

Mar 2009

Special points of interest:

- The court house vs the school house

# Newsletter



## What if we ran our schools like a District Court?

Kia ora tatou, talofa lava, malo e lelei, greetings. I'm sure you are all looking forward to your Easter break - happy holiday!

The refusal of a person who had backed into my car months' ago to admit liability, led to the insurance company filing a claim with the Disputes Tribunal of the District Court in the council area where I reside. Under the terms of this process, I was required to file on behalf of the insurance company, and had to appear, effectively making Company ABC's problem my problem.

The purpose of this personal anecdote is to reflect on my dismal experience in the courthouse of the city council into whose coffers I have to pour literally thousands of dollars in rates.

Imagine if the council symbolised a school Board of Trustees, that required me to pay a compulsory fee each year. Remembering that we live in neo-liberal times now, what might I expect in return for my dollar?

To make the point clear, what did I experience? No-one at the door, providing a helpful greeting, ready to point a mystified visitor in the right direction (think of those parents for whom school is an alien place, and how schools go the extra

mile to make them feel relaxed and welcomed).

Rather, just a bleak entrance and an unmanned (personed?) metal detector. To be fair, there was a signboard that took a while to figure out. While doing that, I noticed official court staff, holding court with each other in the foyer - forget 'customer service'!

With the benefit of education and some experience of bureaucratic fortresses, I managed to get myself to Enquiries. However, I could not help notice the many hapless individuals dotted around on waiting room chairs; whilst some may possibly have been felons, and be less deserving of our sympathy, others had a bewildered air about them. Never mind justice - I'm sure they would have been content with reassurance!

The toilets are really what motivated me to write this. We would not expect that school toilets would be defaced, and if they did get vandalised, we would require of ourselves that these were cleaned up immediately. However, these courtroom toilets would do Thugville proud - they could not have been repainted in months, leaving the taggers free to have a field day.

Then of course there was the actual experience of justice in the raw. Public address systems bellow out the names of applicants and defendants, summoning them to Room so-and-so. 'Dignity' is absent - as was the errant car park motorist in my 'case'.

Having marked time for quite some time waiting for the allotted 'Hearing', I and the Company ABC lady were called in before the 'Referee'. A mile of space separated us from him, and I wondered how a similar situation in a school might play out - this experience seemed very 'old school' to me.

We were in and out within 2 minutes, and I feel sure that even if the 'defendant' in this case had been present, the time allotted to this dispensation of justice may only have been a minute longer. Imagine if that was how we ran schools?



World YWCA (South Pacific)

**We sing your song! Tailored education solutions.**



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Mockingbird Education Management Consultants has been established to provide high quality professional advice, service and support to New Zealand schools.

**It is a consultancy based on:**

- Trust
- Quality
- Professionalism

**Mockingbird understands that:**

- Principals and Senior Managers are busy professionals
- Middle Managers need support and guidance
- Schools have to achieve results

**Therefore, Mockingbird will work closely with you to identify the advice, service or support you require and how best to deliver that to you, your senior managers, staff or school community.**

**Business Activity**

**Term 1**

**Business Activity**

Term 1 draws to a close, with work being undertaken in the following areas:

- Appraisals (Principal level)
- Teacher Only Days on the NZC
- On-going NZC implementation work
- Friend of the School (ERO Review)
- BOT consultation on NZC

Mockingbird Education Management Consultants is focussed on delivering **QUALITY OUTCOMES** to schools - call today to arrange a free consultation.

**Term 1**

**Client Schools**

Kaikohe West School  
Whangarei Intermediate School  
Holy Family School, Porirua  
St Pius X School  
Park Estate School  
St Mary's School, Avondale  
Whau Valley School, Whangarei  
Kaikohe Christian School  
Wesley College  
Elim Christian College

Congratulations: to Holy Family School on its very good ERO report, to be confirmed in the next few weeks.

**Upcoming Professional Learning**

**BT/PRT Workshops**

**Venues:**

**Option 1: James Cook High School, Dr Pickering Ave, Manurewa**

**Dates: 04/05/09**

**08/06/09**

**Option 2: St Dominic's College, 29 Rathgar Rd, Henderson**

**Dates: 06/05/09**

**09/06/09**

**Time: 9 am - 12.30 pm**

**Email or 'phone to receive a registration sheet or more info.**

