



A paper from the Waikato Region

A Level Playing Field? The Importance of Local Funding in Financing Secondary Schools to Meet Future Needs

1 Introduction

1.1 Inadequacy of the Operations Grant

In 2003 a PPTA annual conference paper examined how government underfunding affected secondary schools' capacity to deliver on their core functions, restricting their ability to create an optimal learning environment. The main thrust of the paper was that there was a need to match government funding to the true costs of education in order to deliver a high quality public education. The paper clearly pointed out the inadequacy of the Operations Grant in a changing environment of rising costs and the unhelpful pressure on schools to supplement government funding with other revenue and income sources. Many argued at the time that Tomorrow's Schools and the decentralisation of school management was a potential mechanism for reducing the government contribution to public education; increasingly, it looks as if this assessment was correct.

1.2 Rising inequality: rising costs

The paper found that schools were becoming increasingly dependent on locally-raised funds to meet shortfalls and noted the following consequences:

- A trend of rising parental expenditure on education and considerable differences between schools based on the communities they serve;
- "User pays" reinforcing institutionalised inequity between well-off schools and those which were struggling;
- School leaders assuming financial/managerial roles rather than educational leadership; and
- Some schools simply accepting the inevitability of a budget deficit, regarding it as one way of letting the government know there is insufficient money.

While the government may argue that school funding is increasing, in reality the increases have not kept up with the actual costs.



1.3 More reviews: same result

Since that 2003 paper was presented and debated there have been other investigations of school funding by the Ministry of Education¹, the Education Review Office², NZCER (between 2003 and 2005)³, Waikato Institute of Technology⁴ (2007, with a primary school focus), and the University of Canterbury Economics and Finance Department (2011)⁵. The latter study looked at the relationship between socio-economic factors and the collection of school fees.

1.4 2012: the struggle continues

The main theme of this paper is to highlight the inadequacy of government funding and the inequalities between schools in what they can raise from their local community⁶.

It is the view of this paper that the circumstances and issues raised in the 2003 paper have changed little, and not for the better. Schools are suffering financial effects from:

- Austerity and cost cutting in the public services sector;
- Increasing shift of expenditure by the government into the private schools sector: proposals to implement charter schools; integration of failed private schools and public-private partnership (PPP) schools;
- Rising costs for schools, particularly with ICT;
- Increased need for schools to employ non-teaching staff in schools such as teacher aides for learning support, administrative staff to assist with financial management and business/marketing, sports coordinators and skilled ICT support. All these personnel are working longer hours and are skilled, attracting higher salaries and wages;
- Employment of teachers from the operations grant to provide additional pastoral care or to reduce class size or to widen the range of curriculum subjects available to students;

¹ Ministry of Education Two reviews of the operations grant in 2006 and 2007

² Education Review Office 2006 and 2007

³ Wylie, C and King, J (2005) **An increasing tightness – pressure points for schools' financial management**. NZCER (Commissioned by the School Trustees Association)

⁴ Crabtree and France (2007) **How Selected Primary Schools in the Waikato Manage Their Finances** WINTEC

⁵ Armstrong and Clark (2011) **Does Higher Social Diversity Affect Peoples' Contribution to the Local School?** University of Canterbury Economics and Finance Department

⁶ Appendix 1 identifies the common sources of local and government resourcing to schools.
New Zealand Post Primary Teachers' Association Annual Conference Papers 2012



- Increasing inequalities between communities in New Zealand, both between and within areas. This has led to a polarisation of perceptions about different schools based on decile rating, promotion and marketing of league tables, and even sporting success. Some schools have thereby gained considerable economic advantage over others, a situation not equalised by government funding. The increasingly competitive market in some areas for students and money ensures some schools and thus some students will be winners and others will be losers;
- Economic pressures on families to pay for extra costs for their children to attend school such as activity fees/donations and other money for curriculum related expenses such as materials and field trips, as well as uniforms;
- Increasing difficulty in raising funds from trusts, sponsorship and grants from organisations;
- Reduced international student numbers, who in the past provided fees for schools to use for the “extras”;
- Compliance costs associated with NCEA, property and Health and Safety;
- Contestable funding for initiatives which may provide a significant boost for the selected schools, for example, the beneficiaries of ICT funding. Detailed applications, which take a considerable amount of time to prepare, are required for contestable funding. The money can disappear without warning, leaving schools in the lurch.
- Quarterly roll reviews which can result in secondary school funding being systematically reduced throughout the year though the costs remain the same.

