

Kōrero for Change

Advancing Accessibility in NZ

Education

**Wednesday 14 August 24
9am-12pm | Via Zoom**



Introduction

Welcome to **Kōrero for Change | Education**, a webinar hosted by Access Matters Aotearoa Trust, with support from Whaikaha - Ministry of Disabled People and funding from J R McKenzie Trust.

In this impactful event, we gather to explore vital discussions surrounding the role of the education system in fostering inclusion and belonging for people with disabilities, as well as strategies for ensuring accessibility for all.

We are privileged to hear from a diverse range of panellists, speakers, moderators, and our Master of Ceremonies, each offering their unique perspectives. Together, our goal is to facilitate dialogue, address ableism, ignite action, and drive positive change in Aotearoa New Zealand's education system.



Programme

9 am	Introduction to 'Kōrero for Change' and Housekeeping Amy Hogan <i>Access Matters Aotearoa Co-Chair</i>
9.05 am	What is ableism? Examples of ableism in the education system Kylie Elsbury-Dawson <i>Regional Disabled Leadership Advisor for CCS Disability Action Northern Region</i>
9.11 am	International Education Standards, Example: Australia's Disability Standards for Education 2005 Nick Ruane <i>Manager Stakeholder Relations at Workbridge</i>
9.17 am	What is the role of the Education System in the process of inclusion and belonging of people with disabilities and access needs? Hon Jan Tinetti <i>Member of the Education and Workforce Select Committee, Labour Party Spokesman for Education</i>
9:23 am	A first-hand account of mainstream education Shane McInroe – <i>Leadership Team Member for Enabling Good Lives</i>
9:30 am	PANEL ONE + Q&A The Deciders

- **John Bangma** | *New Zealand Principals Federation Executive*
- **Dr Claire Achmad** | *Te Kaikōmihana Matua - Chief Children's Commissioner, Mana Mokopuna, Children & Young People's Commission*
- **Mark Potter** | *National President of NZEI Te Riu Roa*

MEDIATOR: **Zandra Vaccarino** | *National Executive Officer for New Zealand Down Syndrome Association*



10:02 am

PANEL TWO + Q&A | The Thinkers

- **Dr Vijaya Dharan** | Associate Professor and Director of Academic Programmes at the Institute of Education at Te Kunenga ki Pūrehuroa Massey University
- **Dr Jude MacArthur** | Senior Lecturer, School of Critical Studies at Waipapa Taumata Rau University of Auckland
- **Missy Morton** | Professor of Disability Studies and Inclusive Education at Waipapa Taumata Rau University of Auckland
- **Dr Gill Rutherford** | Affiliate Senior Lecturer, Education and Disability Studies at Ōtākou Whakaihū Waka University of Otago

MEDIATOR: Sean Prenter | New Zealand National Disabled Students Association Co-President

10:38 am

BREAK TIME – please arrive back at 10.48am

10:50 am

PANEL THREE + Q&A | The Creators

- **Frian Wadia MNZM** | Early Intervention Specialist with Autism New Zealand
- **Jeremy Drummond ONZM** | Executive Officer, SPELD NZ
- **Cathy Pole** | Resource Teacher of Learning and Behaviour Manager for North Shore Cluster 4 RTL B
- **Rachel Grant** | Resource Teacher of Learning and Behaviour Manager for Tuawhītu o Akarana Cluster 7 RTL B

MEDIATOR: Jaden Movold | Student at Waipapa Taumata Rau University of Auckland, iLead Committee Member and Athlete

11:27 am

PANEL FOUR + Q&A | The Doers

- **Ann Smaill** | Speech Language Therapist, Former CEO of TalkLink Trust
- **Maqymseahē Ninces** | TalkLink Trust Board Member and AAC User
- **Liz Stenning** | Service Manager Early Supports at CCS Disability Action

MEDIATOR: Heather Lear QSM | Director of Inclusive Education Action Group (IEAG), and Education Advocate at IHC NZ

11:57 am

Closing Remarks | **Amy Hogan**

12 pm

Webinar Ends

Biographies

Master of Ceremonies

Amy Hogan | *Access Matters Aotearoa Co-chair*

Amy, the Co-Chair of Access Matters Aotearoa Trust, has 20 years of experience implementing and overseeing national disability research projects. Her work as a researcher, analyst, writer, and advocate focuses on health and social justice. Amy is now seeking to bring her unique combination of personal and professional experience to wider international forums.

