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CHARITIES AND STATE SCHOOLING PRIVATISATIONS IN AOTEAROA NEW ZEALAND

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Introduction

This chapter provides a local vernacular analysis of recent education privatisations in Aotearoa New Zealand. Specifically, it examines contemporary charitable activity in the New Zealand state schooling sector, and its emergent impact on schooling policy trajectories and effects (Ball, 1994). A focal point is the discursive manner in which it is possible for charities to have become softly incorporated within the language, practices and relations of state schooling policy networks, contributing to what Ball and Junemann (2012) conclude is a new form of education governance. Significantly, they argue:

Many of these changes are 'experimental' rather than definitive. These articulate, advocate, test and trial alternative visions of social and educational policy and social services delivery, based on a diverse but related set of principles that include mutualism, voluntarism, social enterprise and for-profit contracting out. Not all of these experiments 'work', not all survive, but one of the clear advantages of the 'partnering state' is that the state can change its partners fairly easily—programmes and initiatives can be ended, contracts reassigned, agencies closed.

(Ball & Junemann, 2012, p. 137)

Following Hogan and Thompson (2017), we refer to these philanthropic activities collectively as schooling privatisations. Equally, we recognise that such privatisations operate within an increasingly pragmatic 'social imaginary' (Taylor, 2003) of how to conceive, develop and enact state schooling policy that affords close and comprehensive interweavings of marketisation, privatisation and commercialisation initiatives (Hogan & Thompson, 2017). And this to the point

when today they are viewed as unremarkable design tools within the public sector policy development and enactment portfolio. These initiatives and tools serve to facilitate the participation of private actors in state schooling. In so doing, our observation is that they accelerate the erasure of whatever traces might still remain of the principled public-private binary that once characterised the social democratic schooling imaginary in New Zealand.

In the first part of the chapter, we identify three key vernacular dimensions of state schooling in New Zealand that have lubricated changing views of the boundaries between ‘public’ and ‘private’ goods. In the second, we discuss ways of looking at policy discourse that make possible and desirable the participation of private charitable actors in state schooling. In the third, we consider how participation is practically enacted through selected examples of New Zealand philanthropic activity. The conclusion considers potential future directions in light of the growth of philanthropic voice, participation and influence in the policy and practice of state schooling.

The vernacular context for schooling privatisations

As in other state schooling systems, there are locally specific enablers of and constraints on educational privatisation and the activities of private actors in New Zealand (Thrupp, Powell, O’Neill, Seppänen, & Chernoff, 2019). Here, we identify how state schooling privatisations may occur from the ground up, as it were, by teasing out three key local schooling policy discourse strands. These may assist in understanding why, since the 1980s, it has been possible for alternative conceptions of what is meant by ‘public’ education to be enunciated, form and be taken up in ways that serve to normalise (in both popular cultural and civil society discourse) the language and practices of private sector and private actor participation in New Zealand state schooling without generating widespread, concerted resistance (Taylor, 2003).

First, relative to its population of five million, New Zealand has a small, somewhat diverse and highly devolved state schooling system by international governance and administration standards. The system has approximately 2,100 state schools. The structural adjustments of state schooling contained in the 1989 Education Act dramatically altered the formal hierarchical relationships between the former Department of Education, regional education boards and individual schools. Each state school now has 30 years’ experience of operating as a separate Crown entity, with its own local community board of trustees comprising a majority of elected parent representatives. Despite plausible international evidence that a professional mediating layer between local schools and system level can have multiple benefits for students (Hargreaves, Shirley, Wangia, Bacon, & D’Angelo, 2018; OECD, 2015), since 1989 the state schooling system has had no such ‘middle layer’, as in a school ‘district’ or ‘local education authority’ system governance approach (Tomorrow’s Schools Independent Taskforce, 2018). In terms of governance, administration and management, schools view

themselves as 'self-managing' within the parameters of their statutory and regulatory requirements.

