

Schools must work smarter

Many parents are refusing to pay up as schools increase fees to meet budgets.

A new survey covering two-thirds of New Zealand's secondary schools and many primary schools concludes that schools will need to find new ways to stretch resources.

The New Zealand Council for Educational Research report, School Resources, Culture and Connections, said funding was identified by parents, teachers, principals and school boards as the single biggest issue.

Nearly every primary school principal (95 per cent) and secondary school principal (94 per cent) said government funding was not enough.

Among the survey's other findings:

□ One-quarter of secondary schools (24 per cent) had increased the parent donation requested over the past two years.

□ High-decile secondary schools were more likely to have requested a donation increase than low-decile schools.

□ Most donation increases were no more than 20 per cent, but three schools had increased it by more than 100 per cent.

□ Nearly one in 10 secondary principals reported that more than

70 per cent of parents had not paid the donation. Six out of 10 reported donation payment rates of between 30 and 80 per cent.

□ One-third of secondary schools increased their activity fees in the survey year (2006).

The report said schools had to think about what they could do differently, but well, within existing resources.

"These are not issues that individual schools can solve on their own; we will need a systematic response that uses the collective creativity of the whole education community," the report said.

Canterbury-Westland Secondary Principals' Association chairman Denis Pyatt said while government funding had increased in the past decade, the expectations on schools had also gone up.

"You can't provide students with chalk and talk any more - they're past that, and new technology costs big money," Mr Pyatt said.

Lower-decile schools could not sustain donation increases.

"There are some [schools] which are taking in huge amounts, and I think there is a problem there - that produces inequity," he said.

"That is the sort of situation which makes the rich get richer and the poor get poorer." Fairfax

Global quest highlights climate change

By Josh Reich
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A Swiss family has arrived in Nelson, seven years into an epic journey travelling the world to spread the message of climate change and the importance of the environment.

Dario Schworer, his wife Sabine Schworer-Ammann and their children Salina, five, and Andri, two, together with other volunteers, are undertaking a global climate expedition called Top To Top.

Under the patronage of the United Nations Environment Programme, they are attempting to travel the world by walking or biking, or using solar or wind energy to power their 15-metre yacht Pachamama.

Part of the trip involves climbing the highest peaks on each of the seven continents - Mt Blanc in Europe, Aconcagua in South America, Mt McKinley in North America, Mt Kosciuszko in Australia, Mt Everest in Asia, Kilimanjaro in Africa and Mt Vinson in Antarctica.

While in different countries they look at the things people do to counter the effects of climate change, and speak to school pupils about their adventures.

On Thursday they visited Hira School, after previously visiting Tahunanui and Nelson Central schools.

Mrs Schworer-Ammann said the couple became inspired to start their trip after her husband, a climbing guide, noticed that his "office was melting".

They have been on the road since 2002, only returning home to fulfil a promise to their parents



Great support: Swiss adventurers Sabine Schworer-Ammann and Dario Schworer with their children Andri, 2, and Salina, 5, front, with pupils of Hira School during their visit.

Photo: COLIN SMITH 212307

to do so whenever Mrs Schworer-Ammann gave birth.

Mr Schworer, who is pregnant again, said their children seemed to enjoy the travel and being on the road.

The couple gave a glowing assessment of Nelson's prenatal care, after experiencing rudimentary facilities on Robinson Crusoe Island - about 674-kilometres west of South America - and those on the Galapagos Islands.

Although New Zealand did not have one of the seven highest mountains, Mr Schworer said

they had been looking forward to visiting for a while.

"For us it is amazing to come here.

"We've heard so much about New Zealand and how you care so much for the environment and are nuclear-free."

He praised the way New Zealand tried to help other countries be environmentally friendly, such as helping install solar panels in Tonga.

"You've a little nation with four million people but have a great impact on this planet and other

nations." He was unsure how long they would remain in Nelson, but were keen to try and climb Mt Cook before the season closed.

Mr Schworer said he did not know how much longer the family would be on the road, but they were keen to show what can be done with renewable energy and spread their message.

"It shows what can be done in harmony with nature."

■ For more information visit toptotop.org.

BRIEFLY NATION

Tree kills man

A 36-year-old Otatau man is dead after being crushed by a falling tree on a Southland farm yesterday. Senior Sergeant Richard McPhail, of Invercargill, said police were notified about 3.20pm after the man was found on the Hamish Rd farm at Aparima, 8km from Otatau. The man was felling trees on the farm and was working alone.

Boy on arson charge

A 15-year-old boy has been arrested and charged with torching a Bay of Plenty high school. The teenager would be held in police custody until his appearance in the Tauranga District Court tomorrow, a police spokeswoman said. Police and the fire service were called to Te Puke High School about 4am yesterday. A single-storey block of five classrooms was destroyed.