Living with cerebral palsy (CP), Amy has incorporated her day-to-day experiences into her work at the Cerebral Palsy Society of New Zealand over the past decade. She has developed and implemented research, policy advocacy, system change, and advocacy initiatives there. Amy holds a Master's degree (MSc First Class Honours in Psychology) and her thesis analyses the language construction of purported treatments and cures. She also has extensive experience as a lecturer, panellist, keynote speaker, and provider of subject-matter expertise, having presented to government ministers, senior international academics, policy advisers, community groups, students, and multidisciplinary professional groups.



Kylie Elsbury-Dawson | *Regional Disabled Leadership Advisor for CCS Disability Action Northern Region*

Kylie is the Regional Disabled Leadership Advisor for CCS Disability Action Northern Region; a role that she describes as ensuring disabled people are included in society and have their Rights upheld. She has a passion for teaching about ableism and unconscious bias, emphasising exploring how societal language and actions can impact individuals and the wider community. Before starting work in the Disability sector 14 years ago, Kylie was a tertiary student completing a Bachelor of Social Practice and a Postgraduate Diploma in Disability Studies.

While Kylie's qualifications support her work, her passion comes from her lived experience as a disabled woman, acquiring hidden impairments 24 years ago. When Kylie is not working, she spends time with her husband and two children.

Nick Ruane | *Manager Stakeholder Relations, Workbridge*

Nick is a teacher and disability rights activist. He was recently appointed Chair of the Education for All Coalition. Nick has been working to break down the structural barriers and systemic ableism. He is a former Disabled People's Organisation (DPO) leader and, has worked for New Zealand's most prominent disabled MP. Currently, he works in a senior leadership role at Workbridge.





Hon Jan Tinetti | *Member of the Education and Workforce Select Committee, Labour Party Spokesman for Education*

Jan is a list Member of Parliament based in Tauranga. She was born in Hokitika and grew up rurally on the outskirts of Christchurch. Jan attended Villa Maria College before graduating from Christchurch College of Education with a Diploma in Teaching (Primary) and the University of Canterbury with a Bachelor of Education. In 2016 she graduated from the University of Canterbury with a Master's in Education with First Class Honours.

Jan pursued a career in primary school teaching which saw her working in schools in Invercargill and Greymouth before embarking on a career as a school principal. Over her 20 years as a primary school principal, she led across four schools across Southland and Tauranga.

Jan's last position as principal before entering politics was Merivale School, in one of Tauranga's most financially disadvantaged communities. Throughout her career in education, she has fiercely advocated at a national level for equal educational opportunities. After seeing families struggling in her local community, she has campaigned for them to access everything they need to thrive.

Jan's entry into politics stemmed from her belief that the Government has a role to play in ensuring all New Zealanders have access to the services they need to help them to be the best they can be.

Shane McInroe | *National Leadership Team Member for Enabling Good Lives*

Shane McInroe is a dedicated advocate for the rights of disabled people and is deeply committed to seeing the Enabling Good Lives (EGL) principles put into practice. As a member of the National Leadership Team for Enabling Good Lives, Shane brings his wealth of experience and passion to the forefront of disability advocacy. His educational journey at Greymouth High, where he studied one NCEA subject, contrasted with his time at Mairehau High School in Christchurch, where he completed NCEA levels one and two.

Shane's commitment to inclusive education is evident through his past role on the governing committee of the Inclusive Education Action Group. In 2015, he was invited to represent People First on Christchurch's EGL Local Advisory Group, where he gained a deep understanding of EGL principles. Shane is optimistic that health, disability, and education systems will be greatly improved through a more collaborative approach.

Shane has served as the President of the People First Christchurch Local Group and the People First Midsouth Region. He was a member of the People First New Zealand Inc. (PFNZ) National Committee, the City Council's Disability Advisory Group. In early 2018, Shane was invited to represent people with learning disabilities on the National Enabling Good Lives Leadership Group, a role he finds immensely fulfilling.



