What Have I Taught Them Today And Does It Fit With The World Plan?

Irene Cooper and Sandra Aikin
New Zealand Educational Institute

Introduction

Our story is about the connection between public and ideological debates, curriculum policy, and how this policy is mediated by the school and classroom teacher.

We intend to explore three related topics.

Firstly, rather hurriedly, a description of the reasons for the growth of policy activity in the curriculum in recent years and why that activity has taken the form it has. And what does this mean for the coherence of policy for the curriculum.

Having set the context we intend to look at the expectations of the New Zealand school curriculum and examine whether it is in step with a ‘globalised’ future.

Thirdly, and the crux of the workshop, is to explore a view of a teacher as a professional who engages in reflected practice, acts as an action researcher and accommodates changes within practice which she (as most of New Zealand primary schools are) expects lead to improvements in student learning. To the New Zealand primary school teacher education is seen as a holistic endeavor rather than a discrete set of documents set out in levels and objectives. The teacher sees the purpose of education is that of a “public good” rather than a means to build a workforce which matches the economy. Herein lies the struggle.

All these threads we draw together and use a case study to tell a story of how the school becomes the contested site where these concerns of society are played out.

Setting the scene

The direct and crucial relationship between New Zealand’s economy and its education system over the last decade has heralded unprecedented change in curriculum policy and practice. New Zealand developments and debate have been polarised by the divergent pulls of national government and business moguls who wanted education to revitalise the economy, by getting on the global bandwagon. Providing for a knowledge based economy required the ‘outputs’ of schools to feed the labour market in the growth areas of mathematics, technology, and science, and to foster innovation, within a growing technological world.
The world would appear to be becoming more technisist in its demands. Cultural boundaries are breaking as technological innovation changes the ways we learn, access and share knowledge, do business, and communicate. Communication is the means of transmission of culture so the lives of citizens are being reshaped, a universal language (English) is being developed which mitigates against the language and values of indigenous peoples. The organisation and structure and values of society are shaped by the new communications. We are what we speak and what we say becomes the experience that marks our time in history.

Fears about the decline of the economy, the high youth unemployment, 'producer' capture has led to arguments for change. Some of those arguments are the need to:

- modernise the curriculum and make it relevant to the needs of the economy (i.e. technology, ICT literacy)
- allow greater consumer choice (i.e. parents, the community, business community)
- improve teaching quality and to raise standards through assessment regimes
- reassert the ‘national’ culture, language and identify
- reshape values (i.e. values inclusive of enterprise cultures and innovation)
- revive the primacy of literacy and numeracy within the curriculum.

So how has the government effected these changes in the education system? Major shifts in the New Zealand school system have included:

**Changes in organisation**
A move to self-management of schools.

**Changes in environment**
The development of competition between schools for student enrolment and for public prowess through marketing and advertising.

**Changes in curriculum**
The development of a new curriculum framework which includes seven essential learning areas, essential skills and attitudes and values. Technology makes its appearance as a separate discipline.

Organising the curriculum into levels with achievement aims and learning objectives which are to be reported against as a mapped progress report for any child. A hierarchica linear model of learning more suited to accommodating administration rather than the lived experience of how knowledge is learned as espoused in a social constructivist approach. Requirement of local rebalancing of curriculum implementation to give primacy to literacy and numeracy in years 1-4.

**and assessment**
The increased requirement of schools to report on student achievement for cohorts of students. This is a simple way to prove the value added to children in the school setting. The development of new assessment tools to enable this to be carried out in reliable, valid
and comparative ways at key stages. The use in many schools of internationally available tests to measure learning progress.

**Public accountability**

The introduction of an independent Education Review Office who cyclically, and clinically, monitors and reports on school compliance, and school effectiveness.

The introduction of computer access and administration data capability at school sites. The development of national databases and a data mix capability at national level by the ministry. This enables schoolwide reporting against annual targets and allows achievement goals to be integrated with other data held by the Ministry and government targets. Thus creating a direct link between school (local) achievement and government expectations.

