

WORKING TOGETHER

Education Forum

“Are Porirua Schools getting a fair go?”



18 May 2009

Report

Editorial

Russell Marshall Chair of the Steering Group



We were fortunate to have Karen Sewell, Chief Executive of the Ministry of Education as our guest speaker at the most recent Education Forum meeting. Karen is a very experienced educator, and has now also had a lengthy career in top educational leadership roles, at the Education Review Office and New Zealand Qualifications Authority prior to taking up her present role. Although she and we would have liked more time for dialogue, Karen indicated that she would be willing to return for another session some time.

With three very well attended public meetings under our belt, the Forum committee is now talking with our host organisation, Whitireia Community Polytechnic, about how the polytechnic might be able to assist in supporting and strengthening local education provision. One suggestion now being worked on is for Whitireia to take a lead in collecting educational data and in assisting schools to track students and their performance across the sector.

A regularly repeated concern is that so many students leave their local community to attend schools elsewhere. At the May forum meeting Kelvin Davis MP, until recently principal of an intermediate school in Northland, spoke of the work which he and his staff had done to regain the confidence of families in his school's catchment. From my observations and conversations over the last year, most Porirua schools and their teachers are better at their job than many people realise. One of the roles of the Forum may be in helping local parents to recognise and accept that reality.

I look forward to seeing you at the next Education Forum for which we expect the Minister of Education Hon Anne Tolley, will be guest speaker.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Russell Marshall". The signature is written in a cursive style.

Summary of presentations

This is a summary report on the papers presented and the key themes emerging from the Education Forum held at Te Rauparaha Arena on 18 May 2009.

The Forum was a successful gathering of approximately 90 educators from early childhood, primary, secondary, and tertiary sectors as well as community.

Chaired by Russell Marshall the Forum commenced with a presentation from Karen Sewell, Secretary for Education and Chief Executive of Ministry of Education followed by questions. Participants seemed very enthusiastic about the value of the Forum.

This report has been compiled at the request of participants and the steering group who planned the Forum.

Copies of presentations are available from the Whitireia website with instructions for access as follows.

www.whitireia.ac.nz/educationforum

A summary of each presentation is as follows:

- **Karen Sewell , Secretary for Education and Chief Executive, Ministry of Education**
- **Dr Roger Blakeley, Chief Executive Porirua City Council**

- **Speech from Karen Sewell,
Secretary for Education
and Chief Executive,
Ministry of Education
(Transcribed notes)**



Welcome everyone

It would be naive if I didn't start by saying New Zealand is facing a fiscal crises of the kind that we have never had before. It's different from others, partly because the speed of communication technology now means that things that are happening in the northern hemisphere can be conveyed to New Zealand that same day.

The Budget will be difficult for most of us next year, I am no economist but the signs are all there.

So what are some of the inter-related challenges that can act as a brake on social and economic development? In education we always work where there are stress-lines in our society and with the issues that incite controversy and debate. All of you will have children in your schools who have a family member that has lost their job. Families that only need the price of milk to go up by two cents and they drop below the line of coping. You will be dealing with this every day.

There has been a number of summits this year – at all of them, as always, people look at education, very early on, to provide the answers. Quite often they tell us that we are part of the problem, and they tell us we are the answer. I am quite happy to be in that place, because I think it is true. Education can provide us with some of the answers. But to do that you have to make sure that we

focus over the next few years on those things that will make the greatest difference to our future. These are going to be tough times and there will be some hard conversations to have, but out of them will come progress. And it's what we are always focused on, so it will just be a slightly different way of looking at the world.

Public expectations for our schools have never been higher. This is how it should be, but it will also be a challenge. We've got the New Zealand curriculum (which was launched in 2007) being implemented next year. Linked with that are things like the alignment of standards with NCEA.

I find it interesting that the first four things you have noted for priorities for Porirua are the same as those I had noted:

- Early childhood education enrolments
- NCEA numeracy and literacy achievement rates
- Local research monitoring and academic tracking
- Celebrating educational excellence

Focusing on the new curriculum – making sure our NCEA levels are aligned with the new curriculum and that we don't double up on unit standards etc.

Focusing on having the confidence in all our young people to raise the standards of their achievement.

Some of our young people are failing. Often it is not their fault, it's because the education system has failed to meet their needs.

