

**A Question of Voice**

**Secondary Futures as an experiment  
in democratising education design**

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**Presented by Stephanie Pride at the International Congress for Schooling  
Effectiveness and Improvement, Vancouver, Canada, on 7 January 2009**

## A Question of Voice – Secondary Futures as an experiment in democratising education design

### Introduction

For society to function well, it needs educated citizens. For education to function well, it needs democratic processes which give voice to the stake that the whole of society has in what education delivers. Why then, is the evolution of education not generally regarded or scoped as a democratic process?

The processes used by so many developed nations for the last century to shape decisions about education are increasingly unhelpful in a world that needs the full potential of every individual. Current ways of working do not deliver the requisite level of diversity to fulfil this aim. They are too narrowly scoped, with little or no space for imagination and aspiration. They need to be more open. Too few people are involved in imagining what could be.

Too often decisions shaping education have been understood as the preserve of technical experts, where the views of all those who have a stake in education are unseen. Those many voices were often conceded to just a few people, themselves products of a society where education success was set aside for some, not all, students. Ironically, though many working in the education sector understand the need for our learning systems to engender creativity, those same agents seem fearful of any systematised application of imagination and creativity to the design of that very learning system.

Now though, education and all government services are being re-examined as “public services helping citizens to shape their lives and communities in a democratic partnership”,<sup>1</sup> helping people “become the heroes of their own lives”.<sup>2</sup> Learning, and the ability to keep learning, is vital to this goal. Education can no longer be an enclave, separated off from the wider shifts in the nature of government, nor can it only be an integral part of a wider provision for people to live their lives well. It has, and must engage with, the potential to be the locus for actually leading the transformative change.

Yet while the notion that education is something that is done *to* young people at a certain period of their lives is rapidly being replaced by concepts of self-directed and lifelong education *by, with, and for* the student the idea that student voice might be central in shaping the *system* is not often on the radar. Others with a stake in education, such as their parents and other adults in their communities, are seldom given the freedom to share their aspirations for how learning might happen.

Secondary Futures is a unique project, set up to explore new ways for government to engage with citizens and so create a vision for the future of schooling around which there is agreement. In this way, it signifies the stake that both societies and individuals have in creating successful citizens of the future.

“The purpose of Secondary Futures is to find ways to give our kids – all of our kids – what they need so they can be successful contributors to the future New Zealand society. That means matching up what the future might look like with what successful might mean. It means focussing on future possibilities and challenges, and deliberately separating out and leaving everything that is happening today to one side.”

Ian Taylor, Guardian

“The reason I’m doing well at school this year when I never have before is because this is the first year I haven’t felt invisible”

16 year old student

This paper traces two of the trajectories of the Secondary Futures project as it has explored the dimensions of this new space:

- a space between government and citizens where all voices, including those not traditionally heard in the debate shaping policy, can speak and have their contributions valued, and
- a space where possibilities for the future of education, not easily glimpsed from today, are given voice.

The paper describes how both the structure and the practice of the project has created a “re-democratised space” where it is safe for all voices to speak and be heard and considers the critical importance of guardianship and “integrity of practice” in doing so. Twinned with this, it considers the impact of building futures literacy across varied and diverse communities as an enabler of participation in the conversation; an enabler of exploration, invention and discovery about the possibilities for an education system that would make all students successful. In the description of the Secondary Futures model that follows, the themes of guardianship and integrity, empowerment and sense-making are recurrent and take on a new significance.

The paper extracts what has been learned in the process of putting these new ways of working into practice in order to articulate a model that can be used by other jurisdictions in their search to improve education systems for their citizens of the future. While this paper seeks to present the model simply, the work on the ground from which it is drawn is, of necessity, complex, iterative and messy.

