Ten years on. Where to next?
Rotorua Principals’ perceptions of the
Christchurch College of Education
Rotorua regional initiative
A case study

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Abstract

The purpose of this case study was to document four Rotorua principals’ perceptions of the Christchurch College of Education (CCE) Rotorua regional primary pre-service teacher education programme ten years on from its establishment in late 1996. According to Cameron & Baker (2004) few papers have been prepared describing such new flexible delivery mode approaches. The Rotorua Principals’ Association was the key motivator for this innovative regional based approach. The importance I place on principals’ perceptions along with national concerns and subsequent government reviews and reports on initial teacher education and the pending merger of CCE with the University of Canterbury (UC) on 1 January, 2007 created the need for this project within the context I have worked for the past decade.

The findings of this case study confirmed the perception of several aspects of ‘quality’ associated with this CCE regional programme over the past decade. Principal ‘involvement’ with this programme was highly valued with the desire for this to continue into the future clearly expressed. CCE ‘responsiveness’ to identified regional needs over the past decade was appreciated with some concerns formally documented that could inform future responses to pending curriculum changes. Principals’ perceptions of research; the benefits and concerns and future considerations for the newly formed University of Canterbury College of Education (CoEd) became evident within the interviews and discussions with principals. It is hoped that the findings of this project could contribute to and inform future UC and CoEd practices and policy decisions for initial teacher education.
Introduction

In Aotearoa-New Zealand there have been several government reviews of initial teacher education (ITE) during this past decade. These include the Education review office (ERO) “Pre-Employment Training for School Teachers” (ERO, 1999) report that was requested and submitted to the Minister of Education. The main emphasis for this report was the relationship between the school employers and the training providers. An issue highlighted for future consideration within this report was improving the quality of training for teachers working with Māori children. The Ministry of Māori Development, Te Puni Kokiri, worked alongside the Ministry of Education (MOE) to explore this issue and completed an audit on the Quality of Teacher Training for Teaching Māori Students (Te Puni Kokiri, 2001). The parliamentary Education and Science select committee published a report entitled Inquiry into Teacher Education (2004) and recently the government has once again asked the MOE for an Initial Teacher Education Policy Review (MOE, 2006). Such reviews and reports along with media attention concerning the fact that untrained teachers continue to be needed in harder to staff areas reflects the political nature of ITE and highlights the many issues for stakeholders, providers and researchers.

The New Zealand Teachers Council (NZTC) and MOE meanwhile in recent years have commissioned several research studies culminating with Ruth Kane’s final report Initial Teacher Education Policy and Practice (2005). As documented by Kane (2005) varying ‘issues’ and numerous ‘new approaches’ to becoming a teacher have emerged with little known about the rationale or detail for these approaches. A range of modes of delivery have become available in an attempt to attract and maintain a critical mass of students and to remove barriers of access for students living outside main centres (Kane, 2005). The Christchurch College of Education (CCE) Rotorua regional initiative which was initiated in 1997 was one of those new approaches.

The aim of this research project was to gain Rotorua principal perceptions of this CCE programme ten years after it began in the endeavour to inform future policy and practice. Some defining characteristics of this regional initiative, as perceived by principals, emerged during this research and are documented within the findings and discussion. Kane (2005, p.xx) recently highlighted that “the particular features of the
different modes of delivery of ITE need to be explored to shed light on both the benefits and challenges of the different modes of delivery and to provide evidence of processes that ensure quality of student teacher experience”. The goal of ITE in Aotearoa New Zealand is to provide a ‘quality’ “diverse teaching force that will suit the needs of learners of the future” (MOE, 2006, p.4). Kane & Mallon (2005) however in their report for MOE and NZTC on the Perceptions of Teachers and Teaching stated teachers and principals provided negative views of the quality and calibre of student teachers. Issues such as the student selection processes, the number and quality of new providers and programmes were emphasised in this report.

Principals are key stakeholders in teacher education and the future employers of graduates of ITE programmes. Their links with teacher education providers are vital as institutions attempt to continually meet their educational community’s needs and be responsiveness to the emerging future. The Rotorua principal representative at the annual primary advisory meeting thanked CCE for their professionalism, their high calibre students and stated the hope CCE would stay in the region (CCE minutes, 2004 & 2005). Principal participation must be valued by ITE providers and encouraged through partnerships such as this Rotorua – CCE initiative. The interdependence of schools and teacher education providers is a social reality and must be acknowledged.

I have worked within the Rotorua region since 1986 in four different schools as a classroom teacher, an acting rural principal, a deputy principal of a large urban school, and in the early 1990s as a Waikato University curriculum facilitator. I have led the Rotorua-CCE ITE initiative for the past decade. The forthcoming merger of CCE and the University of Canterbury (UC) provides a timely opportunity to examine ITE both in the regional context of Rotorua and the wider context. This introduction will explore the national context of ITE in Aotearoa-New Zealand followed by the Rotorua regional context from 1996-2006. Some ‘social constructivist’ principles will be discussed as they underpin this report which seeks to understand the principals’ perceptions of this regional programme within the ITE context.
National Context

Kane (2005) highlights the importance “to locate the current shape and nature of ITE within the historical context from which contemporary policy and practice has emerged” (p.3).

“Initial Teacher Education is the focus of increasing interest in New Zealand (and internationally), as agencies responsible for the preparation of teachers seek to answer critique from many quarters...Current government policies on teaching quality and anecdotal evidence of concerns about quality of beginning teachers reinforce the need for research that examines ITE...” (Kane 2005, p.1).

The 1989 Education Act and subsequent government policies allowed for the approval of providers and qualifications in addition to those traditionally delivered by the five colleges of educations in Aotearoa New Zealand. According to Jesson (1997) in researching Teacher education for supply or quality it was because of the teacher shortage in 1996 and the Polytechnics wanting to enter the ITE market, that the Ministry of Education provided incentives and “persuasion” for “potential” new providers to offer teaching qualifications. Cameron & Baker (2004) in their Literature Review of Research on ITE in New Zealand 1993-2004 found that the Partington Review of ITE (1997), conducted on behalf of the Education Forum recommended that the government should place no obstacles before those who wished to enter the field of teaching. Interestingly the CCE Rotorua regional initiative was co-constructed at this time largely under the motivation of the Rotorua Principals’ Association who encouraged the local polytechnic to respond to the need and opportunity quickly by forming a partnership with a college of education rather than pursuing the development of their own pre-service primary programme.

The teacher shortage of the mid-nineties, the demand for access to ITE throughout Aotearoa New Zealand and emerging policies and modes of delivery resulted in there currently being 17 providers of primary pre-service teacher education in a country of four million people. The concerns expressed in the research reports commissioned by the MOE and NZTC in recent years include the issue of the number of different providers and programme modes (MOE, 2006).
Kane (2005) found that universities and colleges of education in Aotearoa New Zealand dominate primary and secondary provision accounting for 90% of primary student teacher enrolments in 2005. However Kane (2005) also highlights that Aotearoa New Zealand is now atypical internationally in not having all teacher education within a university context. Teaching is viewed as a profession and therefore is thought internationally to be logically based within a university context. The last ten years of international trends and government policies have therefore been a significant catalyst for the merger of CCE with UC from 1 January, 2007. Once CCE and Dunedin College of Education, the last two colleges of education, merge with their local university in 2007 90% of all primary student teachers will be within university programmes (Kane 2005).

Regional Context
The CCE Rotorua regional primary open learning option (POLO) initiative based at Waiairiki Institute of Technology (WIT) was established in late 1996. This partnership was initially in response to a request from the region’s primary principals’ associations, as represented by Linda Woon, for assistance to address the identified shortage of teachers within the region. Principals were traveling as far as Canada and South Africa to employ teachers. A group of beginning teachers from Canada with very little practice within their training were brought to the region as a short term solution. While there were many very effective teachers coming to Aotearoa New Zealand from overseas there were many who were overwhelmed by the diverse range of our children’s needs. A shortage of quality applicants for positions occasioned in part by a demographic bulge in the population beginning to affect the primary school was highlighted in the data collected at this time (Woon, personal communication, 2001). As previously stated this critical teacher shortage became a national political issue in the election year of 1996.

Traveling two to three hours daily to the nearest tertiary provider, Waikato University, was not an option for most of the potential student teachers in the Rotorua region. These factors along with the region’s growing population and changing demographics made it an attractive context for aspiring regional teacher education providers and developers of innovative modes of delivery. In 1997 Waikato University had introduced an on line distance programme. However many potential students did not
have access to a computer or the skills and motivation to study on-line. A local programme based at WIT, was the favoured option of the Principals’ Association and those keen to enter the teaching profession in the Rotorua region.

At the time human resources at WIT to develop a primary programme appeared stretched given they were in 1996-8 developing their bicultural certificate in Early Childhood into a diploma. With new providers and modes of delivery emerging nationally, the ITE environment was becoming competitive. As Kane (2005, p.219) found “the competitive climate emerging in teacher education discouraged much risk taking”. It is understood that the Rotorua Principals’ Association approached all of the colleges of education to consider the opportunity to bring a primary pre-service programme to Rotorua (Woon, personal communication, 2001). It was CCE management who showed interest, had the POLO programme approved for national implementation and met to negotiate with WIT and the representatives of the regions’ principal associations to co-jointly form the CCE Rotorua regional initiatives and a partnership.

WIT and CCE established the Rotorua regional partnership through an annually reviewed Memorandum of Understanding. Although principals were not included as formal partners in this agreement, their initiative, participation and support formed an essential part of the motivation to establish the Rotorua regional initiative. Such initiatives were also appearing internationally in regional communities. A Canadian First Nation partnership programme established in 1996 in partnership with the University of Victoria had as a guiding principle “to support community initiatives in a community based setting” (Ball & Pence, 2001). CCE has similarly supported a Rotorua based setting and this has in turn benefited CCE.

The Rotorua regional programme contributed to CCE having the largest intake of primary students (21.1%) of any provider in 2005 within Aotearoa New Zealand. From January 2007, all CCE Rotorua regional students will be enrolled with the University of Canterbury College of Education (CoEd). This research is therefore timely and aimed at informing the CoEd of the Rotorua principals’ perceptions of the existing ITE programme. This may well influence future practices and guide policy to
ensure an ongoing responsiveness by the CoEd to meet the emerging identified Rotorua regional educational needs.

By December 2006, seven year-groups had graduated with this Rotorua-Christchurch initiative supplying 163 beginning teachers. Employment of graduates from this programme has been high. Most are currently employed in mainstream classrooms within the region. The average age of the Rotorua regional graduate over the past decade has been 36 years.

