

**TEACHER ATTRITION FROM COACHING IN  
NEW ZEALAND SECONDARY SCHOOLS**

**FINAL REPORT**

Report Commissioned by  
School Sport New Zealand  
New Zealand Secondary Schools Sports Council – NZSSSC)

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report outlines the findings from the School Sport NZ research project undertaken by the University of Waikato during the period of September 2018 – August 2019. This Executive Summary details a brief overview of the background for the project, the design/methodology adopted for the research and a summary of the findings from the three phases of the research project. The results are presented with an enmeshing of both survey and interview data. Reference has been made to relevant documentation and/or research and pertinent literature where deemed appropriate.

### Background

- Aotearoa New Zealand, like many Western countries adopted sport as part of secondary education based on the English Public Schools.
- Teacher involvement has been largely voluntary although most schools place an expectation on teachers to contribute to extra-curricular activities.
- Sport, the largest extra-curricular component, was supported by teachers acting in the capacity of coaches, managers, administrators and officials.
- Increasing expectation was being placed on staff as sport became a growing part of after school and weekend life.
- In 1985 a national sport development inquiry [*Sport on the Move*] afforded attention to Education and Sport and the subsequent report directed criticism to the Department of Education who had demonstrated a ‘hands-off’ approach.
- The report highlighted teacher frustration at being undervalued and advocated for their workloads to be lessened. They did not consider financial reimbursement to be appropriate.
- In 1987 the Hillary Commission was established and one of the several initiatives that followed included the establishment of the New Zealand Secondary Schools Sports Council (NZSSSC), now known as School Sport NZ.
- The Council flagged their early concern at the lack of support and resourcing, leading to many students receiving poor sporting experiences.
- *Moving Through Sport* was published in 1997 and was widely acclaimed as a leading policy document, however its advocacy and intention was not supported at an operational level.
- A second report; *Getting Set for an Active Nation* (2001) signaled concern for support and development of coaching, including secondary school sport. A concern was noted at the continual erosion of teacher involvement in organised sport and acknowledged the overloaded nature of the teaching profession.

- Under the leadership of School Sport NZ, secondary school sport has continued to grow in both number of events and codes but this has been offset by the continued reduction of teacher involvement, particularly in coaching.

This study explored and documented the background of teacher coaches; how schools can attract and retain teachers to coaching; how teachers' work is affecting their involvement in sport; how the nature of sport has shifted teacher support for sport and how the personal, professional and financial costs of coaching can be addressed.

The study adopted a qualitative approach that included three phases:

1. Document analysis of School Sport NZ NZSSSC reports, census data and relevant research and reports
2. Eighteen (N=18) interviews with a purposively selected sample of current, past or aspiring teacher coaches as well as sport directors.
3. A nineteen (N=19) item online survey offered to all secondary school staff. The survey was open for one month and was completed by 1,475 respondents. In addition to selections, some questions facilitated comments.

## Key Findings<sup>1</sup>

### Background

- The current teacher coach workforce is marked by a bank of experience. A significant proportion of teacher-coaches have amassed many years of service. Just over one-quarter of teacher coach respondents have more than sixteen years of experience with a number completing more than 30 years. 41% of respondents have coached for more than 10 years. Only 5% of respondents indicated they were in their first year of coaching.
- Sixty-three percent (63%) of teacher coaches are currently coaching either one or two sports teams per academic year. Of the 3% who selected five or more teams/sports, supplementary responses revealed between six and sixteen teams.
- When averaged out across the year, 58% of respondents indicated they were involved in coaching for between one and four hours per week. Nearly one quarter (23%) of respondents coached for seven or more hours per week.
- Two-thirds of teacher coaches indicated they received no pre-service professional development related to extra-curricular activities. Only 9% could specify they had dedicated professional development at a pre-service level.
- Teacher coaches have varying levels of experience as players in sports they are coaching. Only 14% of respondents indicated they have no player background. Over

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<sup>1</sup> Many of these findings are supplemented by qualitative data later in the report.

half (53%) have player backgrounds in all sports they are coaching, 9% of these at an elite level.

