



Building capability for the future

OERNZ took a significant step forward in December when 10 Kiwi educators got together at Christ's College in Christchurch.

This pioneering group were the first people to participate in our 'Train the Trainers' workshops (<http://tinyurl.com/trainersworkshop>). The aim of these workshops is to establish a cadre of OERNZ WikiFacilitators or Trainers that can build the capability of New Zealand teachers for reusable and portable content.

"We explored a few of Mediawiki's advanced template features, but more importantly we brainstormed ideas and plans for building capacity for OER development in New Zealand," said project founder Dr Wayne Mackintosh. "It's great to see us living out our motto: 'For Kiwi Teachers, by Kiwi Teachers'."

WHAT THE TRAINERS HAD TO SAY:

"It was good to network with other users and share ideas. The training was a mixture of show and tell, and hands on. I learnt a few new things about Wiki syntax. The new editor will be a huge bonus to the community and will help to get more people involved."

Jacqui Land, Papanui High School

"These are awesome tools that potentially save teachers having to use several different packages to do the same job. The sooner we can get them into the hands of enthusiastic teachers the better. I plan to develop my own set of resources for my courses over the next year, as well as run a few WikiEducator taster sessions around Auckland."

Rob McCrae, Diocesan School

"I have been interested in WikiEducator for some time. I enjoyed working alongside others who are at various stages with their development. It was inspiring to see what might be done already with the small group of people there."

Vicky Smith, WestNet

SIGN UP FOR A WIKI-TASTER SESSION

The first job of our new trainers will be running Wiki-Taster sessions for schools. These will be a short two-hour introduction to OERNZ, including basic skills to help teachers get started with collaborative OER development. We hope to reach 300 teachers by the end of June by running sessions across the country. If you'd like to know more or schedule a Wiki-taster session for your school, contact Wayne Mackintosh at the OER Foundation.

wayne@oerfoundation.org

or visit <http://wikieducator.org/OERNZ/wikitaster>

What is OERNZ?

Part of WikiEducator, OERNZ is an open project whose aim is to create an online community for teachers in New Zealand that will foster the collaborative development and sharing of digital resources in support of the national curriculum. These resources are then freely available for anyone to use and, under licences which give you the permission, to alter, improve and redistribute.

We need your help!

Want to get involved? Become a WikiAmbassador and join the 18 teachers who have already signed up! We're looking to appoint at least one WikiAmbassador at 150 schools by 30 June. This person will be our point of contact for distributing newsletters and motivating local staff. They'll also promote the OERNZ concept of a community of educators and a platform for free educational resources, collaborative development and national network building. If you have a passion to widen access to quality education through open networks and free content, get in touch.

For more information:

<http://wikieducator.org/OERNZ/Roles>

Or to register your interest:

<http://wikieducator.org/OERNZ/WikiAmbassador>

FREE online training workshops

Starting this month, we're also running five free online training workshops for New Zealand teachers to gain skills in OER development. Each will be spread over 10 working days, with participants only needing to find 15-20 minutes a day for the duration of the workshop to gain the skills needed to start participating in this amazing national project!

For more information:

<http://wikieducator.org/OERNZ/training>

Go on, add to the Glossary

Looking for a definition? Albany Senior High School's Hamish Chalmers has set up 'English Language Techniques Glossary', a project that's

seeking collaboration among teachers and secondary schools students to develop a collaboratively-built glossary containing

concise explanations of English language techniques and definitions. It's a work in progress and Hamish is inviting people to write new entries or refine existing ones, as well as use it as a reference tool. So, go on, why not give it a go!

<http://wikieducator.org/LitGloss>

New word for your dictionary

While we're on the subject, how about:

Wiki-ing, vb, to publish on a wiki

You read it here first!

Now we are 11

A warm WikiEducator welcome to two new schools with OER portals:
Te raki o Otautahi Cluster, Christchurch
Red Beach School, Whangaparaoa



Allowing others to see and share what we're doing

OERNZ is the way of the future believes **Nathan Parker**, Principal at Warrington Primary School in Otago, the first school in New Zealand to implement a free portal page on WikiEducator.

WHAT'S YOUR REACTION TO OERNZ BEING SET UP?

It's a fantastic idea. For too long schools and teachers have been reinventing the wheel with our planning and administration. This will become a repository for teachers and schools to share and collaborate.

WHY SHOULD SCHOOLS GET INVOLVED?