John Bangma | *Executive, New Zealand Principals Federation NZPF*

John has the privilege and pleasure of being the tumuaki/principal of Mairehau Primary School in Christchurch, a full primary school with 380 children from 34 nationalities and a total staff of 83. He is in his 30th year of principalship. Mairehau Primary School has been the lead school for Te Paeroa: Resource Teachers Learning and Behaviour cluster for 12 years, and John serves as the chair of the RTLB Lead School Principals Executive, working with the Ministry of Education to support the RTLB in their work. John is also on the executive boards of the New Zealand Principals Federation and the Canterbury Primary Principals Association. As a former ESOL pupil, his passion is for ensuring success for all in education.





Dr Claire Achmad | *Chief Children's Commissioner, Mana Mokopuna Children and Young People's Commission*

Dr Claire Achmad is a recognised advocate for children in Aotearoa New Zealand and internationally, having worked in a wide range of areas relating to children's rights, including from legal, policy, and practice perspectives. Before becoming Chief Children's Commissioner, she served as Chief Executive Officer of Social Service Providers Te Pai Ora o Aotearoa, and in that role championed the aspirations and outcomes of children, rangatahi, and whanāu and community-based social service providers, strongly grounded in a focus on equity.

Claire holds a doctorate in international children's rights law from Leiden University, the Netherlands, and has published on a range of children's rights issues. She also holds degrees in Arts and Law from the University of Auckland and is a University of Auckland 40 Under 40 Honoree. Previously, Claire worked for children's NGOs and international organisations in Aotearoa, Australia and Europe, held a senior role within Te Kāhui Tika Tangata the New Zealand Human Rights Commission, and practised as in-house legal counsel in the New Zealand government. She was admitted as a barrister and solicitor of the High Court of New Zealand in 2007.

Mark Potter | *National President of NZEI Te Riu Roa*

Mark has over thirty years of experience as a principal in rural to urban schools, teaching principal positions and walking principal positions.

He is a passionate advocate for social justice for all children to have their right to education met, especially those with disabilities. As a member of the Education for All Forum, he works to advocate for access to schools for all children. This forum brings together disability organisations with professional bodies such as NZEI, to lobby the Ministry of Education Te Tāhuhu o te Mātauranga for the basic human right to an education that is not available to all children in Aotearoa New Zealand. Fundamental to the aims of the forum is that the people who make the most difference for children must be properly resourced.

Mark is in his second year as National President of NZEI Te Riu Roa. This professional organisation supports all its members in achieving equity for all people working in the education sector. This workforce of early childhood teachers, support staff, teachers and principals are a world-leading innovative education system. Before taking this role, Mark served as a National Executive member for three terms, the most recent as Vice-President of NZEI TRR. Previously he has been the Principals' Representative and a general representative. His work in NZEI has included providing advice to schools considering forming or joining a learning community. He also represents NZEI EI on a variety of work groups with the Ministry of Education Te Tāhuhu o te Mātauranga. Mark has presented at conferences in Inclusive Education, school leadership and positive development and employment of support staff. These included a webinar for UNESCO and conferences with international sister unions. He has also had the opportunity to present overseas on community-led development.

Before being seconded to the role of Te Manukura o NZEI Te Riu Roa, Mark was the Principal of Berhampore School in Wellington for 25 years. In addition to his work with his school and NZEI, he is the Co-chairperson of Wellington City Strengthening Families LMG and a trustee on the Autism Intervention Trust.

Mark is married to Tess Casey, and they have three grown up sons.





Dr Gill Rutherford | *Affiliate Senior Lecturer,
Education and Disability Studies at Ōtākou Whakaihū
Waka University of Otago*

Dr Gill Rutherford has worked in the disability and education sectors for approximately 45 years and is still learning. She has had the privilege of learning from and with many disabled children and adults in her roles as a support worker, high school teacher, and teacher educator at the University of Otago. She is particularly interested in disabled students' experiences of school, their right to inclusive and equitable schooling, the role of teacher aides, and inclusive teacher education.

In the latter, Gill has focused her teaching and research on student teachers' thinking positively and respectfully about disability within a human rights framework, as well as practical ways in which future teachers can be responsive to the strengths, interests, and support characteristics of all students. The urgent need to address educational inequities motivates her mahi.

