

'A prick in the Minister's side' - Working  
towards inclusive  
education in New Zealand through  
voluntary advocacy.

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Inclusive Education Action Group (IEAG)  
Governing Committee



# The first 'pricks' - 2007



Prof. Roger Slee - the man who established our role as “A prick in the Minister’s side”



# Who are we?

- 210 members
- Parents, academics, teachers, principals, teacher educators, disabled people, community and NGO representatives, young people, self advocates, Ministry of Education staff, international members
- Governing Committee – majority are people with disabilities or family members.
- An alliance of people from different backgrounds with a shared commitment to inclusion

# Who are we?

- Executive Officer

Sarah Berman

## Grant Funders

- Todd Foundation
- COGS
- Lotteries Community Grants

## Board

- IHC Foundation
- ASB Community Trust





# What do we do?

*mmunities*



IEAG's role is to advocate for changes in the education system so that all early childhood, primary, secondary and tertiary education settings include and teach all children and young people in their community.



# Why do we do it?

## **Our beliefs:**

- Everyone has the right to live and learn in their community, alongside their peers and siblings
- No person should be denied the right to participate fully in education with others of their age

## **Too many disabled people continue to be discriminated against in the education system:**

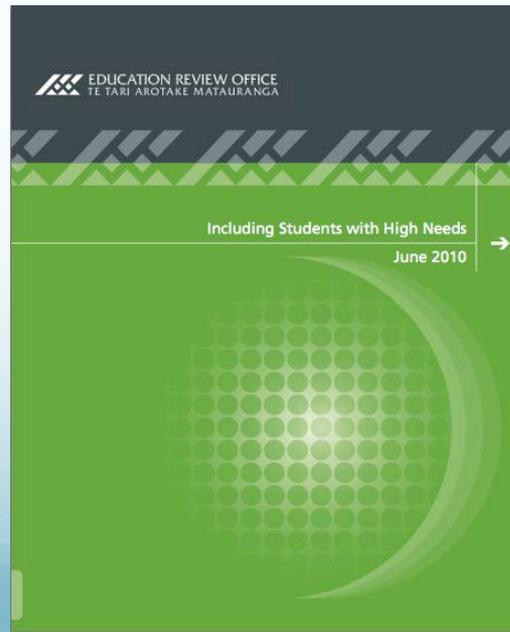
- Limited resourcing and other constraints (e.g. lack of professional development; poor attitudes)
- The MoE has said that schools and BoTs are ultimately responsible for the problems, not government
- Lack of supportive government policy for inclusive education

# Why do we do it?

- Too many children and young people with disabilities continue to:
  - have limited attendance or exclusion from classroom activities because of an absence of support
  - be excluded from activities such as sport, music, school trips;
  - experience suspension or expulsion for behaviour attributable to impairment
- Parents being required to contribute financially towards the cost of support
- Some schools refuse to enrol students because of the student's disability

# Why do we do it?

- ERO Report – *Including Students with High Needs* - 50% of schools had some or few inclusive practices
- The key question that emerges from this review is: how can more schools become better at including students with high needs?



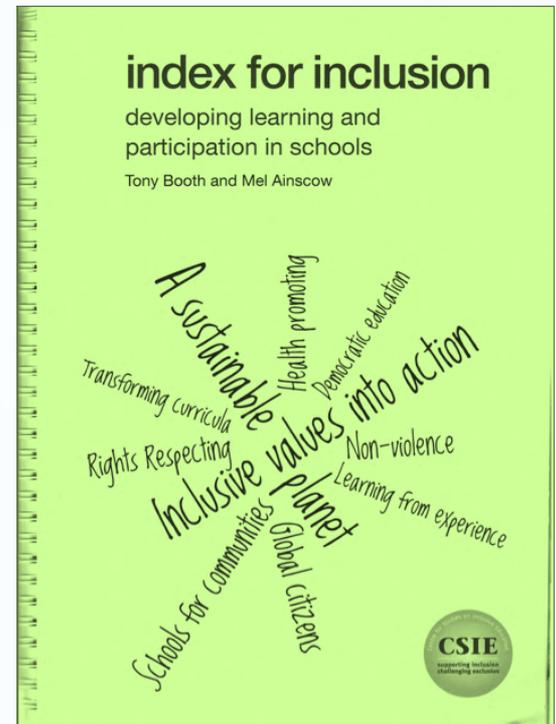
# How do we do it?