2. Issues related to school funding

There are a number of associated issues:

2.1 Inequality

There are considerable differences in schools' capacity to raise funds from their communities. Some will be able to raise significant amounts of money by charging high fees with a high collection rate and by accessing trusts and sponsorship/grants or through fundraising using past-pupil networks. Others will struggle, despite low fees, to get a high overall collection rate and total amount. Some schools are able to collect an activity fee before enrolment; others allow time payments and other methods to secure all or some of the money asked for. While low decile schools receive extra revenue from central sources, it is insufficient to meet funding needs for their students who need considerable support.



2.2 Voluntary donations?

There are regular complaints from communities about the fees charged, the methods used and pressure to pay what is essentially a voluntary donation. The IRD confirms the voluntary nature of school “donations” by recognising them for tax credit purposes.

2.3 Integrated schools

Integrated schools charge Attendance Dues on top of the normal activity fee and these can be quite high, as the money is used for capital works and other improvements in the school environment. As the maximum roll mechanism effectively gives integrated schools the power to select their students, they are well-positioned to collect substantial “donations” on top of the legally-sanctioned Attendance Dues. Additional costs can be as much as \$2000 per year. Information about extra charges imposed by integrated schools is not always easy to find on school websites.

2.4 Private Schools

Private schools are given central funding and have the backstop of integration via the Private Schools Conditional Integration Act should they be unable to survive as a private business. The practice of generously supporting private business while expecting public schools to struggle on has long been a matter of tension. For example, the government budgeted \$3 million over two years for the integration of Wanganui Collegiate while the same Budget prepared to increase class sizes in public schools.

2.5 Charter Schools

Charter Schools are to receive full taxpayer funding and may seek to make profits on the taxpayer investment. They can also solicit philanthropic funding and business sponsorship. The appeal of this model for the government is that the responsibility for adequately funding schools is left to business interests and individuals’ charitable impulses.

2.6 The Ministry of Education: “no care and no responsibility”

The Ministry of Education seems loath to monitor what is charged, preferring to direct parents’ frustrations at the school rather than address issues of long-term underfunding. Every so often there is a directive to schools about the issue as a result of complaints made by disaffected individuals, but government policy shows little overall coherence other than guidelines. Better leadership is required given the increasing likelihood that schools may be subject to legal action⁷.

2.7 Cash-strapped communities

The present economic environment where the public sector is being asked to cut spending, along with general economic pressure on workers, means that schools are having increasing difficulty in securing local funds.

⁷ A lot of advice and guidance on what is able to be charged by schools to the community has come from the Consumers Institute, community law organizations such as Youth Law, Budgeting Organisations, Law Firms and the Ombudsman (where a case challenging the charges for field trips is under consideration).



2.8 “The extras”

The cost of the uniform is one way schools can exclude students from poor families. If the school has “preferred suppliers” for uniforms, as part of a sponsorship deal, parents may be charged more for an item which could be purchased cheaper elsewhere. With schools encouraging students into BYOD

(Bring Your Own Device) parents may face the cost of providing either a laptop, a netbook or a smartphone. One of the benefits of BYOD is sometimes said to be the potential hardware savings for schools.

2.9 Financial risks

The number of schools falling into deficit can only increase. There is also a heightened risk of financial irregularities of the sort previously investigated by the Auditor General.

3. Related data, statistics and publications

3.1 Why is the data not easily available?

The overall revenue and expenditure for each secondary school in the country is available from the Ministry of Education. Information on the amount of money individual schools charge and the percentage amount collected is difficult to obtain and only samples of secondary schools are used for analysis. Given the Ministry’s enthusiasm for data collection it could, at the very least, set up a website which allowed parents to compare costs across schools.

3.2 Research

There have been few studies of how schools manage their finances effectively and they have a mainly primary schools focus. Three studies are outlined below.

3.2.1 How Selected Primary Schools in the Waikato Manage Their Financial Resources of Limited Government Funding to Effectively Meet Their School’s Objectives⁸

Wintec undertook a small study covering four primary schools from a range of deciles, type and distance from a main centre. The key points from the study were:

1. The low decile school had to manage on what it was able to get from the community and did not charge any fee at all, but expected the community and families to provide labour and to support gala days.
2. The three higher decile schools budgeted for a reserve, and the highest decile school relied more on locally generated funds to balance the books.