Because New Zealand teachers are renown worldwide for their sharing of ideas and ability to make stuff happen from nothing. This is just a natural progression of what's already being done. Being involved means that teachers get to become part of a supportive community of educators and the opportunity to be able to work with others in a collaborative environment such as this is invaluable. Ultimately, I see there being a pool of resources (much like TKI) that we teachers can access but with OER content its creative commons licensing allows for total freedom in how it's used.

HOW ARE YOU USING WIKIEDUCATOR AND OERNZ?

Warrington School has been using a WikiEducator site for a while now, allowing others to see and share what we've been doing with our planning, etc. Our aim now is to begin placing our school plans onto the OER portal. This way we can link from our own wiki to a more centralised area. This makes it easier for other to access, ie from the OER portal rather than from Warrington School's wiki.

Our WikiEducator site is getting significant interest from parents in our own community, keeping up with what we're doing and also from within New Zealand – a first place for prospective families to go and find out about us. Content from staff is not hindered by the lock and keys that a traditional school website require, so it seems more content can be placed onto the wiki by anyone, from anywhere, at anytime. We hope to have all our documentation, plans – everything we can possibly have – available for scrutiny and totally open to the world.

It could be scary but we acknowledge we're not perfect. Our mistakes and stumbling steps are there for others to see and guide us with. If we're open about what it is we're doing then we're in a cycle of constant review and evolution.

HOW DID YOU FIND THE SET UP PROCESS?

Easy as buttering toast! The best way to learn is to play around or seek out one of the many WikiEducators, who are always keen to help a colleague.

WHAT HAVE YOU LEARNED SO FAR?

Open education is the way of the future. I came to it through the free software movement, using GNU/Linux on our school computers ... and then finding that the same ideas about freedom were also being used by WikiEducator. It was certainly a 'wow' moment. I've learned that wiki skills are transferable and that 'wiki-ing' is more fun with friends.

HOW WOULD YOU LIKE TO SEE OERNZ DEVELOP?

Teachers and educators creating the learning that suits their schools and communities. Imagine if everything was open to scrutiny from our peers, colleagues and communities. Imagine if the Ministry of Education also began working in this manner. It could reverse the current trend of top down ideas being forced upon schools if everything was open to scrutiny first. As a principal, I would love to be able get copies of policies and procedures from other schools that I could then shape and use as I pleased. I'd also like to see other groups taking charge of areas as well, like EnviroSchools.



NATHAN PARKER
WWW.WIKIEDUCATOR.ORG/USER:REKRAPENATOR



WARRINGTON'S PORTAL PAGE
WWW.WIKIEDUCATOR.ORG/WARRINGTON_SCHOOL

Making the media

WikiEducator and OERNZ founder Wayne Mackintosh was recently interviewed in the Weekend Magazine of the *Otago Daily Times*. The article reflected on the achievements of a "revolutionary educational system" – which, since 1 July last year, has been head-quartered at the new International Centre for Open Education at Otago Polytechnic.

"His brainchild, WikiEducator, has become an educational phenomenon taking the world by storm, linking learners with free learning materials through the medium of the internet," wrote reporter Nigel Benson.

<http://tinyurl.com/odtwikieducator>

Creative Commons New Zealand (CCNZ) has profiled on its website the first *OERNZ News* newsletter:

<http://tinyurl.com/ccnznews>

And *INTERFACE* Magazine recently featured the OERNZ initiative.

<http://tinyurl.com/y9c44d6>

Get involved

OERNZ is your initiative. It's a project, planned, co-designed and owned by New Zealand teachers for New Zealand teachers – so we want you to get involved! If you'd like to share material you have created – lesson plans and teaching resources stored as Word documents, PowerPoint presentations, PDFs, etc. – OERNZ is able to provide digitisation.

Three Steps to getting involved:

Step 1: Visit the OERNZ homepage – <http://wikieducator.org/OERNZ>

Step 2: Join the OERNZ on Google Groups – <http://groups.google.com/group/oernz>

Step 3: Sign up for a free online training workshop – <http://wikieducator.org/OERNZ/training>

Do you have any questions?

The 'Train the Trainers' workshop recommended developing a Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) information resource – so we have! If you have any questions, please add them to the list.

http://wikieducator.org/New_Zealand_Schools_OER_Portal/FAQs

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So, please share and print this newsletter and its contents. The more teachers who know about and use OERNZ, the better it will become.

<http://nz.wikieducator.org>