- Provide information (publications, websites, at conferences, comment to media on inclusive education)
- Collective voice to government on education policy and initiatives
- Workshops for teachers and parents
- Networking and support
- Collaborate with other groups nationally and internationally to share resources
- Submissions
- Research (doing and disseminating)
- Conference
- Involvement in sector groups

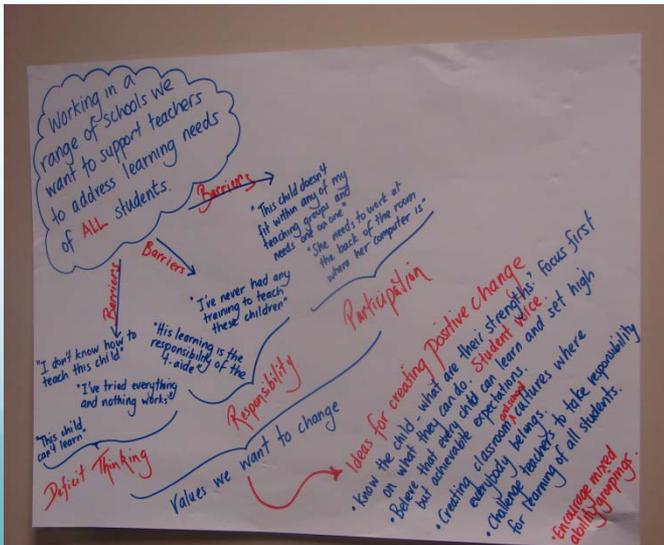


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EMG is a registered charity (CC38831) and Incorporated Society (117812) with HQ above stairs.



# Workshops



# How the workshops operate

## **Participants will leave the seminar with:**

An understanding about what inclusive education is and what it looks like in practice.

Ideas for developing inclusive practice in their own school, including one particular idea to be implemented following the seminar.

A copy of the DVD *Learning Better Together* and a small resource folder that includes useful articles and information about inclusive education.

# How the workshops operate

## Plan for the Day

**9.30 – 10.30** Inclusive schools – what are we talking about?

**Tea break**

**10.45-12.00** Values – the basis for inclusive practice

**Lunch**

**1.00-2.15** Putting inclusive values into practice

**Tea break**

**2.30-3.30** Developing inclusive practice in my own school



Working in a range of schools we want to support teachers to address learning needs of ALL students.

**Barriers**

"This child doesn't fit within any of my teaching groups and needs one on one"  
"She needs to work at the back of the room where her computer is"

**Barriers**

"I've never had any training to teach these children"

**Barriers**

"I don't know how to teach this child"

"I've tried everything and nothing works"

"His learning is the responsibility of the 4-aide"

**Participation**

**Responsibility**

**Deficit Thinking**

Values we want to change

**Ideas for creating positive change**

- Know the child - what are their strengths? Focus first on what they can do.
- Believe that every child can learn and set high but achievable expectations. **Student voice.**
- Creating classroom <sup>and school</sup> cultures where everybody belongs.
- Challenge teachers to take responsibility for learning of all students.
- Encourage mixed ability groupings.



# What participants say about the workshops

- Seriously worthwhile. My head is brimming with ideas and I can't wait to start using them.
- Has given me lots of food for thought on where I can look at going to meet the needs of students I work with and encouraging change of thoughts by senior management perhaps.
- I enjoyed this workshop and it will help us to reflect on what we are doing now and how we can improve our systems.
- Information given was awesome, the group work kept me motivated. Thank you
- Awesome workshop – has extended my knowledge tremendously, wonderful host, thank you so much
- Get more teachers to attend these seminars! (parent).
- I think this seminar would be great for more people in my school (SENCO).

**2010-2011**

- Special Education Review
- Tertiary Education Strategy
- Government Education Workforce Advisory Group
- ECE Taskforce Report
- Draft Cabinet Paper on Special Education Complaints and Resolutions Process

## Submissions

Our membership asks for a collective voice to advocate for change and a stronger public presence

# Success for All

“The reality is that there is a lack of choice for many families. It is wrong that parents who want their children to be in their local school, where they should be, still have to struggle to change some teachers’ attitudes and fight for the supports that their child and the school needs..... Presently for many parents the choice is between two equally non-compelling options: segregation or ‘maindumping’.... Inclusive education means that parents no longer need to make difficult choices. Their children would go to their local school, which would be welcoming and valuing of all children.”

# Special Education Complaints and Disputes Process

“IEAG supports the development of a complaints process that is clear and expedient, and has positive outcomes. Above all, a complaints process should not abrogate children’s and young people’s rights by leaving them languishing in conditions that are detrimental to their achievement and social-emotional wellbeing.”

When the education system is inclusive, we will no longer be a prick in the Minister's side...

