

How education can make a bigger difference to Auckland's future

Discussion paper from the Auckland Education Summit

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HE WHAKATAUKI

E kore e taea e te whenu kotahi
ki te raranga i te whāriki
kia mōhio tātou kiā tātou.
Mā te mahi tahi o ngā whenu,
mā te mahi tahi o ngā kairaranga,
ka oti tēnei whāriki.
I te otinga
me titiro tātou ki ngā mea pai ka puta mai.
Ā tana wā,
me titiro hoki
ki ngā raranga i makere
nā te mea, he kōrero ano kei reira.

The tapestry of understanding
cannot be woven
by one strand alone.
Only by the working together of strands
and the working together of weavers
will such a tapestry be completed.
With its completion
let us look at the good that comes from it
and, in time
we should also look
at those stitches which have been dropped,
because they also have a message.

Foreword

At the start of the Auckland Education Summit, Mayor Len Brown invited us to “be bold” in defining the place of education in the economic and social future of the city.

Summit participants expressed in many ways a commitment to a success strategy, one which would extend beyond success in education to success in life.

Education is important because it improves individuals’ employment prospects; raises productivity; builds strong families and communities and helps Aucklanders keep up with the pace of global change.

This strategy is not the task of any one organisation. Rather, it requires the commitment of the entire Auckland education sector, Auckland Council, government and the wider community.

Tapu Misa, the ‘designated dreamer for the Summit’ reminded us of what we too often forget: *“Our futures – yours and mine and our children’s -- depend upon an Auckland where education is succeeding for everyone ... no matter where in Auckland they happen to have landed.”*

Sir Peter Gluckman was unequivocal in his valuing of education: *“Unless we have a well-educated general population, then the nature of democracy will fail.”*

Angus Fletcher reminded us that we cannot expect to achieve success without risking innovative solutions: *“We can’t solve problems by using the same kind of thinking we used when we created them.”*

What is required is a commitment and leadership from the entire Auckland education sector, Auckland Council, government and the wider community.

The timeline for the work from the Summit coincides with development of the Auckland Plan, which will set the strategic direction for Auckland for the next 30 years. A commitment from the Auckland Council to a ‘success strategy’ will mark it as a leading advocate for education in Auckland – and as an innovative local government body in the New Zealand context.

COMET and the Cognition Institute are pulling together an interim kaitiaki group to progress the recommendations in this report, as part of our commitment to a broader work programme as outlined in the appendix.

We commend this discussion paper for your thinking and action and invite you to share your feedback on our websites.

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Executive Summary

The remit for those attending the Auckland Education Summit, co-hosted by COMET and the Cognition Institute on 11 May 2011, was challenging but simple. They were asked to consider the ways in which education could stimulate the radical changes required to enhance Auckland's economy and society.

The event drew more than 180 leaders from across the city's political, commercial, social and educational landscape. It provided a collaborative forum in which participants debated and identified the activities and policies required to lift the city's education record for all citizens to world class standards.

Participants consistently shared the view there should be much more coherent and active connections between all levels of education in Auckland – as well as between the education sector and Auckland's wider society. Equally strong agreement coalesced around the need for a success strategy that will lift those at the lowest levels of achievement, and enable Auckland's diverse communities to excel.

The day's proceedings, group discussions and individual reflections resulted in the identification of seven interlocking directions for change:

- Education is a vital part of Auckland's success. Education needs to be valued for its vital contribution to Auckland's future social and economic success. A first step towards achieving this change would be the creation of an Auckland education framework or charter with explicit goals linking Auckland's economic needs with the imperative to lift achievement for all.
- Education in Auckland is connected and collaborative. Enhanced connections – between education organisations and sectors, education organisations and families, and education and communities – must develop if radical change within education is to occur.
- The early years are vital. All Auckland children need access to early childhood education or they will miss out on the best opportunities to launch successful lives.
- All Aucklanders need learning to support Auckland's economic growth. The need for quality education is not confined to children and young adults. All Aucklanders require access to a much wider range of knowledge and learning opportunities.
- Education is a shared responsibility. Currently there is no mechanism for a cohesive, widely shared understanding of the performance of Auckland's education system. Participants agreed that current accountability mechanisms are inadequate, and that more people need to be engaged in performance setting and evaluation processes.
- Education can draw on the strengths of Māori, Pacific and other diverse communities. Education professionals and city leaders could champion the role of Maori language and culture and work closely with Māori and other migrant groups to learn about their aspirations for success.
- Smarter gains can be made. Flowing logically from the focus on accountability, participants also argued that better value could be obtained by scaling up programmes known and proven to be effective, rather than investing in further pilot programmes that might not be sustainable. The key is to establish accurate mechanisms through which programmes can be measured – then realign funding.