In addition to creating a popular perception among school trustees and senior leadership that the activities of the Ministry of Education and Education Review Office central agencies are 'removed' from the day-to-day work and practical concerns of the schools (Ministry of Education, 2019), the formal separation of powers between the national Ministry of Education and the schools provides considerable scope for each school to develop its own relationships and service agreements with non-government contractors and organisations from for-profit and not-for-profit sectors. But, as Wylie, Cosslett and Burgon (2016) put it, 'While autonomy appeals to many principals and has many good features, it comes at a price at both the school and system levels' (p. 286). Moreover, devolved governance and management arrangements have undoubtedly contributed to a significant blurring of the public-private distinction within the state schooling sector as state schools are perennially challenged to 'make ends meet'. For the 2016 year, for example, the Office of the Controller and Auditor General (2018, n.p.) reported that in addition to public expenditure on schools – approximately \$7.4 billion – schools collected about \$540 million in locally raised funds (including about \$130 million in donations) as well as about \$140 million from international students. In short, individual schools continue to rely on a significant amount of non-public funds (including funding by families) to make up for a perceived shortfall in state funding. In effect, all schools are required to be entrepreneurial.

Second, contemporary cultural and identity politics position state schooling as structurally unable to meet the needs and aspirations of minoritised groups. Today, this is most visible in the claims by some Māori, the traditional people of the land, to publicly funded self-determination and self-governance of their education provision outside a state schooling system that is viewed, to all intents and purposes, as racist and culturally unresponsive (Berryman & Eley, 2017; Bishop & Glynn, 1999; Milne, 2016).

The 1989 Education Act permitted the Minister of Education to designate a state school as a *kura kaupapa Māori* (KKM), a Māori language-medium school whose values and practices reflect Māori knowledge and customs, the first of which had been established in the mid-1980s. There are now approximately 70 KKM. In 1999, an amendment to the Act identified the peak body *Te Rūnanga Nui o Ngā Kura Kaupapa Māori o Aotearoa* as the guardians of the unique character of KKM, subsequently gazetted in 2008 as *Te Aho Matua*. A smaller number of tribally affiliated *kura*, designated special character schools that do not wish to become KKM, also organise and advocate under their eponymous peak body *Ngā Kūra ā Iwi o Aotearoa* (Ministry of Education, 2018a).

While the Education Act currently defines them as part of the state schooling system, both KKM and *kura ā iwi* seek to advance and maintain their respective identities through a 'parallel pathway' (*Te Rūnanga Nui o Ngā Kura Kaupapa Māori o Aotearoa*, 2018) of self-government and self-determination outside

a Eurocentric and paternalistic schooling policy complex (e.g. Stewart, 2018). Ironically perhaps, from our perspective, this positioning undermines the social democratic progressive sentiment that a public or state schooling system is essential to address the structural disadvantages experienced by Māori and Pacific peoples (O'Neill, Duffy, & Fernando, 2016). Indeed, as Stewart (2018) has noted in her commentary on 30 years of schooling reform in New Zealand:

On the one hand, Māori have taken up the opportunities afforded by policies of 'choice' to establish KKM and other Kaupapa Māori and Māori-medium (including bilingual) initiatives, but on the other hand, statistical inequity for Māori in education remains as large as ever.

(p. 174)

Given that 25% of students in state schooling identified as Māori in 2017, this statistical inequity underscores the lived experience of racism in state schooling, what DiAngelo (2018, p. 22) in the North American context defines as 'the historical accumulation and ongoing use of institutional power and authority to support the prejudice and to systematically enforce discriminatory behaviors with far-reaching effects'.

Third, within the state schooling system, there are also more than 300 state-integrated schools, former private schools, serving around 11% of the school population. These are established through an integration agreement between the Crown and the school's private proprietor. The agreement specifies the 'special character' of the school, which may be faith or curriculum-based. Integrated schools are permitted to charge 'attendance dues' to cover the cost of maintaining the school buildings and facilities because they continue to own their land and buildings at the point of integration. Like state schools, they may also request voluntary donations from parents. The large majority of these are Catholic (Tomorrow's Schools Independent Taskforce, 2018). In addition, there are also approximately 90 private schools serving around 5% of the school population.

New Zealand state schools are resourced by government through three principal funding streams: an operational grant paid in cash to the school; a provision for property maintenance; and a staffing entitlement based on numbers and school type. State integrated schools receive publicly funded operational grants and staffing entitlements, but not property maintenance funding. Private schools receive an annual per student subsidy and a small number of other curriculum-related grants from government, together with ongoing funding for students identified as having very high additional learning support needs.

To summarise, the monolithic label 'state schooling' in the New Zealand vernacular context masks the more fractured reality that the sector includes significant interest groups whose affiliation to a public good system is equivocal at best. Moreover, the structural vehicle of the school as an autonomous Crown entity, in combination with central government agencies that have limited powers of direction or intervention in school governance and management, further

contribute to the undermining of what is now a fragile normative public-private schooling binary. Finally, the configuration of state schooling finance as a combination of central government subsidy and locally raised funds normalises the desirability of school governors and educational leaders to participate as entrepreneurial private market actors when making decisions about revenue generation and services provision.

