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Annual conference — debate and determination

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Community solidarity bringing change for working people

This month's viewpoint is dedicated to a woman I deeply admire, who has spent a lifetime championing workers from every sector and who is leaving the CTU presidency with the organisation stronger than ever.

As I have watched Helen Kelly work I have always been in awe of her strength and determination.

Not only has Helen worked tirelessly to support those who could not support themselves, but she has worked with communities to help change the view of unionism. Despite desperate attacks on unions from some quarters she has not backed down, leading people to realise it's not just about "us and them" but about helping us all.

Listening to Helen's farewell speech at the CTU's recent biennial conference, and to those carrying on in her stead, has given me faith that the union movement is in fine fettle.

She spoke of looking forward, setting priorities, building a stronger union movement and of campaigns reaching beyond our membership. She emphasised the importance of engaging in a broader group of working people with campaigns such as the living wage which include a message that resonates with any working family that is struggling – communities can link together in each other's interests.

Like PPTA's ambition for schools as

community hubs, Helen sees unions as part of a social hub – building community connections and supporting communities.

Through Helen the CTU's reach has been huge. Other campaigns that include equal pay cases, opposition to fast-food multinational zero hours contracts, health and safety advocacy in the Pike River mine case, forestry and farming have all attracted broad public support.

In testimony to her strength in the face of illness, Helen says she will be leaving the job but not the movement. "This movement every day does good with the best people," she says.

She plans to delve into the legal arena and looking in to education law in particular – we definitely look forward to seeing what comes from that!

With Richard Wagstaff taking over the presidency and CTU secretary Sam Huggard making great strides in his new role, Helen can be assured the unions will be in good hands.

Sam particularly impressed us during his speech to PPTA's annual conference when he spoke about the persistence and longevity of the union struggle.

"When the status quo isn't working for our communities then we as unions are going to step up," he said.

Sam described PPTA's "fair for teachers, good for all" campaign slogan as encapsulating what's relevant for the



by Angela Roberts

union movement as a whole.

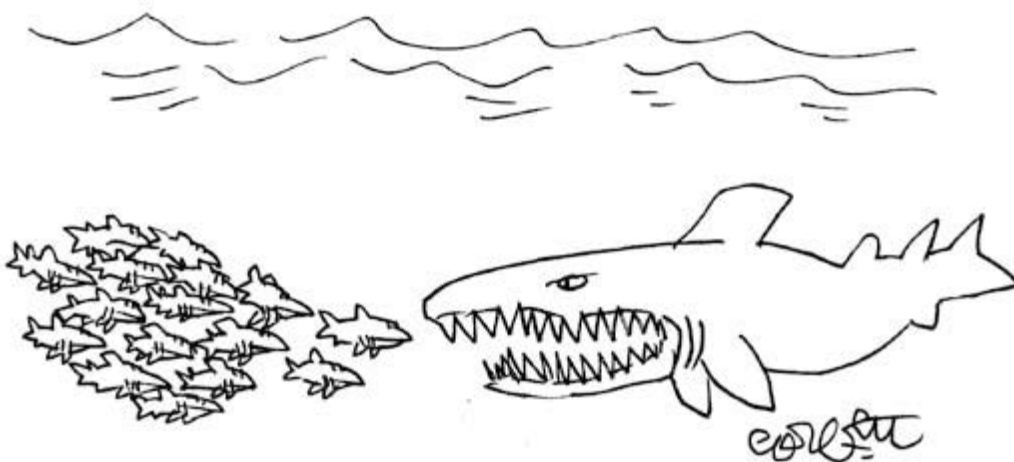
Yes we do things that benefit our members, but the social value that comes from what we do is immense.

"Your goals for the profession and the young people you work with are absolutely linked to our goals," he said.

Helen Kelly will be a hard act to follow, but she has taught those around her well and the future for unionism in New Zealand looks bright.

I will leave you with one of her messages.

"New Zealand working people more than ever need the institutional strength they build through unions to organise themselves, to give them a say in this society and to win justice and fairness for them and their families. The work we do together – officials and members – is good and honourable work."



"YOU DON'T NEED A UNION! I'LL TAKE CARE OF YOU!"