The recommendations of this paper are to:

1. Develop an education and skills framework for connecting what Auckland's education sector delivers to the Auckland Plan
2. Set simple and clear goals for incorporation into the Auckland Plan

HOW THIS PAPER WAS PREPARED

More than 180 participants from across Auckland's education, community, business, local and central government sectors attended the Summit to consider how education can make a bigger difference to Auckland. Three key questions were put to participants:

- *What would be happening if education were succeeding for all citizens not just 80%?*
- *What would be happening if education organisations were truly accountable to their communities?*
- *What would be happening if we were serious about achieving these goals?*

Each question was by addressed by a 'provocateur' to stimulate discussion. Participants were given permission to range widely and deeply around the topic. Each mixed sector group of participants recorded key points of agreement and disagreement. Individuals recorded their personal reflections on the question: *how would we be working if we were serious about achieving our vision?* The findings in this paper include sections describing a future which answers these questions.

Two panels of Rapporteurs reflected their perspectives on these conversations back to the plenary group.

The data from three sessions of group discussions and from a shorter period of individual reflections was collated, coded, analysed and synthesised into seven directions for change.

The format of this paper records participants' thinking about each of these change directions, in three ways:

- A description of what might be happening in Auckland if each change direction was successfully implemented
- A commentary then follows which captures the range and diversity of views and *reflects key points* arising from discussions
- Each core direction for change section concludes with additional feedback arising from the discussion groups.

The raw data used in this analysis will be available to support the next stage of the work programme, including establishing a leaders' group to set the agenda from the Auckland Education Summit.

The production of this discussion paper is a joint effort by the teams at the Cognition Institute and COMET.

Note: This paper draws on the views of leaders who attended the Summit. Additional work needs to be scoped to provide the same opportunity to iwi and other groups under-represented at this event.

FINDINGS FROM THE SUMMIT

1. Education is a vital part of Auckland's success

He maunga nui e kore e taea te whakaneke, he ngaru nui, mā te ihu o te waka e wāhi.

A giant mountain cannot be moved; nevertheless the large wave can be broken through by the prow of the canoe.

Commentary:

Participants at the Summit agreed that education plays a vital role in Auckland's future and needs to be publicly valued, both for its economic outcomes and for its social impact - success in education and success in life.

“Set a goal for Auckland to be a city of innovation. Develop a culture of involving business and industry in discussions about educational outcomes.”

The city and the education sector can provide the strong leadership needed to ensure education achieves the greatest possible outcomes for Auckland's economic and social wellbeing.

Several models were put forward for sector-based leadership to bring about radical change in Auckland education, such as an Auckland education leadership team, or an Advisory Board.

Others suggested the Auckland Council could take more leadership responsibility, by way of a Council Controlled Organisation for education, an advocacy group for education inside Council, along the line of business development or a person in Council with a portfolio to lead education in Auckland.

“(We need) leadership to ‘paint a picture’ of what we want our society to look like, which in turn will drive what the education sector does.”

Many participants commented on the need to increase the public value of education in Auckland, in a ‘campaign’ led urgently by Aucklanders rather than by central government.

“Let's not wait for the government to change the system: we can do this ourselves in Auckland. We need to move forward – FAST.”

“Do it together and do it now.”

Central to this vision is an ambitious agenda, setting Auckland as the ‘intellectual powerhouse’ of the nation. The new baseline for success needs to be what is happening to the least successful Aucklanders.