Another challenge is managing change. We need to look at the governance of our schools. Are they delivering? Are the Boards of Trustees accountable for their communities and to the children that we teach?

We are looking at targeting differently. Early childhood as the first part of a ten year strategy -that has been running for eight years now - and now looks at lifting education levels provided, and better relations with communities.

ECE participation rates are now at 96% (89% for young Māori and 85% young Pacific). In some parts of New Zealand, figures are lower still than these.

So the challenge for us is to target where we know we can make a difference. We are no longer focusing on lifting the whole ship. We have done that and we have been successful at it. So what is the next challenge?

We are facing significant changes in education. We are looking forward and building an education system for the 21st century that will secure our place in the global knowledge society of the future. That will prepare our students for a world that is different from the one we grew up in, because whether we like to acknowledge it or not, we are currently preparing students for jobs that don't yet exist, to use technology that's not yet been invented and to solve problems that we don't even know are problems yet.

So, in this context – what is reasonable to expect from our schools? Schools can't do everything, but we can do some important things and we can certainly achieve more than we sometimes think we can.

What would success look like? Quote from Ben Levine (?) "... to put it bluntly, we want schools to make all our kids perfect."

Is it reasonable to expect that of our schools? Where are the relationships between schools and communities? What are the responsibilities of the communities? Where do parents fit into this? By working together we will achieve far more than we would have apart.

We are going to focus over the next few years on students having literacy and numeracy skills to achieve well at schools and beyond. But to do this we need to focus on early childhood education and the teaching sector, not just the schooling sector. Those children who have a positive, constructive and enjoyable early childhood are far more likely to be successful at schools and as adults, when they leave.

Focus on the accountability that schools have to parents, students and communities and also that parents and communities have to schools. And of course on the Ministry of Education and its focus and accountability.

I think we have an opportunity to make a real difference in this time. In fact in this time of fiscal crisis there will be a real opportunity to focus on education being part of the solution.

We are lucky enough in New Zealand to have one of the best education systems in the world. When I travel, people are always fascinated with what we are doing in education and I am proud of that. Then I come home and I see how much we still have to do. But we've got a chance now to make this different. All of you in your working lives wherever you are – together, people in this room can make a difference for children of Porirua and that is our focus.

The most important things that we must do in our schools - strengthening teaching and learning related practices - will happen through leadership from Principals and Chief Executives and the support given by communities and parents. That's where we will truly make a difference.

I've talked a bit about adapting the system for the students' needs – adjusting what might be a 'too tight fit' for students. To do that we need high expectations for all of our students, strong connections between teachers and students, better student engagement and motivation, rich and engaging environment and effective teaching practices.

They deserve the best we can give them and New Zealand's future depends on giving them the best we can. We need to concentrate on raising the achievement rate of our students, on looking at the education of our Māori and the needs of our young Pacifica children. We'll have better outcomes for children who have special education needs – because they too have the same rights as other young New Zealanders.

• **Speech from Dr Roger Blakeley
Chief Executive,
Porirua City Council**



14 May 2009

TO: PORIRUA EDUCATION FORUM
FROM: ROGER BLAKELEY, CHIEF EXECUTIVE
SUBJECT: PORIRUA CITY - PRIORITIES AND PROGRESS

INTRODUCTION

Education is one of Porirua's nine Community Outcomes. This paper describes the outcome and suggests that the Education Forum could be its champion. Also provided is information on aspects of Porirua's education and overall perception of the city.

COMMUNITY OUTCOMES - "PORIRUA IS LEARNING FOR LIFE"

Education is one of the city's priorities, described in the outcome: "**Porirua is Learning for Life**", described below. The Porirua Education Forum directly informed the *Learning for Life* outcome with the first Forum's recommendations reflected in the outcome. It is suggested that the Education Forum is a natural leader for the outcome.

Porirua is Learning for Life: "Diverse life-long learning opportunities supported by quality educational facilities and programmes."

This means ...

- We learn something new everyday
- We achieve

Some of the things to look at are ...

- Learning opportunities are available to everyone throughout life
- We take part in education
- People of all ages achieve a wide range of educational qualifications
- Our schools reach and maintain high levels of achievement
- We recognise and celebrate educational achievement

Priorities identified locally are ...