In the next part of the chapter, we consider how in recent years charitable actors have become more active in schooling policy networks, and more visible and influential at various stages of the schooling policy cycle.

Why charity?

Charitable activity in the New Zealand state schooling sector takes multiple forms, from single purpose entities to corporate conglomerates that aim to materially shape public policy. Activities range from traditional collecting and giving of money, knowledge or time to venture philanthropy and to for-profit services delivery that enables the wholly owned trading arms of charities to accrue millions of dollars in equity (O'Neill, Duffy, & Fernando, 2016). Educational charities are commonly perceived as a form of altruistic 'giving', not self-interested 'taking', and therefore tend not to attract the opprobrium or controversy that often accompanies other forms of educational privatisation. Why might this be so? And, is the common perception an accurate one?

In Anglophone countries, education has long been viewed as one of the principal objects of charitable giving (Poitier, 2013). As a result, charities enjoy privileged legal, taxation, reputational and social network benefits. In return, charities are required to demonstrate that they act in the public good and that they are 'not-for-profit'. Accordingly, charitable activity and state schooling may plausibly be argued to have something of a symbiotic relationship, where education for the public good can only be achieved by the two parties working together. For example, today most of the approximately 2,500 self-managing schools in New Zealand attempt to supplement their central government grants through various combinations of local fund-raising, which include recommended per student annual donations by families, philanthropic grant applications, acceptance of curriculum resource and service provision from private organisations of various kinds (e.g. Powell, 2020) and, particularly in the case of the more socio-economically advantaged secondary schools, recruitment of international full-fee paying students.

Since the watershed reforms of state educational administration in the early childhood, schooling and tertiary sectors were enacted in 1989, governments of all political persuasions have withdrawn from the post-Great Depression and World War II social democratic progressive sentiment that saw fully funded, publicly provided universal state schooling as an integral feature of a collective nation, society and community building. In New Zealand, both 'edu-businesses' and educational charities have emerged to fill some of the gaps in universalist

provision created by: (i) the gradual withdrawal of the state from its obligation to ensure that state schooling remains free at the point of use; and (ii) the contracting out of public services formerly provided through government entities (O'Neill, 2011). As a consequence, private sector actors engaged in charitable activity are generally viewed positively (Powell, 2020). They typically focus on what are portrayed as areas of public policy shortcomings of approach or shortfalls in funding. As a result, when charitable actors claim to have provided 'proof of concept' for their proposed solution, they may acquire significant voice and influence in state schooling policy development and services provision.

Philanthrocapitalism

The development of philanthrocapitalism in recent years also marks the increasing encroachment of business into the provision of public goods (Bloom & Rhodes, 2018, p. 201). The upsurge in newer forms of highly visible, cause or project-specific philanthropic activity patronised by superwealthy individuals or their foundations, along the North American model, have been described as a 'golden age' and an emerging 'cultural zeitgeist' (Jenkins, 2011, p. 11). Like Bloom and Rhodes, Jenkins associates philanthrocapitalism with the migration of business world views, values, relationships and practices to the sphere of traditional public services provision. This, he argues, presents a threat to democracy 'as private foundations take on public issues in their role as active participants in civil society governance, the way in which they conduct their activities holds the potential to advance or erode fundamental public values' (p. 63). Jenkins draws together a number of concerned scholarly sources to make the point that representative democracy is threatened when: (i) rich elites are seen to be making financial investment decisions that materially shape the polity and the public policy processes; (ii) the ability of the non-profit sector to model practices of self-government and mediate between government and business is constrained; and (iii) philanthropists treat grant-seeking charities as 'subcontractors' rather than as self-governing collectives of staff, trustees, volunteers, members and communities served by the charity, all engaged in meaningful civic participation and community development on their own terms. Bloom and Rhodes (2018) go further, arguing that:

Philanthrocapitalism is about much more than the simple act of generosity it portrays itself as, instead involving the social inculcation of neoliberal values Charitable giving is translated into a business model that employs market-based solutions characterized by efficiency and quantified costs/benefits.