**Reading and Matching**

A recommendation of the *Pre-Employment Training for School Teachers* (Education Review Office (ERO), 1999) report was, “teacher training providers should be responsive to legitimate demands and expectations”. Hunt (cited in Scott, 2000) describes this as the ‘reading’ of needs. He goes further in describing the responsiveness to these needs as a ‘matching’ process. The Rotorua principals successfully demonstrated this process in 1996 by ‘reading’ the regions need for access to a teacher education programme and ‘matching’ it with the regional POLO programme that was offered by CCE.

In 1999 the Minister of Education asked the ERO office to “report on whether there is an appropriate match between current standards for graduation from teacher training programmes and the expectations of school employers” (ERO, 1999, p.1). Clark (2002) within his strong criticism of this report questioned the assumption that “employers” should have the right to determine standards for the teaching profession. The reality is however that in New Zealand principals do employ the teachers for their schools.

Cameron & Grudnoff (1993) hypothesis in their research on *What principals think of their beginning teachers* was that principals would seek to employ beginning teachers who were likely to match their perceptions of effective beginning teachers. Grudnoff & Tuck (1999) when exploring *Standards and the competence of beginning teachers in New Zealand* had principals, teacher educators and tutor teachers socially construct a set of performance standards for beginning teachers. They believe the teaching performance of beginning teachers is a critical indicator of the quality of their pre-service professional teacher preparation. The Parliamentary *Education and Science*
Committee (2004) supported such a move viewing the current exit standards of pre-service teacher education programmes as unclear and too liberally applied and recommended “that the education profession establish consistent and transparent national exit standards” (p.3). Currently, competence of beginning teachers is assured to the community by them graduating from an approved initial teacher education course and the provisional registration process where the critical factor is whether a school considers them suitable for employment (Ministry of Education, 2006). The debate on the need for such national exit standards continues.

The government in 2006 has once again asked for a review of teacher education requesting advice on what policy changes are needed to ensure beginning teachers are as well prepared as possible for teaching (Ministry of Education, 2006). Such forces it appears has resulted in providers presenting their qualification conceptual frameworks as outcome statements and goals standards rather than an underlying conceptual framework for each qualification (Kane’s 2005, p.xiv). However, according to Cameron & Baker (2004) “a match between beliefs and values and commitment on the part of the school to ensure the success of ‘their’ beginning teachers appears to be the critical success factor” (p.63). Therefore what appears most important to principals’ when employing beginning teachers is that they are committed and compatible with the principals’ views and values rather than their performance.

Socio-cultural underpinnings

In 1996, the Rotorua principals ‘read’ that the regional need was for all student teachers (Māori and non- Māori) to empower themselves to teach Māori children effectively. Two thirds of successful applicants for the Rotorua regional option are non- Māori. Within the Bay of Plenty 38.6% of the school population identify as Māori (Ministry of Education, 1997) with indications that this will continue to increase in the future. The projected population figures suggest that in 20 years time 40% of primary school students within Aotearoa New Zealand will be of Māori and Pacific descent (Te Puni Kōkiri, 2001). The fact is that most of the 97% of Māori children that are enrolled in mainstream classrooms will continue to have a non-Māori teacher. Similarly in the United States teachers and teacher candidates remain overwhelmingly white, female and middle class despite schools becoming more diverse (American Association of Colleges of Education, cited in Wallace, 2004).
These demographic projections offered an exciting challenge to ITE within the Rotorua region.

The Rotorua principals in 1996 therefore sought a programme that would meet the needs of the bicultural nature of its school population. Vygotsky, a Russian psychologist, in the early decades of the twentieth century, suggested that learning is influenced by society and culture (Nieto, 1999). This was supported by Bruner (1996, cited in Nieto, 1999) in saying “learning and thinking are always situated in a cultural setting and always dependent on the utilization of cultural resources” (p.14). CCE set out its commitment to Māori by establishing a compulsory Māori specialism programme within the structure of firstly the Diploma of Teaching and Learning and since the year 2000 the Bachelor of Teaching and Learning (BTchl.n) degree. This ‘matching’ was contrary to Berryman, Walker, Reweti, O’Brien & Weiss (2000) observations that historically New Zealand’s teacher educator providers have not always appreciated the central place of Māori cultural values and practices for Māori students in New Zealand schools.

The quality of ITE to prepare teachers to teach Māori children effectively has been an ongoing national concern with long term evidence that “Māori children are not achieving as well academically as non-Māori” (ERO, 2004, p.3). As in the United States “there are no national standards directing how teacher educators should go about doing this critical work to ensure the success of future teachers and their students” (Jones & Black, cited in Wallace, 2004, p.xi). The increasing diversity of school populations makes it critical for ITE to consider the implications of racial diversity for their programmes.

Wānanga were developed locally. Wānanga in this context are defined by Peter Moeau, who designed and has delivered these since 1999, as “experiential learning in a Māori context, operating under Māori structures, according to Māori cultural values and beliefs” (cited in Hunt, 2003, p.2). Each wānanga is for two days and one night and supports and integrates such aspects of the professional studies curriculum as designing appropriate learning experiences for children in New Zealand. All Rotorua regional CCE student teachers are required to participate in six wānanga on the Waiairiki Marae over their three years of teacher training. Interestingly, the Kane
report did not include this identifying feature of the CCE Rotorua regional programme most probably because of financial and time constraints to visit the outlying ITE sites. Nieto (2002) a multicultural educationalist, believes “education needs to be understood within a sociopolitical context, that is, as connected to the social, cultural and political realities in which students live (1996)” (p. 65).

The vision and purpose of the Rotorua regional Mātauranga Māori courses is to personally and professionally benefit the student teachers, regional schools and ultimately all children (Māori and non-Māori). Te Puni Kokiri’s audit (2001) supported such specific ‘reading’ and ‘matching’ by recommending two years after CCE had initiated this locally developed Matauranga Māori course that “teacher training providers acknowledge the changing demographics of the New Zealand classroom and equip graduates to teach Māori children effectively” (p.7).

**Partnership**

Learning how to improve learning for children by building better links between institutions and schools is a theme in most reports on ITE. The *Quality of Teacher Training Audit* (Te Puni Kokiri, 2001) found examples of informal cooperation between groups of schools, and training providers.

*For instance principals in an area with a large Māori population had co-operated to identify providers they believed best met their needs. As a result, many schools in the area had formed a relationship with one provider despite the fact it was geographically distant. Through maintaining a long-term relationship, the schools helped ensure training programmes met their needs* (p.15).

Cameron & Baker (2004) recommend that to improve learning more research is needed to build better links between institutions and schools. Kane (2005) also supports a reconsideration of partnerships between ITE and schools to encourage more coherence between pre-service and induction. Previous research by Fraser (1995) had also highlighted the need for enhanced communication and stronger school-university partnerships. According to Fraser such partnerships can document, evaluate and enhance professional development, action research and children’s learning. The ‘reading’ of the need for ITE and school partnerships is evident yet the
‘matching’ opportunities have been minimal within the CCE-Rotorua initiative during the past decade as the focus has been on establishing a quality ITE programme within the region. As the researcher I was interested in seeking an understanding from the principal perspective of how such partnerships might be co-constructed through future collaboration strategies between the University of Canterbury CoEd and Rotorua schools.

**Voice, collaboration and inclusion**

Voice, collaboration and inclusion, a set of social constructive principles (Skrtic & Sailor, 1996) will be used to seek a greater understanding of the Rotorua principals’ perceptions of the Rotorua regional POLO programme and the programme on their schools. Rotorua principals have voiced their needs in a variety of forums over the past decade, collaborated with CCE and been included in the selection of students, advising staff and employing graduates. Principals are therefore viewed and valued by CCE as co-constructors of this pre-service teacher education programme.

Langdon (2000) found principals proposed the development of collaborative approaches to ITE as a way to develop the important attributes for beginning teachers. Dewey (1976) favored such collaborative problem solving in public education. Inclusion is the emerging cultural logic of the 21st century (Skrtic & Sailor, 1996). In 1996 the Educational Review Office (ERO) in its first review of ITE reported that the quality of people who apply and are selected for training appears to be a significant factor in determining the quality of teachers who graduate from training programmes. It was anticipated that principal perspectives on the ‘quality’ and ‘quantity’ of applicants selected over the past decade would emerge during this project. McPherson (2002) supported this in describing selection for ITE as “the first gateway to the teaching profession and a key element in developing a quality workforce”.

Professional practice is an essential component of ITE and is critical if students are to have opportunities to make sense of how theory and practice are inter-dependent. Principals’ collaboration and willingness to include student teachers in their schools for practicum is vital for students and providers. Embedding instruction in meaningful activities and assessing progress within the context of teaching lie at the heart of ‘integrated, community-based instruction’ (Falvey, 1992). When reviewing the
literature on ITE Cameron & Baker (2004) found many of the student teachers find the motivation to succeed within schools. My observations have confirmed that Rotorua regional student teachers find practicum experiences meaningful opportunities to practice and to visualize themselves as a registered teacher. Haigh and Ward (2004) found the practicum experience is the opportunity for student teachers to teach within a supportive and knowledgeable collaborative context. In contrast Turnbull (2004) conceptualized the practicum as a social system rather than an opportunity to teach. In reviewing practicum research in Aotearoa New Zealand Cameron & Baker (2004) found the ways associate teachers and teacher educators undertake their roles as mentors to students on practicum can indeed contribute to a lack of alignment between the goals of the practicum and the actual experience by students. Maybe a factor contributing to this could be Cameron & Baker’s (2004) finding that many schools find it difficult working with a number of providers with different expectations.

My position
For the past ten years as the coordinator and senior lecturer for the CCE Rotorua regional programme I have felt a huge sense of responsibility for this initiative to meet the goal of ITE in providing ‘quality’ student teachers and beginning teachers for schools and as importantly for the children of the Rotorua region. It is acknowledged that being an ‘insider’ within this programme, with a strong interest in meeting the educational needs of this region and strong motivation for this programme to succeed and continue to do so with the University of Canterbury-CoEd could result in an element of bias within this project. In an attempt to minimize any bias the CCE ethical guideline principle that includes “the rights and welfare of …research subjects…should take precedence over the self interest of staff or the interests of employers…” (CCE, 2005, p.1) will be considered and verbalized to participants. The principals will be encouraged to respond honestly to inform future institutional practice and policy. According to Snook (Davidson & Tolich, 1999) “research is the search for truth and commitment to truth is an ethical imperative” (p.81).

It is timely, as we near the end of the tenth year of the CCE- Rotorua primary teacher education programme, that we listen to the voices of some actively involved Rotorua
Principals’ on this innovative approach to ITE to inform the future of this programme within a university context. As evidence obtained in the *Pre-employment Training for School Teachers* (ERO, 1999) indicated “providers can largely choose whether or not they take employers’ views into account...and in the absence of any formal mechanism many employers do not articulate their needs and expectations clearly to providers” (Executive Summary). This project aims to give four principals the opportunity to voice such perspectives.

