

TEACH Bulletin

Thorough Education Achieved in a Caring Home

Number 29

July 1999

Correspondence School and Open Polytech May Merge

An accountability review report on the NZ Correspondence School (TCS) by the ERO in the year ended 30 June 1998 raised concerns about the effectiveness of the school as a distance education provider.

TCS has a roll of over 20,000 students, more than 600 teachers, and annual Crown revenue of \$35 million, making it the largest pre-tertiary education service deliverer in the country.

The report identified a number of risks to student learning. These included the Board's failure to fully meet its obligations in relation to 1) the delivery of the curriculum and 2) student support.

It also identified risks to the Crown as a purchaser of distance education services, particularly in light of the monopoly status it has given to TCS and the deficiencies in the quality standards set out in the contract with the Ministry of Education. It is not clear that the annual \$35 million TCS allocation represents value for money.

After consultation with the Council/Board of each institution, the Minister of Education Hon Dr Nick Smith decided that a review of the feasibility of an amalgamation of TCS and The Open Polytechnic of New Zealand (TOPNZ) would be undertaken. The Minister indicated that, "given the changes in information technology and the student populations of the two organisations, from the Government's perspective as owner of the two institutions it is timely to consider the potential synergies and economies that

could be achieved through a closer working relationship". The Minister also indicated that like the ERO, he too has questions about the appropriateness of the current governance structure of TCS.

A working party formed by the Minister in early May this year is to evaluate 1) the amalgamation of the two existing institutions and 2) any other option for the two institutions to work together

University Admission by Provisional Entrance

On 19 June 1999 the *TEACH Bulletin* Editor sent a questionnaire to all seven NZ universities asking about their experience in admitting students with a home-based educational background as opposed to the conventional school certificates. Replies have been received from Auckland, Massey, Otago and Canterbury.

Most said they knew of having admitted home schoolers, but details beyond that were few. None of the universities answering has a written policy regarding the admission of home schoolers.

Mr W.J. Purdie, Manager, Student Administration of Otago University, gave what seems to be the ideal representative response in a letter dated 29 June:

In very general terms, the University of Otago expects all prospective students to meet one of the requirements for University Entrance as specified in the University Calendar. For applicants

which achieves sustainable benefits at lower cost than full amalgamation. Among the key considerations of this working party, the Minister indicated there are no predetermined outcomes from the review and that for students of TCS there needs to be an ongoing role for parents in the education of their children.

Most home educators find TCS lessons priced way out of range, while those over 16 have been able to access them at the much lower adult rates. Home educators' discussions into easier access are being left aside for now.

under the age of 20, therefore, the only entrance mechanism available to students who may have taken all or some of their previous education in a home based environment would be Provisional Entrance. Applicants for Provisional Entrance are able to submit any information which they believe might support their case that they had an appropriate academic background to make them capable of successful study at University level. All such applications are treated on an individual basis, depending upon the information supplied.

So unless our teenagers plan to do a year or two at a local high school or correspondence school to get something like sixth form certificate or bursary, they need to brush up on interview skills, be actively collecting an impressive CV portfolio, and getting to know the admissions people and those within the department of study of the university they hope to attend.

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Funding the "At Risk"

An item in the MoE's 1999/2000 budget for new policy initiatives describes an outlay of \$21.669M over three years for "alternative education". This funds schooling for up to 1800 youngsters under age 16 each year, classified as "at risk" youth, in "alternative learning settings". To be eligible, such youngsters must meet certain criteria: they must not be enrolled in any school and must have become alienated from regular school environments.

While most home educators would probably meet the two stated criteria, it is not clear whether we would qualify to receive this largess, which is just over \$4,000 per child per year, because of uncertainty over the definition of the terms "at risk" and "alternative learning settings"!

Home Education Foundation

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Lines of Accountability

The *TEACH Bulletin* Editor is thankful for the correction included in the following letter from Chief Review Office Dr Judith Aitken dated 30 June 1999:

Your heading "MoE asks ERO to do Fewer Reviews this Year" (May 1999 TEACH Bulletin) is misleading.

In fact it is the Minister with the Responsibility for the Education Review Office who decides the number of reviews to be carried out by ERO.

The amendment to Part XXVIII of the Education Act 1989, was enacted in December 1998. Section

TEACH Bulletin

is a monthly publication of the Home Education Foundation, and is concerned with those things which may impact on home educators. Articles will deal with political developments, statist and professional trends, correspondence with educationalists, and other items of general interest to home educators. Information herein is not to be construed as legal advice.