⁸ Crabtree and France (2007). *How Selected Primary Schools in the Waikato Manage Their Financial Resources of Limited Government Funding to Effectively Meet Their School’s Objectives*. Hamilton: WINTEC.



3. All felt that the rate of collecting fees was reducing, as the idea of a donation meant that it was voluntary and that education costs should be paid from taxes.
4. Securing funds through grants and sponsorships depended on a number of circumstances in a competitive environment such as a network of contacts and expertise in preparing applications.
5. The main funding pressures on each school were for teacher support and ICT development.

3.2.2 Does Higher Social Diversity Affect Peoples' Contribution to Local Schools?

A University of Canterbury study⁹ used census data for geographic communities around each school to investigate whether, other factors being equal, community diversity (including variation in ethnic, religious and in household income across six broad household income bands) made a difference to local fundraising. The main statistically meaningful effect noted was that a wider spread of households in the geographic community around a school across the six income bands tends to lower the revenue collected from fundraising, but not from donations and fees.

There are several caveats with respect to the findings of this research, not least being that the geographic community may not be reflective of the community represented by the families attending the school, and in fact is more unlikely to be so as income diversity increases in the geographic area around it.

3.2.3 An Increasing Tightness – Pressure Points for Schools Financial Management

NZCER undertook a more detailed study¹⁰ which concluded that:

1. Most schools were facing a tighter financial situation and had reached a plateau of income;
2. International student income had reduced;
3. Costly upgrades of computers took up a lot of money;
4. High decile schools were able to increase their level of family donations but lower decile schools were unable to do this; and
5. Inflation-adjusted increases in the operations grant did not allow schools to keep up with real cost increases.

⁹ Armstrong and Clark (2011). *Does Higher Social Diversity Affect Peoples' Contribution to Local Schools?* Working Paper, Department of Economics and Finance, University of Canterbury.

¹⁰ Wylie and King (2005). *An Increasing Tightness – Pressure Points for Schools Financial Management*. Wellington: NZCER.



Further investigation is required to fully explore the inequalities that exist between schools. It is also apparent from the studies, that effective financial management is essential to schools when the revenue is inadequate.

3.3 Survey data

For the purposes of this paper, data was gathered from a survey of the websites of 105 schools and supplemented by a New Zealand Herald survey from 2009. (Appendix 2 of this paper contains further data on local fundraising and school incomes.)

The main points to be drawn from that data are:

1. While the figures are mixed there appears to be a higher proportion of lower decile schools with deficits. Some schools have small deficits, while others have large ones, particularly in the higher decile schools.
2. The average amount raised by local sources per student in 2011 was \$1055.50 compared to 2003 which was \$370.
3. The total funding raised in 2011 was \$282.5 million. The higher decile schools are able to raise more money from local sources in total and per student, particularly the single sex schools which have been long established and have historical sources of funds. Thirteen schools raised between \$1 to \$2 million in local revenue and other sources (such as hostels and through sales of assets); twenty-seven schools raised \$2 to \$3 million; twelve schools raised \$3 to \$4 million; nine schools raised \$4 to \$5 million; four schools raised \$5 to \$6 million; and two schools raised \$6 million plus.
4. The amount of funding for schools from government grants, while increasing each financial year, is about 11% below what is needed based on the amount schools need to raise. Without local funds the deficits would be higher and the quality of education lower.

4. Donations charged by secondary schools¹¹

In 2012 the average donation overall was \$191.50 with the highest \$900 and the lowest \$30. In 2003, according to the NZCER study referred to earlier, the average donation was \$89 with the highest \$330, rising to \$400 in 2005.

The schools in the sample were a mix of rural and urban, decile rating, different parts of the country and sizes.

¹¹ These figures are not held centrally by the Ministry of Education and have been obtained from individual school websites. A high proportion of schools do not have these details on their websites – just over 30% of all schools' figures have been used for the data. The collection rates are also very difficult to find without individual school contact. The sample of schools where data has been obtained is sufficient to comment on and the only recent source of information about the percentage of donations collected was obtained by the *New Zealand Herald* in February 2009, which was based on Auckland schools and a very small sample.