The construction of school profiles to identify excellent schools and those at risk of failure is now becoming a reality.

**Teacher quality assurance checks**

Coupled with this has been a call for more rigorous monitoring of teacher performance including teacher pay and performance linked to an arbitrary set of professional standards, the development of staff appraisal systems on all worksites, the imposition of wider ranges of penalties for poorly performing teachers in cases of complaint or discipline. Most recently this has been legislated for, through the creation of a Teachers Council.

The changes have been technist in nature and have put pressure on schools and educators to develop responses to them in a range of ways. A school’s response shows the values schools place on different aspects of learning. These are also evident in the choices a school makes about its intervention strategies, timetable allocations and at the classroom level the organisation of the classroom.

**The New Zealand Curriculum Framework**

This overarching statement sets out the government of the day's economic, political and social agenda. Explicitly stated was the desire for New Zealand to have a competitive edge in the international marketplace. A market-led response was seen as the way to add value to the labour force. Education was to develop individual potential through competition. Students were stratified through a view that 'each will play their part'. Workforce knowledge and skills were emphasised within a response to rapid technological change.

The NZCF sets out the foundation policy for teaching, learning and assessment in New Zealand schools. The framework describes the elements which are fundamental to teaching and learning programmes. To this end it states principles, specifies seven essential learning areas, sets out essential skills, indicates the place of attitudes and values.
in the school curriculum. The national curriculum statements provide details for teachers' guidance on the required knowledge, understandings, skills and attitudes in each essential learning area. The skills promoted are vocationally based to prepare an individual student to become an effective New Zealand citizen within the economic structures in society. Teachers have become accountable for teaching self-management and competitive skills!

The notion of individual achievement is a crucial one to the development of a child's learning profile outlined by the framework's achievement objectives and levels. Reservations concerning the examination system at senior secondary school level have influenced the direction of the profiling movement. The growth of profiling systems to attempt to accommodate the needs of a substantial minority of school leavers who leave school with "nothing to show for 11 years of compulsory education. This focus on secondary education reveals a greater degree of attention now being paid to the qualities possessed by the labour force and the ability to produce high quality goods and services.

Recent criticism of the New Zealand education from the 'right', however, has been part of a much wider concern apparent in many OECD member countries. The perception of a 'gap' between performance and need was generated by an international economic crisis and the school curriculum again became a topic for national policy debate.

This debate has resulted in a radical repackaging of the curriculum raising ICT to almost religious levels. An extended role for teachers has been established as they work within new pedagogies and emerging methodologies and in a climate of critical reckoning.

Despite attempts to make the New Zealand curriculum framework appropriate to primary school teaching methods and values, there are contradictions in the framework that inevitably favour secondary schooling and, by extension, the labour market. If one looks back at history for the past 50 years, primary teachers have successfully worked within a system that had a secondary orientated, examination-dominated education framework. Within that period primary teachers managed to establish child-centred curriculum/pedagogy. They established sound practices informed by research literature.

HILLCREST NORMAL SCHOOL AS A CASE STUDY

The case study looks for specific examples at school site level which exemplify the thesis that globalisation, a national valuing of enterprise culture and the economic imperative for a highly skilled workforce is affecting changes to values and curriculum at school and classroom level within primary schools.

National curriculum statements in the seven essential learning areas are renegotiated at school level to provide actual programmes of work. The school implementation plans sit within the broad framework of the documents, meet the intention of key achievement aims, objectives and strand coverage but have content and context selections, which reflect local interest, incorporate local skill and desired experiences. This process fits
within the ideal of teachers being able to implement a curriculum that is meaningful for students. The extent of, or limitation of, material selected or rejected for study lies mostly with the teaching teams.

At a classroom level teachers selects contexts for teaching and learning to match their particular group of students and their identified learning needs. Learning needs are most usually linked to the development of skills, strategies and processes that support students progressively towards the ideal of a self-motivated and independent learner. Teacher scaffolding of skills progression is also underpinned by implicit and explicit attitudes and values.