Formal documentation and analysis of the impact of this teacher education programme and some of its identifying features are needed. The Kane’s final report (2005) strongly recommended that “there is a need for a further systematic examination of the ways in which different programmes of study leading to one qualification are delivered to ensure students on all campuses, and from all modes of delivery, experience consistent quality of ITE” (p.216). Cameron & Baker (2004) also recommended that, “an analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of the different approaches to teacher education programmes would be instructive” (p.69).

The futurist Schon (1983) argued that voice, collaboration and above all inclusion are the key elements through which such knowledge is constructed, deconstructed and re-constructed. Ten years ago principals’ voices, collaboration and inclusion co-constructed this programme with CCE. The inclusion of principals’ perspectives ten years on will assist with the deconstruction and reconstruction of this programme as it merges with the CoEd. This project will contribute to the understanding of ITE within Aotearoa New Zealand and inform the CoEd of the Rotorua regional context.
Research Questions

Main question

How do Rotorua principals perceive the CCE- Rotorua POLO pre-service teacher education programme ten years on? Where to next?

Sub questions

What strengths/weaknesses do the Rotorua principals’ perceive in the CCE beginning teachers they have employed?

What future needs do the Rotorua principals’ foresee for teacher education provider consideration?

What community needs do UC/CCE need to consider in the anticipated merger process?

This research project aimed to firstly identify the specific strengths and weaknesses of this pre-service teacher education programme. Pre-service are the years that a student teacher is enrolled with a teacher education provider. A teacher education provider is an institution that is approved by the New Zealand Qualification Authority (NZQA) and the New Zealand Teachers’ Council to train teachers.

Secondly this project aimed to seek principal perspectives of student teachers hosted for practicum. A student teacher is someone who is undertaking a programme of pre-service teacher education (Cameron & Baker, p.14). Practicum is the professional practice experience in a school during pre-service years.

Thirdly the strengths and weaknesses of the beginning teachers employed by four Rotorua principals were sought. A beginning teacher in Aotearoa New Zealand is defined as “a teacher with provisional teacher registration status who is employed in a school or early childhood centre” (Cameron & Baker, 2004, p.57). It is important to note that in today’s context initial teacher education includes both pre-service (initial) teacher education and the two years of provisional registration that follows graduation (Cameron & Baker, p.3).

‘Reading and matching’ is a concept first put forward by a United States’ educational psychologist (Hunt as cited in Scott, 2000) in the 1950s after extensively studying
what factors contributed to learning programmes deemed particularly successful. A greater understanding of the co-construction of this ten year old and innovative approach to pre-service teacher education programme was sought through drawing on a social constructivist theoretical perspective throughout this case study. Social constructionism is defined as “a theoretical approach that views concepts as socially constructed and historically situated” (Mutch 2005 p.225). Skrtic & Sailor, (1996) suggest the social constructivism themes of voice, collaboration and inclusion advance the agenda of democracy. Collaborating with and including the voices of principals as vital stakeholders within ITE is important for the ongoing success of this Rotorua regional ITE programme.
Research Design, Methodology and Methods

Case Study
The purpose of this case study was to ‘read’ the perspectives of Rotorua principals’ ten years on from the establishment of a CCE teacher education programme in Rotorua. It was hoped that any emerging data from this study would be useful to the University of Canterbury in its future attempts, under a merger with CCE, to continue to ‘match’ and meet the Rotorua regional educational needs. The strength of the case study according to Bogdan & Biklen (1998) is that it “allows you to get close to the participants, to hear their talk, to observe them in their daily lives and to better understand what they think about their world” (p.32).

Triangulation
This case study sought and examined the perceptions of four principals. Triangulation, a process of using multiple perceptions, can clarify meaning and verify the repeatability of an observation or interpretation (Stake, 2000, p.443). It was hoped that four different individual points of view would ensure there was an aspect of triangulation within this project and would provide rich data to examine and analyze.

Methods

Individual interview
An open ended interview strategy was selected to use initially so that each participant was able to express their thoughts and opinions freely around the selected topic of ‘making sense of the Rotorua-CCE pre-service teacher education programme ten years on and where to next’. To provide a consistent focus for each of these interviews a few open-ended questions (Appendix 1) were prepared. According to Taylor & Bogdan (1998) open-ended interviews can be focused and specific. You can gain the views of those never felt valued or represented and gain new understandings. I actively listened to the voices of each participant probing and prompting where appropriate to maximize the production of rich data. The individual interviews were transcribed and analyzed prior to all participants being invited to a focus group discussion.
Focus group discussion

The themes that emerged from the individual interviews were used to prepare a few open-ended questions for a focus group discussion. Bogdan & Biklen (1992) say a focus group in this sense refers to “a collection of people who identify with each other, and who share expectations about each others behaviour” (p.64). The Rotorua principals have developed a strong group culture over their years of working together. From my experience principals are strong people and often have strong opinions based on their own experiences.

I encouraged the interview to be conversational and to maximize subject participation. It was hoped that this open ended interview strategy would encourage participants to express their thoughts freely. It was anticipated that a focus group interview would stimulate rich data to examine as participants’ voices prompted and encouraged others to share their practices and experiences around the research questions. The complete focus interview was recorded on a dictaphone. An abridged transcript described by Krueger and Casey (2000) as “a transcript of the relevant and useful portions of the discussion” (p.131) was prepared for analysis.

Participant Selection

Four members of the Rotorua Principals’ Association who had hosted CCE Rotorua regional student teachers in their schools on practicum each of the last ten years and had also employed more than one beginning teacher from this programme were approached by phone to participate. They were all principals of large Rotorua urban schools who had hosted and employed students and graduates from several different providers over the past ten years.

All principals approached readily accepted the invitation to participate in this research project. Each selected a convenient hour for their individual interview and their school office as the venue. As very busy principals it was important that the researcher allowed for this participant choice. Email was chosen by principals as the form of communication for further contacts needed. A letter of explanation (Appendix 4) was emailed to be read prior to formally consenting to participate.
Ethical considerations

Consent
Written consent was sought from participants. Consent forms were attached to letters of explanation (Appendix 3). One participant chose to mail this to me and the others gave me this on arrival for the individual interview. I took to each interview a folder containing a spare copy of the letter and consent form should these be needed. On one occasion this spare consent form was needed and greatly appreciated minimizing the wasting of our interview time.

Confidentiality
Anonymity of participants and schools was sought and maintained with the highest of integrity. For this reason the principals’ real names are not used in this report. Participants could only view their own transcripts and anecdotal notes if requested. No participants asked to see these. All collected data was kept in secure area in researcher’s home and will be kept for five years in accordance with CCE policy.

Hazards
The trust of participants was vital. Participants were to be informed should any adverse affects emerge and were kept informed of project progress. Participants had the right of withdrawal at any time up until the focus group discussion had been completed. One principal could not be available for the focus group discussion because of a prior commitment however insisted that he wanted to participate in this project and be individually interviewed.
Data Analysis and Findings

Thematic analysis was the qualitative strategy used to identify categories from the data collected. Mutch (2005) describes thematic analysis as a type of qualitative analysis that focuses on drawing out themes from the data (p.225). Transcribing the conversations immediately after each interview (sample, Appendix 3) allowed me to get close to the data and begin the process of identifying the recurring themes. Davidson & Tolich (2001) say “analysis is about searching for patterns and regularities in the data collected” (p.143). They suggest when asking open-ended questions we need to develop our own set of codes based on the participants’ responses (Davidson & Tolich). The key themes that appeared for me within the individual interview transcripts and that were coded to analyse these Rotorua Principals’ perceptions of the Christchurch College of Education Rotorua regional initiative ten years on and where to next were:

- Quality
- Involvement
- Responsiveness
- Research.

For the purpose of this report the principals will be named Mep, Olivia, Paul and Ric.

Quality

Three of the four principals mentioned an aspect of ‘quality’ when responding to the opening question of the individual interview.

*Ten years on my feeling is that it was a quality programme to start with and it hasn’t dropped the standards over the time ... there is a very good balance between specific curriculum, the pedagogical learning and practising.*

(Olivia, Individual Interview)

Paul who had employed seven beginning teachers from this initiative however could not be at the focus group discussion commented at the individual interview:

*Talking with the people, the graduates we have employed and looking at their first year or two years work they come in really thoroughly prepared. They are not seeing it as a job. They see it from a vocation perspective.*
Olivia’s opening statement at the focus group discussion when each principal was asked to share one thing that they have valued in the Rotorua regional beginning teachers they had employed was:

They’re enthusiastic, they are well prepared and they are keen to put it into practice so they are power houses when they come into your school... we have a built-in commitment to Rotorua from these people.

Ric agreed and added:

They are committed to the local area particularly committed to furthering the achievement for our Māori students... they have got that extra bit of commitment there.

Interestingly, the two male principals highlighted the cultural qualities of both the Rotorua regional initiative CCE students and beginning teachers working in their schools.

They just seem to have an openness to the Treaty of Waitangi and they’re predominately Pakeha students... they seem to be very open to things Māori and perhaps have an affinity to things Māori... they just seem accepting of...

Māori students. (Paul, Individual Interview)

Ric early in his individual interview chose to speak of his beginning teachers’ ability to relate with Māori children.

It has given us teachers who can relate better to children, particularly our Māori children... I think that has been really valuable. People like ** for example who brings that extra little dimension which really helps those children to come through and I don’t think it is any accident that any of the children who ** is teaching that have Māori ethnicity are doing well.

However the limited use of Te Reo by CCE beginning teachers emerged within the following comment:

They are generally quite empathetic... I think their Te Reo is very basic. Maybe that is something that could be looked at lifting a little bit... not coming out feeling particularly confident using Te Reo... but it is something to think about especially in a region like this. (Mep, Individual Interview)
Paul’s initial response to the question as to the strengths and weaknesses he perceives with the beginning teachers he has employed I believe summarizes the four principals overall perceptions of the quality of Rotorua regional initiative ten years on.

_Beginning teachers today are much better prepared than I was ... the bicultural perspective without question... they’re competent in terms of management strategies, competent planners, open to instruction and advice... willingness to learn... personality wise they’ve been people but they’ve also been team players... we will continue to employ graduates on a regular basis._

(Individual Interview)

The principals’ perceptions of the quality of the students hosted for practicum were openly shared. Mep’s initial response to the opening interview question included:

_I would have some faith in the initial selection process... I think that most of the students on the course would have the initial fundamental strengths and intelligence and skills to be teachers._

(Mep, Individual Interview)

Mep spoke strongly at both interviews about the intellectual capacity needed of teachers for the future.