### **Government of the future – new purposes, new structures**

Set up to develop a broad-ranging discussion about how secondary schooling could make more people more successful twenty years into the future, Secondary Futures was given appropriate freedoms to work differently. In particular, it was charged with ensuring that all voices could join the conversation to “identify future need, harness the will to change and ensure there is the capability to make necessary changes”<sup>3</sup>.

“One challenge for the Secondary Futures team to get across is that this is different from anything else ever attempted before. “

Howard Fancy,  
Secretary for Education

“Secondary Futures looks to the future possibilities in schooling – to harness the best of what we are doing now, explore new opportunities and put them in to practice. It also models a new way of us, the sector and the government – engaging in policy debates in the future.”

Trevor Mallard, Education  
Minister

Unusually, Ministers imagined government as an active participant and supporter of the process, rather than owner or director of it; a funder and enabler, rather than a controller. This was a radical departure from customary modes and roles of government, even for New Zealand. Traditionally, in Westminster-derived democracies, governments behave as controllers of processes through legislation, regulation and policy setting, and as funders and purchasers of specific outputs for specific and predetermined ends.

That form should follow function is a generally held machinery of government principle. Sitting such a radical project within structures developed for control and delivery would thwart the very different purpose of the project. Current structures are not well set up for open-ended discovery! This difference had to be embedded in the structure of the project as well as its aspiration to enable it to realise the shifts it was charged with creating:

- shifts in the possibilities for the nature of the interaction between governments and citizens
- shifts in the possibilities for the roles that could be played by each party
- shifts in the possibilities for what power and responsibilities could lie with which parties

An unconventional mission required an approach that was not shackled by current convention about form, purpose or process.

### ***Beyond management to Guardianship***

The project was deliberately set up with four Guardians because the task of the project went beyond the managerial frame. Secondary Futures' central purpose was to deliver a conversation with many and varied voices, and this necessitated different principles and processes. It was reasonable to expect that these differences might need some protection or guardianship. Four independent, trusted New Zealanders were given this role. The fact that they were highly regarded, publicly accessible figures marked Secondary Futures as a process that all New Zealanders, students, teachers, parents, school governors, indigenous groups, business and community leaders saw themselves owning - not government<sup>4</sup>. The explicit role of these four Guardians was to oversee the integrity of the project by:

- building trust and confidence in the process
- encouraging participation and debate
- protecting the integrity of the process as independent of both government and education bodies
- providing vision for the work
- creating a safe environment for robust debate

“Secondary Futures aims to reach a consensus about the issues that really matter when it comes to influencing the successful schooling of our children.”

Trevor Mallard  
Education Minister

“You won’t see a dense and worthy tome emerge from this process, which sits in a bottom drawer gathering dust. What you will see is the steady building of consensus, a testing of ideas, implementation and change where needed.”

Document establishing  
Secondary Futures, August,  
2003

This is a very different from customary starting points for leading government work and goes well beyond the standard management accountability model (see fig.1).<sup>5</sup>

*“The task for the Guardians will not be to develop and all-encompassing strategy or a finite position themselves, but to facilitate a process that allows for multiple contributions and inputs from a variety of sources – learners, parents, teachers, planners, iwi, educators, community leaders and government. Along the iterative path, a cumulative vision will emerge to provide a sense of direction and to illuminate a possible destination.”*<sup>6</sup>

The Guardians are supported by a small secretariat which developed tools and processes so that any New Zealander, irrespective of background or education could think and talk about their hopes and preferences for education 20 years out<sup>7</sup>. The Secondary Futures project led sessions with thousands of New Zealanders, collecting and feeding back their preferences for schooling in the future, based on the possible futures they could imagine. It distributed the vision so that it could be a rich resource for those in decision making positions and it supported those inspired to drive change towards the vision.

To ensure the project’s open-ended, iterative work unfolded in ways that were connected and accountable to the sector, a Touchstone Group was formed. It was made up of a wide range of players with a stake in education, both in the sector and beyond, including students, teachers, teacher unions, parent associations and boards of trustees.<sup>8</sup> The group helped *“debate specific issues, test ideas and check back on progress” and provided a structure for input to be received from a range of stakeholder groups* (ibid). This was a second critical structural innovation embedding the different relationship between government and citizens, government and education sector.