“The baseline for success needs to be what is happening at the bottom -not the average - of the population.”

A first step is to create an Auckland education framework or charter, with ambitious, explicit goals which link Auckland's economic needs with the imperative to lift achievement for all. Participants used words like accord, charter, compact, agreement, plan, strategy, and framework to describe the structures and processes required to set and achieve goals.

“An innovative powerhouse city needs articulate, energetic, motivated, creative, educated, skilled and creative citizens of all ages!”

Such a framework should prioritise communities that currently have high levels of underemployment and under-education, and include a holistic, whanau based approach to success.

Some participants suggested creating education plans for local communities.

“Our solutions need to be bespoke.”

What would be happening if we were serious about education being a vital part of Auckland's success?

The value and profile of education in Auckland would have grown. Auckland's economy would have a hunger for and thrive on the acquisition of knowledge, playing with ideas and knowing what it takes to implement bold ideas.

The Auckland Education Accord would explain how education meets the city's needs. It would be widely disseminated and regularly updated. Its core principle would be a long term commitment to a 'success strategy' and everyone would know what they are working towards.

This 'education strategy' extends beyond success in education to success in life. The intended purpose of education - whether personal or professional - includes the ability to secure employment, to build strong families and strong communities. Education and learning would be the basis of what it means to be a citizen of Auckland. As the nature of citizenship and knowledge constantly changes, so too would the learning and knowledge requirements of Aucklanders.

Success would be defined in many ways. Each community would help define what success is and would have its own learning plan to show how its citizens can change and grow socially and economically. These learning plans would contribute to and draw on the Auckland Council's central 'success strategy'.

This 'success strategy' would mark Council as a leading advocate for education in Auckland, with its zero tolerance for failure. All the resources of every community would be used in better ways to make sure the city can thrive. The baseline for success, regardless of the community, would always be what is happening at the bottom – not the average – of the population.

Moving from a culture of mediocrity to one of ambition, Auckland would become recognised globally as the intellectual powerhouse of New Zealand. Education would enjoy a high status. Intellectual role models, the city's first XV of intellectual ambassadors, would help lead this change.

Students emerging from the schooling system would have had several experiences engaging with businesses and in tertiary learning. All would have skills that make them 'work ready'.

Additional ideas from participants:

An Auckland education framework might include the following targets to raise system quality in Auckland:

- All children will have access to early childhood education;
- All children achieving at school;
- All students leaving school having some tertiary learning experience and work experience;
- All adults achieving at least one tertiary qualification.

There was significant agreement that such a framework should draw on greater connectedness across all levels of education in Auckland, and between the education sector and Auckland's wider society.

2. Education in Auckland is connected and collaborative

He waka eke noa

A canoe we are all in with no exception. We are all on this ride together.

Commentary:

There was overwhelming agreement that greater connections - between education organisations and sectors, between education organisations and families and between education and communities - are needed in order to achieve the radical change needed for education to make a bigger difference to Auckland's future.

Auckland needs a bigger understanding of what it means to be a unified education community across the city, while accommodating the different needs of diverse communities. The way Aucklanders conceive learning needs to be bigger; all Aucklanders, regardless of age, need the opportunity to keep learning.

There need to be stronger collaborations within and across geographic communities. Resources and expertise, wherever they are located, should be available to all who need them.

Participants repeatedly commented on the need to establish more effective communications, within the education profession, and across the community so that every part of Auckland's system knows what is happening.

Some ideas included creating stories of progress towards goals, or featuring education-related stories in, for example, every edition of *Our Auckland*.

"We need people from the forum who can take a lead in driving those initiatives and ideas with the view of reporting back on successes and challenges to the whole group regularly through Facebook or focus group meetings."

There were strong calls to remove silos. Schools need to talk to each other. Tertiary institutions need to work together. Different tiers of the education system need to work together. All education services need to connect to the labour market and to the wider community.

"School community connections don't just happen through the Board of Trustees structure."

For some, an extended role for school managers was imagined, where management capabilities in schools were strengthened to make the link between business and community.

"Schools should understand how to do community development after all."