Table 1: Donations /Activities Fees Set by Sample Secondary Schools – 2012 Data

Decile	Number of Schools	Roll Size	Average Range of Donation (\$)	Average Donation (\$)
1	5	715	30 – 100	53
2	9	711	50-120	92
3	12	749	45-220	101
4	15	1111	50-180	104
5	13	1092	90-220	112
6	14	1034	90-240	121
7	10	969	110-400	197
8	10	1289	120-600	233
9	8	1273	125-740	379
10	9	1838	250-900	423

Table 2: The New Zealand Herald Survey February 14th 2009

Decile	Donation Individual (\$)	Donation Family(\$)	% Collected
1	40	80	25
2	100	200	45
3	100	200	55
4	175	240	65
5	220	350	55
6	150	210	40
7	230	310	60
8	300	525	63
9	475	650	75
10	860	1720	80

Although only a snapshot, it is clear that overall the higher decile schools expected, set and were more successful in receiving higher family fees and donations.

5. Conclusion

5.1 User pays by stealth?

Across the secondary sector as a whole, there are clear signs of increasing tightness. The capacity of schools to deliver a quality education is being compromised by the government's underfunding of the operations grant. The contribution of families to the total revenue of schools is rising faster than the government's contribution. The rate of collection and the amount sought is leading to widening disparities between schools which must be addressed. Despite prudent financial management, many schools are still in deficit and



would be even worse off if it was not for the contribution of local funds. A covert campaign to introduce user pays compulsory education by stealth appears to be well under way.

Parents and teachers should be wary of where this drift will lead. The Australian Scholarships Group (ASG) has just released an estimate of the future cost of schooling there. It calculates that, "(t)he total cost of secondary schooling for a child who will start year 7 in 2020 (in) a government high school (is) AU\$34,990; a Catholic school AU\$121,244 and an independent school as much as AU\$272,522"¹².

5.2 Time to Review

It is clear that a review of funding mechanisms based on decile ratings is needed to boost the finances of, in particular, lower decile schools, which are the key target of government initiatives to "raise the achievement of under-performing students". Education is the future of our country and is an investment. It is the responsibility of schools to ensure that the tax payers' money is well spent and to deliver the best quality education possible. However, the increasing demands on schools and compliance with new initiatives are putting pressure on that goal. Serious dialogue is required with all parties – the Ministry of Education, the School Trustees Association and other agencies with a link to education - to ensure that New Zealand does not fall behind other countries in delivering a world class education and in improving student outcomes.

REFERENCES

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Armstrong and Clark (2011). *Does Higher Social Diversity Affect People's Contribution to the Local School?* University of Canterbury Economics and Finance Department.

¹² The Sydney Morning Herald. March 30th 2012 *Doing the sums – does a private education add up?*
<http://www.smh.com.au/lifestyle/doing-the-sums--does-a-private-education-add-up-20120327-1vw9g.html#ixzz21bKngidg>.
Note: The figures include tuition fees, uniform, travel, computers, books and extra-curricular activities



Recommendations

1. ~~That the report be received~~
2. ~~That PPTA reaffirms its commitment to a fully state funded secondary education sector and a truly free education.~~
3. ~~That this conference notes with concern the evidence of increasing funding inequality between schools and calls on the government to conduct an investigation to identify the extent of the problem and the solutions.~~
4. ~~That PPTA urges the Minister to:~~
 - i) ~~establish a needs based funding index for secondary schools to ensure that the Operations Grant is sufficient to enable all schools to fulfil their expectations and to allow the Grant to be adjusted as requirements on schools change;~~
 - ii) ~~identify the costs to schools of compliance and either fund schools for these costs or eliminate them;~~
 - iii) ~~discontinue the present contestable funding process in favour of a demonstrated needs based or roll based funding;~~
 - iv) ~~analyse the costs to secondary schools of each new government initiative and provide funding for these from the time of their introduction;~~
 - v) ~~abandon the policy of Quarterly Funding as this limits the ability of schools to budget for the whole year.~~
5. ~~That PPTA advocate restoring adequate targeted funding through new budget allocations to support disadvantaged students who are at risk of under-achievement.~~



APPENDIX 1 Common sources of resourcing to schools

SOURCES OF LOCAL FUNDS

Activity Fees: This is the most common term used by schools to refer to the monetary payments made by parents/caregivers /guardians to a student's school.

Donations: This is a softer term used to mean an Activity Fee with the implication that it attracts a tax credit. Donations are voluntary and cannot be enforced which is what can cause problems in the collection of them.

Levies: Another term used to cover the giving of money to contribute to an existing fund.

Sponsorship: A school can attract business support, usually for extra curricular activities, where a firm could use their name to attract business.

Grants: Usually applied for through a Trust (local or nationally based) for extra curricular activities or a special project. This source has been under increasing pressure and is very competitive.