- 1) Early Childhood Education Enrolment
- 2) NCEA Level 1 Achievement Rates for Literacy and Numeracy
- 3) Local Education Research, Monitoring and Academic Tracking
- 4) Celebrating Educational Excellence

Lead agency/forum for the outcome

The Community Outcomes Steering Group considered that the Porirua Education Forum was the natural choice for outcome leader. If agreed, the Forum's logo or name would be used, along with other organisations and forums, in the Community Outcomes "Working Together - Partnership Agreement". The Forum is ideally placed for this role as it:

- has a specific focus on education in Porirua;
- is intersectoral;
- has informed the development of the education Community Outcome;
- would reinforce the importance and position of the Forum.

Monitoring the outcome

Monitoring and reporting on outcome progress will use information routinely managed and analysed by local, regional and national educational organisations around: education services and opportunities available; participation rates; educational achievement. The Education Forum identified local education research, monitoring and academic tracking as a priority and outcomes monitoring will be further informed by this work. Wider determinants of education will be picked up in the Community Outcomes (eg health, housing, employment, safety).

A SNAPSHOT OF PORIRUA'S PERFORMANCE (EDUCATION & GENERAL)

There is an amazing range of information about what goes on in Porirua and how we are doing as a city. However, there are some areas where we need better information. Following is information on education and Porirua's favourable performance in a number of recent analyses of quality of life, best places to live etc and more details are in the appendix.

Education (see appendix for graphs)


- Most Year 1 students in Porirua primary education have attended early childhood education services
- Average weekly hours attended at licensed early childhood education services for Porirua is similar to neighbouring councils and NZ
- There is a higher proportion of school leavers with little or no formal educational attainment in Porirua than its neighbours for both genders, Maori, Pacific and Pakeha

Perceptions of Porirua (see appendix for details)

- Residents are very positive about Porirua and rank the city in a similar way to residents of other NZ cities. In some cases, eg in the recent Quality of Life Survey (2008), Porirua ranks very favourably
- People who do not live in Porirua generally have a poor perception of the city, including aspects of education and safety.

THE FUTURE

Porirua City Council looks forward to continuing working in partnership with the Education Forum and its member organisations on a wide range of city issues, including progress on the Community Outcome "*Porirua is Learning for Life*". I look forward to meeting with you at the Forum on Monday 18 May 2009.



Roger Blakeley
CHIEF EXECUTIVE

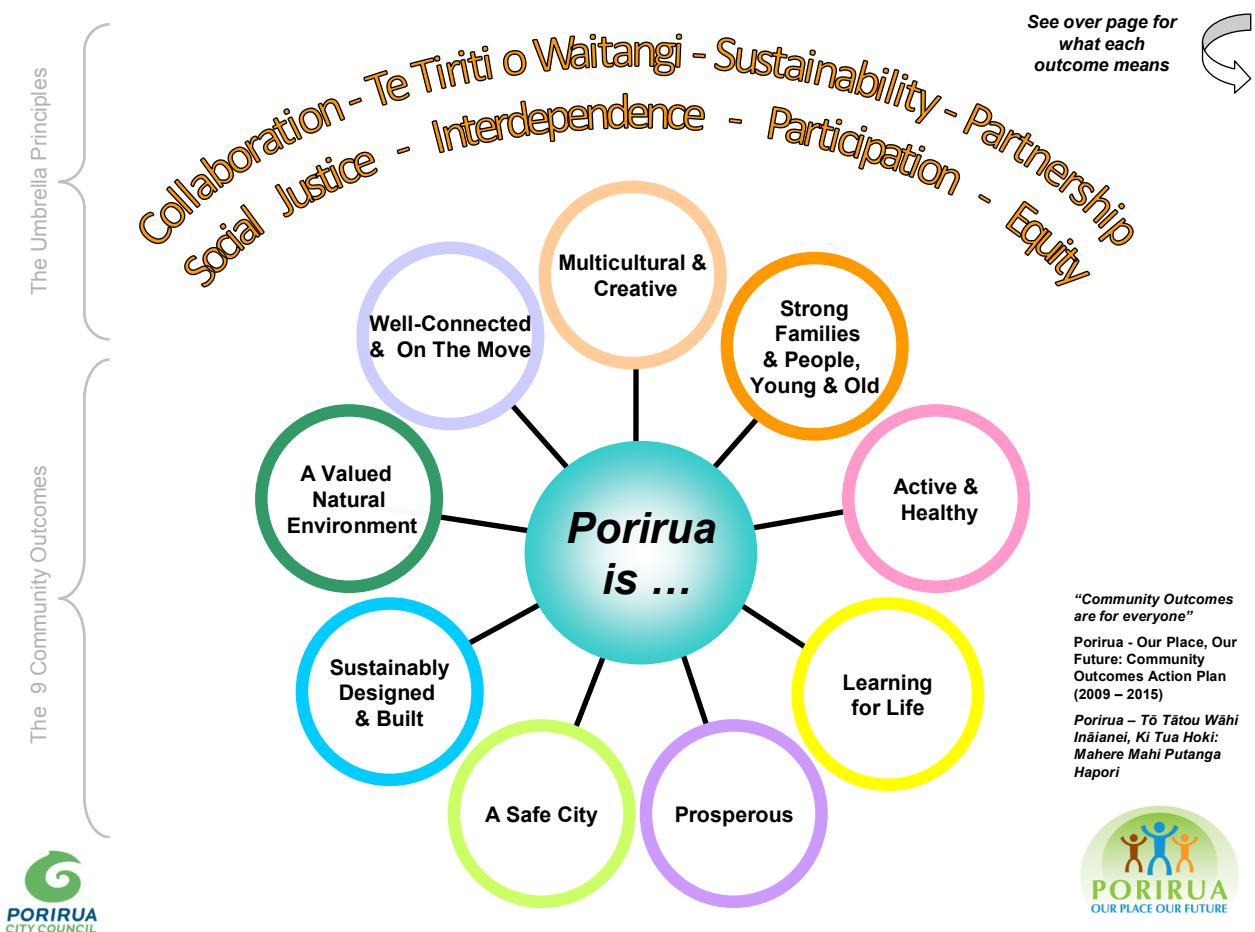
Appendix to Memorandum to Education Forum, 18 May 2009