(p. 192)

So when we referred earlier to the relationship between private charity and public or state schooling as 'symbiotic', we were alluding to precisely this dilemma

of contemporary philanthropy – that while it may well be portrayed by private donors as generous and altruistic, there is increasingly an expectation that these donors may specify their desired public outcomes. As Ball (2012) writes, ‘new philanthropists’ (p. 66) in education expect ‘clear and measurable impacts and outcomes from their “investments” of time and money’ (p. 70). In this regard, symbiotic relationships between private charities and state schooling may indeed be characterised by mutualism (where both benefit each other), but also by commensalism (one benefits and the other neither benefits nor is harmed), amensalism (one is harmed, the other is unaffected) or parasitism (one benefits, the other is harmed). These potential downsides are rarely canvassed in polity, professional or civic discourse. Yet, in considering the participation of charitable actors in state schooling, a key issue is, on the one hand, how relationships are portrayed, reimagined and promoted; and on the other hand, their material effects.

Blurring boundaries and blinding privatisation

In New Zealand, like many other societies, the political, social, cultural and economic agendas for schooling cannot be achieved by a single sector or institution alone. As Rose (2000, p. 323) argued, modern government can only be achieved ‘through the actions of a whole range of other authorities, and through complex technologies, if they are to be able to intervene upon the conduct of persons’. Schooling in New Zealand is a good example of this ‘multiple-authority’ approach to government, where a myriad of players (e.g. charities, corporations, venture philanthropists, industry groups, academics and government departments) have converged to ‘fix’ elements of the schooling system and the people within it.

One way that various players (including schools) benefit from their relationships is through the increasingly ‘blurred boundaries’ (Ball, 2007) between the public, private, third sector (i.e. non-profit) and fourth sector (i.e. ‘for benefit’, such as social enterprises, corporate social responsibility, venture philanthropy) organisations. By blending historical demarcations between for-profit, ‘non-profit’ and public, sector organisations and creating new types of relationships between an array of educational actors, the ‘publicness of public services’ is diminished (Haque, 2001, p. 65). Ball (2007, p. 9) refers to this as ‘destatalisation’, in which public/private borders are redrawn and the relationships between organisations on either side of the border are rearticulated. As Ball (2012, p. 89) also writes, when these traditional boundaries between public and private organisations are not just blurred, but dissolved, it makes it incredibly difficult to know ‘what not-for-profit means’. The diminished publicness of public education is further accentuated as the recipients of education become restricted, the nature of the role of education (and its provision) becomes narrower and weaker, public accountability is lessened and public trust in education becomes undermined (Haque, 2001). The redrawing of boundaries, rearticulation of relationships and changing nature of the roles of education and education actors are clearly evident

in the New Zealand education context. They are achieved through the employment of a range of strategies that continue to privatise education policy and decision-making, while at the same time also helping ‘new philanthropists’ meet their diverse interests and ambitions.

The ‘philanthropic’ and ‘charitable’ aims of various authorities act in two ways. The first is that the dual notions of philanthropy and charity act in combination as a ‘congealing agent’ (Leahy, 2012), where organisations are brought together through their mutual ‘will to give’ (Powell, 2019) – or at least be seen to give. This act of giving – through donating funds, providing personnel, offering in-kind services, advising on governance – helps to shape a gamut of education policies, programmes and practices. The second, and interrelated, way that ‘giving’ privatises education in New Zealand is that discourses of philanthropy and charity reassemble and at times reinvent the various authorities – particularly those representing for-profit actors – so that they are seen to be altruistic rather than self-interested. In short, the strength of the idea of selfless *giving* enables relationships to be made, boundaries to be softened and schooling to be reformed.

Bringing together these numerous, disparate organisations and actors – and maintaining the connections between them – is difficult. One strategy that enables various parties to converge and congeal is by joining together the interests of different sectors, organisations within and across these sectors and individual actors. Li (2007, p. 265) describes this as a practice of *forging alignments*, where the ambitions of different players are linked together, including ‘both those who aspire to govern conduct and those whose conduct is to be conducted’. In other words, privatisation is not necessarily achieved through top-down or oppressive forces by wealthy companies and venture philanthropists onto ‘poor’ unsuspecting education systems and educators. For multiple parties to align, they must first convince each other ‘that their interests are consonant, that each can solve their difficulties or achieve their ends by joining forces or working along the same lines’ (Miller & Rose, 2008, p. 34). In the case of schooling, there are a number of key components to ‘shared interests’ that make it possible for alignments to be forged between institutions with different, sometimes conflicting, aims: a shared interest based on an ‘urgent need’ to fix a problem (e.g. professional learning, Initial Teacher Education, achievement of Māori); a shared interest in and agreement on who requires governing (e.g. teachers, principals, students); and a shared interest in solving the problem.

