

Co-convenor's report to Annual General Meeting January 2015 - February 2016

Tena koutou, nga mihi nui ki a koutou!

This year has been a challenging one for IEAG and the governing committee with our Executive Officer resigning from her position in June. However, we have still managed to contribute and achieve quite a lot with the commitment and hard work of everybody. Thanks to all of the committee members who have worked really hard to keep IEAG functioning and meeting our strategic goals over the year. Denise Astill and Maree Kirk resigned from the committee during the year. Past committee member Ally Attwell was coopted onto the committee in August to help provide some continuity and keep the committee a good size. Thanks to Denise, Maree and Ally for your work and commitment to IEAG. We were excited and relieved to appoint Imelda Coleman to the new position of IEAG National Coordinator (22 hrs per week) at the end of last year. Imelda Coleman was appointed as IEAG National Coordinator (NC) in November last year after a 5 month period of IEAG having no paid employee. Imelda is working 22hrs per week. Welcome Imelda! We are already experiencing the many benefits of having Imelda coordinating IEAG's work programme and supporting IEAG's vision and strategic direction alongside the governing committee and members.

WORK 2015

Over the year we have represented IEAG and acted in advisory roles on several government and Ministry groups and consultations

IEAG representation, advocacy and advice to Ministries

Ministry of Education *Special Education Update* meetings (regional, nationwide)

Ministry of Education *Inclusive Education Capability Building Sector Advisory Group* (National)

Ministry of Education *Special Education Dispute Resolution Process* workshop (National)

Ministry of Education *Education Act Update* meetings (National and regional)

NZQA *Social Skills Advisory Group* (National)

Written and oral submissions to the Education and Science Select Committee *Inquiry into the identification and support for students with the significant challenges of dyslexia, dyspraxia, and autism spectrum disorders in primary and secondary schools*

Cross Sector Collaboration

IEAG has been an active core member of the **Education For All Forum (EFA)**. Education For All (EFA) is a collaboration of disabled persons organisations, family and inclusive education organisations, teachers, and school principals, leaders, researchers and academics in inclusive education, and people from the employment and human rights sector. The forum members and their organisations are committed to ensuring all students with disabilities are well educated in an inclusive education system. IEAG alongside other key organisations is engaged in on-going leadership and collaboration with education, disability, human rights, and family sector organisations to support the development of inclusive education policies, systems and practices in education. Our involvement in EFA and its activities is a key part this work.

In 2014 the EFA forum developed an Education For All Priorities plan for the New Zealand Education System. The purpose of the plan has been to provide a basis for a productive dialogue and partnership between disabled people, advocates, the education, employment and human rights sectors and government. In 2015 we worked with other organisations to develop a process for working in partnership to advance the dialogue and positive changes towards an inclusive education system and society.

Todd Foundation Partnership Funding

In 2015 IEAG was privileged to accept an invitation from the Todd Foundation to enter into a 5 year Partnership Funding agreement. Three other organisations Parent to Parent, The Disabled Persons Assembly and The Champion Centre were also successful. The partnership funding can be used for any purpose that contributes to IEAG's vision of Aotearoa New Zealand having an inclusive education policy, system and society. IEAG primarily spent Todd Foundation Funding on wages, and the IEAG Voices Project in 2015.

IEAG Membership and Networks

In 2015 IEAG held one network meeting in Wellington with speakers Mark Potter (school principal) and Giovanni Tiso (school Board of Trustees chairperson), Berhampore School.

Supporting local regional networks of IEAG members and others interested in inclusive education is a top priority for Imelda, IEAG National Coordinator and the IEAG governing committee and members in 2016. This year we are committed to increasing our membership and the engagement of IEAG members.