Community Outcomes

Local government has a coordinating role in identifying outcomes and reporting on progress, and is required to bring community and organisations together at least every 6 years to identify Community Outcomes and to report progress at least every 3 years. However, Community Outcomes are for everyone and rely on partnerships and the efforts of many organisations to make and monitor progress. Community Outcomes have been reviewed over the last year by an intersectoral Steering Group with a series of workshops and a draft Porirua City Community Outcomes Action Plan.

Community Outcomes and umbrella principles

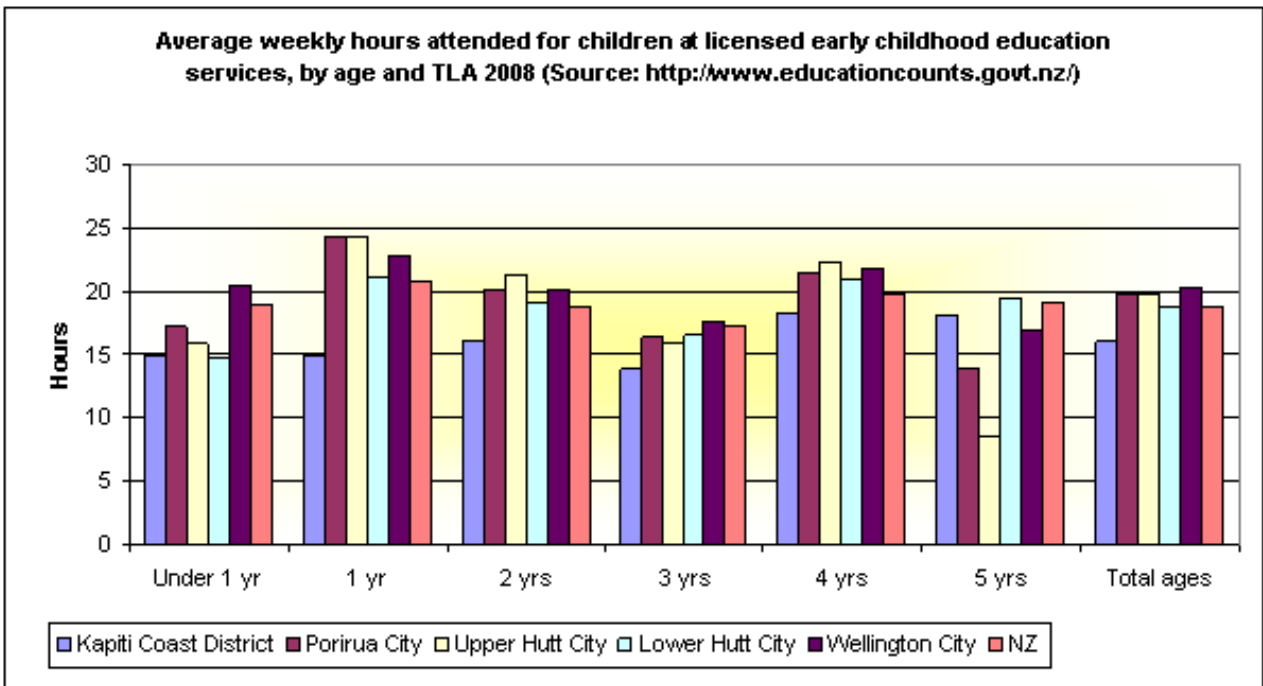
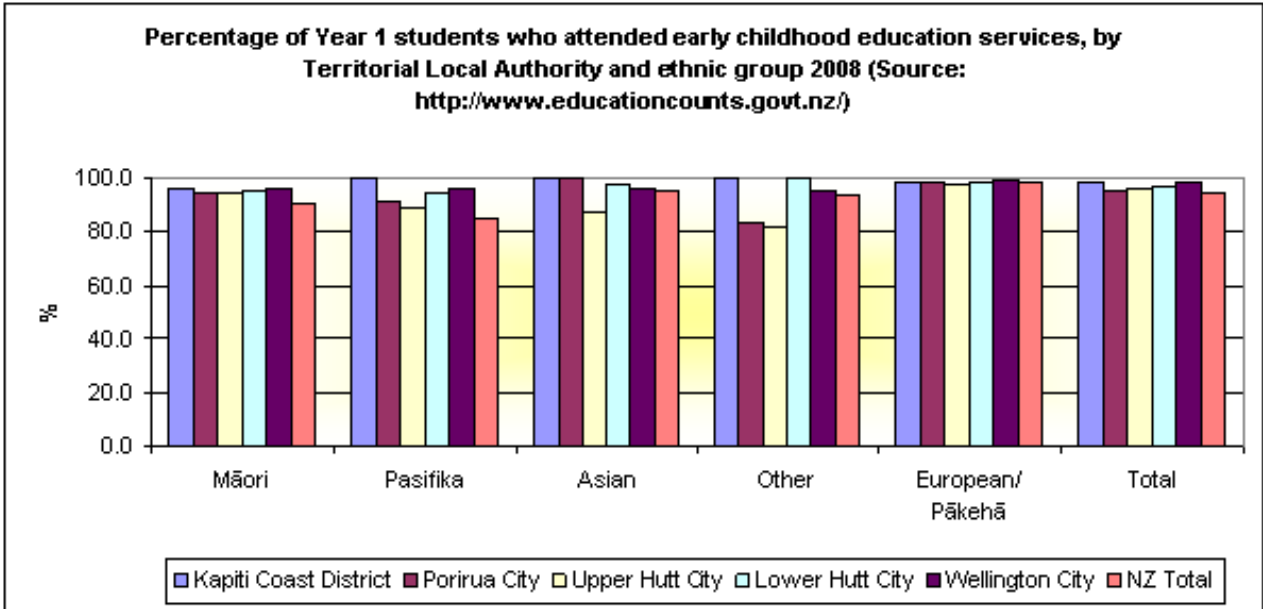
The draft Porirua City Community Outcomes Action Plan (submissions closed on 1 May 2009) and are now being considered.