Dr Jude MacArthur | *Senior Lecturer, School of Critical
Studies at Waipapa Taumata Rau University of Auckland*

Jude is a Senior Lecturer in the School of Critical Studies in Education at the University of Auckland. Her background is in primary teaching, teacher education, and disability research. She has a particular interest in the educational experiences of disabled children and young people and in the ways that early childhood centres and schools can develop as inclusive learning communities where every child and young person is valued, belongs, and learns well.



Dr Vijaya Dharan | *Associate Professor and
Director of Academic Programmes at the Institute
of Education, Massey University*



Dr. Vijaya Dharan is an Associate Professor and Director of Academic Programmes at the Institute of Education, Massey University. She is a registered psychologist and a registered teacher. She contributes to the Master's in Educational and Developmental Psychology Programme and supervises doctoral and master's students. Her research interests are in inclusive education and equity, particularly around autism. Prior to becoming an academic, she worked for 15 years in specialist education and learning support working in a range of educational settings, with kaiako, whānau, tamariki, and rangatahi.

She has held senior advisory positions in the Ministry of Education Group Special Education (current Learning Support). She is a member of the Autism Living Guideline Group (LGG). She is a strong advocate for home-school collaboration, and the rights of all children to be educated in their community alongside their peers.



Missy Morton | *Professor of Disability Studies and Inclusive Education at Waipapa Taumata Rau University of Auckland*

Missy Morton is a Professor of Disability Studies and Inclusive Education at the University of Auckland. Her research and teaching focus on building cultures of learning and belonging for all students and their families. Her students are new and experienced educators keen to learn about being more inclusive. Missy has led or worked on several Ministry of Education Te Tāhuhu o te Mātauranga projects focused on supporting teachers and schools to build their confidence and competence in ensuring all disabled children and young people are welcomed, are learning and achieving, and have a real sense of belonging.

She has also been a member of the Ministry of Education Highest Needs Review Advisory Group, and the Education Review Office Advisory Group 'Thriving at School.' Missy has been a member of the Royal Society Expert Panel on Te Tapeke Fair Futures. A recent project has looked at Residential Special Schools.

Jeremy Drummond ONZM | *Executive Officer for SPELD New Zealand*

Jeremy Drummond has been the Executive Officer for SPELD New Zealand since 2012. SPELD NZ is a leading nationwide provider of support for those who struggle with dyslexia and other specific learning disabilities (SLD). Initially, Jeremy practiced law but after having children, she had a long involvement within the education sector in a voluntary capacity. She took on governance roles, supporting the Auckland Kindergarten Association for nearly two decades, including nine years as board chair. Jeremy also served on the board of its subsidiary, Kindergarten New Zealand, for 16 years, during which time she was its president and vice president. She was also involved with her son's school board of trustees and a volunteer with SPELD Auckland Inc for about 14 years. Jeremy was appointed Officer of the New Zealand Order of Merit in the 2018 New Year's Honours.



Panelists



Rachel Grant | *Resource Teacher of Learning and Behaviour Manager for Tuawhitu o Akarana Cluster 7 RTLB*

Rachel Grant is a Resource Teacher of Learning and Behaviour and the Manager of Tuawhitu o Akarana | RTLB Cluster 7. She leads a team of 40 RTLB who support 66 schools and 3 Alternative Education hubs in the Central Auckland Region, stretching from Ponsonby to Lynfield on the mainland, as well as Waiheke Island and Great Barrier Island in the Hauraki Gulf.

The RTLB role is to help students to fulfil their learning potential when barriers they face exceed the current support provided in the classroom. They work collaboratively with konga, whānau and kaiako to build understanding and partnership and support schools and teachers to reflect on their classroom environments and approaches and develop creative and inclusive solutions to increase student access, engagement, and achievement. Rachel has a Post Graduate Diploma in Specialist Teaching and is currently completing a Master's in Educational Psychology.



Frian Wadia MNZM | *Early Intervention Specialist with Autism New Zealand*

Through her experiences within the education and health systems over the years, Frian has become a passionate advocate for creating systemic change to ensure inclusion and enable a meaningful, dignified life for all individuals with disabilities. She is particularly interested in the creation of a genuinely inclusive education system where every student is valued, supported, has a strong sense of belonging, and can learn and thrive. In her professional capacity, she is an Early Intervention Specialist with Autism NZ and loves supporting autistic tamariki, their families, and ECE teachers using family-centred and strengths-based approaches.

