage to your buildings. The pace of that change and progress since has been dizzying.

Thanks to the support and efforts made by boards and principals, staff, parents, and children we are continuing to build back to a better Christchurch education network.

Through Learning Communities we have a collaborative vision and culture to enhance learning outcomes. So far the progress of bringing together groups of schools and early childhood education centres has proven a powerful tool in the success of the greater Christchurch Education Recovery Programme.

The most substantial changes have emerged from you the schools and your desire to adapt as we aim to enhance education across Greater Christchurch.

Our main priority remains the continued support to students and staff post-earthquakes as many people in our communities continue to require support as a result of the earthquakes and changes which have been made in response to them.

Delivering a teaching practice programme is also key to the future of the Christchurch Education network to make sure the significant capital investment into refurbishing, remodelling, rebuilding and renewing our school properties is realised.

2015 is an opportunity for us to continue to work together to achieve our goal for greater Christchurch to become the leading education community in New Zealand, where every child is supported to realise their talents. I know that the Ministry teams are looking forward to working with you to do this.

Ma te wa,

Coralanne Child

Director of Education for Canterbury



Creating an education network that inspires children to reach their full potential.

2015 and beyond

We have a number of priorities to deliver on between now and June 2016, including those relating to learning communities, which requires greater flexibility to respond quickly and successfully. We are working harder than ever to achieve these priorities and this can only take place through building on the work already being done.

Our core priorities for the coming year and beyond include:

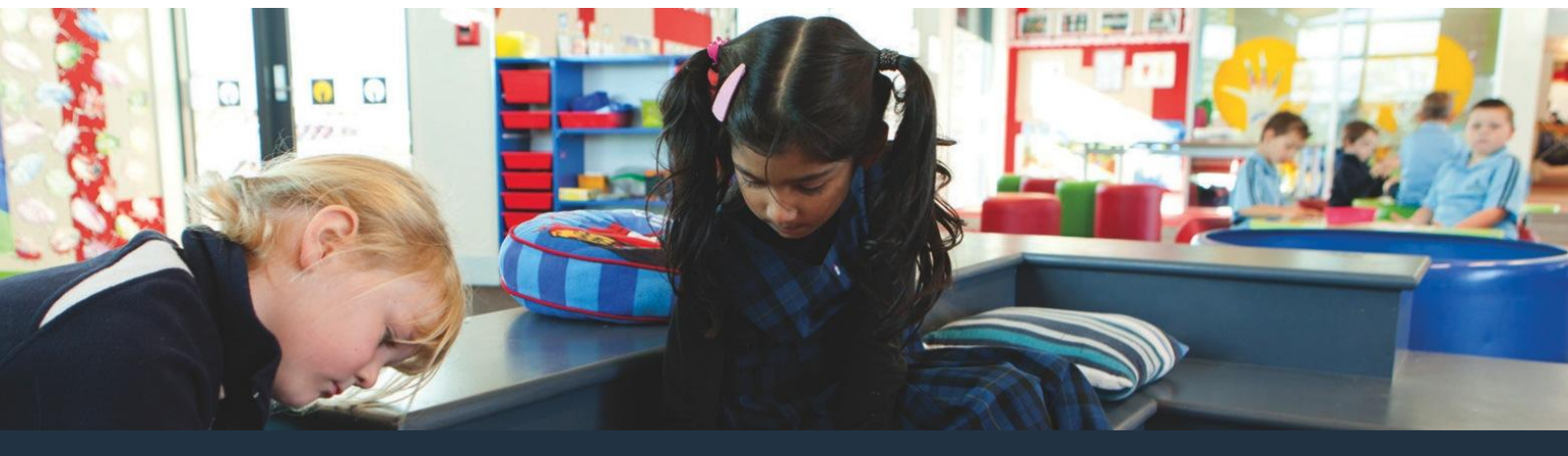
- Delivering a teaching practice programme so the investment in modern learning teaching spaces at schools is realised.
- Implementing the agreed proposals for Special Education network development.
- Implementing decisions around technology provision for Year 7 and 8 pupils in greater Christchurch.
- Working with the Waitaha Advisory Board to implement projects in 2015.
- Implementing the plan for secondary schools to work collaboratively to achieve their vision for education renewal in greater.

Continuing to support students and staff post-earthquakes

We know that many people in our communities continue to require support as a result of the earthquakes and changes which have been made in response to them.

We're continuing the development of a cross agency working party (Community & Public Health, the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS), Resource Teacher Learning and Behaviour (RTLB), and the Ministry) to address wellbeing issues in schools – the gap analysis of current services government and non government is progressing well.

We've maintained a focus on supporting students and staff in schools which will close or merge in early 2015. Specialist change managers have been working with schools to try to ensure a good transition for students, as well as working with staff and the wider community. Teachers in these schools have also had access to help with CV development, professional coaching and retraining opportunities where needed. We also made Education Development Initiative (EDI) cash grants available to schools that are receiving students from closing and merging schools.



Building a new and better future for education and for the community.

Collaborative initiatives making a difference

Underscoring how far we have come since 2011 are some important projects that are achieving results and being replicated by other clusters.

Cultural Practice - Hereora Cluster looked at their practices and how they could implement more inclusive practice into their schools. This project has been supported by Rebecca Sweany (CORE) who is doing a research project on collaboration - 'Spirals of Inquiry' which includes findings from the Hereora Clusters examination of their practices and the changes they are making.

This project has led to the cluster gaining more knowledge about their students and supports valuing the identity, language and culture of all of their learners. Hereroa's success has led to other clusters also focusing on Maori inclusive practice projects within their clusters.

Sharing Expertise - Burnside Cluster held an un- conference in 2014 where teachers shared ideas, looked at what practices they could implement into their own programmes. The opportunity to network with other teachers, share knowledge and find out what works in other schools. Collaborating to find more efficient and effective ways of working together to support the outcomes of their learning communities has proven a real success. Teachers continue to communicate and share information and will repeat the conference in 2015.

Transition Projects - The Parklands Cluster have scholarships that enable teachers from schools in their cluster to visit and work with their colleagues to find out what transition means to them, what works well and what can be replicated, what they have in common and what practices they can improve on.

The Papanui/Redwood Cluster transition projects include ECEs visiting primary schools to see how they can link their processes to enable an easier transition for their children to school. School teachers also visit ECEs where they outline what practices are working and what changes could be made to improve transition from ECE to school. They are working towards producing a transition document that will shape effective transitions across the cluster into the future.

Resource Sharing - The Riccarton Learning Community Cluster recently started a Caretaker Group, hosted by schools within their LCC for regular meetings. These meetings have already proved invaluable as caretakers begin to work through the new health and safety legislation and discuss processes they need to have in place and the best way to achieve these. The caretakers have also gained an understanding of the equipment they each have access too with a view to sharing their resources rather than individual schools having to hire equipment ad hoc and potentially enable schools to save money on maintenance. Other clusters are now looking at implementing similar groups.

To enable us to share your projects please email: amanda.dowling@minedu.govt.nz