A government funded, independently led project where the process of having a conversation - rather than the results of the conversation - was the outcome, needed not only an innovative structure and open-ended purpose, it also demanded a different sort of practice: practice characterised by integrity in three dimensions.

### ***Integrity of practice***

If the project was going to meet the novel challenges posed for it, it had to act in a different mode where there was no separation between what was done, why it was done and how it was done. The project’s practice had to have integrity – that is, be a seamless integration of process, principles and purpose. This augments the definition of integrity needed for the 21st century.

We are already familiar with two notions of integrity, individual and corporate.

“One really important possibility is to develop new ways of dialoguing, to have sector interacting with other sectors, and interacting amongst the sector itself, working with policy makers in away that has not been possible in the past.”

Gillian Heald, Guardian

Most public services and many private corporations have codes of behaviour that describe the level of integrity expected of individuals as they go about their business. Usually these are associated with probity.

We have become more familiar with notions of corporate integrity, where organisations and institutions undertake to go beyond the minimum standards of operating within the rule of law by articulating a higher set of objectives ranging from “do no harm” to espousing wider and more altruistic goals of contributing to wellbeing, knowledge or sustainability as an integral part of progressing their core business.

Alongside this we need to put a third dimension of integrity – integrity of practice. Integrity is practice that integrates process, principles and purpose, and guardianship of the integrity of the Secondary Futures project takes on a deeper dimension in this context. It means ‘walking the talk ‘ in every aspect of the project. Principles of equity and empowerment need to be designed into the heart of the processes used, and featured at every level. They cannot be relegated as ‘good intentions’ often promised at the outset then overtaken by busy-ness. If the purpose of the project is to create a new space to speak where all voices are valued and “the voices not traditionally heard in the debate shaping education policy” are drawn into, rather than absent from the conversation, every tool and every part of every process and structure must keep faith with that objective.

As a result of this, one of the challenges of telling the story of Secondary Futures journey is that it requires constant movement between the details of operational practice and the articulation of theoretical principle.

### **Creating a new space to speak**

*“Mapping educational futures is not the prerogative of any single group but is a shared responsibility that should reflect the representivity of the population as a whole.”<sup>9</sup>*

Several principles were established from the outset to ensure that the process had integrity.

#### **Opening the door to all voices**

Starting from the principle that all voices are valued and necessary, the first condition is that those voices are present. It was particularly important to ensure that the voices of students were heard throughout the process. Guardianship and integrity of practice have been essential in ensuring that the conversation extended to all New Zealanders. The roles of the Guardians in building trust and confidence in the process and encouraging participation and debate have been crucial in this regard.

Chosen for their own personal and professional standing and integrity, the Guardians were able to open the door to engagement with every sector of society and particularly those less likely to engage in debate, including those from communities that government has previously struggled to engage and empower.

“Secondary Futures needs to maintain and preserve the space for futures thinking and not let it get eaten until it disappears forever; the nature of decision making is more complex than dealing with a particular agency or even range of agencies.”

Touchstone Group Member

The trust engendered in the process by the Guardians was absolutely crucial at the beginning of the project and has remained central throughout. People came to join the conversation because of who the Guardians were and the assurance they therefore gave. They continued to engage because of the integrity of process in those conversations.

### ***Ensuring all voices are heard***

All stages of the work of Secondary Futures are designed to value each participant and what they have to contribute, both to the local and the national conversation. The ways of meeting and talking with people needed to ensure that all participants had the permission, space, time, respect and resource to contemplate the extent of change that the next twenty years will bring and to explore their own preferences in the face of those possibilities.