Partnerships are a critical technology to facilitate the privatisation, marketisation and commercialisation of state schooling in New Zealand. Indeed, in current times there has been an explosion of multi-sector partnerships, a phenomenon described by Huxham and Vangen (2000, p. 303) as ‘partnershipitis’, a phenomenon not confined to education, but evident in other public policy spaces (e.g. public health; see King, 2006). Education organisations in New Zealand, especially those that are registered charities, are made viable and visible by partnering with a messy mix of organisations across multiple sectors. For instance, Ako Mātātupu Teach First NZ (hereinafter Teach First NZ), a voluntary member of

the Teach For All global network and a registered charity in New Zealand since 2011, promotes on its website:

Since Ako Mātātupu's inception, we have been supported by leading organisations spanning a range of fields. We believe our vision can only be achieved by working together with others, and the partnerships we have formed represent the collaborative nature of our work.

(Teach First NZ, 2020a)

The charity is supported by a range of partners. The Ministry of Education and The Mind Lab are their 'delivery partners', they partner with low socio-economic secondary schools, are funded by venture philanthropists (e.g. Foundation North, NEXT Foundation) and receive support from both 'strategic partners' (e.g. Education Hub, Teach For All) and the curiously labelled 'non-profit partners' (and multinational corporations): Deloitte, KPMG and Fuji Xerox (see Teach First NZ, 2020a). The philanthropic dimension of these partnerships is critical to the creation and maintenance of the Teach First NZ charity, as explained by CEO Jay Allnutt in a promotional video for NEXT Foundation:

As an independent charitable trust Ako Mātātupu: Teach First NZ is able to operate in ways that other players in the sector can't and philanthropy is a major part of that because philanthropy gives us the ability to invest in areas that are important to our model Philanthropy is able to play a role and support us in a way that government can't because government is limited in the funding it can offer and needs to be much tighter in the outcomes they're seeking.

(NEXT Foundation, 2019)

These symbiotic relationships tend to be promoted as, at the least, being mutually beneficial. In the case of Ako Mātātupu Teach First NZ, various partners have converged on a shared interest in recruiting, placing and training teachers to work in 'disadvantaged' secondary schools, with the ultimate goal to 'to disrupt the inequities which create inequalities in our education system' (NEXT Foundation, 2019). As the brochure for potential donors to Teach First NZ states:

New Zealand has a high quality, but low equity education system ... This issue is not something we can leave solely to the government or schools. We all need to be engaged to ensure New Zealand has an education system that enables every child to achieve their full potential.

(Teach First NZ, n.d., p. 2)

Partners also promote this as the key benefit from their investment. In the marketing brochure to recruit funders, there is the following testimonial from Deborah Lucas, Senior Manager for Corporate Responsibility at Deloitte in New

Zealand, Corporate Responsibility: ‘We have supported Teach First NZ from their early stages and are proud to partner with an organisation which has the potential to deliver sustainable and systemic long-term change to education in New Zealand’ (Teach First NZ, n.d., p. 6). Similarly, Frances Valentine, founder of The Mind Lab, states:

We fundamentally believe in fostering the career paths of inspirational teachers and leaders to the benefit of our rangatahi [young people]. We’re thrilled to partner with Ako Mātātupu: Teach First NZ to deliver this Master’s programme and tackle educational inequality across New Zealand.

(Teach First NZ, 2020b)

Although there is significant marketing from Teach First NZ and their partners of the impact of philanthropy and charity on students, teachers, indeed the entire education system in New Zealand, there appears to be reluctance from private actors, policymakers, researchers and charitable ‘givers’ to openly consider the possible commensal (where one benefits, while others are left unscathed) or even parasitic outcomes. For instance, there is contradictory evidence that after almost a decade of recruiting, placing and training ‘high caliber leaders who will drive systemic change in the education sector’ (Teach First NZ, n.d., p. 6), Teach First NZ have actually disrupted ‘the inequities which create inequalities in our education system’ (NEXT Foundation, 2019). In short, although Teach First NZ and its partners may benefit from this programme (e.g. the sustainability of the Teach First NZ or the positive impact for Deloitte to be seen as socially responsible), the education system itself may be left unscathed.