Learning from our students

The Youth2000 survey series offers New Zealand secondary teachers the most comprehensive and representative data about issues that affect the student population. So what is Youth2000, how is it useful and what has it found?

Every few years the Youth2000 survey series asks a large, representative sample of students from around a third of all secondary schools to respond anonymously to a wide range of questions regarding the health and well-being of young people in Aotearoa.

The surveys are a project conducted by the Adolescent Health Research Group (AHRG) of the University of Auckland School of Medicine and Health Sciences to provide accurate and timely research that seeks to improve youth health and well-being. So far three surveys have been conducted – in 2001, 2007 and 2012 – with another planned for 2018.

AHRG principal investigator of the *Youth'12* national survey Terryann Clark says secondary schools engage with the research knowing that increasing evidence shows that healthy and safe youth learn and participate in education more effectively.

“Issues around this range from bullying, through to family-school communication, healthy lifestyles, employment, aspirations for the future, spirituality, health and pastoral care services, substance use and suicide,” she says.

“We try to provide a summary of the strengths and risk that young people face. The survey also provides schools with up to date information about issues that affect their students, and how this pattern is changing over time.”

Around 100 randomly selected secondary schools throughout the country are invited to take part. About 20% of the year 9-13 students at each school are surveyed. A total of 12,503 students were invited to take part in the 2012 survey and 8,500 participated - representing 3% of the 2012 New Zealand secondary school roll. The survey questionnaire was completed during school time and took about an hour to complete.

“For schools who participate in the survey, they also get an individualised report that gives them an idea how their school is doing compared to other New Zealand schools,” says Terryann.

The latest survey found an improving



“Some schools have utilised the data to advocate for services for their students.”

trend in the health and well-being of secondary school students with clear evidence of a marked reduction in tobacco, alcohol and drug use between 2001 and 2012.

Terryann says changes to public health policy over the past decades to protect and restrict access to many harmful activities for young people including tobacco policy, alcohol reforms and restricted drivers' licensing strategies have made it more difficult for young people to engage in risk than previous generations.

“Schools have taken an active role in health promotion activities and providing students with quality information,” she says.

“Health and pastoral care services within schools appear to have an important impact on students' well-being.”

However, the *Youth'12* survey also found areas of continuing concern such as high rates of bullying, depressive symptoms, inconsistent use of contraception and obesity.

“We have presented this national data at principals' regional meetings and talked with schools about their data”

says Terryann.

“Some schools have utilised the data to advocate for services for their students, other schools have altered their school physical education curricula to address issues that are specific to the school. These data highlight major issues for students and enable policy makers to make sound decisions about service allocation and curricula development.”

Terryann says schools are making use of a number of *Youth'12* survey reports including: *Māori youth report*, *Same/both sex attracted report*, *Problem substance use* and *Gambling report*.

“Early next year we will be releasing our Pacific youth report and the Sexual health and sexual abuse reports.”

PPTA also uses this data in a variety of ways that include informing its anti-homophobia workshops, its approach to bullying prevention work and its policy development around student behaviour and well-being.

To find out more about the Youth2000 project and to download copies of the *Youth'12* survey overview and reports visit www.youthresearch.auckland.ac.nz.



Genuine inclusion needs more funding

Students with dyslexia, dyspraxia and autism spectrum disorders face significant challenges, as do secondary schools trying to support them.

In a submission to an Education and Science Select Committee inquiry into these issues PPTA identified a range of significant demands for which schools were poorly resourced and supported.

"While the general area of 'special education' has been the subject of much comment and attempts at policy solutions over many years in New Zealand, we are not aware of any inquiry up to now focussing on these particular disorders, so this select committee inquiry is well overdue. Students with these disorders need better support so they can fulfil their potential and experience happy lives," the submission said.

PPTA president Angela Roberts said the association supported inclusion in education for special needs students provided adequate resourcing to support teaching and learning is put in place.

"We have also supported a parent's right to choose options other than full inclusion, including special needs units, if they feel they are more appropriate for their child," she said.

Barriers to inclusion included lack of professional learning and development (PLD) and resources provided in schools.