- By contrast to the experiential level, over half (53%) of teacher coaches have no formal coaching qualification. Of those with a formal qualification the majority (14%) hold a National Sport Organisation (NSO) Level 1 qualification.
- Only 5% of teacher coaches have been offered professional development within their school. 54% have not been offered professional development (PD). Of the 18 schools interviewed only one offered PD that aligned with their school policy.

### **Policy**

- Only 18% of staff were aware that their school had a formal sports policy. Almost half (49%) indicated there may be one but they were unaware of its existence. Nearly 85% had either not sighted one or stated their school did not have one.
- The monitoring of staff involvement in extra-curricular activity (ECA) was followed up by either the principal or a senior management team member in 19% of respondents' schools. In just over half (52%) of schools ECA either involved pleas or shoulder-tapping or was based on an ad-hoc process. Several respondents indicated this raised equity issues related to staff workload.

### **Challenges for teacher coaches**

- Two categories were examined as challenges. Respondents were asked to rank within school challenges. Managing time was the highest ranked challenge, followed by managing administration duties and paperwork. The three highest ranked challenges all related to workload.
- Of the six beyond school challenges, 'meeting family obligations' was ranked the highest. Interview and supplementary data endorsed the tensions often associated with balancing family commitments with evening and weekend coaching roles.
- Respondents were asked to rank their strongest reason behind the decline in teacher coach numbers. There was an overwhelming endorsement for 'Increased time and workload'. There was also support for the aging teacher workforce and support for the dilemma many schools recorded for succession in the next five years. Parental expectation also received notable acknowledgement from survey respondents.
- When asked of their intentions to coach over the ensuing three years there was a clearly defined group who would coach no matter the circumstance. This was offset by over half indicating it would be not at all likely or unlikely they would continue coaching for that period. This result was marked by indifference. Many interviewees stressed they would only continue as coaches because their students would miss out otherwise.

## Incentives

- From 10 options to recruit or retain teacher coaches the incentive that was nominated as the most popular was 'Being compensated for time'. The second most popular incentive selected as number one ranking was 'Formalised payment'.
- When mean scores were assigned to the ten incentives to recruit or retain teacher coaches time factors (reduced duty or supervision or exemption from cover for absent colleagues) received the strongest support. The third incentive was clear policy around financial compensation for travel, accommodation and clothing. 'Formalised payment' received a lower result on mean calculation due to the number of respondents who nominated multiple issues associated with financial incentives.
- Amongst payment options as an incentive, 49% of respondents selected community and teacher coaches should be paid an allowance plus expenses. 18% endorsed the appointment of paid community coaches and an equal number of respondents selected expenses only for both teacher and community coaches.

## Embracing sport

- On a ten-point scale just over 70% of survey respondents selected 9 or 10 for sport to remain in education. Almost 90% allocated a score of 7 or higher.
- The degree to which coaching sport contributes to job satisfaction was evenly balanced between not at all and significantly. Findings support international research that extra-curricular coaching may have a positive impact on teacher job satisfaction.

## State of play

- Sport, particularly junior sport, is an essential part of this country's larger sport culture. Sport can offer many goals including an educational goal but to be educational sport must be accessible, safe and attractive to students and teachers. Schools are ideally placed to ensure the tenets of educative sport are both supported and advanced.
- If teachers continue to walk away from sport coaching roles, school sport will not be sustainable, its place in schools will not be viable and the positive sport experiences of students will be threatened.
- Current and previous strategies adopted by schools are failing to keep pace with student demand nor directly address the matter of teacher coach attrition. And while schools attempt to seek solutions, clearly this is a systemic issue that requires both dialogue and resourcing.
- Under the frame of a new Sport New Zealand Strategic Direction it is timely for Sport New Zealand, The Ministry of Education and School Sport NZ NZSSSC to commence a conversation about resourcing and supporting teachers as coaches so this historical and chronic condition of reduced teacher involvement can be at least arrested and at best reversed.