Schools need to operate in clusters alongside early childhood and tertiary providers and with their local communities. Some called for local community board education plans.

"Don't define community too narrowly. It's not just schools and parents. We need mechanisms for genuine knowledge sharing, open conversations, and knowledge-building together."

The alignment between Council planning and education planning was reflected in the calls to consider transport planning in relation to education and for more efficient sharing of community and education facilities.

What would be happening in Auckland if we were serious about being connected and collaborative?

Auckland would have an infrastructure to make and maintain connections between organisations to achieve success. Auckland's 'big' community would have a 'big story' where everyone knows they need to keep learning and how this would happen routinely.

The Auckland Council would have set up a team to ensure coherence across Auckland's early childhood, school and tertiary learning systems, and to support education networks.

A series of social, cultural, political, financial, and educational networks would have been established and work together on a daily basis. These networks would share planning for all types of personal and professional learning. There would be increased collaboration between education organisations at every level. Private, community and public organisations would have built partnerships to support schools.

These connections ensure that the thinking and behaviours of learning organisations would be thoroughly attuned to what Māori whanau and iwi need. They would also be thoroughly conversant with the needs of the diverse cultures that populate Auckland.

Communities would draw on their own and each other's strengths to achieve the widely shared vision of educational success. Parents, the education and private sectors would all be involved in these community connections, drawing on existing structures.

Additional ideas from participants:

- Make learning part of the community, and connect learning activities between communities;
- Establish social, cultural, political, fiscal and education networks;
- Stimulate private, community and public organisations building partnerships to support schools;
- Set up networks and align goals between the private sector, local government and education system;
- Help communities develop informed and high aspirations around learning;
- Locate early childhood and family learning experiences where people are: in neighbourhoods, marae, churches, libraries or sports facilities;
- Include education in local community board plans, and invite local community boards to sponsor forums to share information and outcomes;
- Use social media for conversations between education sector groups;
- Have a liaison person responsible for making connections between a school and its community;
- Establish stronger connections between health and education.

3. The early years are vital for success

Kohikohia ngā kākano, whakaritea te pārekereke, kia puāwai ngā hua.

Gather the seeds, prepare the seedbed carefully, and you will be gifted with abundance of food.

Commentary

Educational success starts with early childhood education. All Auckland children need access to early childhood education or they will miss out on the best opportunities to launch successful lives. Parents need to be involved in their children's learning from the earliest days. There was a clear consensus that early childhood education forms a critical platform for future educational success.

The New Zealand Curriculum is flexible and supports community engagement and collaboration. It is a good base for building greater connectivity between learning in school and the economic development aspirations of the city.

"If the curriculum was fully enacted the world would be a beautiful place."

Several groups called for a change to the self-managing governance model of schooling.

"Have community people with expertise able to support groups or networks of schools, so that the focus is on learning and not the governance bureaucracy."

Many participants commented on the lack of shared knowledge of what is already happening in learning organisations and made several pleas to share effective practice across the Auckland region in a systematic, consistent and regular way.

"Look at successful models. We know what works but ultimately we don't seem to be implementing the models that work in Auckland or even nationwide."

Some participants saw a role for teachers working with the wider community within, not outside, their core role.

"We need leaders with the time to lead: co-ordination across schools and communities takes time."

Teachers should also be a resource for shaping public policy.

What would be happening in Auckland if we were serious about the early years being vital for success?

Students, rather than organisations, would be the heart of the learning system and linked to learning experts from their earliest years until adulthood. Every child would participate in Early Childhood Education. They would have a learning plan that they carry from early childhood through their years at school. It would be regularly revised and updated and accessible to all those providers involved in the student's life.

The New Zealand Curriculum would be providing a robust platform for building greater connectivity between learning in school and the economic development aspirations of the city.

Schools would collaborate with each other and with the wider community to deliver what students need for success. The whole family, from a child's earliest days, would be involved in learning with support from schools and other learning organisations. Parents would be supported to help their children learn and grow.

Student Reference Groups or similar structures would feed in to policy activity to make sure the right balance is achieved between the design of the education system and what schools do.

