



WORKING TOGETHER FOR EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION IN MANUKAU



Season's greetings to all early childhood education providers and stakeholders in Manukau!

This newsletter rounds off a milestone year for early childhood education in Manukau, and provides you with an update on what has happened since the Manukau Early Childhood Education Summit in April 2008. There is much progress to celebrate as a result of your involvement.

5 December, 2008.

This newsletter is produced by the City of Manukau Education Trust (COMET) as the project Lead Agency, and on behalf of the Manukau Early Childhood Education Taskforce.



Manukau's goal: Increasing participation

Thank you for your endorsement [at the Manukau Early Childhood Education Summit in April this year] of the goal to increase participation in early childhood education. The goal is being led by the *Tomorrow's Manukau: Manukau Apopo Strategic Steering Group*, chaired by Leigh Auton, the Chief Executive of the Manukau City Council.

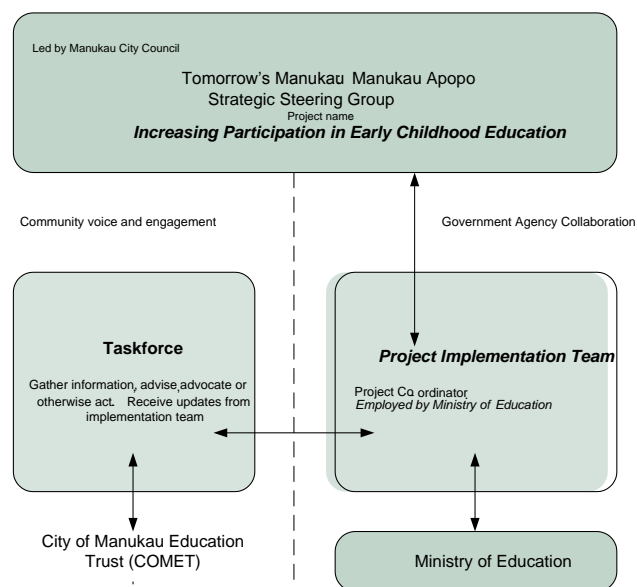
You told us that this goal involves three areas of work:

- (1) more buildings and services
- (2) more teachers
- (3) encouraging family demand for services.

A Project Implementation team, consisting of paid staff of Manukau City Council, the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Pacific Island Affairs and COMET will have responsibility for **agreed actions**. The team will work closely with an independent Taskforce of community and sector representatives.

The diagram opposite illustrates the different roles that Council, government agencies, COMET, providers and community organisations can play in working towards this goal.

The Ministry of Education has developed a plan for early childhood education in the Counties-Manukau area. The Ministry is funding a project co-ordinator who will have responsibility for bringing stakeholders together around this government plan (further details overleaf).



Cr Colleen Brown elected Chair of Taskforce

Many Summit participants told us they were keen to see an action group in place. The Manukau Early Childhood Education Taskforce was



initially set up as a small group to scope action opportunities. The Taskforce is now being led by Councillor Colleen Brown. The group will provide advice and support to a "Project Implementation Team" and independently advocate for actions. It will also be a place to get up-to-date briefings

from the Ministry of Education and the Project Implementation Team.

The Taskforce will be expanded next year to include a wider group. Members who have attended meetings include: [Georgie Witehira, Manukau Leisure Services](#); [Karen Shields, Franklin Kindergarten Association](#); [Aolele Sua-Aloese, Tautua Aoga Amata](#); [Nancy McCartney and Kathryn Elliot of Barnardos](#); [Colleen Brown, Manukau City Council](#); [Leanne Nathan, Clendon Park School](#); [Michelle Pratt, Living and Learning Foundation](#); staff from [Manukau City Council, COMET](#) and, in an advisory capacity, the Ministry of Education.

The group will meet in March, May, July, September and November 2009. More information about these meetings and invitations to attend will be extended in February.

\$9 million investment in new centres on school sites

The Summit called for early childhood centres to be built by the government on already-owned crown land. The previous Minister of Education, Hon Chris Carter, announced funding on 22 October for nine new centres to be built on school sites in the Counties-Manukau area.

The services will be a new type of government-sponsored early childhood education property project and will provide for a maximum of 450 new 'equivalent fulltime places' for children not currently participating in early childhood education. This is excellent news, and we hope that this project will be expanded over time to meet the baby boom now hitting Manukau.

The school sites announced were: Greenmeadows Intermediate, Mangere Bridge Primary, Mangere East Primary, Mansell Senior, Sir Douglas Bader Intermediate, Weymouth Primary, Homai Primary, James Cook HS, and Manurewa East Primary.

Community-based early childhood providers will be granted a license to occupy the new centres, following agreement with each school's board of trustees.

Ministry of Education Plan for Early Childhood Education in Counties-Manukau

The Ministry of Education is appointing a Project Co-ordinator who will work next year with organisations interested in becoming providers of services at the above school sites. The Project Co-ordinator will be based in the Ministry's project office in Manukau City – Te Puna o te Matauranga, and will be part of the Project Implementation Team.

Smoother applications to Council for resource and building consents

At the Summit, many participants spoke about how difficult the resource and building consent processes can be for new centres or centres that are being re-built. On November 14, Mayor Len Brown and Councillor Colleen Brown chaired a high-level meeting to explore how to lift the barriers to getting consents for new buildings and redesigned services.

A Working Party will address the details that trip people up. Meanwhile, the council has made some changes to its systems so that applications are better co-ordinated and supported. We thank the council officers for their willingness to "go the extra mile" to make sure that consents can proceed smoothly and within deadlines.

In order to be relicensed, some centres may have to make changes next year that will need consents. Please keep the Taskforce informed of any issues that you have in keeping your centre open. Contact COMET on 09 968 8773.

Services for Maori

If you are a kohanga reo or centre delivering for Maori, or interested in early childhood education services for Maori, further consultations on how the project will meet the needs for Maori families will take place in Term 1 next year.

Make Sure Early Childhood Education is a city priority

What can you do to increase participation?

Let the Council know that you think that early childhood education services are really important and that community planning needs to include enough services for every child in Manukau.

Councillors are now working with staff to further develop the options for the 10-year plan. Your opinion will be included in the draft annual ten-year plan if you fill out the feedback form: <http://www.tellusyourmanukau.govt.nz>, or write as soon as possible to the mayor or your local councillor at: "Think of the Possibilities", Manukau City Council, Private Bag 76-917, Manukau. Your message should be simple and clear - encouraging participation in early childhood education should be a city priority for Manukau's growth and development. We urge you to give this feedback before Christmas.



MAKING EDUCATION WORK FOR MANUKAU