Desirable attitudes and values as stated within the New Zealand National Curriculum framework are expected to underpin the culture of any school and therefore the “messages” children are surrounded by. There is a growing acceptance of the negotiation of explicit local values to be documented within school charters. Communities of interest such as church schools have espoused these most strongly in the past. Now other local communities are identifying some basic tenets of how a school should operate as a key partner with parents and the state in the establishment and maintenance of a set of values attitudes and acceptable standards. Such statements are reported as part of the school vision statement within the Charter, or as local goal statements which are operationalised through school policies on behavior, codes of dress and agreed standards for work completion. Together these form a broad ranging set of quality standards to which the school and its community commit. They are the social and cultural glue of the school which underpin curriculum implementation.

Such a local goal statement at HNS is:

To promote care and concern for others so that all may enjoy a secure and happy learning environment. The following values will be fostered in the school; cooperation and sharing; respect for others and aroha; accepting responsibility; honesty; respect for elders/kaumatua/kuia; valuing knowledge and learning; perseverance; independence.

This goal sits amongst other goals in the charter and gives direction for the school. Such goals are then negotiated into action plans within the school. Each teacher helps to establish and develop specific understandings in practice of what it means to “Cooperate” in room 5. How will we act? What will we see happening and how will we know everyone is working on this goal?

The nature of community has an interesting impact on school values and culture. National valuing of culture includes the protection, preservation and promotion of the indigenous rights of Maori as part of the Treaty of Waitangi. All schools to some extent reflect this value. However New Zealand lying within the Pacific has numerically strong indigenous groups from the Pacific Nations as permanent residents. Indeed Auckland has is the biggest centre of Polynesian population in the Pacific. Other waves of immigrants
since pakeha colonization have led to a rich tapestry of cultures within the country. This has impacted on schools.

Hillcrest Normal School has a mix of cultures. Any classroom would have up to 10 different cultures represented within it. We have only 4% Maori, but over 12% of students are from Asian countries and a further 6% of students come from various countries e.g. refugees from European countries, and South Africans. There is also a steady flow of new immigrants from traditional sources. The cultural mix of the school is augmented by students whose parents are on sabbatical visits to Waikato University, on contract to local hospitals or “visiting” the agricultural research establishments in the city. A further small group of students are Asian fee payers from Taiwan and Korea who spend either part or all of their primary school years with us.

Families at Hillcrest range from high income professional parents who have international labour market mobility, to those with few material assets, seeking a new life and a safe haven. Other families are mobile within the New Zealand labour market and that others have little experience beyond the city they grew up in. All these families have strong aspirations for their children and expect the school to provide what was traditionally described as a good state funded education for their children. This tag has now been broadened to include aspects of an internationally class education for their children and one which tolerates, respects and accommodates cultural difference. The challenge for the school is to meld this into a harmonious whole.

New Zealand policy entitles Maori students to education in their mother tongue. This policy does not extend to other groups. The prime language of instruction is English and the state system is geared to identify and provide funding support for second language learners to become confident speakers of English. On school sites assimilationist practices generally prevail. Pacific Nations children are classed as second language learners, their home language teaching is being addressed in many schools through the introduction of unfunded Pacific language nests which are part of local school goals.