For students, education would be like a bus trip. The system would enable students to get on and off the bus to catch up with whatever they needed to make them successful. Miss one bus, another would be along soon. If students had a good journey, they would want to keep using the bus. Auckland would have a significant increase in its achievement data, attributed in large part to the quality of teaching.

Professional learning would support the quality of teachers and leadership in the profession. Teachers across levels of education and institutions would routinely identify and share examples of effective practice. All teachers would participate in specialist training for students' special and English as a second language needs. Inspirational teachers would lead a range of projects co-ordinating activities across schools and communities.

Additional ideas from participants:

- Affordable and accessible quality early learning needs to be available in all communities;
- Decile ratings create public perceptions about schools that are not helpful;
- A challenge to the premise of putting thousands of adolescents in one place to learn;
- Have a seamless transition between special education and mainstream education;
- Create visionary teachers, good school systems and programmes;
- Value teaching as a profession and raise the expectations and rewards for teachers;
- All teachers should be conversant in a range of languages;
- Create policies to attract and retain quality young teachers in Auckland;
- Shape Auckland's education system to suit the ethnicity and culture of the clientele and promote excellence;
- Enable better data sharing about what is working for students;
- Create an infrastructure to promote and scale up successful programmes.

4. All Aucklanders need learning to support Auckland's economy

Ma te tini, ma mano, ka rapa te whai.

By many, by thousands, the work will be accomplished.

Commentary

The changing nature of Auckland's economy and society requires all Aucklanders to access a wider range of knowledge than ever before.

Adults need to learn skills that can make them successful, as members of the workforce, and as parents.

"Adult education needs to be linked to early learning needs. This will require a collaborative effort between central and local government, the community and education sectors."

Adults also need to acquire the knowledge that can support them to make competent decisions as members of society.

Some said schools and communities could offer a better menu of learning opportunities for families such as parent reading programmes and leadership courses. There was a strong desire to create community learning hubs where families can access early childhood services, health services, social services or regional innovation centres.

Several participants proposed that the strengths of Māori culture and language contribute more to learning and to Auckland's future.

However, it was around the transition from students' full time learning to full time participation in the workforce where there was most agreement. Young people need coherent learning pathways that move them successfully through education and into work.

"We need to better match the outputs of the education system with the skills needs of the economy by better matching educational outputs to labour market demand. "

"As part of the joined-up system, we need simplification of infrastructure so families find it easy to understand [how to navigate] through to employment."

Another consistent theme was the influence of technology on work as well as on learning and education.

"Be bolder about technology – all employers will expect employees to be able to use it."

Technological development means that all Aucklanders need to be ICT savvy to make the best of learning opportunities, to be work ready and to keep up with developments in their careers and workplaces.

Social media are likely to transform system relationships as well as personal learning styles.

"Why are schools still refusing to let students use their mobile phones, MP3 players and laptops?"

"I've been tweeting [about this conference] ..."

What would be happening in Auckland if we were serious about achieving this goal?

Parents, from pregnancy, would have support to develop the skills to help the growth of children under two. As the child grows, parents would stay closely linked to their children's learning and liaise whenever required with teachers about what their children need.

Diverse ethnic groups would be involved in designing what education success looks like for them. They would provide routine support to Auckland's teachers so they could learn more about the culture and aspirations of these populations.

The changing nature of Auckland's economy would mean there are regular discussions between business and learning organisations where commercial leaders and education professionals exchange ideas about emerging innovations.

Auckland Council would routinely work with schools to ask what they can offer in terms of facilities or expertise, leading to better partnerships between schools, local and central government.

Businesses, communities and families would all contribute to the learning plans for their local communities.

There would be easy access to digital education by all families, regardless of their age and stage of learning.

Additional ideas from participants:

- Early learning needs to come in a variety of forms to meet family and community aspirations;
- Help learners make better transitions between different parts of the education system;
- Vocational training and outcomes to be given weight in the Auckland plan;
- Establish business mentoring services to help students;
- Help the community to develop informed aspirations [through careers planning];
- Develop a leadership team for education in the city, to lead, broker and champion education's contribution to Auckland;
- Use e-learning and m-learning technologies (mobile phones, ipads, notebooks) to be educationally innovative;
- Address equity issues about access to ICTs.