_ívteaching is also an intellectual pursuit and I'm really pleased that in this course now there are universities papers because if people can’t cope with that level of thinking they shouldn't be in the profession so I really think that academic rigour needs to be in there._

(Mep, Individual Interview)

The limited awareness for principals of the content of the Rotorua regional CCE programme content became evident through analysing the individual interviews. As one participating principal honestly shared this:

_I can’t be too specific about the course itself because I really don’t have enough engagement with it._

(Mep, Individual Interview)

However these principals had strong perceptions and views on what teachers of the future needed.

_We really need to work hard on making sure our future teachers are into this life long learning thing ... the world is a changing place... we need to produce educators who are well educated._

(Ric, Individual Interview)
Olivia and Ric added to this during the focus group discussion. Their comments appeared to support the merger of teacher education into the university environment.

*It is going to be important in the future that teachers have at least one academic degree.*

*(Olivia)*

*The thing that hit me when I went overseas in 2001 and again two years ago is the low level of academic qualifications that NZ teachers have compared to other countries in the western world.*

*(Ric)*

Ric’s following comment summarized the principals’ perceptions on the quality of the Rotorua regional students:

*The quality of the students is pretty good... concerns I have are minor rather than major. The overall thrust of what CCE are trying to achieve I think is correct.*

*(Individual Interview)*

However, both Ric and Mep expressed concerns about the age of the students.

*Age is a worry. We have got a profession that has got an average age of nearly 50 now and we are bringing in new trainees who all they are doing is adding to that being over 50 and that is a real concern.*

*(Mep, Individual Interview)*

Ric’s perceptions of the strength and the weakness of so many mature students were:

*The strength is that the people bring a bit more to the table in terms of their training as they’ve got a background of life experiences.*

*(Individual Interview)*

However during the focus group discussion Ric shared the concerns about the future:

*What we need is the beginning teachers in their 20s early 30s to be well established in ten years time so they are ready to aspire to management.*

Students’ preparedness for practicum in schools was positively commented on by all principals interviewed. An example of such comments is:

*I think the students come very well prepared for each teaching practice.*

*(Paul, Individual Interview)*

Olivia identified the face to face feature as a contributing factor from her perspective.

*The satellite rather than straight on-line allows face-to-face which is a really important feature of learning at all ages... I think the quality learning we are getting is because they are in a group, face-to-face, learning from each other.*
The appreciation and support of Rotorua CCE staff was also evident.

*I think the students are being well supported.* (Ric, Individual Interview)

*That’s a strength I think the localized follow up.* (Mep, Individual Interview)

*The quality of the people that are providing the support to these teachers... I know it is a very small team but you have a high quality team.*

(Ric, Focus group discussion)

However, Mep also honestly shared:

*I think possibly in a couple of cases I have thought there could have been a bit more straight talking with a couple of students.* (Individual Interview)

Olivia emphatically stated:

*Your role is pivotal and you do it very well ... I know that any hassles people can go to you for an immediate ear point of contact and not have to consider the facts or have a phone contact with someone they might not have even met in Christchurch.* (Individual Interview)

The principals’ perceptions on the quality of the CCE Rotorua regional initiative were overall positive with some very useful and constructive comments to feed forward into the programme. Their perceptions were clearly based on their involvement with hosting CCE students on practicum for the past ten years and employing several beginning teachers to staff their schools.

**Involvement**

High levels of involvement by Rotorua principals and regional initiative students and graduates emerged as a theme during the individual interviews. A sense of ‘interdependence’ appeared to be an identifying feature of this CCE Rotorua regional programme ten years on.

Principals’ involvement in developing the CCE Rotorua regional initiative is reflected in Ric’s spontaneous comment early in his individual interview:

*Because the relationship was positive from the word go that in itself is the success of the programme. It was something that the Rotorua principals went out and looked for... we’ve got a partnership.*
Involvement in the annual selection process for the past ten years also appears to be highly valued.

*The fact that the Rotorua principals association is involved in selection is a real strength and certainly I value that and I think quite a lot of the principals do value that input.*

(Ric, Individual Interview)

A future consideration for management of the CoEd was:

*They need to come face-to-face with the principals’ association and principals... as I know Barry Brooker (the director of the school of primary teaching at CCE) has from time to time it is incredibly powerful...that personal face-to-face thing beats ten thousand bits of paper.*

(Ric, focus group discussion)

When questioned on the considerations needed with the UC/CCE merger Ric’s significant comment regarding local principals’ involvement was:

*Well, in the merger process I think and I can’t speak for the association obviously but from my own perspective as a member we want to be involved. We see that as being invaluable. We want to be involved not only in the selection but also in the consultation of what actually needs to go into the training ... keep that cultural aspect ...I would fight to keep it I think it has been very worthwhile for the city.*

(Ric, Individual Interview)

A commitment to having an ongoing involvement with the Rotorua regional initiative appears high for these principals as reflected by the following comment:

*It’s just a sense of professional responsibility to provide the best possible practice for students and to support Christchurch College of Education. It’s a reciprocal thing... if we support Christchurch then the programme is going to remain here and we are going to continue to have a really good pool of sought after beginning teachers.*

(Paul, Individual Interview)

The principals spoke freely about the benefits they see for associate teachers and their schools hosting students for practicum.

*It’s good for our teachers as well... it helps them to reflect on their practice and why they do things. I also think it’s very good for them to hear the praise from their students...*  

(Olivia, Individual Interview)
The inclusion of associate teachers and their professional responsibility to do so was highlighted by Mep:

*I strongly believe we have a professional responsibility to promote and develop the teachers of the future and I think we all have to participate in that.*

(Individual Interview)

During the focus group discussion Olivia initiated the idea of a career pathway in ‘mentorship’ for teachers.

*A concept I researched a few years ago was mentorship... developing our really skilled teachers who are our best associate teachers into a higher level of teacher ... it is a future pathway that I think our universities should be looking at in conjunction with our unions as a career pathway.*

Exploring such interdependence of associate teachers and student teachers and such a preferred future created a sense of excitement and appreciation within the discussions.

*We are providing opportunities to students and students in return are providing ideas and opportunities for us and we get to see them trying different things... we’ve had great input from many of the students like **(a Rotorua CCE student) comes back to help with our kapahaka so we actually get that on going commitment from the students .* (Ric Individual Interview)

The willingness of students and beginning teachers employed from the Rotorua regional initiative to be involved and ‘give things a go’ in schools and the educational community emerged through all of the individual interviews.

*A willingness to try out things and take on new learning... so they are open minded from a professional perspective...* (Ric, Individual Interview)

The need for future teachers to be ‘life long learners’ and ‘risk takers’, emerged as a focus group discussion point.

*What the profession is going to need is people that ... are actually quite high level risk takers ... we need people who can come in and run a good and consistent programme but they need to be people who are comfortable with a change environment.* (Mep, Focus group discussion)

Several comments that alluded to CCE beginning teachers being risk takers were:

*That is the difference with the young ones coming out now.* (Mep, Focus group discussion)
I've seen the college people... and they're popping up in newspaper team competitions. They're popping up in sport days. They're popping up in the cultural events. (Ric, Individual Interview)

Another commented on professional leadership qualities:

For example ** (CCE Rotorua graduate) has been a team leader for three years. She does an extraordinarily good job...and she is highly competent at running our extension programme. (Paul, Individual Interview)

The beginning teachers employed were observed to be heavily involved in current musicals, kapahaka and sporting events confirming Ric's observations of Christchurch College of Education educated teachers involvement and willingness to have a go and the qualities to teach anywhere.

Any of the ones that we've employed could teach anywhere ... they are good teachers ... so they could pick themselves up and go and work in Auckland, anywhere. (Ric, Individual Interview)

Principals talked openly and honestly about the reality of 'trying before buying'.

I talk to the associates whenever we have anyone and say how did you find that? What did you think of the person because I'm always on the look out for new staff or keeping an eye out whose coming through. (Mep, Individual Interview)

Responsiveness

The concept of 'reading and matching' regional and national teacher supply and curriculum needs was evident when analysing the individual principals' perceptions of the past ten years and the future of this Rotorua regional initiative. Ric's immediate response in opening his individual interview was:

I see it as meeting a need... it certainly helped with the shortage of teachers in Rotorua. If the government brings in to this 1:15 there's not going to be enough teachers for new entrants so that's going to be interesting.

The principals all confirmed the need for the pool of graduates from this programme.

I think the regional training is crucial... it is valuable for this town. There is no doubt about it for this region... I imagine it would be just the same for Whakatane, Tokoroa, and Opotiki. I just can't imagine how they'd be staffed if they didn't have locally trained people. Quite a crisis really we are already getting close to that with classroom release time...
So ten years on we have used all of the graduates that have come out I think. They’ve all found jobs. We are still struggling to find teachers come the winter term so despite the number of graduates there is obviously a great need here and they’re snapped up.

The reality I believe is that without the regional post Rotorua schools would not be fully staffed now because we’re not getting sufficient quality external applicants.

This fact is obviously very much in the forefront for principals as at the closure of the focus group discussion the principals chose to return to this point by asking me how many beginning teachers the Rotorua regional option had provided and such comments as:

*Imagine if we didn’t have them... we wouldn’t be able to staff our schools.*

These principals appeared very grateful to CCE for responding ten years ago to the need for locally educated beginning teachers to meet the significant roll growth. From 1995 onwards roll growth created an increased demand for primary teachers (Ministry of Education, 2004). MOE initiatives and other factors adding to the ongoing demand for beginning teachers in Rotorua regional schools were; a per-head funding model, the lowering teacher-pupil ratios, and the number leaving teaching. A report of Cabinet Committee on Education, Training and Employment in 1995 predicted that by the year 2000 possibly 18,000 extra teachers could be needed (cited in Jesson, 1997).

The slowness of CCE to respond to curriculum changes over the past ten years was a non-surprising issue that emerged. The need for CCE beginning teachers to be better prepared to implement the early and advanced numeracy frameworks (ENP/ANP) had been shared by principals at many informal gatherings with CCE staff and raised at the annual Rotorua Advisory meetings for several years. Three of the participating principals spoke strongly about this issue during their individual interviews.

They’ve got to be at the cutting edge which is what has been very disappointing and frustrating over ENP & ANP. (Ric, Individual Interview)  
Maths ANP & ENP should be mandatory (Paul, Individual Interview)
Where I have found changes have happened over the ten years is where a change has happened in our curriculum such as in maths and I will say that I think Christchurch College of Education was much slower with picking up the pace there. (Olivia, Individual Interview)

This concern emerged again during the focus group discussion with Olivia and Mep commenting:

There will be other initiatives like that in the future and they will be perhaps localised but there must be room for flexibility to meet these within the programme. (Olivia, Focus group discussion)

If they are going to survey periodically on what are the needs they must be prepared to make a regional response. (Mep, Focus group discussion)

These principals perceived that the MOE could also have been responsive to such needs.