### **Safe conversations**

“A prevailing theme from respondents was that people valued the safe place for debate about the future of education that Secondary Futures provides, and the opportunity for inclusive group discussion.”<sup>10</sup>

So how do you create a space where all voices are equal, feel safe, are willing to come and willing to speak? The project has developed a range of principles embedded in its practice to ensure this is the case.

Setting the conditions for conversation has been crucial. Each conversation is framed by the same four permissions extended by the Guardians which are designed both to enable and protect the space for all people to speak safely:

**The permission to disengage from today:** the futures frame itself is inherently democratising. Put crudely, no one person or sector ‘owns’ the future – most of today’s bets are off twenty years from now - and because it is created by the complex interaction of everyone’s will and actions, everyone’s imaginings have a place in bringing it about. This permission also serves as an important reminder not to bring today’s disagreements or tensions into this conversation. Those discussions can be held elsewhere, allowing the conversations in this space to move beyond those barriers.

**The permission to wear any hat** you wear in your daily life: every aspect of each participant is accorded value and everyone, and each role they play is given equal status.

**The permission to rattle cages**<sup>11</sup>: every assumption about today’s systems and aspect of the status quo is able to be challenged. Integral to this is setting the terms of the debate wide. After talking with a range of New Zealanders, the project itself framed three broad questions about learning 20 years out:

- What will be the purpose of secondary education?
- How can secondary education best enable young people for their futures?
- How could learning happen?

“We’ve learned that there’s a lot of interest in our work. With help, people can think seriously about the future. People we’ve worked with are starting to think outside the box they traditionally think in, extending their own networks, and working alongside others to think about how to get the best for students. Some are starting to take an in-depth look at some future possibilities.”

Mason Durie, Guardian  
November 2004

“We need keepers of the long view.”

Rob Fenwick, New Zealand  
Business Council for  
Sustainable Development

“We felt we had the liberty to exercise ideas and options, and the freedom to criticise.”

New Teacher

Supporting and validating participants in widening the frame for their conversation was integral to the process, giving permission to extend the time frame - twenty years ahead and twenty years back - to see the scale of change, the breadth of the question they ask and the landscape on which they see it applying (for example from “what will a classroom look like?” to “where could learning happen in the community?”) and expand the possibilities for who could be part of the solution.

The school community, and therefore who could help has tended to be narrowly defined – to teachers, current students, current parents. Starting from the principle that the whole community is a resource for schooling and everyone has a stake in the quality of learning, the project supported school communities to bring this diversity into their conversations: past and current students, local government, health providers, iwi representatives, local businesses

**The permission to be optimistic:** in the face of some of the failures of today’s systems that can appear entrenched and in the face of a rate and scale of extrinsic change that can seem overwhelming, the optimism which allows participants to engage with their own capacity to effect change becomes doubly important. Without this permission, it could be possible for some the attitudes of some participants to limit the aspiration of others.

These permissions create an equal footing for all participants and in conjunction with other elements of process design, work to ensure that there is sufficient trust to allow exploration at the deeper level necessary to move beyond today.

### **Making sufficient time**

Early on in the process, the importance of demanding sufficient time for futures thinking became evident: it takes time to leave today’s busy-ness behind, to make mental space to combine information and imagination, to listen to the other participants in the conversation and to have the opportunity to be heard. Allowing insufficient time for this to happen, either in any one session, or for a series of conversations to run their course, would undermine the trust in the process.

An extended timeframe is needed for working in this way. The conversations themselves can take longer than many traditional forms of consultation. At the moment these processes have to be ‘interrupted’ into the existing bureaucratic systems. It is tempting to succumb to a demand for hurrying an answer, any answer, instead of valuing a frame which gives time to think and subsequently empowers people to act on their ideas.

However, we know it takes time to learn, and without time, you cannot have a ‘learning by doing’ process.

“Long-term thinking must be understood as an exercise in imagining what today might become, what we want tomorrow to be like and how to assess the actions that might make a desired future more likely to occur.”