5. Education can draw on the strengths of Māori, Pacific and other diverse communities

Kia ānga whakamua me hoki whakamuri

Knowing where we have come from as we move forward

Commentary

Many of the conversations during the Summit focused on making a difference to those groups for whom the current system is not working.

As one participant commented:

“If today’s conversation isn’t about what is happening in areas like South Auckland, then we might as well pack up our bags and go home.”

Ambitious goals need to recognise a new base level for Māori and Pasifika achievement in schools.

“Have the same success rate for Māori and Pasifika as NZ Europeans.”

The Pacific voice included a call for “zero tolerance for failure.”

While several discussions focused on the structural barriers the schooling system presents for Māori, they were also hopeful that other structures more suited to *te ao Māori* could provide solutions to help Māori learners.

“Tertiary education is already acting as a hub – eg MITE Māori in Tertiary Education”

Many participants recognised the importance of nurturing the diverse languages and cultures of Aucklanders and the willingness of Pacific Peoples and other migrant communities to play a role in this. There was also a call for the Council and others to advocate for the rights of communities to learn and retain their languages.

“The Auckland Council should be fighting for the rights of communities to retain their language.”

Participants at all sessions discussed the need for the education sector to better serve the needs of Māori and Pasifika students. This included teachers being able to learn more about cultural frameworks used by Māori and other groups.

Responses appeared to assume that making the education system more connected and cohesive, building a more accountable system and scaling up effective evidence-based approaches would set the platform for increasing achievement of Māori and Pasifika citizens. The importance of developing a partnership approach with iwi was evident in several responses.

What would be happening if we were serious about drawing on the strengths of Māori, Pasifika and other diverse communities?

Schools would be reporting their outcomes for Māori and Pasifika students not just to parents but to the community as a whole.

Students would have access to early childhood education that is accessible for their parents. As they progress through their education, their learning plans would signal what the child needs to achieve their potential. They would participate in a range of forums shaping plans for education.

Student success data would show Māori, Pasifika and children of new migrants achieving at or above the average data.

Parents would be supported to have rich discussions with learning professionals so that education can strengthen students' confidence and identities. They would have routine access to teachers whenever it was needed.

Schools and other learning organisations would be drawing on the expertise of Māori and other diverse ethnic groups to provide Auckland's youngest citizens with what they need to support Auckland's growth and economy.

Schools would be reporting their outcome for Māori and Pacific students not just to parents but to the community as a whole.

The profession would have greater numbers of Māori and Pasifika teachers and leaders. Their professional development would include learning more about what these communities need for their children.

The Mayor and Council would advocate for and support education policies that create opportunities for children to gain literacy in their own languages as well as in English.

Additional feedback from participants:

- School structures are not working well for Māori;
- Target investment at increasing Māori and Pacific students' achievements;
- Projects such as Ka Hikitia and the Pasifika Education Plan are a step in the right direction;
- MITE is developing a website as a resource to display options for students;
- Teachers need to be up to speed with 'the browning of Auckland.'

6. Education is a shared responsibility

Nau te rourou, naku to rourou, ka ai te manuhiri.

With your food basket, and my food basket, the wellbeing of the people is assured.

Commentary:

There was strong agreement around two key ideas:

- Current accountability mechanisms are not sufficient for education to make a bigger contribution to Auckland;
- More people need to participate in the performance setting and measuring processes.

Participants want to see regular monitoring of progress against the outcomes in an Auckland education framework and believe success measures should be widely set.

“Education is accountable for more than academic achievement”

Currently there is no mechanism for a cohesive, widely shared understanding of the performance of Auckland’s education system. As a result, there were different views about the performance of the system, the challenges and possible strategies for improving outcomes.

For some, accountability starts by identifying a clear, well-articulated vision and purpose. For others, accountability requires reciprocal relationships and trust, and has to involve a sense of responsibility on everyone’s part.