"PPTA supports in-service PLD for teachers, teacher aides and learning support assistants that is resourced,

standardised and available across the country," the submission says.

Unfortunately in many areas, this was far from the case, Roberts said.

The Ministry of Education is undertaking Inclusive Practices work in schools, but this is yet to have a discernible impact.

"This is largely because there is no PLD alongside it," Roberts said.

To help mainstream schools succeed in working with these students appropriate environments, class sizes, space and equipment are needed. This includes equipment and resources that would not normally be found in secondary schools.

"Schools are not currently funded to this level. As an example, students with autism often have hypersensitivity to noise; very few schools would be able to provide them with the quiet environments that they require for successful learning," the submission says.

"Money currently being spent on private and charter schools would offer a far greater return should it be redirected into public secondary schools for students with special education needs," Roberts said.

The submission looked into school based issues, including difficulties in accessing reader/writer support for these students, a lack of readily available diagnostic tools and the lack of support and resources for staff tasked with supporting these students.

A number of schools consulted in developing the submission reported trouble in identifying the students that most need help.

A principal from a low decile school believed identifying students in his community was a very different proposition to a higher decile community where parents were often proactive about

getting a diagnosis. He felt there could be a number of undiagnosed students in his school on the autism spectrum who were seen instead as withdrawn or badly behaved.

"This points to a need for more assistance in the identification of these students," the submission says.

Another principal reported that while their low decile school had at least 40 students who should have access to Special Assessment Conditions (SAC), only four did.

"The school simply does not have the resources to process all these or sufficient teaching assistants to provide this level of support," the submission says.

Teachers spoke about the need to support families as well as students because families often found the Ministry of Education difficult to deal with.

"If secondary schools were resourced to operate as hubs, students and whānau could be better supported by getting the necessary resources through the school," the submission says.

PPTA members would like to see ministry regional officers being more proactive in their leadership of special education and in creating opportunities for cross-school, cross-sector and inter-agency communication and collaboration.

The cooperation and collaboration which underscores the Investing in Educational Success initiative should help with this.

PPTA believes all students have a right to learn, but currently this ideal is impossible to maintain, Roberts said.

"Inadequate funding for the full range of students with special educational needs means schools are faced with making impossible choices about how they allocate their limited resources," she said.

"Inadequate funding for the full range of students with special educational needs means schools are faced with making impossible choices ..."



New legislation raises the stakes

With employees becoming "workers" and employers now "persons conducting a business or undertaking" (PCBUs) there is much in the new Health and Safety at Work Act 2016 to confuse.

Questions around higher penalties and their potential impact on education outside the classroom (EOTC) have also been raised.

In a bid to address this *PPTA News* has put together a brief outline of the changes and how they might impact on you.

The positions

The legislation introduces four categories of person;

1. *Person conducting a business or undertaking* – Despite its name, the PCBU will usually be a business or corporate entity. In the context of the school sector the PCBU will be a school's board of trustees. The PCBU has "primary duty of care".

2. *Officer* – Officers are the individual members of a board, including the principal. They have the duty of "due diligence".

3. *Worker* – Worker is a broader term than "employee". It means any person who carries out work in any capacity for boards of trustees, including principals, assistant and deputy principals, teachers, caretakers, contractors and volunteer workers.

The act requires stronger worker engagement, encouraging worker participation to ensure safety for all.

4. *Other persons* – This is any person within the school environment including students, parents, visitors, casual volunteers and members of the public.

Education outside the classroom (EOTC)

The intention of the new legislation is not to curtail EOTC experiences. EOTC is an example of where more than one PCBU may be involved, such as a school board of trustees and a museum or adventure activity operator. The PCBUs must consult, coordinate and collaborate with each other to meet their shared responsibilities and work together to ensure that the work or activity does not pose risks to people's health and safety.

Offences and penalties

The bill provides for three graduated offences in relation to a breach of health and safety duty and a tiered penalty and fine regime to distinguish between individuals and corporate entities.

There are two "failure to comply with health and safety duty" offences – one with risk of death or serious illness/injury and one without. The third, most serious, offence is "reckless conduct" – without reasonable excuse, engaging in conduct that exposes any individual to a risk of death or serious illness/injury and is reckless as to the risk.