## **1.0 PURPOSE OF RESEARCH**

To ensure the continued provision of positive sporting experiences for students and to ensure sports retain a place in education, it is crucial to have the support of teachers. Equally, if schools wish to retain school sport then it is vital to address how teachers can be supported. If teachers are disengaging from sport in general and coaching in particular there is a need to know much more about why this is occurring. More specifically, the purpose of this research investigated:

1. How can schools attract teachers into and/or back to coaching?
2. What needs to be considered to ensure their retention?
3. How has the nature of teachers' work affected teacher involvement in co/extra-curricular activities?
4. To what extent has the nature of sport shifted teachers' support or resistance as coaches?
5. What are the perceived personal, professional and financial costs of coaching school sport and how can those costs be addressed?

## **2.0 INTRODUCTION AND HISTORICAL BACKCLOTH**

Currently there are over 450 secondary schools in Aotearoa New Zealand. These schools comprise 143,684 students in either Year 7-13, 9-13 or a designated special school, 65,804 teachers, plus 471 principals. Teachers are guided by a National Curriculum. The key learning areas and their respective derivations form the formal or functional curriculum. In addition, schools offer a variety of activities that constitute what is widely referred to as the extra-curriculum. This component of school life includes sports, music, student publications, school productions, clubs, student government and assemblies amongst other things. Collectively these activities are also referred to as the informal curriculum or more recently, the co-curriculum (Berk, 1992, p. 21). As Berk argues the term co-curriculum is preferred by enthusiasts who emphasise the importance of integrating student activities with classroom studies. Moreover, advocates stress the importance of the co-curriculum as a vital part of the educational experience of students.

Sport is generally the largest co-curriculum component but collectively activities offered within schools are considered to be prime sites for 'nurturing prosocial values and behavior, individual interests and talents, and worthwhile use of leisure time' (Berk, 1992, p. 1035). And whilst research on the extra- or co-curriculum does not yield the same attention as that of the formal or functional equivalent, Berk (1992) points out that research examining participation in ECAs demonstrate vital contributions toward adolescent development. International research has presented a thin yet constant stream of attention to the role and outcomes of student participation in ECAs (see for example Eccles, Barber, Stone, & Hunt,

2003; Feldman & Matjasko, 2005; Mahoney, 2000; Marsh & Kleitman, 2002; McNeal Jr, 1995). By comparison, research examining ECA participation and effects such as student achievement in New Zealand secondary schools are sparse. The exception is a study conducted by Shulruf and colleagues who tested for causal effects of student participation on literacy and numeracy during secondary schooling (Shulruf, Tumen, & Tolley, 2008). No research has examined teachers and sport coaching in a New Zealand context.

## **2.1 The evolution of school sport**

Like many Western countries Aotearoa New Zealand adopted sport as part of the secondary education system based on the English Public Schools. That model required all students to participate in classroom activities as well as games, all of which were delivered by teachers. When the model was adopted by the English State school system a significant modification saw all students were required to participate in two hours of sports, once each week in school time, as well as two hours of physical education. As part of this iteration of school sport teacher involvement was voluntary in nature yet considered to be part of the job. This model was further refined and exported to many Commonwealth countries and eventually to Europe and America (Broom, 1990).

## **2.2 Sport's settling in period**

By the 1950's sport became an important part of school life for many Aotearoa New Zealand students. Interschool sport became commonplace and was arguably a way to contribute to the social and physical development of students (Grant & Pope, 2007). A decade later, school sport had proliferated and diversified yet the growth was managed by teachers who supported this burgeoning aspect of school life through coaching, managing and supporting students in after school and weekend competitions. But as student interest and demand grew, increasing pressure was placed on teachers. Many staff found themselves assigned to 'new' sports of which they knew little, preferring instead to support more traditional codes (Bradley, 1974). As the situation compounded across the next decade the Post Primary Teachers Association (PPTA) began to signal concern about the expectations being placed upon teachers who were involved in extra-curricular events including Saturday sport. Teacher sacrifice was evolving into teacher resistance.