The provider needs to go along to the Ministry and say hey what’s happening we want to hook into this. (Ric, Individual Interview)

You almost wonder whether the Ministry of Education should be liaising a lot more closely with teacher education providers... professional development should go out to teacher education providers at the same time as schools. (Paul, Individual Interview)

The draft new curriculum document had arrived in schools for consultation the week prior to these individual interviews. The need for CCE to be responsive to this pending curriculum change was shared constructively by principals. For example:

I think the emphasis on the new curriculum framework is critical. It should be integrated into the education programme as quickly as possible. (Paul)

One of the things you will need to introduce going forward is linking the new document to the old supporting ones...you have got new areas coming on stream through the new curriculum the place of values and how values are integrated into curriculum and the new competencies and how they’re integrated because that’s the essence of both. I know that you already look at integrated curriculum but in a way this is different... it is a lot more holistic. (Olivia)

Paul perceived another real need for all teacher educators of the future was their responsiveness to biculturalism:
I think the bicultural nature of NZ cannot be side stepped ... if this is not being repeated in other learning institutions it ought to be... this bicultural perspective it will become the norm it should be the norm now I think. It is certainly going to have to become so in the next decade or two...with the whole changing demographics... I think if there are learning institutions that are not emphasising this bicultural aspect it's time they looked at doing so quite frankly.  

(Individual Interview)

Within the focus group discussion principals identified several features required of teachers in the future. Mep summarized this discussion with:

Whether pre-school, compulsory sector or tertiary there are going to be generic teacher skills on effective practice and ongoing learning is going to be one of them... that they are going to know how to locate information from a variety of sources and to check it out.

Research

Principal perceptions of educational research reflected a mostly overwhelming support for educational research and the inclusion of recent New Zealand research in teacher education. However some real concerns with and suspicions of research were voiced.

As Ric stated:

We are looking for students to be trying the newest and latest  

(Individual Interview)

This was supported by Olivia’s comments regarding the new curriculum.

The fact we’re embedding the crucial New Zealand research... you’ve got powerful NZ research which is what needs to be the base of your pedagogical teaching.  

(Individual Interview)

Olivia also saw a need for other medical research to inform educational practice.

The whole neurological stuff ...how the brain works, brain friendly learning and areas of the brain and how they’re connected and the multi sensory approaches ...all of those things are important.  

(Individual Interview)

The need for pre-service to access Māori research based MOE professional development programmes was highlighted by Paul:
I wonder whether these really good programmes like Te Kōtahianga and Te Kāhuna that are claimed as having critical success it would be great for the education providers to tap into these. (Individual Interview)

Only a few clusters of schools within Aotearoa New Zealand had been able or opted to engage with these research based programmes to date (Education Gazette, 2004).

Middle management on-line conversations on Mep’s current study programme concerned her.

_Things I observe and I hear and it concerns me is the undervaluing of the theoretical understanding of learning._ (Individual Interview)

Other concerns these principals shared regarding research in education were:

_Yes, you can handle a certain amount of research but at what level... I don’t think every person who is a provider in tertiary needs to be doing research up to doctorate level._ (Olivia, Individual Interview)

A further concern expressed regarding the CCE merger with UC was:

_I’m in the position now similar to what you are in that I’m a practitioner that’s also doing the research thing and there is a different mindset but I think the problem with the university is many of those people are academics and researchers but they’re not practitioners... I’m concerned that somebody, who in fact doesn’t know how to teach, is going to be teaching teachers._ (Ric, Individual Interview)

Olivia made very strong statements regarding her perception and expectations of my role within the CoEd.

_It (research) is going to drain your energy and take your attention away. What do I really need you to be doing... I want you to be energetic and enthusiastic and passionate about teacher training._ (Individual Interview)

Her concerns within her individual interview continued with:

_I worry also that the best people are seen as the best because they’ve done the most research... the reward needs to go to the people who inspire the most... I’m also worried that the pay scales are far too low for the providers and are you going to be able to attract the best people into tertiary?_ 

However, Olivia’s support of research was evident in her practices shared and her comments. For example:
Action research, as a model, is very important and I strongly support that and it needs to be part of the providers model of working just like our teachers model of working so I'm not against that but I am against the high level of research that is required in order for providers to get their funding and I have a major worry about that. (Individual Interview)

Mep supported this view during a focus group discussion by saying:

*Any research should be done on what is happening in local Rotorua schools so let's go and have a look at two or three programmes that are being used across town. Let's get some research on the effectiveness of them.*

Ric concluded this discussion with:

*Let's make sure the research is good research...teachers need to know what good research is and what isn't... we get a lot of summaries and when you look more closely it is not always good research and yet assumptions are made on the basis of it.*

Principals concerns and suspicions of research and their positive perceptions of how recent New Zealand research can inform effective future practice were clearly evident. I sensed that the development of a research culture within the Rotorua region was in an embryonic state with all participating principals presently participating to some degree in some way. With the CoEd interest, support and guidance there appears to be potential for localised research to benefit the region that could inform practice throughout Aotearoa-New Zealand. After closely listening to these principals' conversations, perhaps such a positive research environment could be further developed by the CoEd offering in collaboration with the region, post graduate study opportunities for teachers and principals.
Discussion and Conclusion

This discussion will focus on the strengths, concerns and the future of this Rotorua regional pre-service teacher education programme as perceived by the principal participants. The emerging identifying features of this option of the BTchLn degree and future needs and possibilities will be considered to inform the CoEd who from 2007 will be managing the policies and practices that guide this programme in Rotorua.

This project has reaffirmed that the CoEd must liaise closely with the Rotorua principals who ‘read’ the need and initiated the involvement of CCE within the region ten years ago. Principals in Aotearoa New Zealand play a strong role in employing beginning teachers for their schools. This could be a limitation of this project in that the participating principals could therefore have felt a strong need to support their own judgments of employment as cited in the literature within the introduction to this report. Within the data collected there appeared to be strong evidence of a sense of inter-dependence between these participating principals and their need for CCE graduates to staff their schools now and into the future.

My relationship with these principals could be viewed as both an advantage and a limitation to this project. I have known them all professionally from between ten to eighteen years in my various educational roles. I have become very aware and at times wary of their strong opinions and judgments however I have always listened to and maintained a positive relationship with principals. With the size of this project involving only four participants no generalizations can be made from this research. An added limitation could be the fact that all participants were non-Māori principals in mainstream schools as no Māori principals in Rotorua at this point in time met this project’s criteria for selection. One Māori principal had employed more than one beginning teacher from this programme however had not been able to regularly host CCE students over the past ten years. I suggest future research is needed for Māori principals to voice their perceptions of Rotorua’s regional pre-service teacher education and any needs specific to the bilingual, immersion and Kura Kaupapa school contexts.
I found this project was an opportunity for me to ‘step back’ from a programme that I have immersed myself in and felt a great sense of responsibility for since 1997 and listen to the perceptions of four actively involved principals. In doing so I found myself learning from the perceptions of the participants and drawing on social constructivism throughout. Biddulph & Carr (1999) say social constructivism views learning as a personal linking of ideas and experiences, often involving extending, restructuring or changing present ideas, is greatly facilitated through interactions with others, and is influenced by prior ideas and feelings” (cited in Barker, 2001, p.43).

**Strengths**

The identification of some significant features of the Rotorua regional CCE mode of delivery emerged when four principals voiced their perceptions of the strengths of programme. The commitment of the students and local CCE staff was clearly ‘voiced’ and showed evidence of significant ‘collaboration’. The fact that with the flexible study hours of this delivery mode, students are able to return to their practicum schools and assist are acknowledged and valued by these principals. However it was the principals’ perceptions of their beginning teachers that showed the strongest evidence of the perceived high ‘quality’ of this CCE option. As stated earlier Grudnoff & Tuck (1999) believe the teaching performance of beginning teachers is a critical indicator of the quality of their pre-service professional teacher preparation. Greenwood (2005) also found “stakeholders place high value on beginning teachers demonstrating personal qualities” (cited in Rivers, 2005, p.13). It appears that these principals perceive their beginning teachers and the students they host as meeting their expectations and demonstrating the commitment required in their schools.

Could this be because the Rotorua regional beginning teachers, who are mostly mature, know our children and our schools and their needs? That is, through experiencing six practicum, in six different local schools they are able to ‘read’ and ‘match’ the local expectations with their own practice. These participating principals openly shared they use practicum experiences to get to know students and select their future beginning teachers. This process is often referred to as ‘try before you buy’. It has been my observation that there is definitely a pattern of students winning positions in a school where they have had a recent practicum.
Principals commented that the Rotorua regional students were well prepared for practicum. Kane believes Christchurch College of Education provides a particularly useful and comprehensive definition of this area of study (see Appendix 6). Kane (2005, p.105) cited that these “papers were concerned with professional preparation and practice, examined the role of the professional, involved critical reflection on the teaching experience/practicum and focused on development as a teacher including ethics and legal responsibilities”. She found the area of study defined is extensive and accounts for between twenty to thirty percent of the credit/point value of the qualification. It is a significant feature of the Rotorua option that the weekly face-to-face classes at WIT deliver these exact professional preparation and practicum programmes. The data collected from principals could suggest that this on campus course component contributes significantly to the ‘quality’ of the Rotorua regional CCE programme. However a 2005 CCE survey conducted throughout Aotearoa-New Zealand similarly found there was a high (87%) satisfaction level of principals over all CCE programmes (CCE, 2006).

The CCE programme being of value for the Rotorua regional community was a strength highlighted by these principals. Similarly in Canada, the First Nations projects found a locally based and co-constructed teacher education programme successful (Ball, 2001). I suggest that the Rotorua regional principals, teachers and CCE students being ‘included’ and ‘collaborating’ in a local pre-service context are identified features that could be a contributing factor to the high level of commitment of the regional CCE beginning teachers and these principals perceptions of their qualities. This is summarized and acknowledged by CCE within the conceptual framework statement submitted to the Kane report (2005, p.63).

*Skills are not learned in isolation from community and context. The geographical, political, historical and social contexts of a nation/community and the varying learning needs of each child make learning to teach a high level task, requiring an amalgam of technical and theoretical skills and understandings. Teaching is intellectually, physically and emotionally demanding* (Christchurch College of Education).

Kane found just over half of the conceptual frameworks submitted for her final report on *Initial Teacher Education Policy and Practice* articulated the importance of
teachers understanding how children learn and the contexts and relationships that influence learning. The need is now foreseen for a CoEd Rotorua regional conceptual framework to document the features of this programme and its mode of delivery as this context is unique within the CoEd BTchLn programme and this needs to be transparent for all concerned.