Alumni/Trust/ Past Pupils Association: Set up to tap into funding sources from past students who are approached/encouraged to make money available and/or hold fund raising activities such as events with admission tickets. These can raise substantial amounts of money, particularly if the organisation is well established and able to call on a wide network of contacts.

International Student Fees: Paid to the school by students from overseas who wish to experience a New Zealand school. For many years this collection, depending on the number of students, has been substantial, however it is subject to fluctuation, depending on economic factors outside New Zealand.

Attendance Dues: Extra fees charged by Integrated Schools on top of the school fee for improvements in the school buildings, environment and plant.

Also Parent Teacher Association donations, Work Days by students, Gala Days and Sales of products (such as chocolate bars for specific group fundraising to lessen the burden on families).

SOURCES OF GOVERNMENT RESOURCING

Funding

Around 90% of funding to schools is centrally provided and is based on:

- per pupil funding by year level
- base funding by type and size of school (different schools and the application of the economy of scale principle)
- targeted funding for those at risk of educational under-achievement and additional costs for rural schools due to their geographic isolation
- property maintenance and provision of utilities such as heat, light and water



- special programmes and initiatives to achieve national education goals

Decile Funding

This determines a school's eligibility for weighted funding such as TFEA (Targeted Funding for Educational Achievement). The decile rating measures the socio-economic level of the community based on census data and determines the allocation of other discretionary funding.

Operational funding

This is provided for the general functioning costs of the school based on type, number/ages of the students and the property profile. The base funding is reduced proportionally as the roll rises.

- Per Pupil Funding is based on the number of students at each level. Senior and older students attract higher funding per student as the resource requirements are assumed to be higher than for junior students. The funding covers books, non teaching staff salaries and other resources.
- Relief Teacher Funding covers the cost of sickness and absences by teachers.
- Targeted Funding for Educational Achievement is to assist schools with students who are facing barriers to learning, particularly in low decile schools.
- Special Education Grants assist schools with students who have challenging learning and behaviour difficulties.
- Careers Education Grant is provided to schools to assist with career information and guidance.
- NCEA Grant is provided to schools to assist with the provision of NCEA for Years 11 to 13 students.
- Information and Communication Technology Grant is for schools to operate and maintain their ICT resources.

Supplementary funding

- Ongoing and Reviewable Resourcing Scheme (ORRS) is tagged to individual students with high special education needs.
- Secondary and Tertiary Alignment Resource (STAR) is available to support school programmes and students in non conventional subjects.
- Maori Language Programmes Funding provides extra support for Maori students enrolled in Maori language programmes.
- School Risk Management covers insurance for assets.
- Targeted Funding for Isolation (TFI) and Targeted Rural Funding (TRF) covers the high cost of accessing goods and services for isolated schools.



- English for Speakers of Other languages (ESOL) funding provides support for students with English language needs.

A lot of the funding is contestable and it is over to the individual schools to decide how the grants are to be used – whether for resources and/or support staff.

STAFFING

The other significant part of school resourcing is based on the number of teachers each year related to roll numbers. It can vary from year to year based on student numbers and can be 'banked'.



APPENDIX 2 The data – findings and implications

Deficits

The 2003 PPTA Conference Paper gave an historical trend during the 1990's of schools operating under deficits. A school may have a deficit one year and correct it the following year, or vice versa. For the table below the figures relate to 2010 only.

Table 1: Secondary Schools' Operating Deficits by Decile, 2011

Decile	Total Deficit	Number	% in deficit	Range of Deficit(\$000)	Average Deficit (\$000)
1	17	11	64.7	21 – 43	46.5
2	30	15	50.0	14-161	94
3	29	19	65.5	9-294	109
4	31	19	61.2	6-466	141
5	36	19	52.7	4-370	98.5
6	40	20	50.0	12-458	90
7	32	13	40.6	15-459	110.5
8	32	8	25.0	4-468	129
9	29	15	51.9	1-548	162
10	21	7	33.3	12-611	178

Local Funding of Schools

Table 2: Secondary School Revenue by School Type, Roll size and Sources, 2011 Year