## **2.3 Emerging symptoms of illness**

The conundrum of teacher involvement as well as wider educational and political issues prompted Mike Moore, the Minister of Sport, to launch a Sport Development Inquiry. One of the terms of reference of *Sport on the Move* (Sports Development Inquiry, 1985) was an examination of the role and provision of sport in educational institutions. The report devoted a section to 'Education and Sport' (pp. 68-79) where criticism was directed toward physical educators for failing to provide appropriate pathways for young people into sport. They, along with schools, were blamed for the apparent demise of sport in our culture.

But perhaps the most scathing assertion made in the report was directed at what was then the Department of Education. The review committee documented their concern at The Department of Education's 'hands off' approach:

... the Department of Education has no firm commitment to sports education. Where the Committee and the Department of Education drastically part company is over the department's seeming rejection of its responsibilities in the teaching of competitive or good quality sport both in and out of school. (Sports Development Inquiry, 1985, p. 71)

The position taken by the Department of Education and the apparent ambiguity surrounding the relationship between physical education and sports education was cause for consternation. The Committee's view asserted that sport had been 'buried' within the current physical education syllabus and as a consequence sport was seriously disadvantaged. The outcome of this positioning was regarded as unhealthy. A recently appointed secondary schools sports inspector, Mr Peter Sharp, communicated his impression that 'sport in secondary schools has many symptoms of chronic illness' and 'unless remedial measures are applied the degeneration could become so advanced that sport as we know it could slowly disappear' (Sports Development Inquiry, 1985, p. 75).

The report also highlighted teacher frustration that their efforts were undervalued by Principals and Boards of Governors. Teachers also expressed their reluctance to be paid, arguing that financial reimbursement was the least appropriate method for improving their conundrum. Their preference was a lessening of their teaching load to compensate for their out-of-class sport education activities. Moreover, their advocacy for glide time teaching that included both in-class and out-of-class sports education. The final recommendation of the Committee was the establishment of a sports advisory service to augment the recent appointment of a Southern Region inspector of sports in schools. This would include the training and placement of sport educators into secondary schools who would work on glide time to address the delivery of sport programmes.

## **2.4 Political and policy change**

In 1987 the Recreation and Sport Act was introduced and resulted in the establishment of the Hillary Commission for Recreation and Sport (now known as Sport New Zealand). Although the Hillary Commission did not have a direct link with schools the *Sportfit* programme was introduced to address some of the anomalies identified in the *Sport on the Move* report. After consultation with sporting and educational agencies, five points of focus were identified as being central to the *Sportfit* programme:

1. Participation in sport benefits all - the individual, the school and society
2. It was paramount that sport remained part of schools' programmes
3. Schools needed help
4. There was a need for coordination between community agencies and schools
5. The Hillary Commission was the appropriate agency to coordinate assistance (Sharp, 1991).

To address those foci, five initiatives were undertaken by the Sportfit Coordinator in 1992:

1. The *Sportfit/school partnership* offered schools a dollar-for-dollar subsidy partnership, for up to two years for any sport related project. For example, schools implemented strategies to run new programmes with enhanced coaching, and school-based sport coordinators and programmes to elevate numbers of participants as well as the standard of participation.
2. The *Kiwisport Leadership and Advanced Leadership Awards* scheme was aimed at enhancing leadership skills and to help students realise their potential as leaders while working with younger students in children's sport.
3. *Sport Education in Physical Education* is a curriculum model developed by Daryl Siedentop (Siedentop, 1982, 1987) and trialed in New Zealand secondary schools in 1991. The model deals with sport in its entirety and encourages students to participate as players over a 'season', perform all the roles associated with sport and immerse themselves in a total sport experience.
4. *Regional Partnerships* were established to assist in the facilitation and organisation of interschool sport. Seventeen regional school sports directors were appointed and one of their main functions is to liaise with secondary schools to support developments in interschool sport. The directors assisted with the organisation of competitions, promoted new sports and acted as a link between community sporting organisations and secondary schools.
5. *The New Zealand Secondary Schools Sports Council [NZSSSC]* (now known as School Sport NZ) was established to promote a more efficient network between national sporting organizations and secondary schools. For example, in 1994 there were 65 major sporting events held involving secondary school students.

