

8 October 1982

The Hon. M.L. Wellington,  
Minister of Education,  
Parliament Buildings,  
WELLINGTON.

Dear Mr Wellington.

We have been alarmed to hear a suggestion, which is apparently being canvassed, that all kindergartens should have their rolls set at 30/30 with the exception of kindergartens under great pressure of numbers, mainly in the Auckland area, and that staff would be re-deployed to improve ratios in these larger kindergartens.

In case this proposal has reached you we draw the following points to your notice.

Such an arrangement would depart from the essence of the agreed proposal which has been placed before you. This proposal not only provided for gradual improvement in the ratios, but went much wider in placing the staffing on an entirely new basis, unlocking the service from the current rigid three grades which has limited the ability of the kindergarten movement in its efforts to provide for the needs of communities differing in size and character.

The Union would be reluctant to agree to any amendment to the scheme which would remove this flexibility. It appears to the Union that the suggestion referred to at the beginning of this letter would do just that.

It had been the Union's understanding that the agreed proposal was aimed at improving staffing ratios, not at reducing pupil places where children are waiting to be admitted. The Union, throughout the entire time the Working Party was meeting, has insisted that where a community has raised funds and with government assistance been able to establish a kindergarten to cater for rolls of 40/40 and where sufficient children are available to fill these rolls, then that should remain the size of the kindergarten. We are aware that this is in accord with the wishes of the Government as outlined in its manifesto.

Enclosed is an analysis of the July 1, 1982 enrolments and waiting lists for Grade 1 kindergartens as returned by associations to the Department of Education. The figures used are those for the so-called client group i.e. numbers on rolls plus children over three on waiting lists.

This is believed to be the most significant figure as it indicates the potential for enrolment whether or not children have actually been admitted.

You will note from this that 363 of the 480 Grade 1 kindergartens have the potential to retain rolls of 40/40. The Union could not agree to the underutilisation of plant which would result if a substantial proportion of these kindergartens were to have their maximum rolls set at a lower figure.

The Union believes that such a conciliatory gesture towards the Kindergarten Teachers Association should not receive serious consideration.

The Executive of the Union agreed recently that it should not give support at this time to the committee on staffing in kindergartens being reconvened. It is felt that the time for this will be when implementation of the scheme is imminent.

Information received from associations on how the teachers are carrying out the directive that no children be admitted to kindergarten during October, leads to the belief that support from the great body of teachers is apparent rather than real. The Union's view is still that expressed when you met with the President Mrs Martin; that the 'action' should be allowed to run its course unopposed so that it is given every opportunity to wither and die.

Yours sincerely,

B.L. Lindegren,  
Executive Officer.

Encl:

ANALYSIS OF CLIENT GROUPS\* IN GRADE 1 KINDERGARTENS AS AT 1 JULY 1982

NOTE: These figures have been taken out with reasonable care but cannot be guaranteed as exact.

up to 85	66 kindergartens	In most instances these kindergartens will be able to retain rolls of only between 30 and 35 morning and afternoon
85 - 95	51 kindergartens	These kindergartens have the potential for two groups of between 35 and 40.
95 - 105	60 kindergartens	.
105 - 115	67 "	.
115 - 125	62 "	.
125 - 135	37 "	
135 - 145	38 "	In this group the 363 kindergartens have client groups of a level which in the Union's view indicates that they should continue to have rolls of 40/40.
145 - 155	37 "	
155 - 165	25 "	
165 - 175	14 "	
175 - 185	9 "	
185 - 195	4 "	
195 - 205	5 "	
205 upwards	5 "	(the highest being 286)
total	<u>363</u>	

\* Children currently attending plus children over 3 years enrolled on the waiting list.