Other immigrants have access to locally initiated after school language programmes aimed at retention of mother tongue. Cultural influences and practices impact on schools through the need to share messages about children, the need to establish agreed health programmes and physical activity practices. In curriculum implementation, teachers attempt to incorporate cultural practices and skills into daily programmes and use parents as mentors and coaches to broaden the understanding and tolerance of all students. Opportunities for students to mix with such wide ranging cultural groups is a relatively new occurrence. At Hillcrest the “mixing” meets with a suspicious response from some parents, but is accepted by children. These children are the new citizens of a global world. The tension is in maintaining and valuing cultural identities whilst working together.
Hillcrest provides in class and withdrawal teaching for all students who wish to learn Maori. This is a National expectation and a right for any Maori child. The school also teaches Japanese as a second language to those students who wish to learn. This is not government funded but is a parental expectation of the school. Children without threshold levels of English language are provided with regular instruction in English. This is nationally funded until the threshold is reached up to a maximum of three years. Fee paying students receive private lessons in school and some after school tuition. This is part of the education package offered by the school. Some students attend local language preservation classes organised by their ethnic communities on Saturday mornings. These are all new initiatives within the last decade as education has become responsive to the stakeholders and conscious of a need to meet the market. Schools have responded to the range of challenges presented. The outcome has been a change to value systems for children and a change to the ways “schools do business”. At Hillcrest we have specialist teachers and teacher aides whose employment is related to the developing multicultural society and the education market.

The dislocation of families and lack of extended family support is in part due to economic imperatives. Both parents are working, or families live far from extended family support systems so there are no caregivers available for sick children, for children before and after school or in the term breaks. Children buy their food out more.

Hillcrest school has responded to this with the development of subsidiary businesses such as, the healthy canteen, the before-and-after school care programme and homework centre, a stationary and uniform shop, and foreign fee payer services including homestay arrangements. Other agreements allow the school to provide necessary medical care and to administer drugs.

Education as a product effectively sees New Zealand schools develop as service industries for foreign fee paying students. The wealthy middle class of Asian countries have seized upon our ability to provide cheap education in English medium from primary schools onwards and the subsequent treasure of access to university education. This has impacted dramatically on many schools where a subsidiary industry has been built into the school staffing and funding equations. Money raised from providing services for fee-paying students is used to balance shortfalls in government funding, and to provide extras for schools that take up the initiatives. Innovation and business partnership is promoted by government as a positive direction in which schools can move.

Hillcrest school is not alone in developing into a full service model, where families come to expect a range of support services, extension options for the school day and to find information and exchange their views. The school continues to have a stronger social and cultural role as well as providing extended educational opportunities. This extension of service means the school has a much more diverse range of staff than it did a decade ago. The growth has come from the outsourcing of what were once parental responsibilities. Economic imperatives and the mobility of the families has changed the values of the school.
By developing a global market for education and education products the nature of New Zealand school resources has also been challenged.

Companies developing resources here for our own small market find they do not have international appeal because of the cultural aspects and contexts portrayed. In a bid to capture more internationally lucrative markets publishers have moved to portray more generic contexts and a wider range of ethnicities. Similarly the use of language in texts has changed and colloquial New Zealand vocabulary has been replaced. New Zealand children are now just as likely to have books with Negro and Asian faces than Maori or Polynesian faces.

If cultural messages are relayed and culture is embedded in the images we see around us in real life and in virtual situations then these are changing. The impact of imported television programmes, of international advertising by multi national companies to promote sales and the access to educational resources are all market and profit driven.

The impact of affordable travel and cheap international flights has seen many children experience the reality of world beyond our shores. Visits “home” to family are part of the growing culture of Internationalism. Children experience dislocation from the home culture and dislocation within the adopted culture. Some of them are the new global wanderers. Many parents have contract work in other countries and seek further opportunities to better themselves. Career professionals are prepared to make several moves to chase job opportunity and promotion prospects. They work in industries where they may have had to re credential on moving across borders. Such parents in schools desire credible portable qualifications for their children. They bring with them reports from other education systems, expectations of similar work programmes for student age and comparable examination or reporting systems. Many parents categorize New Zealand not doing the same kind of testing or work as an education system that is “behind”. They have little time for the philosophies, which prevent their child from being accredited with a suitable grade.

The pressure for transportable and comparable qualifications has led to primary schools entering students into Australian based tests and examinations, for which parents are prepared to pay. At Hillcrest students are offered access to some of these tests and parents place a high value on that and certainly place a higher value on the one mark than on teacher professional judgement about their child’s work over a period of assessment.