Tiff leads to arrest

A 25-year-old man faces a charge of wilful damage after he allegedly poured sugar in his ex-girlfriend's car. Constable Blair Duffy, of Queenstown, said the victim was in Queenstown for the weekend, visiting from Christchurch, when an argument broke out between the pair about 9.30pm on Saturday and he allegedly began pouring sugar into her petrol tank.

Race victim stable

A teenage girl who had part of her leg amputated after being hit by a car in an illegal street race is in a stable condition at Auckland Hospital. Amy Duncan, 17, who was not connected to the racing, was crossing a carpark in the North Shore suburb of Bayview early on Friday when a competing car lost control and hit her. Police have spoken to both drivers involved, impounded their vehicles and urged more witnesses to come forward.

Boys seriously hurt

Two boys suffered serious head injuries after the trailer they were riding in came unhitched and they slammed into a concrete barrier in the Bay of Plenty yesterday. The trailer detached itself from its towing ute on State Highway 35 east of Te Kaha at 1pm. The impact threw the 13 and 14-year-old boys metres through the air and onto the road. NZPA-Fairfax

Wanaka shops left to trade in peace

An estimated one-third of Wanaka retailers remained open in defiance of Easter trading laws and none will be punished.

Paper Plus owner Brian Kreft has been charged by the department twice for flouting the law but his doors were open yesterday.

"I'm a law-abiding citizen and I don't break the law lightly," he said. "But this is one of the biggest trading days in the year."

Mr Kreft estimated about a

third of retailers remained open yesterday, mostly the bigger shops, which could more easily afford the time and money of prosecution.

The Labour Department had inspectors out around the country yesterday and no breaches were found in the Nelson region, said department spokesman Colin Patterson.

In a statement issued yesterday afternoon, the department said 16

retailers nationwide could face prosecution for breaking the Easter trading laws on Sunday but none was in Otago or Southland.

That adds to the 17 retailers caught trading on Good Friday.

Mr Patterson said of the total number caught, 17 were from Auckland, with three Christchurch retailers the only South Island offenders.

Most of those caught trading on Friday were garden centres, with

three music shops also nabbed.

Several hardware stores, music shops and a couple of bookshops were caught yesterday, he said.

The numbers are similar to last year when 32 retailers were prosecuted for opening over Easter.

Mr Patterson refused to comment on whether any inspectors had been sent to Wanaka but confirmed no retailers there faced prosecution.

Girl sought help before rape

A 13-year-old girl who was grabbed and raped in Auckland at the weekend had sought help before the attack, police say.

Police are hunting for a man who yesterday raped the girl at Oakley Creek Reserve in Water-view after following her for about a kilometre.

The man had verbally harassed her while he followed her from shops in Point Chevalier to a BP service station in Great North Rd about 10am, Detective Sergeant

Andrew King said. The girl begged a woman filling her car at the station for help, but the woman told her to keep away from the man and drove off.

Police want the woman to contact them.

The man was captured on CCTV making a purchase at the service station before he followed the girl to the reserve and raped her.

Mr King said the man posed a huge risk to the community and could strike again. NZPA

<p>Farmers EASTER SALE ALL STORES OPEN TODAY UNTIL 6PM MUST END TOMORROW</p>		<p>20% off women's lingerie Excludes Thermals, Playtex, Berlei, Honey Vegas & Mossimo.</p>	<p>25% off a huge range of women's clothing & accessories</p>	<p>25% off men's clothing & accessories Excludes Levi's Denim, Fossil & superdeals.</p>	<p>20% off children's & infants' clothing, underwear, sleepwear, socks & accessories Excludes OshKosh & YmamaY.</p>
<p>25 to 50% off manchester & homewares Excludes nursery, electric blankets & small appliances.</p>	<p>20 to 50% off small appliances including kettles, toasters, microwaves, personal care & more Excludes non-ranged items.</p>	<p>now only \$3.00 each Lindt Milk Chocolate Gold Bunnies 100g</p>	<p>25% off all women's hosiery Columbine, ambra, voodoo, PLATINUM</p>	<p>25% off men's underwear, socks, sleepwear & robes Excludes superdeals.</p>	<p>25% off clothing Available at selected stores.</p>
<p>at least 35% off furniture Excludes clearance items.</p>	<p>25% off beds by Sleepyhead Excludes Sensorzone, superdeals & clearance items. plus receive a free hi sheet set with every Sleepyhead bed purchased ^Sheet set size is to be same size as bed size.</p>	<p>at least 15% off LCD & Plasma TVs Excludes clearance & non-ranged items.</p>	<p>12% off whiteware by Fisher & Paykel ELBA, Whirlpool Excludes clearance & non-ranged items.</p>	<p>25% off all nursery furniture & accessories Excludes superdeals & non-ranged items.</p>	<p>15% off all toys Fisher-Price, Barbie, B'z, TRANSFORMERS, PLAYSKOOL, MATCHBOX, Tonka, My Little Pony, BEN 10 ALIEN FORCE</p>