Concerns

Responsiveness to curriculum changes emerged as the most significant concern for participating principals. I believe the CoEd must proactively ‘read’ and ‘match’ such ‘voicing’ of concerns urgently. This project must document that principals perceive that CCE could have acted more promptly through ‘reading’ and ‘matching’ the need to have all beginning teachers knowledgeable about and ready to teach the ENP and ANP maths programmes earlier in the decade. Modules are now included in the year two maths courses however it takes time for such components to filter through. Cameron & Grudnoff’s (1993) study showed that generally principals are unaware of the content of the initial teacher education. This was confirmed in the findings of this report. If the CoEd is to be responsive to future curriculum change, dialogue with schools and the MOE, of how best to do this is urgently needed.

Such ‘outcome’ based expectations alert us to the call for standards for teacher graduates. The Teachers Council is currently working with stakeholders on a set of standards for teacher graduates. As identified by Kane (2005),

If “standards” are to be used to define the curriculum of ITE, then there needs to be clear evidence of how such “standards” are themselves derived from and informed by critical research and scholarship on both theory and practice of teaching and teacher education (p.229).

From my experience the political nature of maths is historical. While it was disappointing for principals that CCE did not respond when schools began to teach the ENP and ANP programmes, it was my observation that the research base for the introduction of these new MOE initiated programmes was not made explicit for teacher educators to draw upon. Hence the current tensions emerged. I believe we must learn from this experience to ensure a committed and research informed ‘response’ to future curriculum changes.
All principals interviewed highlighted the need for future teachers to have a commitment to lifelong learning. CCE’s current commitment to lifelong learning is cited in Kane (2005, p.67). “Effective teaching requires career-long professional learning by teachers and teacher educators (Barth, 1990; Fullan, 1991; Hargreaves, 1994, Fueyo and Koorland, 1997; Stoll et al, 2003) (Christchurch College of Education). An example of such learning is the year one writing skills course. Kane (2005) found that numeracy and literacy requirements are generally set as part of their entry criteria, although a few require a standard to be met by the time of graduation, with the understanding that numeracy and literacy would be developed through engagement in the programme of study.

During the focus group interview these principals highlighted that the what (subject knowledge) will continue to change therefore it is the ‘how’ and ‘why’ that is going to be important for future teachers to be able to know and share with children. They say that with quality handbooks such as “Making sense” in science they believe teachers can learn the ‘what’ with children. They discussed that perhaps subject knowledge is therefore not as vital as some perceive. Perhaps the focus needs to be the ‘how’ and ‘why’ teachers create effective learning environments for all children. As identified by the two male principals within this project student teachers becoming consciously aware of the cultural features of our schools today and into the future and the implications for their teaching is vital. This is supported by Kane (2005, p.224)

*The student teachers studying towards initial teacher education qualifications today will have an influence on the lives of children and young people for the next twenty to forty years. Unless we are already engaging our ITE students in developing critical understandings, personal, professional and pedagogical skills that enable them to respond effectively to the cultural and curricular needs of Māori and Pasifika children and young people, we are not preparing quality teachers ... This same argument can be stated in relation to all minority groups and thus reinforces the critical need for a commitment to inclusive teacher education practices.*

Kane (2005) found conspicuous silences surrounding aspects of initial teacher education critical to the New Zealand context. For example, “To date there is little evidence within the research on initial teacher education in New Zealand which shows
that pre-service programmes are preparing beginning teachers to address the needs of Māori students in the classroom (Cameron & Baker, 2004). Ric’s comment on the ability of his Rotorua CCE beginning teachers to connect with and progress their Māori children is an identifying feature of this Rotorua option. Future outside and objective research would be welcomed to validate such observations and features. As Kane (2005) highlights

“In light of claims in the recent Best Evidence Syntheses (Alton-Lee, 2003) as to the importance of preparing students for effective teaching of all learners, and from Te Kōtaitanga: the experiences of year 9 and 10 Māori students in mainstream classrooms (Bishop et al., 2003), for Māori students in particular, it is clear that further, more focused research is required” (p.135).

According to the latest Initial Teacher Education Review (MOE, 2006, p.5) “explanations for these current concerns are historical but solutions need to be future focused”.

The Future

The potential for the University of Canterbury CoEd within the Rotorua region to develop a research culture emerged during the focus group discussion in this project. As acknowledged ITE qualifications are required to be research-informed and “to promote research as an important component of student teachers’ developing professional skills” (New Zealand Teachers Council, 2005, p. 8). Principals openly shared their visions for a CoEd regional post graduate study outpost for teachers and principals as a key to such future partnerships and development of a research culture. Staffing these would be a challenge as although the Rotorua teacher education staff have high levels of practical expertise they are very much beginning researchers. Therefore the current context for CCE staff is a consideration as identified by Kane (2005)

*Teacher educators are themselves subject to increasing complex pressures in the current climate of amalgamations and mergers of colleges of education with neighbouring universities... Such major structural upheaval has real professional and personal consequences for teacher educators working within the contributing organisations* (p. 234).
Such a development would require CoEd sending research experts to the region for block evening/weekend intensives as suggested by a participant until such time as the local CoEd staff are qualified and ready to staff regional post graduate study, within Rotorua. It appears that such face-to-face blocks are preferable to a fully ‘on line’ learning option. Principals perceive post graduate study as a potential growth area for CoEd within the Rotorua region.

As Kane (2005) identifies, “the competitive environment has placed challenges on the need for providers to perhaps invest more time and energy in the development and maintenance of relationships with local schools to ensure that they are given preferential placements as the local provider” (p.206). The findings of this project suggest these participating principals perceive CCE as the current local provider. The opportunity for local teachers and associate teachers to gain qualifications, such as in mentorship and leadership, can enhance teacher career pathways and will grow further quality support for the CoEd students on practicum and beginning teachers in schools. Kane (2005) found fewer than half of the conceptual frameworks articulate the role of practitioners as partners in the learning to teach process. However she did cite (p.68) that Christchurch College of Education identifies the reciprocal nature of work with practitioners in schools. This inter-dependence must be maintained and has potential to be developed further by CoEd.

Conclusion

Principals sharing their perceptions of the CCE Rotorua regional initiative ten years on has enabled the documentation of some identifying features of this programme, and has indicated a strong support to keep the option in Rotorua to continually provide ‘quality’ beginning teachers for regional schools.

Participants keenly shared their ‘voices’, their positive ‘collaborative’ experiences with CCE and how highly they have valued CCE and principal ‘involvement’ in teacher education within the region. This project has documented the importance for CoEd from early 2007 to proactively ‘read’ and ‘match’ the Rotorua regional needs to guide all future policy and practice within the college’s university environment. This will be vital to the nurturing and development of relationships within the region and the ongoing provision of an effective teacher education programmes for the region.
The potential for the University of Canterbury CoEd to develop post graduate study packages for teachers in Rotorua became evident in this project. CCE was invited to the region ten years ago, they have consciously nurtured and developed their relationships with principals and these will need to be continually maintained and developed by the University of Canterbury CoEd into the future to maintain the ‘quality’ of this Rotorua regional programme as perceived by the principals that participated in this project.
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Appendix 1

Initial open ended questions for individual interviews

What is your perspective of the Rotorua regional POLO programme?
What do you perceive as the strengths of the programme?
What concerns do you have with the Rotorua regional POLO programme?
What do you value about having the Rotorua regional pre-service students on practicum in your school?
What strengths/weaknesses do you perceive with the CCE beginning teachers you have employed?
What future needs do you foresee for New Zealand teacher education providers’ consideration?
From your perspective what Rotorua regional needs do UC/CCE need to consider in the anticipated merger?
Appendix 2

Focus group discussion

Proposed question sequence

1. _____ what is one thing that you have enjoyed about having a CCE trained beginning teacher on your staff? (30 seconds each)

2. Quality –
You all spoke of the qualities you have seen in the students, graduates and programme over the past 10 years.

   a) What do you perceive as the qualities or missing qualities that the BTs that you have employed have brought to your school?

   b) What do you perceive as the qualities beginning teachers are going to need in the next decade?

3. Involvement

   a) Thinking back over the past 10 years what are your perspectives on the Rotorua Principals’ involvement with this pre-service teacher education programme?

   b) Given the merger of CCE with UC how do you imagine our future involvement with UC being within our region?

4. Responsiveness- You have shared many ideas on how CCE has and has not been responsive to our regional needs and curriculum changes in the past ten years.

   a) What would you recommend to the incoming management of CO ED regarding “responsiveness” to our Rotorua regional needs?

5. Research- You all shared your thoughts & experiences around the importance and concerns surrounding the expectation of educational research.

   a) What would your visions be for the future of research within our Rotorua regional educational communities? What opportunities and considerations do you see?
Appendix 3