Riel Miller and Tom Bentley,  
*Unique Creation* 2003

“I’d like to think about the future but we’re too busy doing our strategic planning at the moment so we’ll leave thinking about the future till next year”

School Principal

Each subsequent engagement deepens understandings, connections and the capacity for imagining possibilities.

### **A place for debate amongst equals**

Holding conversations in physical spaces that by their very nature take people away from their busy daily routine support people to imagine possibilities that differ from today (for example community rooms at shopping malls, art galleries, city council chambers). Taking people to places that are not the territory of any one participant also helps to set the level playing field.

Some of the reasons why voices have not been heard, even if they have been present include being intimidated by speaking in front of a whole room of people, a sense that they are on an unequal footing or not feeling comfortable in the relationship. Using 'café style' arrangements, where people sit in small groups, can hear each other and speak without the intimidation of addressing the whole room increases the choice and opportunities for all to add their voice. It allows them to build a relationship with, and talk to, the two to three other people at their table and whether they also choose to speak to the wider group or not, have their voice and contribution recorded. If 'the voices not traditionally heard' are being invited into the conversation, it is important that the conditions support them to speak and articulate their values. Increasing the diversity of participants in the conversations widens the scope of possibilities they imagine - for themselves or together with others.

These four permission are integral to the different practice modelled by the project. As people successively develop their own capacity to lead this practice in ways that are integrated into their own work, they extend the 'guardianship' by sharing and passing on these permissions to others.

### **Valuing values – from consultation to conversation**

**Consultation fatigue:** above all, the Secondary Futures process acknowledges that all choices are based on values. Current systems for consultation on policy often ask people to express preferences, but the values on which options are predicated are often invisible, sometimes explicitly filtered out of the policy consultation process. When governments consult, generally they set the terms of reference – determining the time-frame, the ambit of discussion, the range of options to be discussed, the process to be used and the use to which the fruits of consultation are put. However, the importance and prior existence of values in the decision-making frame is being increasingly recognised.

Internationally, democratic governments of developed states have found that even though both standards of living and the quality of

"This is the fourth time I've participated in one of these workshops and I get more out of it each time because these are big questions, I'm talking with different people, and my own thinking has moved, so it's useful to keep meeting to talk about this"

Education official

government services have improved over the last few decades, at the same time levels of public trust in government and satisfaction with government services have declined.<sup>12</sup>

One possibility for this paradox is that governments have become disengaged from the expectations and preferences of the citizens they serve, both in the way they operate, and in the values they embody. The expression of preferences once every three, four or five years at the ballot box is no longer a rich enough source of information about citizens values and preferences. We need to bring democracy into the decision-making processes at all levels of the system, involving a greater number and more diverse voices on choices and possibilities.

Service providers, including those in the education field, have implicitly recognised that there is a gap between citizens' expectations and what governments deliver. They have become more adept at market research and consultation, to the extent that 'consultation fatigue' is a term firmly embedded in the public lexicon. However, there is still a disconnect between what is provided and what is desired - a thinning out of the current democratic model in 21<sup>st</sup> century society. Consultation, and the frame it embodies, might even be part of the malaise rather than the solution.

In the 21<sup>st</sup> century, decision making processes must take values into account or face the risk of increasing dissatisfaction and disengagement, or the emergence of alternative systems where the locus of control ends up further from the people it serves than the systems we have now.

Moving from the mode of consultation to the mode of conversation requires some fundamental shifts, not only in what is done, but how, so that participants themselves can set the frame for the conversation. The Secondary Futures project has had the opportunity to incubate some of these shifts.

**Resourced conversations:** the Secondary Futures process of resourced conversation provides the time and space and safety to explore deeply. It allows people to define and ask the big questions. It creates the conditions for participants to ask themselves and each other what they value and have this heard and valued as part of the process. Once people are clear about their values they have the confidence to make decisions based on them – the process helps them to ensure alignment of choices and values and therefore construct enduring ways forward.