TEACH Bulletin is available for a subscription of \$16 per year for 11 issues (none in December) or two years for \$30.

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Hear, my son, your father's instruction,
and reject not your mother's teaching.
— Proverbs 1:8

328A *Functions of Chief Review Officer* states:

"The Chief Review Officer—

(a) May carry out reviews (which may be general or in relation to particular matters) of the educational services provided to persons exempted from the requirements of section 20 and must carry out such reviews when directed by the Minister to do so."

This means that Accountability Reviews of Students Exempted From School are part of the purchase agreement negotiated by the Chief Review Officer and the Minister with the Responsibility for the Education Review Office.

This clarifies the point about who the Chief Review Officer is responsible to in terms of the delivery of accountability reviews of students exempted from school.

Home Education Awareness Week 11-15 October 1999

(Continued from page 4)

- 12 Sept Travel to Hamilton
- 13 Sept Evening seminar, 6.30 to 9.30pm. 2 topics "BEYOND SURVIVAL..." and "DIFFERENT STROKES FOR DIFFERENT FOLKS". Venue probably Central Baptist Church, Hamilton.
- 14 Sept Hamilton Support Group's Family Day 10.30am to 2.30pm
- 15 Sept Morrinsville/Paeroa.
- 16 Sept Possibly Tauranga
- 17 Sept Waitomo Caves / Otorohanga Kiwi House. Contact: Peter (07) 825-9914
- 18 Sept Go into YWAM course.

(South Islanders — Apologies for the typos in the Auckland Workshops brochures. The information is correct and the registration forms A-OK.)

Trading Post



Wanted:

A Beka maths grade 1 plus answer book.

Contact:

Phil & Helen
ph. (06) 322-0114 (Bulls)

Wanted:

(To borrow or buy)

"A Survivor's Guide to Home Schooling" by Luanne Shackelford & Susan White

"A Full Quiver" by Rick Hess

"Yes, They're All Ours" by (??)

"For the Children's Sake" by Susan Schaeffer Macaulay

"You Can Teach Your Child Successfully" by Ruth Beechick

Contact:

Helen Bryant
17 Lauriston St.
Tokoroa
ph/fax: (07) 886-5272

Wanted:

Saxon Maths 54

Contact:

Cheryl
ph. (07) 825-2900

Wanted:

ABeka

Grade 7: "Of People", Student & Teacher Tests; "Grammar and Composition", Teacher and Student; "A Healthier You", Student & Teacher tests; "Health"; "Order and Reality"; "The Life of Christ".

Grade 7-12 Water colour step by step.

Grade 3: "Read and Think 3"; "Language"; "Cursive Writing Skill, 3"

Rod & Staff

Pre-School: Bible pictures to colour, Adventure with books, Counting with numbers, Do it carefully, Everywhere we go, Finding the answers.

Contact:

Jeff & Gael Powley
Lower Hook Rd.
R.D. 8, Waimate
ph. (03) 689-7240

Total Monopoly Predicted for State Schooling

The Chief Review Officer, Dr Judith Aitken, in her Strategic Overview of state education in a report to the House of Representatives in June last year, made some interesting and significant observations.

At the end of almost 10 years of a change from managing schools from a central state department to locally elected trustees, ownership in the school sector is dominated by the State. The generous financial incentives offered through the Integration Act have brought many private schools into the public school fold. "It is possible on current trends that within a few years, the State will have a virtual monopoly in this major human service sector," Dr Aitken advised.

Between 1991 and 1997 the percentage of private schools has dropped from 5.0% of the total number of schools to 4.5%, and the number of students attending private schools has dropped from 3.8% to 3.5%. It is interesting to note that this drop in student numbers is very similar to the growth in the numbers of home educators over this same period.

The report said these developments signaled some policy and education issues of particular importance. Does this growing monopoly indicate that the state schools' performance is virtually identical to what private schools offer? Can the state school system absorb all "demand" and still provide a quality education? (But surely there can be no "demand" for schooling when it is compulsory...is this signalling a change to the compulsory attendance clause of the Act?) And then how will the ERO be able to compare the performance of state schools, when there is no competition with which to compare, especially since "there is still no valid or reliable

national system for testing the nature and quality of consumer outcomes (ie. student learning) until the senior secondary school level?"

Home educators are, of course, providing that much needed competition, but it goes unnoticed because of the lack of recognised standardised tests, such as exist in the USA. In that country home educators have repeatedly and consistently demonstrated overall averaged standardised test scores 25 percentile points higher than those in state schools.