R Individual interview transcript 3/8/06

A Thank you R for agreeing to be interviewed
R- Not a problem
A – I am interested in your perceptions of the Rotorua regional POLO option I have
few questions they are very open the most open is what is your perspective of the
Rotorua regional Polo programme
R – Wow blimey
A -I can get more specific if you want me to
R- Ok in terms of I see it as meeting a need way back when it first started we shopped
around and nobody wanted to now us we approached Waikato, we approached
Auckland, we approached Massey no we didn’t want to know Christchurch College of
Education said yes we do which we found interesting this was way back in 95 94
when I first came to Rotorua because Christchurch College said yes we will I think
the relationship started on a good foot and its kept going ever since and I think
because the relationship was positive from the word go that in itself is the success of
the programme it was something that the Rotorua principals went out and looked for
and we’ve got a partnership that’s common and said yes we want to be part of this so
yes both sides of the equation are the keys to make it happen I think in general terms
its certainly helped with the shortage of teachers in Rotorua if the government brings
in to this 1:15 there’s not going to be enough teachers for new entrants so that’s going
to be interesting and entertaining beginning teachers in new entrant classrooms aren’t
the greatest idea in the world though I’ll have to say having employed a number of
them including some in those new entrant positions they’ve been a better bet than
some of the experienced teachers out there I think the quality of the students are pretty
good I mean there are variables there are with any programme like that I’ve got some
real concerns about some of the graduate students some of them I don’t see how they
graduated to be honest that’s a scrap I’ll take up with someone at some stage but in
general terms most of the students that we’ve had through here have been pretty good
the strength and the weakness of the programme is that there are lots of mature
students
A- Do you see that as a strength?
R- I see that as a strength and a weakness the strength is that the people bring a bit more to the table in terms of their training as they’ve got a background of life experiences which means that they’re further along the track than your 19 or your 18 year old straight out of school I think the biggest weakness is that for many of those people learning is a discrete thing you’ve done your training and now its done its been a disaster for some of them and they don’t even know its been a disaster
A – That life long learning
R- yeah that life long learning thing is not been assimilated I’ve had some say I know how to be a mum well I’ve had kids and I don’t know how to be a dad I’ve bumbled my way through knowing there’s a lot more things that I can learn it’s just a mindset and I think for some of them it’s a real problem I make no bones at talking to them about it when they are here on section
A-that’s great
R-I think the students are being well supported you know there’s good support from yourself and the other people that work within the college ** been good ** done some good work with the students
A- I highly value them
R- I think you can be very pleased from that point of view I think the fact that the Rotorua principals association is involved in selection is a real strength and certainly I value that and I think quite a lot of the principals do value that input I’m concerned to see what will happen with the merger with the university politics don’t actually do a lot for me I see quite a lot through my work at Waikato and yes I see some real concerns world wide actually with universities and teacher training because university people some of them don’t have a good understanding of what it means to actually sit in a classroom and work with children yeah I have some concerns there but they might be unfounded
A- Are they cultural type concerns?
R- absolutely yeah I’m in the position now similar to what you are in that I’m a practitioner that’s also doing the research thing and there is a different mindset but I think the problem with the university is yes many of those people are academics and researchers but they’re not practitioners and the crappiest teaching I ever got was at university there’s no doubt about that in fact most university lecturers from my experience couldn’t teach their way out of and yet that is such an essential component
of what we do and I’m concerned that somebody who in fact doesn’t now how to teach is going to be teaching teachers
A- So are you saying a teacher educator needs to be a teacher first?
R- absolutely just like a principal needs to be a teacher first too and we’ve had a couple of experiments down that track which haven’t worked so overall if someone said the option was there to take this away I think I would say I would fight to keep it I think it has been very worthwhile for the city and most of the concerns I have are minor rather than major the overall thrust of what CCE are trying to achieve I think is correct I mean you’re trying to turn out students who are good teachers who’ve got a good range of skills who are working their way to learning to do more and I think it is very difficult to drop back onto you even though I do to some extent the need for the life long learning thing
A- it’s good for us to hear that we need to hear this it’s part of being constructive and we making it more explicit but as you say it is a mind set we’ll work on that
R- the other interesting thing that might not be relevant to this but the number of nurses that come in thinking its going to be an easy job compared to nursing I’ve had a number of them actually say that to me and my response has been you don’t understand the job you’re embarking on here this isn’t easy it’s different but it’s not easier and physically its not that much easier either
A- that’s interesting observations from a different perspective I can see that you have really answered my first 3-4 questions example the strengths I heard you say it has been worthwhile to our city in what way has the programme been worthwhile to our city?
R- well to start with Rotorua is the most Māori city in the world arguably Māori culture even in places like Lynmore still the schools I’ve taught in its an important part of how we do things and I had this driven home to me when my eldest boy went to university and he came back and said you know they can’t understand us when we talk down there was a group of boys that went from Rotorua and he still knocks around with them from time to time he said we’ve got our way of sayings things and to some extent our own way of doing things and none of these boys are Māori but they still use Māori phrases without even thinking they use Māori constructions particularly in their casual language and they just I mean they don’t even see it as something being different S only became aware of it when he heard the r rollers from Gore we can’t understand what you are saying I think that was mutual sometimes I
think by having a programme that is based here I know you’ve worked quite consciously at this it has given us teachers who have can relate better to children Particularly our Māori children within town I think that has been really valuable people like ** for example who brings that extra little dimension which really helps those children to come through and I don’t think it is any accident that any of the children who like ** is teaching that have Māori ethnicity are doing well and its not because she’s doing anything different within the classroom its this is the way I am just as an aside we had a couple of years ago when ** cam she was going to be Whaea ** the furore in some of my community I fielded letters and phone calls all sorts
A- Because she was pakeha and wanted to be called Whaea?
R- yeah she had always been Whaea and yeah they had all these literal translations of Whaea and when I talked to these people I said Whaea is a term of respect but it means aunty and I said no it doesn’t mean aunty that’s a simplistic translation and now I’ve got Whaea** and Whaea ** relieves here quite a bit nobody takes any notice its accepted it was just the first time which says something about how the culture we’ve quietly changed it without any mayhem the kids didn’t care yeah I think the strength is having something based here that takes in our local flavour and I think that’s a strength and I can see value in other training providers looking to do that I mean you have got to be careful you don’t become provocial but at the same time you’ve got to recognise the realities for all that** or ** or any of the ones that we’ve employed could teach anywhere
A- that is your perception?
R- Yeah they are good teachers yes so they could pick themselves up and go and work in Auckland and yeah there’d probably be the odd rumble about 1-2 things they do from some parents depends where they went
A- So you’ve employed I think I worked out about 4 BT from this programme?
R- I’m not sure because I don’t keep track certainly **, **, **,
A- Just thinking about those are there any other strengths or weaknesses that you perceive these CCE BT coming with?
R- I don’t think there is anything particularly different in terms of things they don’t know BT the world over I think have the same don’t knows they’re the things like the ability to work with a group and watch the class which they’re still working at developing it’s the things like what’s important and what isn’t its tings like how to
manage the paper work without it running them over and at the same time getting the teaching done those basic things some of the management stuff we all have to make mistakes about those sometimes working with parents occasionally a little bit more subtly wouldn’t hurt those are normal for any Bt s I don’t see them being major problems cause once they get exposed to experience and there’s only one way to get experience and that’s on the job I think the particular r strength I see in those particular students particularly the ones here ** was another one of yours wasn’t she is that willingness to give it a go when ** was a 2nd year 1st or 2nd year I said ok I need someone to play music for a show and she said Ok she wasn’t too familiar with the age group but she said I’ll give it a go ** yes I’ll do netball I’ll give it a shot nobody is that keen about going down on Saturdays but she does ** who no I can’t do anything I just bully her into doing things and she does when she was here as a student I can’t remember who was a student here with her but it was part of the pack that they were going to sing to the staff on the last morning and anyway she was sick really sick and *8 was here by herself and she was literally shaking but she said I said I was going to do it so I’m going to do it so she played the guitar and she sang a song now
A- Very brave
R- Yes it was very brae and I’ve done things like make ** play the guitar at the Māori festival and she was shaking so much with that one that after it was unbelievable and ** will, and ** would that kind of thing
A- Willingness to take responsibility
R- Yes its this is part of the job this scares the hell out of me but I’ll still try and they are all capable people
A- some have learnt those sills on the job a] some have brought them with them into the programme
R- I don’t think it really matters what the skill is it’s just the fact that we’ll try
Yes it scared the hell out of me but I’ll try anyway you know after the first time ** played at Mori festival she swore at me I’m quite used to being sworn at and about three sentences later she said something about doing it next year and I just laughed and said I’ve got you and the she really abused me I’ve seen the college people and I’ve seen other teachers that I haven’t employed but are in other schools and they’re popping up in news team they’re popping up in sport days they’re popping up in the cultural events those young teachers young in experience not necessarily in years so I
think what you have given them and I think it is marvelous you have given them that this is part of the job and not even the part of the job as the teacher but part of the fun of the job you know I even enjoy doing that sort of stuff and I’m pleased that they do too – exciting isn’t it
R- ** was another one I had ** had a similar I would have loved to have kept her she was a good kid had a lot of things going for her yeah I think that is a strength and the cultural thing I allude to earlier those guys have got better skills than I have in that area
A- Yeah their skills blow me away another area is their ICT skills incredible they show me up as 3rd years that’s for real
R- Its nice though isn’t it
A- I think it is wonderful I acknowledge it
R- yeah in my job I’m not as good as any of my people as what they’re best at there are people much better at teaching juniors teaching language teaching maths whatever fortunately its not my job to be the best at all those things I think with the students to coming teachers that understanding that Ok you don’t have to have all the answers you can go and ask the questions and if you don’t know ask somebody one other thing that I’ve noticed with Christchurch College of Education people is that they’re very ready to take the support that is given by the tutor teachers and other people in the school they see that as being part of the way things happen now I don’t know if its just the people that I’ve had or not but they certainly have responded very well to that and gained hugely from it plus a lot of courses that the tutor teachers say its so easy cause they listen to what we are doing
A- And they respond
R- ** was yours? She’s now a real teacher she’s got a whole class
A- What age?
R- New entrants she was the best option ** from Wellington training did NE last year and did really well we have had a few disasters at least if you have got a good BT that will listen to the tutor teacher I’m using ** she combines the support and guidance these people need so things happen
A- Perhaps we can get into more general things now what future needs do you see for NZ teacher educator providers consideration?
R- There are going to be a few throats cut I think a few of the providers are going to go
A- What are those staying going to need to consider for the future?
R- really need to work hard on making sure our future teachers are into this life long learning thing that got to change the world is a changing place and Ok its ICT today but I think ICT will continue to grow and the reality is in terms of jobs people use it all the time they’ve got to be as a teacher you don’t need to know how it works you just have to be comfortable with using it I would like to see more problem solving if my printer doesn’t work the photocopier is broken down my whatever is broken I can’t find this particular journal rather than who am I going to fix it what am I going to do go and teach in a two teacher school in the country there’s no one to ask so you’ve got to do it yourself I think sometimes there is some of that missing with some of our teachers I mean the barbed wire baling twine mentality is really pretty important in teaching and I know the world is changing but I’d look at the kind of thing that a syndicate in the rural school we used to take turns of taking the trailer to Auckland to Whitcoulls and get off cuts of cardboard but is was the attitude then
A- Resourcefulness
R- Yeah we’ve got to be resourceful we can’t afford cardboard Whitcoulls have some lets take a turn basically twice a term one turn every year. That was common
A- Yes it was common at the other end of the island too my mind is already ticking over how we can create scenarios to problem solve in class
R- a lot of what can you do with a little bit I think too I’m pleased to see our new curriculum because it is important within the overall guidelines that we do have the freedom to choose what is right for my students here would not have been right for my students at ** there are commonalities we all need to learn to read learn to write learn numeracy we need to learn to get on with other people I was really pleased to see strong statements about values so in terms of teachers coming through teacher educators I think they need to teach teachers that its ok to say this is what I believe this is how I’m going to teach this is what I’m going to teach within the confines of that have the courage of your own convictions but make sure they’re backed with something more than this is what I think the research stuff I guess I don’t like using ministry words but it’s the data driven evidence based stuff I think really important how do you know this child is learning prove it the evidence might just be teacher observation I think teachers carry an incredible amount of information in their heads about their children which you wouldn’t even want to write down but it is important that there is some hard stuff that backs it up even if it’s stepping stones along the way
the sloppy c is in the head as long as the hard stuff is there someone ca n say yes I can see from this and this and this that this child is making progress or they’re making good progress here but there is a real need here this is the whole so from the point of view of the teacher training providers how to teach the difference between hard data and the fluffy stuff and how do you make sure people are using it to base their decisions on and that’s where I think the ANP and ENP were good
A- They modeled it
R- they modeled it really well and so that’s what I see as the challenges for the future we need to produce educators who are well educated I wonder about I can think of a couple of graduates where there are serious concerns about their own level of educational attainment I had to teach a BT the difference between 1/3 and ½ one day
A – You’re talking about knowledge base
R- yeah it was scary they actually thought 1/3 was bigger than ½ numeracy in particular I think s an issue we had a thing called fundamentals in maths when I was at teachers college they changed it every year to stop people jumping the test there were some people in their 3rd year who still hadn’t [passed it I think we’ve got have to basic level of knowledge
A- That has definitely come through in the research I have been reading as you say with Graduates coming through with this it is a serious concern
R- I think it is more than a concern I think there is some serious fudging going on somewhere I think sometimes the teacher training providers have to be a bit harder on the edge I really do to say this is the standard and if you can’t pass it sorry you’ve gone but it has to be done early cause people have to commit a lot of time and energy into it and I don’t know if it is the right way to do it it maybe something like a basic entry exam I don’t know but it is something that needs to be looked at by people who have got a bit more time
A- Speaking of time we’ll move on
R- Sorry
A- that’s alright I’m thinking of you from your perspective what Rotorua regional needs does the University of Canterbury College of Education need to consider in the anticipated merger I mean it is not official yet but could be within weeks? I am very interested in the Rotorua principals perceptions of what they feel needs to be considered in this merger process.
R- well in the merger process I think and I can’t speak for the association obviously but from my own perspective as a member we want to be involved we see that as being invaluable we want to be involved not only in the selection but also in the consultation of what actually needs to go into the training and we’ve had not formally but informally we’ve had quite a lot of chat I’ve talked with yourself, ** and I know other Principals have to but while that may not be formal it still goes back in and thought goeses into it the college has major input into what should and shouldn’t be in there I think the fact that we don’t see nay major problems with the current kind of provision suggests that it’s not broke so don’t fix the bits that aren’t broken in any kind of review. It would need to be minor rather than major in my point of view it would be nice to keep that cultural aspect going through it would probably be very foreign in Christchurch. Those would be the major