“When organisations and initiatives are connected, accountability will happen. Until we know what others do, we don’t know what we could do differently.”

Some participants suggested that greater accountability for Auckland’s educational performance might emerge from collaborative practice.

“Shared planning drives quality and shared accountability”

Others said that accountability should incentivise good practice, and that it should involve families.

While some felt that the solution to some students’ underperformance will not be found in the education sector alone, others felt that failure was not about students but about the system.

The view that accountability referred to school accountability was expressed in comments such as:

“Schools need to be responsible for student engagement”

School accountability should not be confined to Board and student reports. It should include dialogues, opportunities to be consulted and to participate in the setting of goals and measuring progress to achieve them.

There were many calls for more accountability for teachers:

“Accountability of teachers for student performance is fairly opaque”

“Too many can underperform and get away with it.”

Several suggested performance indicators for teachers, and a need to “*raise the bar.*”

There was also a view that as success in learning, concerns the wider community and not just the caregivers of students attending the school, teachers should be held accountable by their community.

“Every school should be a good school”

What would be happening in Auckland if we were serious about education being a shared responsibility?

Data about the education system would be regularly updated and widely shared. Finding out how well education in Auckland is performing would be as easy as finding the latest currency fluctuations or sports results.

Education experts, parents and the wider community would be collaborating to develop and implement strategies for education success. There would be community stakeholder forums and other information-sharing mechanisms about effective programmes and initiatives in the city.

There would be a special focus on how to build and maintain the quality teaching workforce that will make the most difference to Auckland's least successful learners.

Businesses and learning organisations would network to ensure that the professional expertise from across all sectors can be applied to make learning organisations world class.

Schools would know where students go when they leave school to monitor and stake a claim in that continued success.

At community, organisation and professional levels, there would be incentives for effective practice and accountability for the performance of school and tertiary organisations. There would be incentives for high performers and sanctions for low performers.

Additional comments:

- Set up a system to track children that stops them falling through the cracks;
- Support parents in identifying the questions they could ask educators;
- Consider more use of results based accountability where the emphasis is partnering with others to achieve outcomes bigger than the organisation and which includes getting community buy in;
- Provide a greater level of governance/mentoring with schools to ensure schools have the expertise then need;
- Have a leadership group conduct an audit of what is already happening in the city;
- Consider the option of setting up an institution that oversees the initiatives and tracks what works and what doesn't – not only in Auckland but nationwide;
- Make the outcomes around current spending transparent;
- Create a linking mechanism for schools, boards and businesses to network to ensure the skills and capability for accountabilities are grown.

7. Smarter gains can be made

Ko koe ki tēnā, ko ahau ki tēnei kīwa o te kete

You hold that handle, I'll hold this one, and we'll carry the load together

Commentary

Participants suggest better value can be obtained through scaling up programmes already known to be effective, rather than piloting local interventions that are unable to be sustained. Unless more is known about what is currently happening and what is successful, resources will continue to be wasted on programmes that can be stopped.

A number of participants spoke of the need for more knowledge about interventions that are proven to be effective.

However, there was also recognition that no one solution fits all situations.

While there was recognition of current financial constraints and the benefits of using the current resource more wisely, there was also a call from some participants for an equitable population-based funding that would bring more resource to Auckland.

As well as a call for stronger funding arrangements to education organisations, participants suggested a rethink of current spending.

“Funding formulas act as barriers to innovation and need.”

The considerable investment in education in Auckland could be realigned to more closely match city priorities. One participant boldly suggested:

“The macro budget for Auckland schools should be pooled and controlled by one agency in Auckland that would fund and broker targeted development resources focused on a model of improving schools.”

There was also a view that a stocktake of all current resource investments was needed in order to make decisions about what to reallocate. As one group noted:

“Equity of investment is not the same as equality of investment.”

Another mooted the idea of a new agency with the responsibility and flexibility to dispense new resources:

“[Create an] independent multi-stakeholder NGO responsible to market and brokering role; central repository for funding moves to which all schools can apply”

What would be happening if we were serious about making smarter gains?