Over the last few years, she has been part of various grassroots community groups, committees, school/education/community governance boards, and advisory groups in the education and disability sectors. Currently, Frian is Co-chair of the Te Poutāhū Disability Voices Group, working on rights-based, EGL, and trauma-informed approaches in education to improve inclusion for disabled students. Frian is on the leadership team of admins for VIPS Equity in Education, a grassroots online advocacy and support group for families, and has been a support parent with Parent to Parent for over a decade. She is the current president of Parent to Parent and is passionate about empowering and informing families so they can make the best decisions for their children and families.

Frian has been on the Lotteries Individuals with Disabilities distribution committee since 2019 and was on the Teaching Council governance board from 2019 to 2022. Since 2022, Frian has been a member of the National Enabling Good Lives Leadership Group and is a champion for the EGL approach, empowering families to be staunch advocates for their disabled children's rights.

In 2023, Frian founded the Neuroscience and Trauma Informed Network Aotearoa Trust (NATINA) and is passionate about preventing educational trauma and creating trauma-informed schools and communities to ensure all children thrive and belong. Frian's constant endeavours are aimed at empowering families and disabled people; improving systems, policies, and legislation to ensure disabled children's rights are upheld; and ensuring equity for all children irrespective of their abilities, socioeconomic status, neurodiversity, and any other challenges

Cathy Pole | *Resource Teacher of Learning and Behaviour Manager for North Shore Cluster 4 RTL*

Cathy Pole has dedicated over forty years to education, teaching in both Primary and Secondary schools before becoming an RTL (Resource Teacher of Learning and Behaviour) in 1999. She is currently the Cluster Manager for North Shore Cluster 4 RTL. A passionate advocate for inclusion and equity, Cathy has spent many years studying and working on how best to create learning environments where all students belong, actively participate, and achieve. She is a leader, a systems thinker, and a proponent of inclusive education. Her journey began from her own challenging experiences as a student, realising that rather than her failing school, the school had failed her. This fuelled her to become a teacher and leader with a strong commitment to inclusion. She lives in Tāmaki Makaurau, is married, and has two adult children and two grandchildren whom she absolutely adores.



**Ann Smail | *Speech Language Therapist,
Former CEO of TalkLink Trust***

Ann Smail is a speech-language therapist and former CEO of the TalkLink Trust. With over 30 years of experience specialising in AAC, she has seen incredible developments in assistive technology tools and strategies over this time. These developments are likely to continue at pace, with AI advances, and increased evidence-based practice and research. While the education system within Aotearoa has become more inclusive over the last 30 years, barriers to inclusion remain.

With easier access to the right tools, learning support, and importantly a supportive environment, students would be better able to access education. Ann advocates for a better understanding of the access, attitude, and participation barriers faced by AAC users daily.



**Maqymseah Ninces | *TalkLink Trust Board
Member and AAC User***

Maqymseah has been a TalkLink Trust client for over 25 years. She is also a TalkLink Trust ambassador and serves on the trust's governance board. Through these roles and public speaking engagements, Maqymseah uses her voice to advocate for people who use augmentative and alternative communication (AAC). From attending a mainstream kindergarten to earning a Master of Business Studies from Massey University, Maqymseah knows firsthand many of the challenges students who use AAC navigate to be truly included and to feel a sense of belonging within our education system.



**Liz Stenning | *Service Manager Early Supports,
CCS Disability Action***

Liz has worked in Early Childhood Education for 37 years. Her roots are in Montessori education, having taught and owned Montessori early childhood centres before gaining a postgraduate degree in Specialist Teaching Early Intervention. She has worked with CCS Disability Action since 2010, firstly as an Early Intervention Teacher and for the past few years, now as a Service Manager. She leads an amazing team of Early Intervention Teachers, Speech-Language Therapists, and Education Support Workers who support the inclusion and learning of children who have high and very high learning support needs.

CCS Disability Action's Early Intervention teamwork under a Ministry of Education contract. Liz is also the mother of four gorgeous boys (now men), two of whom have recently been diagnosed with ADHD. She loves seeing children develop and thrive and feels very strongly that it is incredibly important for all children to feel they are loved, and accepted for who they are, and that they belong. It is also incredibly important for their families to know their children feel safe and happy and have opportunities to learn in ways that work best for them when they are at school. If children are happy, they cannot help but learn.