New clarity emerges about deeply held values. This is not the same as erasing differences. Involving many and diverse voices provides a more valid vehicle for differences to be heard, while maintaining focus on what is shared, rather than what is not. It brings together aspirations that are the very basis of what it means to be democratic community.

When shared values are made clear and laid bare, rather than merely assumed or kept hidden, it is easier for a wide range of participants to make alignments to goals or work in their own lives. In this way, the

“We seldom have the opportunity to think long term about the future, because we are all locked into the urgency of the day. For many of us, the most we can think about is tomorrow... If you look far enough into the future, it's just possible that you might be able to anticipate the change and make the shift in direction before it is forced upon you”

Mason Durie, Guardian, to School Trustees Association

responsibility and possibilities for next actions are shared, rather than being held closely and exclusively by those who might traditionally have 'owned' the engagement process.

From each conversation, all participants' preferences and imagined possibilities for the future of education were collected, collated and fed back to them –raw and unmediated - to be used as a resource by them.

At the same time, all voices were also valued in considering the collective vision. The same material was collected into a database, analysed and further tested to ensure that the thousands on diverse voices that had engaged with the project did indeed reflect New Zealanders' views.<sup>13</sup>

### **New possibilities emerge**

Given an opportunity to have a voice and, by means of a futures frame, to consider what was truly valued and what could be let go, New Zealanders created a vision that resets the education agenda. They envisaged an education system that was truly predicated on success for all learners and a society where education was valued as critical to the success of both individuals and the nation. This vision requires some deep shifts in thinking and in the settings for the systems organizing learning.

The shifts in thinking include moving from tolerance of failure to a determination that all will succeed, from loyalty to institutions to loyalty to learners, from a system designed for knowledge transfer to one designed to enable learning capability and excitement, from a standardised system to one capable of customising to the needs and preferences of individuals, families and communities, from fragmented, silo-based learning to coherent, community based learning, from compulsion to engagement.<sup>14</sup>

The vision is both aspirational and a guiding light for the system changes that need to be made. To the extent that any of those shifts individually or collectively seem impossible to achieve as reality, it is useful to recall both the aphorism that the best way to create the future is to imagine it<sup>15</sup> and to reflect that twenty years ago the internet was merely the collective aspiration of a small group of scientists and technical experts and is now a world-wide transformative phenomenon.

The vision is the result of the application of imagination and creativity to the design of the learning system. It gives voice to possibilities for the future of education, not otherwise easily glimpsed from today's frames and ways of doing.

"We were surprised and delighted to get our thoughts back from Secondary Futures. Usually we never hear what happens to our contributions."

Parent

"The Secondary Futures process allows people to take greater leaps in their thinking rather than think it's not realistic."

Touchstone Group Member,

## Empowerment not just delivery

Equally, there is irony that a project explicitly not charged with effecting change can demonstrate how change occurs when people are empowered by thinking and talking. What the Secondary Futures process has demonstrated is that once people have the opportunity to examine and reassess their values in the light of change over a twenty year frame, they have the confidence to make decisions based on them.

The resourced conversation model is an empowerment model, not delivery model. The conversation and the connections empower individuals and groups to make changes on the ground using the full extent of existing permissions, and embracing the permission to rattle cages, to question or renegotiate their licence. In doing so, this collective, whether operating at local or national level both moves the system towards the vision and highlights current policy settings which are a barrier to the desired direction of change.

## Engendering change at all levels

Change is often driven either from the top down, which can be slow and have limited reach and sustainability, or at a localised level with innovation hot spots which may work well, but are hard to scale up or systematise. Neither mode works well or fast enough on its own as a means of achieving change in the 21<sup>st</sup> century; even together they are still not necessarily effective enough. We need ways to empower and liberate local change whilst keeping a dynamic connection to the bigger patterns and possibilities for change. The Secondary Futures approach to this challenge has been to work in ways that simultaneously gather up and redistribute the vision and empower and connect individuals to drive change. The processes described in this paper have allowed people both to voice their preferences for the education of the future and to realise their own capacity to start driving those changes.