Importantly though, the idea that the philanthropic privatisation of education may even do ‘harm’ is for the most part not taken seriously. Part of this problem, we argue, is a type of ‘blindness’ – both intentional and unintentional – to the ‘dangers’ of philanthropy, charity and partnerships. This happens through a number of means. One is that within contemporary partnerships in New Zealand, the sheer number of partners, either in a single initiative (such as Teach First NZ, which is supported by 21 other organisations) or across education programmes in general, results in a kind of cognitive overload where it is now difficult to ‘see’ potentially problematic relationships. This includes amensalist and parasitic relationships between two or more organisations – the multiple relationships in and across an array of initiatives that constitute state schooling as a whole.

Another critical aspect of privatisation blindness is the somewhat confusing and convoluted assemblage of actors from different sectors who tend to claim that they do not ‘profit’ from these relationships. For those people working at the coalface in schools, ‘it is becoming almost impossible ... to tell where business ends and charity begins’ (Powell, 2019, p. 208). Notions of philanthropy, charity and corporate social responsibility help to obscure and ameliorate a number of ethical concerns that teachers and principals (and students) may have about a particular company, industry or philanthropic organisation, especially when

particular programmes or resources are 'gifted' to schools and when the educational value (to teachers, principals or students) is perceived to be unquestionably and inherently 'good'. Indeed, when a charity is understood as the main organisation involved in the delivery of an education service (whether it be a teaching resource, providing food to children, Initial Teacher Education, professional development), discourses of gifting, charity and philanthropy help to resolve any potential tensions by emphasising (and encouraging decision-makers to focus on) the benefits rather than any possible harms.

One striking example of this in New Zealand is the involvement of the gambling industry through government-regulated 'pokie trusts' (also known as gaming trusts, gambling trusts, gaming machine societies). Pokie trusts are, in a strictly legal sense, not-for-profit organisations and function through owning and operating gaming machines, and then making grants to non-profit community organisations of their choosing (including education charities and schools) (Department of Internal Affairs, 2014a). Pokie trusts have a similar status to that of a charitable trust (as defined by the Charitable Trusts Act 1957), but have a legislated and regulated obligation to pay at least 40% of gross proceeds back to 'the community' (see Department of Internal Affairs, 2016; Problem Gambling Foundation, 2014). Under Section 4 of the Gambling Act 2003, trusts must only raise funds for authorised purposes, including 'charitable purposes' and 'non-commercial purposes that are beneficial to the whole or a section of the community' (Department of Internal Affairs, 2014b, para. 2). Every year, pokie trusts deliver hundreds of millions of dollars of grants to thousands of community, education and charity organisations. For instance, one pokie trust – The Lion Foundation (2019) – reported they 'distributed more than \$38 million to community-based organisations' (p. 2) in just one year, and that since its creation in 1985 the foundation has 'built up a proud record of fund-raising for the community and to date we have raised over \$920 million to help people to do good things' (p. 4).

The charitable gifts made available by pokie trusts act as a key technology for organisations to achieve their governmental ambitions, especially those wanting to 'get into schools'. Numerous education charities are themselves made financially viable through pokie funding: Life Education Trust (New Zealand's largest health education provider to primary schools) is funded by Pub Charity, The Lion Foundation and The Southern Trust (Life Education, 2019); Garden to Table (a programme that teaches children in schools about gardening and food) has gained 'generous financial support' from The Lion Foundation, Pub Charity, Dunedin Casinos Charitable Trust and The Southern Trust (Garden to Table Trust, 2019); and KidsCan Charitable Trust (which provides food, shoes, raincoats and health products to children in 740 low socio-economic schools) was gifted \$717,274 in 2018 by philanthropic and gaming trusts, including its 'major partner' Trillian Trust (KidsCan, 2019).

Even though some research has illustrated how the pokie industry and their gaming machines are perceived by some children and adults as deeply harmful, the funding of charities (that then deliver a variety of programmes to and resources in

schools) is viewed as harmless (see Powell, 2020). This is blindness to a significant issue, one that could realistically result in schools refusing to use pokie-tainted money by forging alignments between the educational interests of schools and those of the main education organisation. Discourses of charity, in combination with assumptions about the promised or perceived educational benefits, work to ‘trump’ concerns about a particular organisation and obscure any detrimental effects. Ultimately, these philanthropic practices work by acting as a buffer, a barrier between the interests of pokie trusts (charitable or otherwise) and the potential danger they may pose for children, their families or indeed, the schooling system.