Sean Prenter | *New Zealand National Disabled Students Association Co-President*

Sean is the Co-President of the New Zealand National Disabled Students' Association and was the 2022 Co-President of the Otago Disabled Students' Association. Sean advocates with his disabled peers while completing his Master of Politics, Philosophy, and Economics at Victoria University of Wellington. While studying, Sean has presented research on Crippling Sustainability at Tertiary Institutes at the Global Disability Summit and the Australasian Campuses Towards Sustainability Conference and researched accessible urban forms.



Sean represented New Zealand in the CAMP2030 New York innovation lab, served as the 2024 Prime Minister's Scholar Ambassador to India, and is on the youth advisory group for Inspiring Stories. Across these channels, Sean engages his pūmanawa of ensuring access, inclusion, and dignity for disabled people.



Zandra Vaccarino | *National Executive Officer of the New Zealand Down Syndrome Association*

Zandra is a dedicated social justice advocate with nearly three decades of experience in the disability sector, spanning New Zealand and South Africa. She champions a rights-based approach to social justice, collaborating closely with various disability and community groups to achieve collective goals. She supports people with Down syndrome in advocating for their rights and represents the views of whānau in numerous advisory and national stakeholder groups.

Her advocacy is enriched by her personal experience of disability and her academic background in Human Resource Development, Social Work, and Inclusive Education. Zandra's commitment to the Enabling Good Lives Approach further strengthens her advocacy efforts. Central to Zandra's beliefs is the conviction that access to inclusive education serves as both the cornerstone and a critical pathway for disabled people to achieve full citizenship rights.

Jaden Movold | *Student at Waipapa Taumata Rau University of Auckland, iLead Committee Member and Athlete*

Jaden Movold is an athlete, advocate, speaker, and ambassador. His mission is to use sports as a platform for creating positive social change, promoting inclusivity, accessibility, and empowerment within his community. Jaden represents several organizations, such as Paralympics New Zealand, and serves as an ambassador for the Starship Foundation, Yes Disability Resource Centre, Wings for Life Charity, and Medifab/Spex Seating.



Jaden's community involvement is extensive. He has collaborated with the Ministry of Social Development (MSD), the United Nations, and the Children's Commissioner, contributing his insights to shape policies and initiatives. Additionally, he participates in numerous consultations with iLead and Halberg throughout the year to advocate for better accessibility and inclusivity standards. Jaden has received numerous national awards for his sports and community work. His dedication extends to serving on various committees, including iLead, Halberg Youth Council, and The Auckland Transport Capital Projects Accessibility Group. Jaden's sporting achievements include numerous national titles and records, international podium finishes, and ending 2023 as the world #1 U20 T54 5000m wheelchair racer. By excelling in sports and sharing his journey, Jaden inspires others to push boundaries and embrace the limitless potential of the human spirit, driving positive social impact in his community.

Heather Lear QSM | *Director of Inclusive Education Action Group (IEAG), and Education Advocate at IHC NZ*

Heather Lear is a parent with lived experience of the challenges families face navigating an unfair education system. She has a background in law and social work, with a deep commitment to fostering equitable learning environments. Heather is the Director of the Inclusive Education Action Group (IEAG) and has been a valued member of the IHC inclusive education litigation and campaign team since 2010.



Heather is representing IHC and IEAG at this event. Both organisations have contributed to the decades long discourse and efforts to build a quality public inclusive education in New Zealand. Both organisations want the education system to value all students as learners and to provide what they and their schools need for a quality education. Unfortunately, too many disabled and neurodiverse students have missed out on what they individually need to be successful learners because of ongoing system failures. Both IHC and IEAG have lobbied successive governments about the layers of system change required for those students to get a fair deal at school. IHC has lodged litigation under the Human Rights Act alleging that disabled and neurodiverse students are discriminated against at school. IEAG has engaged at every level with successive governments and non-government organisations to build the case for a quality public inclusive education where every student matters and matters equally.

Heather's longstanding commitment has been suitably recognised with the Queens's Service Medal (QSM) in June 2021 for her exceptional commitment to inclusive education.