Education

IEAG Voices Project

At a cost of \$50,000, this is IEAG's biggest project in our six year history. We have used \$25,000 of our Todd Foundation funding and \$25,000 from the IHC Foundation and are extremely grateful to these organisations for making the project possible. This project is the first phase in what will become a growing IEAG platform for sharing perspectives and responding positively to the voices and rights of disabled people in education and society. The project has involved interviewing and filming 12 young disabled people talking about their aspirations and experiences of schooling and life post school for those who have left school. The interview footage is currently being edited and produced as short films. The short films will be posted on IEAG's website alongside teaching resources also being developed that focus on the key messages from the young people and on

inclusive thinking and practices in education. The films and resources will be publically available on our website. Our aim is that teachers, teacher educators, students, non-disabled people, families, leaders, researchers and policy makers will listen to, learn from and use the films and resources in their settings. We will continue to add to the Voices film and teaching resource platform. We are looking forward to the launch and going live later in the year!

Professional development

In 2015 Jude MacArthur and Bernadette Macartney presented on inclusive education at the Auckland Down Syndrome Association 'Success For All', Professional development for teachers courses.

Governance work

The governing committee also spent time last year clarifying the roles and responsibilities of the Governing Committee and IEAG paid employee/s. This work included things such as reviewing the Executive Officer (EO) position, hours and job description, developing a National Coordinator position to replace the EO one, appointing a National Coordinator and reviewing IEAG's Constitution.

Many Thanks 😊

IEAG functions through the funding, good will and voluntary work of our members, funders, and other not-for-profit organisations, and agencies. We would like to thank and recognise the contributions of a number of individuals, organisations and agencies that have supported and made our achievements over the past 15 months possible. Thank you to

- The Todd Foundation, The IHC Foundation, Lotteries, COGS and the Department of Internal Affairs
- The staff and Advocacy team at IHC
- CCS Disability Action and the Education For All Forum (EFA) groups
- Paul Macbride
- Ross Madden

Three committee members including myself are not seeking election to the committee this year. Many thanks to Kate McAnelly and Anne-Marie McIlroy for your contributions to governing committee, particularly your knowledge and perspectives as teachers and education researchers. Kate has been a committee member for three years and Anne-Marie for one. We look forward to continue working with you through some of IEAG's education projects but will miss having you on the governing committee. All the best for both of you with your studies this year!

Every member of the governing committee has taken additional pressure and work while we have been without a paid person and appointed our NC this year. You have all gone the extra mile and then some! Thanks for your support to me in my role as Co-Convenor. Thank you Shane, Trish and Heather for putting yourselves forward for election again this year. You will provide much needed continuity and knowledge about IEAG on the new committee. We are looking forward to the networks, knowledge and perspectives that new members of committee will bring to IEAG and the governing committee.

I have been a member of IEAG for five years, on the IEAG governing committee for four years, and have been Co-Convenor for the past three. Thanks to everybody for the energy and expertise you all bring to the organisation and our work to make education a place where everybody belongs and thrives. Let's continue to be at the forefront, alongside others, of creating real change and transformation to our education system. I'm looking forward to being involved in IEAG network groups, at conferences and courses, and to the launch of the Voices Project later in the year.

LOOKING FORWARD TO 2016

The governing committee and strategic plan has its eyes firmly fixed on IEAG members and membership as a priority focus. We are wanting to keep developing ways IEAG can help to communicate the voices and rights of disabled people to a wide audience, teach about quality inclusive teaching and influence positive change in education. Supporting local Inclusive Education Networks and groups throughout the country, listening to and increasing the active engagement of members is a piece of on-going work we are keen to spend our energies on in 2016.

In the professional development and influencing education space we will be completing, launching and sharing our Voices Project films and teaching resources, hosting Learning Better Together days in Nelson and Christchurch, conference presenting, sharing resources and talking with people through IEAG information stands and there is plenty of need and room for more work and growth in this area. With Todd Foundation multi-year funding and support, we are in a good position to develop and expand our work and influence in the education sector.

I wish the new committee all the best for the coming year.

Nga mihi nui ki a koutou

Bernadette Macartney