The ‘gathering up’ of the multiple voices into a national vision is important. It makes the vision available for decision-making at a national level. It makes the same information available to ‘creators’ at all levels in the system. Having more people understand the role they have as decision makers helps them react to change more promptly than centrally led mechanisms and as new possibilities evolve, options for action remain open.

Secondary Futures processes have been a catalyst for forging alliances and networks to harness change at all levels through the system. Driving transformative change through a complex, distributed system is dependent on harnessing the multiple wills of many, many individuals and so the solutions, the innovation and next practice can be sufficiently diverse to meet the needs of all. At the same time, the national vision helps to provide a point of sense making that illuminates the context for local change.<sup>16</sup>

“The fantastic thing about the Secondary Futures process is that it unleashes new energy; to do things differently and creatively.”

Tony MacKay, OECD  
Schooling for Tomorrow  
Consultant

“Secondary Futures made me think 20 years’ out and as a result I’ve changed everything and we’re doing it in 2006!”

Principal, Unlimited paenga  
tawhiti

“As a community, we need to reach some consensus about the issues that really matter when it comes to influencing student outcomes – our ‘common destination’.”

Cabinet Discussion  
Paper, August 2003

Lead stakeholders have commented on the value of Secondary Futures as simultaneously a safe place for debate, a resource for action, a continuing pull towards the future, and a coalescing point for sense-making and articulating national consensus.

### **A new model in a new space.**

This paper has been an attempt to capture what has been learned over the last five years as the Secondary Futures project has explored the dimensions of a new space. It has found that new principles and ways of doing are necessary to reset the interaction between citizens and government to one that empowers people to identify their preferences over the longer term and start acting towards them in the present.

Valuing all voices, valuing conversation, creativity and imagination, valuing the time to talk about preferences and possibilities and in particular valuing students' articulation of their preferences and aspirations are all fundamental. Enacting these requires a deeper integrity of practice. This is vital to build and maintain trust, to ensure that all participants are empowered by their participation and to ensure that the gathering and sense-making pays attention to all voices. These new ways of working need to be protected; otherwise it is all too easy to slip back to current modes, so guardianship of the model and its processes is also vital.

The model provides new ways for all those with a stake in education to work together. It offers the opportunity in many developed countries (where the role of government is predicated on a delivery model) to give up some old ways of working, but it does require that participants understand the new frame they are working in and that the new ways of working are constantly applied. In countries where older frames are not so bedded in, what is the opportunity to embed these new principles and processes?

Having developed processes where all can have a voice, why would we not start from the assumption that we should use them as a matter of course? Why would we not expect that the learner's voice should always be at the centre of the mechanisms for developing and evolving the learning system?

"Students are experts in their lives – they know what 'works' in secondary school teaching and what doesn't!"

Teacher

## Appendix 1

*The Guardians*

### **Professor Mason Durie**

Professor Mason Durie, Assistant Vice-Chancellor at Massey University in Palmerston North, is an esteemed academic and a Maori leader of great standing. His areas of expertise range across health, education and economic development.

### **Gillian Heald**

Gillian Heald is the Founding Director of Unlimited Paenga Tawhiti, an innovative secondary school in Christchurch, where programmes are customised for the students. She has been involved in secondary and tertiary education for 30 years in a wide variety of roles.

### **Bernice Mene**

A Samoan New Zealander, Bernice Mene, is a trained secondary school languages teacher but is best known to New Zealanders for her captaincy of the national netball team. Bernice is particularly interested in working with Pasifika communities and young people.

### **Ian Taylor**

Ian Taylor is a high profile Māori entrepreneur from Dunedin with interests in applied information technology and multimedia. He has won awards nationally and internationally for work such as the groundbreaking 3D America's Cup graphics.