Decile	Number of schools	Roll Range	Average Roll	Range of Total Revenue (\$000)	Range of Local Revenue (\$000)	Income represented by average local funds raised (%)	Locally raised funds per student (\$)
1	16	98-1508	666	2111-13156	170-2051	6.63	736
2	28	105-1866	604	2079-15766	105-1836	6.39	651
3	32	88 -1221	490	1675 – 14852	5-1275	7.04	786
4	31	205-2418	676	2139 -23226	103-2009	9.90	1103
5	36	27 -2246	823	2713-18795	165-2573	12.06	1049
6	40	135-1810	825	2588-13568	307-2144	11.82	1142
7	31	216-2697	838	2911-2907	244-3287	13.10	1319
8	34	216-2166	1141	2997-17179	82-2997	11.80	949
9	32	264-2297	1115	3964-20781	364-3871	14.20	1231
10	22	463-3026	1248	812-26666	297-5364	12.16	1589



Table 3: Secondary School Local Revenue Raised by School Type (\$000), 2011

Decile	Total Raised (\$000)	Average Per School (\$000)
1	7853	490
2	11006	393
3	12311	385
4	23151	746
5	31075	863
6	37712	942
7	34341	1107
8	37466	1102
9	43907	1372
10	43678	1985

Table 4: Government Grants Spending in Education - % Changes for All Schools (State and Integrated) including all Types Primary and Secondary, 2002 - 2010

Year	% Change	Year	% Change
2002 – 3	4.47	2006 – 7	5.28
2003 – 4	6.62	2007 – 8	3.66
2004 – 5	6.51	2008 – 9	6.09
2005 – 6	6.06	2009 – 10	1.98

Table 5: Local Funding % Changes for All schools (State and Integrated) all Types Primary and Secondary, 2002 - 2010

Year	% Change	Year	% Change
2002 – 3	10.	2006 – 7	2.2
2003 – 4	10.1	2007 – 8	4.5
2004 – 5	7.5	2008 – 9	1.3
2005 – 6	-3.1	2009 – 10	3.3

Table 6: Changes in Total Funding (Government and Local) for State and Integrated Schools – all Types Primary and Secondary, 2002 – 2010

Year	% Change	Year	% Change
2002–3	5.39	2006-7	4.78
2003–4	4.31	2007–8	4.64
2004-5	6.26	2008–9	4.64
2005–6	4.79	2009–10	2.4



Table 7: Changes in Government Spending by School Type - Secondary Years 7 to 13, 2002 - 2010

Year	% Change	Year	% Change
2002-3	10.8	2006-7	5.5
2003-4	14.8	2007-8	(accounting changes to a new system)
2004-5	20.4	2008-9	7.9
2005-6	10.3	2009-10	1.9

Table 8: Changes in Government Spending by School Type - Secondary Years 9 to 13, 2002 - 2010

Year	%Change	Year	%Change
2002-3	7.24	2006-7	4.92
2003-4	7.60	2007-8	(accounting changes to a new system)
2004-5	2.31	2008-9	2.43
2005-6	4.44	2009-10	7.28

2012 Annual Conference

Minutes

Minutes of the Annual Conference of the New Zealand Post Primary Teachers' Association (Inc) held at the Brentwood Hotel, Kilbirnie, Wellington, commencing at 9.45 a.m. on Tuesday 2 October 2012, continuing at 9.00 a.m. on Wednesday 3 October and 9.00 a.m. on Thursday 4 October 2012.

Waikato Regional Paper: A Level Playing Field? The Importance of Local Funding in Financing Secondary Schools to Meet Future Needs

C12/95/09 Moved Norm Austin/Val Thomson

1. THAT the report be received; and
2. THAT PPTA reaffirms its commitment to a fully state funded secondary education sector and a truly free education; and
3. THAT this conference notes with concern the evidence of increasing funding inequality between schools and calls on the government to conduct an investigation to identify the extent of the problem and the solutions; and
4. THAT PPTA urges the Minister to:
 - i) establish a needs-based funding index for secondary schools to ensure that the Operations Grant is sufficient to enable all schools to fulfil their expectations and to allow the Grant to be adjusted as requirements on schools change;
 - ii) identify the costs to schools of compliance and either fund schools for these costs or eliminate them;
 - iii) discontinue the present contestable funding process;
 - iv) analyse the costs to secondary schools of each new government initiative and provide funding for these from the time of their introduction;
 - v) abandon the policy of Quarterly Funding as this limits the ability of schools to budget for the whole year; and
5. THAT PPTA advocate restoring adequate targeted funding through new budget allocations to support disadvantaged students who are at risk of under-achievement; and
6. THAT the PPTA work with the Ministry of Education and other stakeholders to review the present decile school rating classification system to more accurately reflect the communities schools serve and student intakes.

Carried Unanimously