



Welcome to the third newsletter for the Ngā Mātāpuna o te Waihora Learning Community Cluster.

The Ngā Mātāpuna o Te Waihora cluster consists of Early Childhood Centres and Schools in the Ellesmere area. The Cluster works together in a variety of areas with the aim of supporting our tamariki that attend our Early Childhood Centres and Schools. This initiative is supported by the Ministry of Education. The purpose of our Cluster newsletters is to inform the Community of the initiatives and programmes the Cluster has running.

Communities of Learning - Kahui Ako

On Monday 21 August Minister of Education Nikki Kaye approved the Community of Learning/Kāhui Ako submission from Ellesmere College, Southbridge School, Leeston Consolidated School and Dunsandel School. Our submission was one of 13 new Communities of Learning/ Kāhui Ako announced by the Minister. A Community of Learning/Kāhui Ako is a group of education and training providers that form around children and young people's learning pathways, and work together to help them achieve their full potential. The Communities of Learning/Kāhui Ako is part of the Government's initiative Investing in Educational Success (IES).

What is a Community of Learning/ Kāhui Ako?

Communities of Learning are groups of kura/schools that come together, along with their communities, to raise achievement for all tamariki and young people by sharing expertise in teaching and learning (ako), and supporting each other. They focus on the compulsory educational pathway, but can also engage with early childhood and post secondary education to fully include the learning (ako) journey children and young people will take. A Community of Learning will work with the students, parents, families, whānau, iwi and other communities within its catchment, as the support and involvement of these groups is essential for the Community of Learning to progress towards its goals.

The four schools will now spend time working through the following to ensure there is full benefit to all the children in the Ngā Mātāpuna o te Waihora Kāhui Ako

- Working with all groups in our community to develop a shared vision for our ākonga/students
- Deciding how the different parts of our Community of Learning will work together.
- Identifying our shared achievement challenges and creating a plan to address them.
- Establishing how we will operate as a Community.
- Deciding how, throughout these steps and ongoing processes, we will involve parents, family, iwi and the wider community.
- Deciding how we will document and share our learning as a Community.

This process, we understand, will take time as we endeavour to get our Kāhui Ako established as per Ministry of Education requirements and talk through our ideas that will benefit the children of the Ngā Mātāpuna o te Waihora Learning Community Cluster.



Young Writers

On the 12th and 13th of June, twelve talented writers from Year 6 - year 8 across the cluster met with James Norcliff for two days of intense writing. James Norcliffe is a published poet as well as an author of children's books. He has been awarded the 2012 University of Otago College of Education's Writer in Residence. The Loblolly Boy won the 2010 NZ Post Junior Fiction Award, as well as being shortlisted for the Esther Glen Medal. His other recent books are The Loblolly Boy and The Sorcerer, The Enchanted Flute and Felix and The Red Rats. The children really enjoyed working with James.

On the 16th of June, 12 talented young writers across the cluster from Year 3-5 enjoyed a wonderful day of writing with Gail Ingram from the Christchurch School of Young Writers. Gail has a degree in creative writing, and last year won first prize in the NZ Poetry Society's international competition. The children found her workshop most enjoyable, and some wonderful creative writing was produced as a result.



Teacher Professional Development – The Oral Language Book

On Tuesday 28 March we welcomed Louise Dempsey and Sheena Cameron to our Cluster. Louise and Sheena are the authors of the classroom resource The Oral Language Book. They engaged teachers from across the Cluster with a worthwhile introduction to the book and a range of Oral Language ideas and strategies that will support teachers to include more quality learning talk in classrooms. This PD was attended by over 50 teachers from our Cluster area which was fantastic.



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