Taking into account the maximum possible amounts, a board of trustees as an entity can be fined from up to \$300,000 to \$3 million and a principal from up to \$100,000 to \$600,000 and five years in prison. Teachers and other staff (including assistant and deputy principals) can face fines of up to \$50,000 to \$300,000 and five years in prison and other people (students, the public and parents) the same.

Workplace relations and safety minister Michael Woodhouse said the maximum fines were only imposed in extreme circumstances for the most serious offences where the duty holder had been reckless.

If your school has sound existing policies then there should be no issues.

Full details can be found at www.education.govt.nz.

Restoring respect

PPTA has been engaged for some time now in a restorative practices (RP) working group.

Restorative practice is a relationships-based approach to school life grounded in mutual respect. The group has been developing resources and helping shape the expansion of this way of working.

So far three 'kete' (baskets) have been produced which take schools through everything RP from circles work to restorative conferences.

A team from Otaki, Andy Foster and Janice Brown, have been working at the Positive Behaviour for Learning School Wide (PB4L SW) and the Teacher Refresher Course Committee (TRCC) wellbeing conferences with advanced classes and workshops to introduce schools to ways of working that relate to restorative practices.

Up to 200 secondary schools have had some involvement with restorative practices and the University of Waikato has won the contract to train schools in this work.

The aim of PB4L restorative practices is that both adults and students in

the school will develop skills that enable them intentionally to build respectful relationships.

The University of Waikato through the Institute of Professional Learning (IPL) has appointed regional coordinators who will be the primary contact for the schools in each cluster. They will support the schools to develop their own plans and ensure their training and support requirements are met. IPL is developing a website on the Virtual Learning Network which they hope will become a resource, not only for the schools in PB4L RP, but for all educators who are interested in developing a common understanding of these practices. Go to vln.school.nz and search for PB4L RP. You will need to join the network before you can join the group.

Co-director Wendy Drewery says the initiative can be traced back to judges in the Youth Court, who noticed that 80% of the young people coming before the court were school drop outs. The judiciary are still very interested in how PB4L RP will

work out, she said. The PB4L RP team has strong relationships with the ministries of justice and social development, she said.

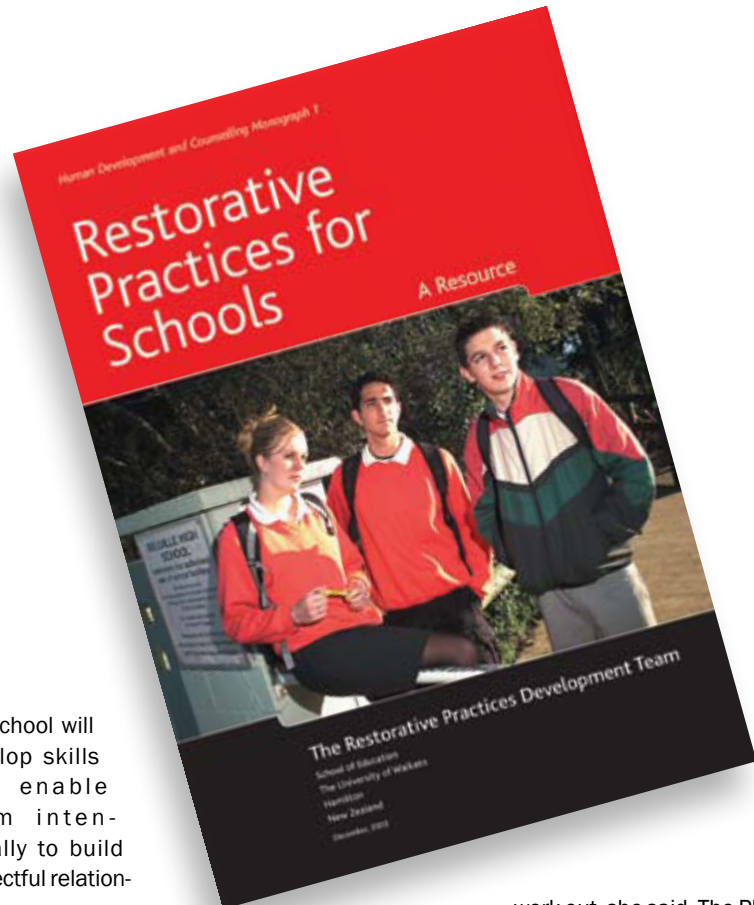
"There will be a lot of interest in how it all goes."

