

EDUCATION FOR ENTERPRISE



Over the past three years, West Coast students of all ages have led the way in implementing a new curriculum for the 21st century.

They've completed projects as diverse as producing books, making costumes, painting murals, designing public amenities, conducting surveys, mapping rivers, planting landscapes, growing vegetables, reconditioning bikes and restoring an 80-year-old railway wagon.

In the process there's been liaison with a range of organisations from local bodies to central government. It's all been part of E4E – Education for Enterprise – an opportunity to learn outside the classroom by planning and carrying out initiatives that meet real needs in schools, communities or businesses.

With the programme now drawing to a close, there is every reason to expect that its impetus will not only keep delivering valuable projects; it will continue to strengthen community connectedness.

DWC – the facilitator

When the West Coast was selected as one of four regions to test E4E, Development West Coast (DWC) was the obvious choice to steer the 36-month programme.

DWC recognised E4E as an ideal concept for a population with a tradition of hard work and enterprise. Its education Project Manager Nicky Cooper was appointed Regional Coordinator. Soon others were needed to share the workload and Julie Kissell and Yvonne Simpson joined the team as potential community partners were identified, 14 schools became involved and projects were launched at an astonishing rate.

Drawing on a range of educational professionals, the methods of international award-winning educator Elizabeth Deuchrass were applied to building relationships between schools and their communities. CORE Education Ltd staff provided professional development directly to the teachers. Ministry of Education's national coordinator for E4E, Steve Rees, provided support and guidance to school leaders.

By matching Ministry of Education and New Zealand Trade and Enterprise funding dollar for dollar, DWC was able to facilitate the programme and contribute to many of the individual projects.

Now, with the three-year programme complete DWC has reached its objective. It now looks forward to seeing schools and their communities continue to apply the principles of E4E.

Teachers – quick learners

Each school started with an E4E lead teacher and over time others developed their E4E skills, built productive

“Education for Enterprise will enable students to be effective contributors to our communities in the 21st Century”

Wayne Wright

Principal
Reefton Area School

community relationships and refined their enterprise approach to teaching and learning.

Workshops and seminars, as well as individual programmes with facilitators, have assisted teachers with their own development. Teachers at every level have become involved, as various works have been initiated by a range of students from years 1 to 13, and beyond that via the Karoro Learning Centres.

Interaction between teachers has also extended to pre school level. For example St Mary's year two students wrote and produced a book telling Scenicland Pre-schoolers what starting school is like. Balancing student-led initiatives with curriculum requirements has been a stimulating experience for many teachers, especially those who felt restricted by or even

weary from the old curriculum. Many have progressed to become regional leaders and authorities on E4E.

West Coast schools have caught the attention of education professionals from outside the region, keen to learn what will be required of them now that enterprise has been identified as a key element of the curriculum.

Communities – mutual benefits

Partnerships between schools and community interests, nurtured through E4E, have been for the benefit of both. Students have been able to draw from the wide range of skill and experience that exists within the Coast community,

as ideas for projects have been put forward, discussed and implemented.

As students' abilities have become evident, organisations such as the Department of Conservation, Buller District Council and West Coast District Health Board have shown enthusiasm for the process as well as valuing the results.

Many projects have required high degrees of knowledge – such as devising attractive, nutritional meals for breastfeeding mothers or designing a lookout structure for public use. Some have led to others when the range of available skill has been realised. In one instance a person impressed by a mural painted by students suggested another place that could benefit from their artistic talent.

Others have been part of a chain of events - such as the costumes that Westland High made for Kanierie primary pupils who then used them in a dramatic performance for Scenicland pre-school. Perhaps most pleasing of all has been the way E4E has connected generations, built understanding and brought about mutual respect for each other's knowledge and abilities.

The Future of E4E

It's now up to the community and schools to maintain the momentum of the West Coasts home-grown version of E4E.

Teachers have the required expertise, along with backing from the new curriculum. Individuals and organisations within our communities recognise students' potential to plan projects and deliver them efficiently.

In the words of Elizabeth Deuchrass: “What and how they learn as they travel through the education system today will have a vital effect on what New Zealand looks like in the future.”

Schools are finding that authentic activities make learning more meaningful for students

Helen Slyfield
Education Review Office
(ERO) Quote



KEY NUMBERS

- 14**
Schools Involved
2007 – 2009
- 235**
Projects Initiated
2007 – 2009
- 176**
Community/Business Partners
2007 – 2009
- 5,725**
Student Interactions
2007 – 2009 (based on average class size of 25)



Teachers explore and demonstrate enterprise attributes at a regional workshop

Teachers have been able to spend less time managing and more time facilitating or 'enabling' classes as students have increasingly organised their own learning. In many cases students have been seen in a completely new light as they have 'taken off' in studies they can see more purpose behind. There has been immense satisfaction in seeing students display increasing ability to take chances, be innovative, make changes where necessary, solve problems in creative ways and generally manage themselves.



Blaketown Primary School students share their migrant service support booklet with the Human Rights Adviser, Zheela Vokes. Written by children for children who are entering a new environment, this project is being considered as a model for other New Zealand schools.

Students have learned the importance of planning, communication, teamwork, time management and flexibility. Dealing with people at all levels of organisations has broadened their views and they have learned that the correct answer in a textbook isn't necessarily right in 'real life'. Many have felt more enthusiastic in the classrooms as they have recognised the true purpose within projects and grabbed opportunities to apply their flair for innovation and enterprise.



Sam MacDonald and Stacey Bowden discuss DHB laundry systems with Manager Liz Mehrtens.

E4E has enabled generations to feel more comfortable with one another. People have been astounded at pupils' ability to contribute positively to their communities in a variety of ways. Many have enjoyed seeing their own suggestions taken up by students, expanded upon and completed to bring lasting benefits. The immense value that the numerous projects bring to the community is matched by the mutual respect that comes from the sharing of time and expertise. Community members involved in E4E are keen to mentor students as they go on to higher learning, and there has been talk of seeing them again after graduation – so their talent and experience can be retained for the West Coast.

E4E gave me an appreciation of how the skills we learn in school are applied in the business world

Stacey Bowden
School Student, Projects 235