There would be a cohesive voice for Auckland in policy-making decisions in Wellington so that education can make a bigger difference to Auckland's economy.

There would be new funding arrangements in place that factor in the contribution of partnerships and volunteers working to strengthen education in Auckland.

There would be well-supported calls for programmes that work for learners to be shared widely and quickly across all of Auckland's communities and systems in place to do that. Resources would no longer be spent on activities that are known to make no difference to education success. Leaders from the education sector, the council and the wider community would have processes in place to cull programmes that are not providing quality experiences for learners.

There would be widely published data to support a cohesive, shared understanding of the performance of Auckland's education system.

There would be incentives for effective practice. Accountability for early childhood, school and tertiary performance would be based on the perspective of the 'bus journey' of a student's particular learning and social needs. There would be a special focus on how to retain good teachers in disadvantaged communities.

Professional and skills development resources would be accessible to education professionals and students.

Additional comments:

- Create a database of interventions that are focused on reaching more students. Audit them and note the contribution each is making to the vision e.g. Hippy is about the vision of connecting communities around a child developing competencies that give them access to lifelong learning;
- Map and share effective programme initiatives;
- Provide short snapshots of education projects going on in Auckland and elsewhere, across deciles and ages that are known to be effective, measured by research and community buy-in;
- Have tagged positions such as a teacher in a school or similar resource in the community to identify specific areas of need and innovations that will address them;
- Provide more flexible education delivery and better use of school facilities – don't build new rec centre when schools already have the facilities;
- Another option to reduce replication is the amalgamation of smaller schools – pool resources, facilities and so on and maintain better teacher to student ratios.

Recommendations:

This paper recommends:

1. Develop an education and skills framework for connecting what Auckland's education sector delivers to the Auckland Plan
2. Set simple and clear goals for incorporation into the Auckland Plan.

Appendix 1.

This report complements the earlier “**Initial report from Auckland Education Summit 24 May 2011**” previously circulated to Summit participants. Messages from that earlier report include:

COMET and the Cognition Institute have signalled a commitment to support the radical change needed to improve the effectiveness of education in Auckland, so that education can make a bigger difference to Auckland’s future.

Our role is:

- To support Summit participants to put in place the leadership (kaitiaki) required to achieve this goal over the next year
- To help these leaders build a work programme for a range of activities that can quickly contribute to this goal
- To support the learning needed to sustain system change in education
- To report progress towards the goal.

A consistent overarching theme from data gathered from the last session of the Summit was **the need for greater connectedness across all levels of education, and between the education sector and community, families and the private sector.**

Approaches to achieve this include:

- **Create an education plan specific to Auckland’s needs.** Include agreed targets for education, more efficient links between council and educational facilities and expertise; elevate the profile and value of education to the wider community.
- **Develop smarter ways to share existing excellent practices.** Educational professionals are already designing and implementing solutions that work for Auckland’s population.
- **Rethink current investment and return on expenditure in education.** Greater alignment across a vastly fragmented sector will lead to more resources.
- **Increase the value of early childhood education and the role of family in participation in learning.** Offering incentives for Aucklanders to participate in and contribute to learning from early childhood and right through the adult years could equip and reskill all citizens for changing times.
- **Communicate the changing purpose of education to families, community and the business sector.** Clarify what is actually happening in learning organisations and the range of projects that are creating successful outcomes for more learners.

What will happen next?

- We will help set up the groups of leaders to oversee the work needed in the next twelve months. We invite you to identify people who can serve in this role.
- We will set up a database to capture, share and provide contacts for current innovations already improving education outcomes. We invite you to add to this database and suggest how this tool might be widely accessible.
- We will keep in regular contact with Summit participants about the people who are stepping up to help lead this project, the activities that are occurring and the emerging plans. We invite you to share your thinking from the Summit with others who might contribute to this agenda and keep us informed about the results of this thinking.

The Summit has reinforced the education sector’s appetite for more cohesive and aligned activity during this window of opportunity. It is an ambitious agenda but the foundations of activity and the networks are in place to deliver a concrete plan of action that will impact on Auckland’s future.