Since the formal handover in September, the PB4L RP team at Waikato has been working in partnership with the Ministry of Education to ensure that the aspirations of restorative practitioners will continue to be met – and hopefully, exceeded.

"We are both pleased and excited to join with the ministry and school communities in this work," Wendy said.

"We are starting a bit later than hoped, but we have made plans with all the schools that have already been contracted to PB4L RP by the ministry, and will hold tailored trainings with many before the end of the year."

2016 will see a new round of school recruitment, and it is anticipated that over the next three years the practices will be embedded in at least another 150 schools.



Getting on board

The Ministry of Education is in the process of selecting schools for Positive Behaviour for Learning (PB4L) restorative practices for 2016 and 2017.

The ministry will be using a range of selection criteria to consider schools suitable to be part of PB4L Restorative Practices but because of the synergies between the two initiatives, priority is being given to School Wide schools.

To be considered for selection or any queries contact either your regional school wide practitioner or the PB4L manager (regional). Further information can be found at <http://pb4l.tki.org.nz/PB4L-Restorative-Practice>



Annual conference - struggle and persistence

Around 150 PPTA members from throughout the country descended on Wellington during the school holidays to talk professional issues, politics and policy.

PPPTA's 63rd annual conference took place over three days at the Brentwood Hotel in Kilbirnie.

Delegates discussed the future of NCEA, crisis in school middle leadership, workload issues, the threat of charter schools and changes in initial teacher education among other pressing issues.

Debating and voting on papers that will shape PPTA policy, decisions were made by secondary teachers for secondary teachers.

In opening this year's conference, PPTA president Angela Roberts looked back to the issues delegates discussed during the association's inaugural conference in 1953.

Teacher shortages, curriculum and

assessment, class sizes and professional learning and development were all on the agenda and, over 60 years later, the battles continue, she said.

"The similarity of the concerns over 60 years speaks to the persistence and longevity of our struggle. There has never been a time when PPTA members have not been engaged in activities that are designed to make the system better and fairer for kids.

"What you do here is important. It has far reaching consequences for secondary schools, members and students," Roberts told delegates.

"Those who want an education system that treats students as commodities on a production line in order to advance an agenda of privatisation and profiteering

will never rest. Nor shall we," she said.