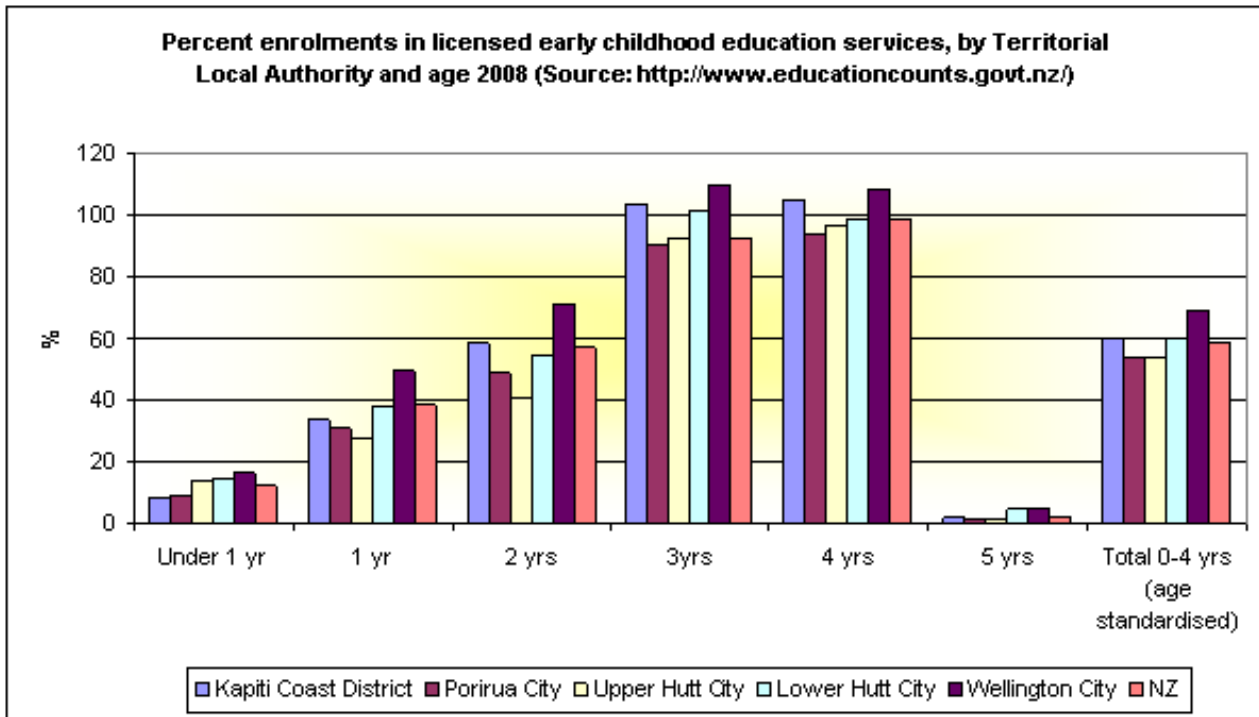


A SNAPSHOT OF PORIRUA'S PERFORMANCE in education and perception as a city

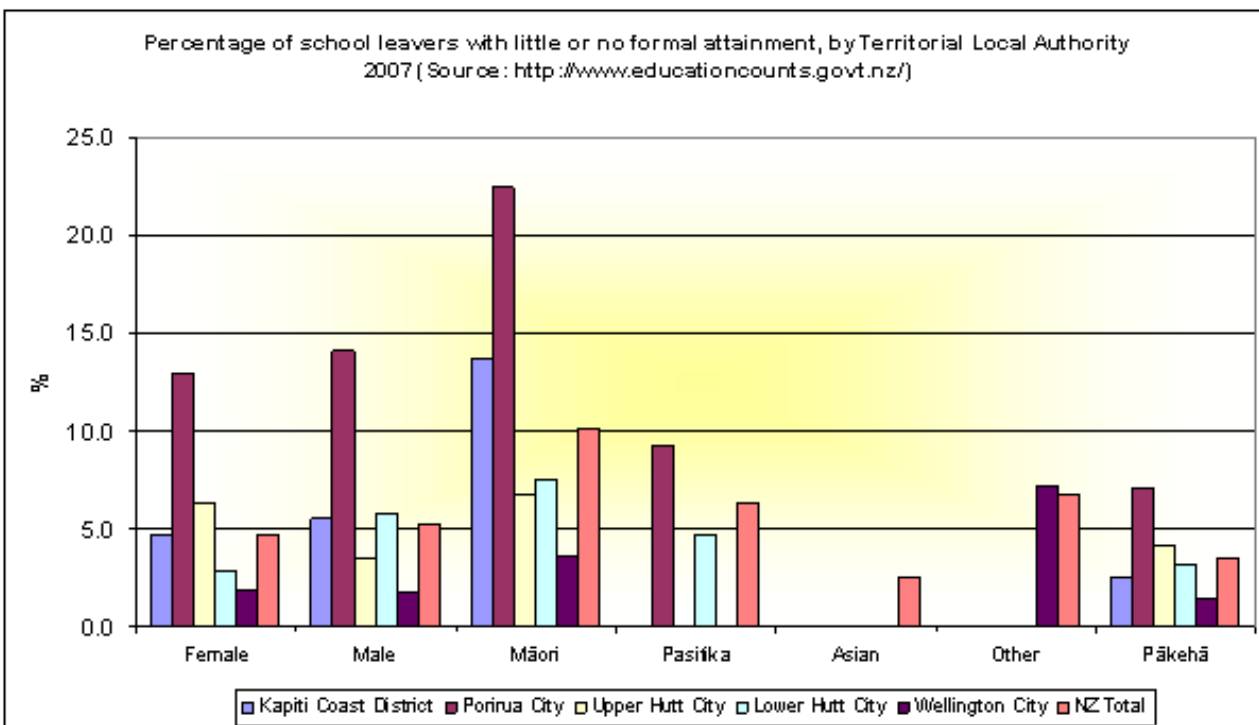
Education

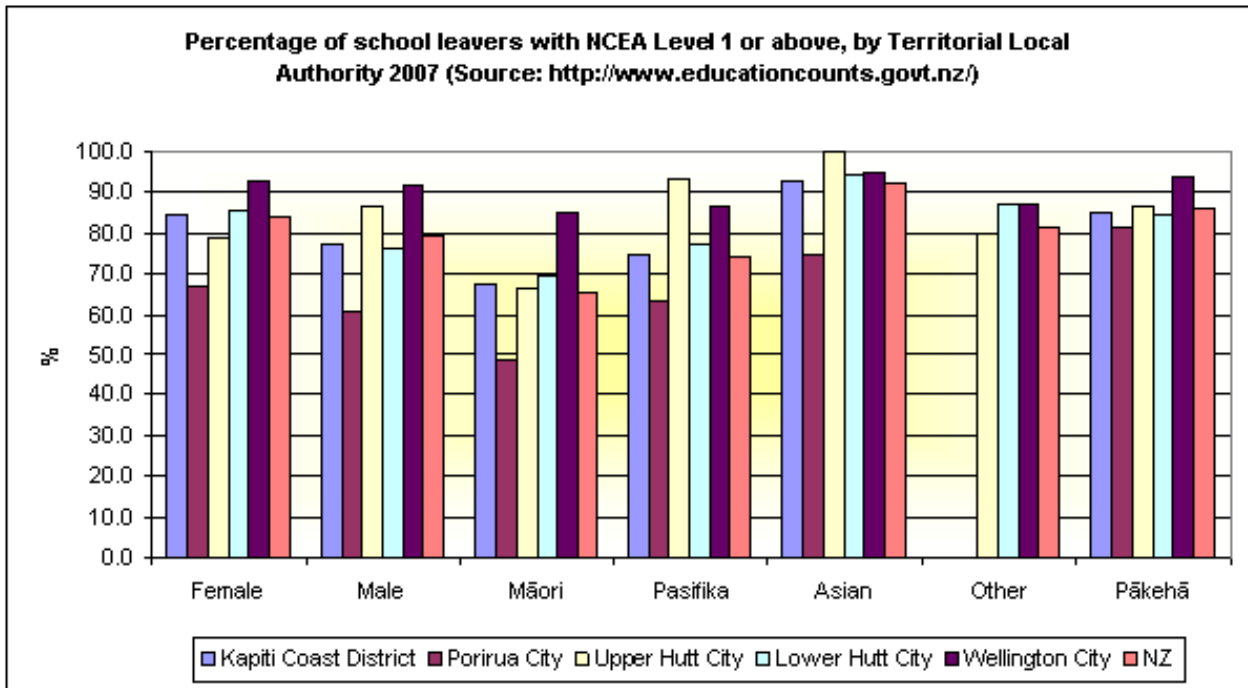
Early Childhood Education





School leavers





PERCEPTIONS OF PORIRUA CITY

Porirua has performed very favourably in a number of recent surveys and analyses of different issues. Some of the recent results are summarised below:

Some of the highlights of the 2008 **Quality of Life** Survey on residents views about a wide range of issues (environment, safety, trust, health, lifestyle, democracy etc) Porirua was:

- highest of the 12 Cities for satisfaction with free time (79.5%)
- higher than the 12 Cities average neighbouring cities for feeling a sense of community (60.1%)
- higher than the 12 Cities average for perception of having a culturally rich and diverse arts scene (76.1%). This result is particularly noteworthy as it places us 3rd of the 12 Cities after Wellington (91.1%) and Dunedin (77.7%) and just ahead of Auckland (75.0%)
- higher in use of public transport than the 12 Cities average but slightly lower than Hutt and Wellington
- lower than the 12 Cities average in pride in the city's look and feel (52.7% cf 12 Cities average of 61.8% and Wellington at 81.8%)

The most notable areas of difference are in the results around local democracy and council processes, with Porirua:

- highest of the 12 Cities for residents understanding Council decision making processes (46.1% cf 12 Cities av 34.4%)
- second of the 12 Cities for Confidence in Council decision making (51.5% behind Hamilton's 57% - 12 Cities average is 44.4%)
- second of 12 Cities for Perception of Public's influence on Council decision-making (68.2% behind Wellington's 69.3% - 12 Cities av is 58.9%)

EXTRACTS FROM UMR SURVEY OF CITY PERCEPTIONS FROM PEOPLE OUTSIDE PORIRUA, SEPTEMBER 2008

Negative perceptions of Porirua

- Crime
- Race based gangs
- Based on long held perceptions, freshened occasional media
- Domination state housing
- Poor secondary schools
- No restaurants
- Traffic congestion
- Declining industries
- High rates

Positive perceptions of Porirua

- Small base of people aware of story of Porirua's improvement
- Some Wellingtonians more knowledgeable about this
- Little traffic congestion (but disputed)
- Cheap parking

PORIRUA IN OTHER ANALYSES

Porirua has also performed very well in analyses of best places to live, family-friendly cities, environmentally-friendly cities etc. Data from a range of sources, including the Quality of Life survey, was used for this and showed:

- For ***NZ's Best Places for Families*** (ASB Top Spots, December 2008): Porirua ranked 8th out of NZ's 50 largest territorial authorities
- For ***NZ's Most Affluent Places*** (ASB Top Spots, December 2008): Porirua ranked 4th out of 73 local authority areas for households earning more than \$100,000 pa
- For ***NZ's "cleanest and greenest" cities*** (ASB Top Spots, March 2009): Porirua ranked 4th of 12 Cities.
- Provisional results of labour market analysis on the knowledge economy places Porirua 3rd of 73 Territorial Local Authorities (behind Wellington and Auckland) on the ***proportion of our workforce in knowledge intensive employment*** (ie civic services, engineers, architects, planners, other professional services, ICT services etc)
- There is also interesting and relevant information for the Forum's consideration contained in the Update on the ***Wellington Regional Labour Market Strategy*** available through this link: http://www.gw.govt.nz/council-reports/pdfs/reportdocs/2009_134_1_Report.pdf

Further information

For further information about the Porirua City Community Outcomes process and city monitoring data, please contact Stuart Parkinson, Strategy & Planning, Porirua City Council, email sparkinson@pcc.govt.nz; ph 237 1610.

Tēnā Koutou Katoa, You are invited to

EDUCATION FORUM 2009

Chaired by Russell Marshall

Ms Karen Sewell
Guest Speaker
Secretary for Education
and Chief Executive of
the Ministry of Education



WORKING TOGETHER

ARE PORIRUA SCHOOLS GETTING A FAIR GO?

Nau Mai, Haere Mai ki tēnei hui Mātauranga 2009

The Education Forum is for educators and organisations
involved in education in the wider Porirua region.



When: Monday 18 May 2009

Where: Te Rauparaha Arena, Porirua City

Time: 4.30 pm



Please RSVP to Valérie Bray by 8 May 2009 (04) 237 3103 ext 3704 or email Valerie.Bray@whitireia.ac.nz

Figures:

500 invitations

80 attendees

Steering Group Education Forum May 2009

- Chair Russell Marshall
- Don Campbell, Chief Executive
Whitireia Community Polytechnic
- Arthur Graves, Deputy Chief Executive
Whitireia Community Polytechnic
- Susan Cauchi, Deputy Chief Executive Academic
Whitireia Community Polytechnic
- Dr Roger Blakeley, Chief Executive
Porirua City Council
- Hedley Aitken, Principal
Bishop Viard College



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