A- Are you saying when the programme comes up for review say in a year or two under the university these are the things to consider

R- Yes very much so I think in terms of the local area stuff just the fact that we’ve got something here that’s really really important this is not an easy to staff area

A- The mid nineties proved that

R- absolutely and even now BT are a dime a dozen but experienced teachers are not we need to turn some of them into experienced teachers I’m lucky I can get 50 applicants for a job but I know of others that might get 10

A- That’s in this region

R- That’s in this city some people are getting pretty picky about where they will apply and those issues aren’t around applicants they’re around schools they’re around principals

A- that’s all my questions is there anything you would like to add one I did miss out but I think you covered is what do you value about have the Rotorua CCE students on practice in your school? We highly value and need this however do you see any values

R- oh god yes as far as the schools concerned we’ve had great input from many of the students like ** comes back to help with our kapahaka so we actually get that on going commitment from the students I think there is huge input there I think there’s huge input to any school that takes students you get the odd dud but there’s not many and they’re balanced by the really nice things that happen for associate teachers ** said to me one day I like having a student because it keeps up the mark I know I have
to have my planning up to date I know I have to have my teaching organised because someone is watching me and its really good at keeping me on board with my work I thought that was an interesting perspective and she liked that I think the other thing as a big school we have a responsibility to be part of bringing on the next lot of teachers

A- The next generation

R- yeah the average age of my age if tj s getting up a bit I am well below it you know we’ve got to take some responsibility also too you know I also think its huge institutional knowledge that some of the people around here have I lost ** earlier this year she retired you know that was 29-30 years of superb teaching knowledge that has gone now the students that she’s had the last was a shocker ( Grad) unfortunately but the students ** has had have had the benefit of that over the years so there’s value to the wider educational community and we need to be thinking wider than our own school as Principal my job is to think wider than ** school despite of what my board of trustees sometimes think because there is a responsibility to education in general you know I was very lucky that I had opportunities of coming through the various schools I have been through we are providing opportunities to students and students in return are providing ideas and opportunities for us and we get to see them trying different things you know teachers being teachers they see students doing something different they will try it too yeah we learn a lot from that Associates will really acknowledge they learn things from students

A- it’s two way

R- and we are looking for students to be trying the newest and latest just going back to that question about training providers one of things I am expecting is I am expecting to see students to come out with the latest thinking and thoughts they’ve got to be at the cutting edge which is what has been very disappointing and frustrating over ENP & ANP

A- Would you like to talk bout that formally that concern its important data

R- yes I would I think the Ministry I’m not sure where the ministry is at or where Christchurch College of Education is or the other training providers I know where Waikato is at and they think it is just going to be a here and gone again thing which is a bit sad as it means that their students are missing out it was very disappointing for us that students coming in as first year teachers actually didn’t know really what ENP & ANP were about and I was asking students in interview situations well I’ve seen it on section and I don’t think that was good enough I think it was something where the
ministry needed to be working with the providers and saying this is what is happening and ** needed to maybe he did and it didn’t work but from my perspective it needed to be this is what we are doing with teachers and this is what you need to be doing your student teachers training providers may be needed to accept that this is what was going to happen I don’t know where CCE was in that. If that offer was made and it wasn’t taken up then someone needs a kick in the back side

A-0 there was a real gap there

R- Yes there was a huge gap and it penalised the students students who had managed to get ENP some have done it through various devious means they had an advantage

A- We were very aware of it

R- That was unfair on the students and it certainly didn’t help us

A- There are going to be other initiatives coming through and if Both Ministry and teacher providers can learn from this mistake there needs to be pro-active liaison between these organisations

R- If you get wind of something the provider needs to go along to the Ministry and say hey what’s happening we want to hook into this and it might cost them money I suspect

A – Thank you for that data it needed to be recorded is there anything else that needs to be formally recorded?

R- ah we’ve got about selection don’t think so if I can make an observation I’m not sure if this is relevant for this or not ** (wife) did the upgrade through CCE and me being me I had to read all her stuff I almost knew nothing about Vygotsky until she started doing that and it was a really neat chance for me to catch up I just wonder if there is a way for training providers of getting this to particularly associate teachers of finding some mechanism that will help keep people up with speed with that kind f stuff

A- So you are talking about professional development for associate teachers it is relevant

R- Yeah I think I know you offer deals for associates studying and they appreciate that very much

A- Its finding a mechanism to meet the need

R- I try and do a lot of reading to try and keep up I somehow missed that don’t know how but I managed to pick that up I still know a lot of people her its making sure the associates have got that theoretical background the students come in with and that is
probably something that is a bit more maybe not cutting edge but you put Vygotsky on top of Piaget and it takes it so much further

A- It is access to the content of the programmes students have that you are saying is needed

R- Yeah that is a great idea and very relevant as AT development is part of our programme

A are you Ok with stopping there yeah
Appendix 4

8 Sloane Ave
Rotorua
17 July, 2006

Dear ________________________

Information for Participants

As the Coordinator of the Rotorua regional programme and a Senior Lecturer within the School of Primary Teaching I am working towards completing my Master of Teaching and Learning degree. I am currently enrolled in TL803 and am required to complete a research project for this paper. The title is:

**Rotorua Principals’ perceptions of the Christchurch College of Education - Rotorua regional initiative ten years on, and where to next?**

What is the aim of the project?

My particular interests are the strengths and weaknesses of this programme as perceived by Rotorua principals. I would also like to seek Principals’ perspectives on the future of the Rotorua regional programme. Such constructive feedback will be welcomed in the hope that this will contribute to and inform future practices and policies.

Who are the participants being sought?

Four Rotorua principals who have hosted Rotorua regional student teachers for practicum in each of the past ten years and have also employed more than one beginning teacher from this programme are sought.

What will participants be asked to do?

Each principal will be asked to participate in an individual interview early in term 3. The maximum length of this interview will be 45 minutes. Later in term 3 all four participants will be invited to participate in a focus group discussion around the emerging themes. This will be one hour maximum. Participation is voluntary with the right of withdrawal at anytime up until the completion of the focus group discussion.

How will confidentiality and anonymity be addressed?

No findings that could identify any individual participant will be published. Data will be stored for at least five years according to college regulations using code names for participants. This data will be stored in a secure place in my home.
Consent form

If you are willing to participate could you please read, complete and return the attached consent form to the above address or the fax number below. Please do not hesitate to ring me on 346 8820 (office) or 346 0120 (home) to discuss this project further if required. If you agree to participate I will arrange a time and venue of convenience for an individual interview. Should at anytime you have concerns about the conduct of this research do contact myself or my supervisor Jo Fletcher on 03 345 8455.

The Christchurch College of Education Ethics Committee has reviewed and approved this project.

Complaints procedure
The College requires that all participants be informed that if they have any complaint concerning the manner in which a research project is conducted, it may be given to the researcher, or, if an independent person is preferred, to:

The Chair
Ethical Clearance Committee
Christchurch College of Education
P O Box 31-065
Christchurch
Phone: (03) 345 8390

Thank you for your consideration. I will look forward to your response.

Yours sincerely

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Fax: 07 347 2378
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Appendix 5

Declaration of Consent

I consent to participate in the project, “Rotorua Principals’ perceptions of the Christchurch College of Education Rotorua regional initiative ten years on and where to next?”

I have read and understood the information provided to me concerning the research project and what will be required of me if I participate in the project.

I understand that the information I provide to the researcher will be treated as confidential and that no findings that could identify either me or my school will be published.

I understand that my participation in the project is voluntary and that I may withdraw from the project at any time.

Name: ______________________ Date: ______________

Signature: ______________________
Appendix 6

Professional Studies courses form the compulsory core of the B-TchLn and introduce the range of skills required of teachers in New Zealand schools. The courses encompass the knowledge and skills required to use a range of planning, management, assessment, learning and teaching methods, knowledge of legal and community expectations of teachers and an individualised component that is responsive to professional needs.

The Professional Practice courses, which include the practicum, integrate theory and practice, and provide for the essential partnerships between the College and schools. The professional practice courses enhance student's knowledge of context and general pedagogical knowledge. They introduce students to the craft (see Principals discussion need for tutor availability) of the classroom/learning environment and to the teacher as a professional. These courses enable students to develop, articulate and review their own teaching philosophy and assist them to reflect critically on their own teaching.

The practicum provides the school context which is an essential element of successful teacher education. It provides the opportunity for students to implement the learning outcomes of their professional education and curriculum courses and to demonstrate the outcomes of their professional practice course. It provides a context and a supportive environment in which students can trial and refine their planning, teaching and management skills. The practicum initiates students into the complexities of the teacher’s role within the classroom, the school and the wider community (Christchurch College of Education).

Kane (2006, p.105)