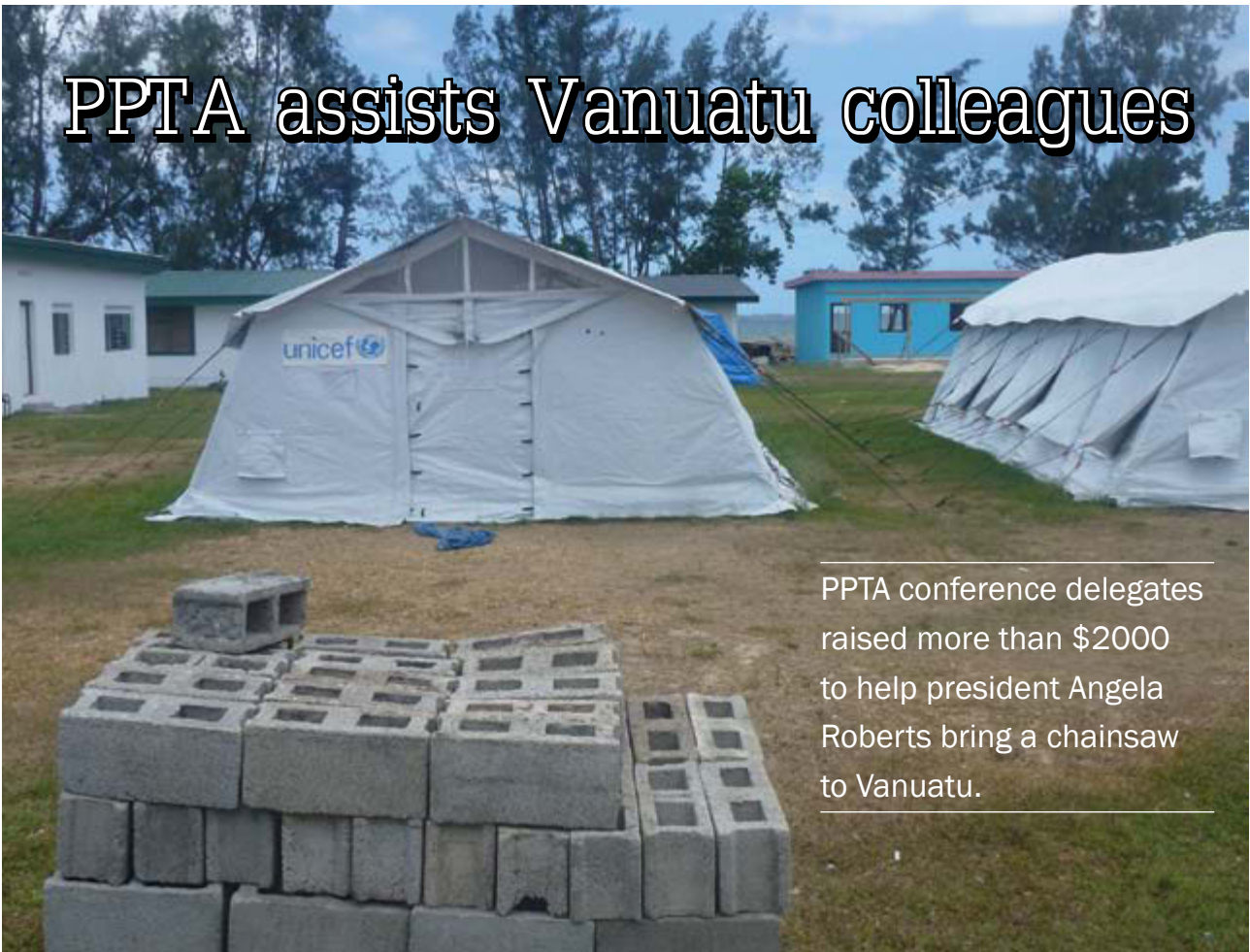
In his presentation of an update on PPTA's stand against charter schools, executive member Austen Pageau agreed, describing the decision made by the association in 2013 to stand in opposition to charter schools as "implacable".

It was not a decision that was made lightly and followed much robust debate.

"It was a position we took to protect our profession and the public good which is public education," he said.

"We have a world class education system and PPTA members have shown we are willing to fight for it, that we will continue to fight for it and for the solutions which will actually benefit the children most in need," he said.

PPTA assists Vanuatu colleagues



PPTA conference delegates raised more than \$2000 to help president Angela Roberts bring a chainsaw to Vanuatu.

Unfortunately, despite charitable intentions, she was prevented from boarding an aeroplane with the power tool.

Roberts was bringing the chainsaw, and other much needed supplies, into Vanuatu to help towards the country's recovery from cyclone Pam.

After speaking with members of COPE (Council of Pacific Educators) about the situation, Roberts was shocked at the impact the cyclone is still having on the tiny community.

Out of the 900 members of the Vanuatu Teachers Union about 400 were left homeless, she said.

"The scale for those who are left to try and support each other really struck me."

Before heading over on holiday with her family, Roberts contacted Vanuatu Teachers Union general secretary Vincent Kapalu asking what was still needed.

"I emailed asking 'what do you guys need? Clothes, utensils, tools?' and he said 'everything — anything'.

"Three seconds later he emailed back and said 'a chainsaw'. So I thought I'd pack a chainsaw in with my togs," she



Angela Roberts

told annual conference.

Conference delegates generously helped fund the chainsaw, but unfortunately it didn't make it out of the country.

The tool was brand new and safely boxed up for the flight but, despite initially approving it, at check-in the airline had a change of heart. As a result the chainsaw stayed behind in New Zealand, to be posted at a later date.