A further influence on school culture and the scope of learning contexts provided has been through the accessibility of electronic technology. For years children have watched TV as a passive way of gaining educational and cultural information. Schools have embraced computers as tools of learning and most schools now have access programmes stating expectations for student’s interaction with, and skill development in the use of electronic technologies. The NZ government have funded some professional development for teachers and given grants towards infrastructure development such as cabling of school sites. Business partnerships with communications giant Telecom are ensuring that school sites have appropriate line access, Telecom have installed free of
charge dedicated “learning lines” and reap benefits from the growth of consumption in the school sector.

Recycled business computers can be purchased by schools at cheap prices. The government funding for schools IT development is inadequate and schools are left to initiate their own enterprise arrangements to meet and contain this cost hungry resource. The value of business school partnerships is being promoted. The few schools, which have introduced fully digital classrooms to deliver the curriculum, have done so largely on an annual parental payment basis with some business funded scholarships for those students who can’t meet the costs. Such schools often operate under agreements with major hardware suppliers for advertising and promotion of product.

At Hillcrest the school has moved from single computers in classrooms to a suite of computers all networked. The school presently has 32 computers and is considering how to increase access in the senior school. All children from five onwards have instructional programmes using computers as interactive tools of learning. The school has identified a continuum of progression as a minimum expectation for achievement.

The introduction of computer based learning within schools has changed teaching methodologies particularly in those classrooms that are fully digital. The biggest change is where student learning is based within a problem solving methodology. Children work in partnerships, their joint work, which is improved upon as work in progress, is stored digitally and able to be accessed from either home or school. Those students who have computer access at home are now advantaged over those who don’t. Student ability to access a wider range of resource material got all of which is desirable or legal has influenced local policy development which limits placed on both access and transmission. Locally developed and international sites can and are accessed by teachers and students alike. At Hillcrest this includes students completing web quest challenges. This American based programme is used by us because it requires high order thinking within a problem-based challenge and set up at a series of difficulty levels. Teachers can access this with little technical knowledge. It fits within the philosophy and conceptual framework of the school which is learner centred. Currently a senior group are interacting with NASA in a research project about planets. The students work in teams, research bookmarked sites, transform and present a synthesis of information in a new way using powerpoint.

Students also experience virtual reality field trips that give them access to parts of this country and the world, which are not available to many as direct experiences. The programmes are provided to the school and class teachers opt to take part. Programmes are interactive and involve students in observing, questioning, conferencing and researching to develop an understanding of the scope of a topic. This includes a virtual field trip, a website, a discussion board which enables children to ask questions and to have them answered, an audio conferencing programme, which is used in conjunction with the website and enables students to interact directly with the field trip teacher. A recent example of this would be a sponsored link to the Amazon rain forests with the explorer travelling down the Amazon and linking up with classrooms at key points.
answering student questions and drawing their attention to critical aspects. Teaching plans and strategies to support this unit of work were supplied to the school by Telecom.

The local company LEARNZ provide virtual experiences specifically for the new market.

Schools are also advocating the type of business enterprise programmes which were over only found in senior secondary schools. There are fledgling aspects of this in most primary schools now. This move has been strengthened by the introduction of the Technology Curriculum document which has an expectation that not only design build and improve will be considered, but also productions and processes. At Hillcrest this has led to a number of initiatives occurring. For the last three years senior classes have run production lines with product testing and a sales outcomes. The most recent of these was “Eat Me Potatoes” (Baked potatoes stuffed with a range of enticing fillings). Children operated in teams as a process production line after they had completed trials, and taste tests in designing their product. They then took orders, filled the orders to a timeframe and handed out client satisfaction questionnaires. Evaluations were around quality of product, ability to work as a team in the process and use of team strengths. The project was self-funding.

Another project at the school was based around the design of a covered lunch area and gardens. Students worked with a landscape artist and a graphic designer to develop the skills needed to prepare scale plans, draw up design details in 3D, work out material quantities and put together their own presentation portfolio. They used survey methods to identify staff and student preferences. Selected student portfolios with different designs were sent for commercial component costing. A presentation was made to the Board of Trustees. The presentation included recommendations to the Board for action based on all considerations. The Board members agreed to the project and used the student portfolios to access charity funding so that the project could be completed using parent labour.