Figure 1  
*The changing mode of government in the 21<sup>st</sup> century (Secondary Futures, 2008)*

Current mode		Future mode
Management - accountability		Guardianship - Vision, integrity and leadership as well as accountability
Government as owner Consultation		Government as supporter Conversation
<div style="border: 1px dashed black; padding: 5px;">             Government as controller              Frame set narrowly              Selected voices              Some voices privileged              Trust taken for granted              Values not articulated              Delivery           </div>		<div style="border: 1px dashed black; padding: 5px;">             Government as participant              Frame set wide              Diverse voices              Voices valued equally              Trust continually renewed              Values articulated and valued              Enabling           </div>

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## Footnotes

- <sup>1</sup> Parker, S., & O'Leary, D. (2006). Re-imagining Government Putting people at the heart of New Zealand's public sector. *Demos*. p16
- <sup>2</sup> *ibid*
- <sup>3</sup> Secondary Futures. A Guardians Framework for Considering the Secondary Futures Project (Secondary Futures Guardians), p.2
- <sup>4</sup> For more information about the Guardians see Appendix 1, p14 or [www.secondaryfutures.co.nz/guardians](http://www.secondaryfutures.co.nz/guardians)
- <sup>5</sup> Even if some of these guardianship and leadership roles are articulated in the riding instructions for boards, they are not pulled up front as the explicit purpose but rather buried in detail or general requirements, or sit behind in the assumed competency model. The project remains accountable for the use of taxpayer dollars, formally reporting, to the Secretary for Education on employment matters and for financial accountability, but works to the Guardians for the larger objectives.
- <sup>6</sup> Secondary Futures. A Guardians Framework for Considering the Secondary Futures Project (Secondary Futures Guardians), p.4.
- <sup>7</sup> The tools were presented by Secondary Futures' Chief Executive, Nicola Meek at ICSEI 2008 in Auckland. The paper, *Rattling cages today for effective schooling tomorrow*, was subsequently published in the Centre for Strategic Education: Occasional Series (volume 105, 2008) available at <http://www.cse.edu.au/occasional.php>; More information on the tools and how to use them is available on

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the Secondary Futures website:

<http://www.secondaryfutures.co.nz/how-do-we-work/tools.php>;

- <sup>8</sup> For a full list of the Touchstone Group membership see [www.scondaryfutures.co.nz](http://www.scondaryfutures.co.nz)
- <sup>9</sup> Secondary Futures. A Guardians Framework for Considering the Secondary Futures Project (Secondary Futures Guardians), p.4.
- <sup>10</sup> Secondary Futures (2005). *Creating the Space*. Wellington: Secondary Futures pg. 14
- <sup>11</sup> A colloquial metaphor for challenging customary notions, some of which may be dearly or closely held..
- <sup>12</sup> OECD. (2000). Conclusions from OECD Symposium “Government of the Future: Getting from Here to There” Paris, September 1999, published in *Government of the Future*;
- <sup>13</sup> Secondary Futures commissioned an external check of the effectiveness of the process, partnering with the University of Auckland’s Centre for Child and Family Policy Research to analyse the data collected from these conversations and further interrogate the key findings. We examined current evidence of effective practice, and the trends that are shaping our learning system and New Zealand’s future. We then retested the emerging ideas with students, with think tanks of sector and community leaders, and with the Touchstone Group
- <sup>14</sup> For more information about the Secondary Futures vision see the four theme papers and to access the vision theme papers see <http://www.secondaryfutures.co.nz/how-do-we-work/index.php>

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<sup>15</sup> Drucker, P. (1909)

<sup>16</sup> Chapman, J. (2003). Thinking out of the machine. In Bentley, T & Wilsdon, J. (Ed) *The Adaptive State*, (p.50 - 58). London: Hendy Banks City Print

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