“ I emailed asking ‘what do you guys need? Clothes, utensils, tools?’ and he said ... 'a chainsaw'.”

“The best laid plans of mice and men ... we will still get it to them.” Roberts said.

The schools Roberts visited were appreciative of the supplies she had been able to bring and she and her family were given a first-hand look at what was still needed for the rebuild.

Students were learning in tents while schools were being rebuilt around them.

Roberts was pleased to be able to do something simple and practical.

“One of the things COPE helps us to do is make real connections with real teachers who are doing the same work we are under such trying circumstances. We're so grateful to have that opportunity,” she said.

True charity kept at home

Is it right that the “top five or ten percent” have increasing levels of influence and decision making power in terms of public policy and public education?

Massey University Institute of Education professor John O’Neill addressed this question in his presentation to PPTA’s annual conference — How charities are shaping education policy in New Zealand.

O’Neill updated the conference on the findings of a PPTA, NZEI and NZPF funded research project, looking into how influential people at elite levels of society were shaping education policy in New Zealand — often under the guise of charity.

“Is it right that just because you have money you are able to engage in activity that begins to significantly shape the direction and emphasis of public policy,” he asked.

There was something “seriously wrong” with the way public education policy was being advanced, O’Neill said.

The ease of setting up an organisation for charitable purposes could encourage giving and altruism, but it also meant a charity could be “a proxy or sheep’s clothing for all sorts of other activities,” O’Neill said.

“Now we have government actively encouraging the private and the philanthropic sector to plug the gap between what it’s prepared to do and what needs to be done to provide decent public services.

“The boundaries between public and private interest and influence are being blurred quite rapidly,” he said.

O’Neill examined some of the major players in the education charity game, from home-grown support organisations such as KidsCan to “education management organisations” such as Core and Cognition Education.

“We now have a situation where activities will not take place unless a charity or charitable trust invests in them ... and that creates pressure for public policy to move in the direction the trustees of a private charitable entity wants,” O’Neill said.

A number of entities failed the public benefit test but because they hadn’t been scrutinised too closely were allowed to operate as charities, O’Neill said.

As an example O’Neill presented the Cognition Education Group. The group



used to operate Multiserve Education Trust, which was then “quite deliberately” replaced by Cognition Education — a private company set up to generate as much revenue as possible. All surpluses from that activity then go to the Cognition Education Trust.

He showed Cognition Education Group’s annual return for 2015, which posted a total revenue of \$27.7 million. Their “distributions to beneficiaries” however came to just \$200,000.

“Less than 1% of their total revenue ends up distributed to beneficiaries,” O’Neill said.

Looking further into the accounts shows they paid “directors fees” of \$300,000 and “employee expenses” came to \$16 million.

“To me this doesn’t pass the public/private benefit ratio test ... most of the money that goes in should go to charitable purposes, not to supporting the lifestyles of the people who work for the charity,” he said.

In comparison he looked at KidsCan’s accounts. They posted an income of \$9.7 million, much of which were gifts and donated goods in kind — for example shoes and raincoats from sponsors.

They run a chief executive model and have no directors’ fees and posted a modest surplus. Most of the money, more than \$4 million, went into the

charity program.

“They are building up an asset base but at least 60% of their total income is going back to their beneficiaries.

In comparison to Cognition’s 1% donation this showed KidsCan as a “well meaning, altruistic, genuinely philanthropic organisation ... working incredibly hard to generate money to do the kind of work the government should be doing.”

Today’s government had walked away from the notion of fully funding and fully providing education, O’Neill said.

“For the foreseeable future there’s going to be a gap between what kids need, what you need to run schools and what the government is prepared to put in,” he said.

“Philanthropy can either be altruistic charity like KidsCan or social investment venture philanthropy, or corporate activities masquerading as charity,” he said

PPTA’s contribution to the research said a lot about the state of education research and government priorities in New Zealand, O’Neill said.

“It reinforces for me the absolute imperative for the professional role for PPTA. If you don’t fund the research this sort of stuff isn’t going to be analysed at all. We will have policy and privatisation by stealth and the public will be none the wiser.”

Out in the field

Voluntary retraining when staffing is trimmed

Information and advice from PPTA's intrepid field officers.