The biggest change in curriculum implementation has come from the notion of problem based learning. Curriculum aspects are fully integrated in pursuit of a meaningful investigation. Investigations can be both small and large scale. The curriculum links involve the real work needed to complete the task. This is quite different to thematic learning. Each project uses complex thinking skills and teachers not only scaffold process and procedural skills but also develop and structure the thinking needed as part of the problem solving strategy. Teachers at Hillcrest embrace the “six thinking hats” of De Bono and use extended brainstorming and other techniques and then plan using Gardiner’s multiple intelligences as a framework. Library skills have become information skills and include problem solving procedures and organisers to come. Hillcrest Normal school uses information literacy processing evaluating and teaching model. (ILPET) as a structure to facilitate the cohesive inclusion of information literacy skills within the school. This is based around a hierarchical problem-solving model. The key elements of which are defining, locating, selecting/analysing, organising/synthesising, creating/presenting, and evaluating. Fostering creativity is apparent in the planning and organisation within many classrooms where creative design work is a regular parts of the programme.
Integration of curriculum is essential to create rich meaningful learning experiences. Teachers at Hillcrest have become skilled at this. A recent mathematics investigation was based around student initiated desire to have a broader range of sports represented within the school planned programmes. The class identified research questions to investigate. What do we already know? What do most people want to change and why? What are the benefits and considerations to be made in putting a sports programme together? How do you cater for those who find sport a challenge?

Students brainstormed to topic and considered how to collect the information. They considered what they would do with the information they gathered, who their audiences would be and the form of presentation that would be suited to these sorts of data. The desired outcome was to have a revised plan for lunchtime sport and school sport implementation prepared with supporting arguments. The plan had to consider the need to provide opportunity for skill practice, be cost appropriate, and consider the needs and fitness levels of all senior students. The plan was to be presented to the sports coordinators and principal for consideration and action. Having established all this, assigned groups set out to collect information and research aspects.

Presentations were made back to the whole group as parts were completed. Groups were given peer feedback and aspects of quality were drawn to the attention of others as models of the standard and quality of work to be aspired to. The class culture was one where children are trained to give “put ups” and constructive comment. The teacher facilitated the process of the investigation, kept the direction tightly on the outcomes identified, provided skills teaching and scaffolded new processes so that students experienced success. She kept the tasks manageable and challenged student thinking by asking the right question of the right student at the right time and by pulling groups together for teaching where a need was indicated.

Curriculum integration included health and physical fitness, mathematics, in particular the statistics strand. Research skills, numeric data gathering and qualitative interviews, oral language/debating skills in values areas, written language genres and graphic presentation skills. Underpinning all this was the development of co-operative teamwork with high order thinking skills being used to achieve specific goals in authentic contexts.

The Catching the Knowledge Wave Conference held in Auckland in August re-enforced the political and business initiated agenda that schools must focus on math’s, science and technology and foster innovation in students if New Zealand have a sound economic infrastructure. It is not just knowledge but the thinking skills that are behind problem solving which have the power to improve teaching outcomes for students.

Teachers have been influenced by the introduction of the new curriculum document for technology, by the rapid introduction of electronic technology and its ability to open up new experiences that were previously beyond the capability of the primary classroom. With the new technologies have come a need to refine and re focus teaching programmes and methodologies that support problem based learning. Interestingly the technisist
model and measurement of outcomes by narrow paper and pencil testing is not appropriate for the emerging teaching models. Teaching in such classrooms is a complex and highly skilled task.

As globalisation occurs through the access and exchange of information, capital and labour markets the push for transportable qualifications and the investment in English as a prime language of communication, concepts of culture maintained through isolation are challenged and protections are needed for indigenous peoples and their languages to survive. Merging of communities forces the need to address issues of competing values within a multicultural society. The school is a prime interface of community and so has an important role to play in forging community values and meeting community expectations. The challenge is fast becoming that of finding ways of acting together morally and ethically within a world village.