Although the involvement of pokie trusts in New Zealand may point to more obvious tensions between philanthropy (for private interests) and education (as a public good), we argue that charity in general enables practices of anti-politics (Li, 2007) to work, where political questions about state schooling are re-posed ‘as matters of technique; closing down debate about how and what to govern and the distributive effects of particular arrangements by reference to expertise’ (p. 265). However, as O’Neill (2017) argues, philanthropic investments in schooling are able to:

secure our attention, admiration and approval in the short term, but do nothing to address the long-term structural educational, economic and social inequalities that only a progressive, integrated, multi-agency, system-wide approach to state schooling can hope to mediate. Nor can these new private sector solutions compensate for chronic underfunding of state schools by government.

(p. 8)

This is perhaps one of the most significant dangers of privatisation through philanthropy and charity. These forms of funding promote and enable a short-term, *ad hoc* approach to ‘solving’ a variety of education problems, despite an apparent lack of evidence that these approaches work or do no harm. By forging alignments, sharing interests and making the enactment of state schooling funding anti-political, the official aims of education philanthropists and charities (i.e. improved education outcomes) rise to the forefront of our contemporary schooling imaginary. At the same time, the ways these organisations may profit – financially, politically and publicly – is relegated to the realms of insignificance. As one teacher remarked in previous research about the impact of corporations and charities on schools, when asked about the funding of an education programme in schools, she stated: ‘I don’t care. It’s about the education of the children that counts’ (Powell, 2019, p. 209). The privatisation of education via philanthropy and charity remains mostly, problematically, soft and hidden.

Conclusion

Ball (2009) reports a shift in international state schooling policy discourse – language, practices, relations – from ‘government’ to ‘governance’ and the replacement of ‘hierarchy’ with ‘heterarchy’. A feature of these more fluid,

distributed and networked contemporary governance forms is the 'partnering state' that tactically enables and encourages private sector participation in state work. Within these new policy communities, partnership forms are increasingly opportunistic, improvisational and experimental as governments seek to find: (i) alternative funding sources to replace diminishing public taxation revenue; and (ii) alternative policy solutions in order to satisfy ever increasing general civil society expectations and special interest group demands for what state schooling shall deliver. A key feature of the New Zealand vernacular context, which has yet to be meaningfully researched, is that the government now also actively seeks to meet its quasi-constitutional obligations to Māori by partnering with private sector regional tribal *rūnanga* (governance bodies) and Urban Māori Authorities in order to further their social and economic self-determination (O'Neill, Duffy, & Fernando, 2016). In this particular regard, it might plausibly be posited that what is occurring represents an enhanced rather than a diminished publicness.

Charities and philanthropic activity, we have argued, are now integral to this refashioning of state schooling governance. In New Zealand, the antecedents of this shift may be seen in the structural adjustments of the late 1980s, which were based on competing ideologies of market liberalism and new public management (Court & O'Neill, 2011). Burgeoning pressures on school trustees and principals to raise local revenue through parental donations, contestable grant applications and recruitment of international full-fee paying students have served to reshape the social democratic schooling imaginary through the weighting of school governance towards energetic financial entrepreneurship together with a primary focus on careful curation of the school's image, reputation and relative positioning within its local schooling marketplace.

Charities and philanthropic actors have now emerged as important contributors to this economised state schooling discourse at both central and local levels. Most recently, the New Zealand Ministry of Education and the Labour coalition government have initiated formal mutual interest partnership meetings with the local venture philanthropy sector (e.g. Ministry of Education, 2018b). This is a significant policy discourse moment for charities in New Zealand, for it suggests that the role of the philanthropic sector may be shifting rapidly from providing 'proof of concept' schooling solutions to helping shape state schooling policy and funding priorities.

In the contemporary New Zealand vernacular state schooling governance modality, significant fractions of both faith and ethnocultural communities see themselves as only loosely and pragmatically affiliated to the social democratic state schooling project, while 30 years of entrepreneurial self-management at the individual school level have enabled the discursive positioning of the state education polity as one that is incapable of supporting and funding the quality of schooling services that local parent consumer bodies demand. In such a complex governance modality, the activities of charity and philanthropy may be interpreted as key elements of either a diminished or an enhanced publicness, or indeed of both simultaneously.

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