Matthew's principal announced at the start of term four the school needed to reduce staffing by the equivalent of 2.8 full-time positions and asked for volunteers.

Matthew thought his position was vulnerable being the newest appointment in a declining department. Matthew was 60 and intending to retire in five years' time.

He investigated the voluntary options. Matthew entered teaching late and was uncertain if he was eligible for the long service option, a pay-out of 25 weeks' salary after 25 years' service. Checking with Novopay he found he didn't have enough service for this.

He looked at being supernumerary, either in his own school or at another school. This offered 30 school weeks' pay (plus holiday pay) while he looked for a permanent job. If a suitable permanent position of equal or lower status became available at the school then he would have a right to that job.

He investigated the retraining option, 40 school weeks, and with holiday pay he would be paid for a full school year. The purpose of the retraining option is to

enhance or upgrade the teacher's skills as a secondary teacher. Matthew already had a good degree, so there was little point deepening his subject base. He needed to widen it. He looked at various courses including IT courses, Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) courses and various graduate diplomas. Eventually he saw an IT course that started in January that he could do from home with block courses at the institution. Even though he would have to pay the course fees Matthew saw retraining as his best option.

He applied for the voluntary option. The board needed to be confident they could operate without Matthew. The school's Art teacher told Matthew she too was applying for the voluntary option but it had been rejected on curriculum grounds. Matthew received a letter from the board accepting his voluntary offer. There had been another resignation, so with the reduction of two full-time permanent positions and the non-reappointment of fixed term staff the school was able to reduce their staffing by the required 2.8 full-time teacher equivalent (FTE).

Matthew applied to the board for



approval for the course. It was late November and he was anxious to secure his place and finalise arrangements. The school sent details of Matthew's course to the resourcing division at the Ministry of Education. They checked to see if the course met the criteria previously mentioned and whether it was of a sufficient level on the NZQA framework. Once the ministry approved the course Matthew busied himself getting materials and books.

While there was a nice staff farewell for Matthew he was conscious that he was stepping out into the unknown, and at the end of the following year he would be back in the job market at the age of 61. Would any school employ him?

Dedicated activist joins field service

The newest addition to PPTA's field officer team is both an experienced teacher and PPTA activist.

Palmerston North field officer Jan Torrey, who'll be looking after members in Taranaki and Hawkes Bay, has 30 years of teaching experience. At Karamu High School she was a science and physics teacher, assistant head of faculty science and a specialist classroom teacher (SCT).

"In my role as SCT I was especially interested in boys' learning and achievement," she said.

After completing some postgraduate work on adolescent learning, Jan set up a project involving year 13 boys mentoring year 11 boys who were in danger of not achieving to their potential called 13 2 11.

Jan is a long-standing PPTA activist,

holding all the branch positions over the years and acting as Hawkes Bay regional chair since 2003.

She has been involved in organising PPTA's Issues and Organising seminars, worked on housing affordability and class size taskforces and is a trained surplus staffing nominee. She was also PPTA's nominee on the now defunct New Zealand Teachers Council from 2014 to 2015.

"All of these roles have given me the experience to deal with the variety of issues that were raised by teachers around the regional table," she said.

Jan's desire to become a PPTA field



Jan Torrey

officer stemmed from an increasing uneasiness about changes in legislation that impact on the effectiveness of unions to act for their members, as well as the disbandment of the Teachers Council and the loss of representation on the new education council.

"These legislative changes impact on the working conditions of teachers. I want to help ensure members are accessing all of the conditions they are entitled to. I wish to promote the importance of PPTA as the guardian of both the professional and industrial arms of the profession," she said.



The amazing oratory and performing talents of our rangatahi were on display at the 50th national secondary schools Ngā Manu Kōrero speech contest at Te Rauparaha Arena, Porirua in September.

The annual competition is sponsored by PPTA/Te Wehengarua and has a proud history running back to 1965, showcasing the wit, wisdom and eloquence of Māori students in both English and Te Reo Māori.

PPTA/Te Wehengarua extends congratulations to all the winners and looks forward to the return of more dazzling talent next year.

Ngā mihi maioha.