All of us are influenced by those whom we interact with on a daily basis, by what we see through the media about national and world directions, considerations and challenges. The rhetoric here influences thinking including that of teachers. Teacher thinking is actioned through curriculum focus, structural positioning, ethnicity and location. This mix is reflected into the classroom as the teaching programme. Teachers are not value free. They become the agents of change whether through conscious decision making, through the introduction of new curricula, through Ministry of Education direction for curriculum instruction and through professional development opportunities. Teachers also respond to parents and communities. Communities often support and advocate rhetoric from the media, and are influenced by views expressed by the business world, which seek logical, easy fix solutions to educational issues.

As family links are fragmented and communities are less easily identified the school is emerging as the new village, a one-stop shop for health, education, childcare and social organization. The school is the keeper of values and the advocate for the child and family within a multi-cultural dimension.

The school is the place where complex new teaching methodologies. Methodologies that are problem based, and supported by high order critical thinking skills. We are preparing students to think their way though and provide solutions within a rapidly changing world.

**DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION**

Our thesis was that each school which has its own social and cultural context negotiates the national curriculum at several different levels. In our exploration we looked at notions of citizenship in New Zealand as expressed through the curriculum documents and framed by the country's economic imperatives. We have examined how one school has interpreted the ideas and draw these together in a case study of curriculum integration. In the case study we have highlighted models of practice and significant features and emerging trends. In conclusion we want to identify those common links which are apparent.
Participatory democracy in schools

The notion of participatory democratic citizenship in the classroom is exemplified by students sharing the control over learning. Opportunities are provided by the:

- development of classroom charters (how things are done around here, and the way we will interact);
- selection of problems within learning contexts;
- development of hypotheses plans and solutions and presenting them to the next level to gain support and approvals e.g. student initiated surveys about issues which affect them within the school – the food served at the canteen, interclass sport competition at lunchtime, the range of sporting opportunities available, the development of particular areas within the ground-care and protection of native bush areas;
- organisation of the learning e.g. students working in teams, taking responsibility for each other e.g. acting as coaches, mentors or mediators, working within leadership programmes (student council, librarian, ICT technical support).

At a school systems level it may mean a:

- rebalancing of school curriculum timetables to give greater emphasis to literacy and numeracy and the repositioning of science and technology in the core

- push for innovation and valuing and development of students’ ideas in making sense of science and technology. Use of computers as tools of learning and to support learning. Evolution of school libraries as learning centres means the work going on pushes the boundaries into a global environment.

- developing enterprise programmes within a business model in primary classrooms e.g. designing, developing and marketing product within a business model e.g. “Eat me potatoes”. The economic aspects grow from the curriculum rather than the organiser for the curriculum e.g. Primary Enterprise Programme (PreP).

- the notion of school-business partnership beyond the governance-management relationship, local funding support in return for business loyalty and promotion with the potential for business to access extended client bases from school parent lists e.g. Telecom sponsorship, ASB, Westpac. Schools are now part of business marketing strategy

- acknowledgement that the partnership to the parents and with the local community establishes a set of values which surrounds and permeates everything that happens in the school. And the school culture and curriculum implementation must be in tune so that the learning experience is authentic and must have an impact beyond knowledge and skills.
We conclude with our belief that political rhetoric and globalisation impacts within the school setting but is mediated through the school’s cultural context and the implicit democratic values and assumption held by the principal and staff.

21 August, 2003

IRENE COOPER is a national executive member of NZEI Te Riu Roa and principal at Hillcrest Normal School. She can be contacted by email: hnschool@ihug.co.nz

SANDRA AIKIN is a senior officer at national office of NZEI Te Riu Roa specialising in curriculum and assessment issues. She can be contacted by email: sandra.aikin@nzei.org.nz.