In reality this is totally unfair competition. A universally recognised indicator of academic success is parental involvement. Home educators provide total parental involvement. Rather than this being the professional educator's dream come true, they generally denigrate the home schooling movement because it sidelines the professionals so completely with no loss but rather a net gain in academic performance. Yes, loving, concerned and committed parents are indeed unfair competition to the teaching profession, and for a whole raft of reasons which will not be reviewed here.

In regards to home education, the report said that the identity of the home education sector does not remain constant as there is a turnover of about 1000 per annum. It said the supervisory allowance was only a minor benefit in comparison with the costs of home education. Review findings had indicated that home education is a low risk area in terms of Crown expenditure, the wellbeing and safety of children, the quality of parental supervision, and educational comparability.

In 1997/98 the State expended more than \$4 million on home-schooling, as follows:

MoE.....	\$750,000
ERO.....	\$405,000
Supervisory	
Allowances.....	\$3,350,000
Total.....	\$4,505,000

Diana Waring Home Education Author and Convention Speaker

Home Education Consultant and Counsellor of Home Schooling Dads **Bill Waring**
and their three teenagers, Isaac, Michael & Melody.

September Itinerary (this replaces earlier itineraries, and is still subject to last minute changes):

- 1 Sept arrive Auckland: rest
- 2 Sept getting orientated to New Zealand
- 3 Sept 9.00 a.m. Interview with Radio Rhema, a national Christian Radio Station
- 4 **Sept South Auckland WORKSHOP** Contact: Christine (09)292-8454 (see enclosed brochure for more details).
- 5 Sept Sunday night fireside meeting in Helensville
- 6 Sept Stop at Matakoho Kauri Museum - Early Settlers Museum
Dargaville evening meeting BOX FREE LIVING. Contact Kathy, (09)439-0099

7 Sept Whangarei Conference contact Huriana (09) 436-3649 or Sharyne (09)433-5617.

Venue: AOG Church, 10 Mill Rd., Kensington, Whangarei. Single: \$10; Couple: \$12.50; teens free; no children; creche for babies. Late registration (after 29 August) = \$15.00.

Donations gratefully received.

9:00 - 9:30am Registration collect your nametag and a programme and information sheet, look through resource material on sale.

9:30 - 10:20am THE HILARIOUS HOMESCHOOL — Creating homemade laughter —Diana Waring

10:20 - 10:45am Morning Tea Break

10:45 - 12:00pm **Elective 1: HISTORY VIA THE SCENIC ROUTE** —join Diana who will show you how to use literature, music, art, science cooking and more for an approach to history that will captivate.

Elective 2: An Introduction to Homeschooling. If you are thinking about homeschooling and want to know more about starting out or dealing with exemptions, etc., join speaker Craig Smith, editor of *Keystone* and *Teach Bulletin*.

12:10 - 1:00pm LUNCH: Bring your own lunch, tea and coffee provided.

1:00 - 2:15pm **DIFFERENT STROKES FOR DIFFERENT FOLKS** — make the learning styles of your children come alive through skit, music, colour, comedy, and concrete examples with **BILL WARING**

2:15 - 2:45pm Afternoon Tea Break

2:45 - 4:00pm **Elective 1: THE THINGS WE WISH WE HAD KNOWN BEFORE** — a panel of home school parents including Bill Waring and Craig Smith take a look at issues and principles of Home Education.

Elective 2: TEENAGE VIEWPOINT —a panel of homeschool teenagers including the Waring children Isaac and Melody Waring - chaired by Barbara Smith.

Dinner break: recommence at 7:30pm

7:30 - 8:30pm **BEYOND SURVIVAL** — the key to success is found in relationships. Includes humorous stories of their family. Presented by Bill & Diana Waring

Supper with the Warings 8:30 - close 9:00pm.

8 Sept After lunch leave for Kaitaia via Dargaville, Waioua Forest, Opononi. Kathy (09) 406-0904
Possibly a barbeque tea with a casual group of Homeschoolers for singing etc.

9 Sept Visit Ancient Kauri Kingdom at Awanui

Visit Paihia then boat to Russell-Russell Museum, Bay of Islands.

Possibly stay at Moerewa contact Kathy (09) 406-0904

10 Sept travel to Auckland.

11 Sept North Shore WORKSHOP contact: Dorinda (09) 480-6878. (See enclosed brochure for more details.)

(Continued on page 2)