

## Editorial

Kia ora tātou,

Welcome to the first edition of Kairaranga for 2017.

Just over twenty years ago, in 1996, the New Zealand Government released the policy *Special Education 2000* (Ministry of Education, 1996). The aim of this policy was to “create a world-class inclusive education by the year 2000” (p.5). Now, in the year 2017, it is worth pausing to consider how far we have come toward the realisation of this aim, and why we cannot yet say that we have a world-class inclusive education system in New Zealand.

Given the limits of a forum such as this editorial, it is difficult to do justice to highlighting those factors that are in force within our societies and our education systems that act to exclude and marginalise some students from and within school. However, these forces are so powerful that they appear to override international treaties and laws such as the United Nations Educational and Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) Convention Against Discrimination in Education (UNESCO, 1996) and other international human rights treaties which prohibit any exclusion, or limit on education based on personal or socially-ascribed factors such as ability, gender, religion, socio-economic status and so forth. Similarly, these forces appear so powerful as to override national policies and legislation promoting and protecting the rights of all children and young people to be included at their local neighbourhood school and have their needs met.

Perhaps it is time to start focusing more on the notion of ‘equity’ in relation to our education systems. Equity within education has been described as having two components, fairness and inclusion (OECD, 2008). In New Zealand, we have always prided ourselves on the belief that we live in a place where people can ‘get a fair go’ When we see unfairness and inequity, we stick up for the ‘underdog’. Maybe the simple question – ‘is that fair?’ - is a question that we should ask ourselves when we consider the policies and practices of our education systems and of our societies. There is no doubt that there are some children and young people who are still not getting a fair go, despite the best intentions of the educators who work tirelessly to support these learners.

Kairaranga continues to contribute to the discussion of educational equity with a range of articles highlighting policies and practices that support the creation of more fair and inclusive education systems. We begin with an article by Tara Way McLaughlin, Julia Budd and Sally Clendon. In this article the authors introduce a toolkit that is designed to assist educational teams to discuss key aspects of children’s functional experiences and abilities to inform educational planning.

The second article, written by Ivanka Soljan and Wendy Holley-Boen reports on research into a community of practice (COP) that used a strength-based approach. The authors highlight those factors found by the COP participants to be effective in working together to grow knowledge and manage change. The next article by Tracey Jongens describes the experience of two Year 11 teens attending different schools in New Zealand. This article highlights the diversity of experience each had due to the differing approach their school took towards them and their diagnosis of Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder.

The fourth article by Mike Stone examines how one school, the RTLB service and its community leaders, including Maori advisors, used a shared understanding of ‘equity literacy’ in an education setting and the appreciative inquiry process to enhance learning opportunities for all students and especially those from low socio-economic backgrounds. In the next article, Lynette Quinn presents the findings of a study which surveyed 110 teachers of Year 1 to Year 4 students, examining the behaviour management training teacher respondents had received both pre-service and inservice, as well as the behaviour management strategies they perceived as useful. Finally in this edition of Kairaranga, Madelaine Armstrong Willcocks discusses curriculum as a vehicle for agency in gifted learners.

We hope that readers enjoy this edition. Thank you to all our contributors.

Ngā mihi nui

Alison Kearney (for Kairaranga editing team)

## Kairaranga

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