## 2.5 A gesture from education

In light of the criticism directed at the Department of Education in *Sport on the Move* it is perhaps no surprise that in 1987 a booklet was published entitled *Sport for Children and Young People* (Department of Education, 1987). This booklet was the first time the Department of Education acknowledged sport as part of the curriculum. This document provided a full justification to the statement in the national physical education syllabus of 1987, stating:

School and community share the responsibility for the development of young people. Today we are increasingly aware that in considering sport, traditionally an important feature of New Zealand life, schools and sporting organisations need a common policy. (Department of Education, 1987b, p. 3)

The Foreword in this document claimed such a policy statement was prompted by an initiative of relevant agencies concerned with the delivery of sport for young people in other countries. The document thus became a response to international attention to sport in schools and the need to recognise the provision of opportunities for young people to engage in sport as part of their education.

The Department of Education also acknowledged the UNESCO International Charter of Physical Education and Sport by including the following statement in the *Introduction to Sport*:

The role of the school is to ensure that opportunities are provided for children, regardless of their abilities, to participate in sport. It should offer opportunities in addition to the physical education programme. The school should also liaise with sports bodies and individuals in the community to assist those students who wish to continue their participation in sport outside school hours, and for whom no voluntary coaches make themselves available. (UNESCO *International Charter of Physical Education and Sport* Article 1,1.1., 1978)

The notion of shared responsibility would become an all too familiar cry from the educational reforms that would unfold during the following years. While making many relevant and positive statements regarding sport education *Sport for Children and Young People* was presented only as a policy statement. The booklet did not outline how, why or if sport should be acknowledged as part of the school curriculum. This publication remains the sole document from the education vote of central government on sport policy in secondary education, and subsequent reforms (namely Tomorrow's Schools) have failed to provide direction for this aspect of education.

## 2.6 Seeking further change

Following the bedding in of the initiatives implemented by The Hillary Commission a review of school sport was conducted. Amongst other issues raised in the review concern was directed toward coaching:

... the diminishing involvement of teachers, of the inequitable distribution of increasingly scarce resources, of the large numbers of high talent, high energy young sports people, students and those recently out of school who were being denied coaching and who were frustrated by sports experiences which were so poor in quality that they could be turned away for life. They heard of the lack of encouragement or opportunity for young people who attend a school with no policy or practice of involvement in sport and leisure activities or for children whose sport skills were not well developed. (Sharp, 1991, p. 2)

Although there was widespread support for sport in schools it was clear schools required support and assistance. Many of the issues identified in the Hillary Commission review were being replicated in Australia. Like Aotearoa New Zealand there was a notable lack of professional support for teachers, particularly at pre-service level. One Australian academic (Evans, 1990) lamented the insufficient attention tertiary institutions allocated to aspiring teachers enrolled in teacher education programmes:

The sad state of affairs is that sport education is not a priority in teacher training institutions. If tertiary institutions can't or won't include sport education in their pre-service programs, and I think the likelihood of them doing so in the future is extremely remote, then for sport in schools to continue alternative strategies need to be implemented to help teachers. (Evans, 1990, p. 10)

In response to a two-day forum hosted by The Hillary Commission, *Moving through sport* (Hillary Commission for Sport Fitness & Leisure, 1997) was produced as a national plan for junior sport. The Commission had been endorsed as the appropriate organisation to develop and prepare a junior sport policy document. One of the stated areas for attention was the role of sport in the education and development of young people. *Moving through sport* was received with acclamation and enthusiasm (nationally and internationally) however, its ambitious arrival was not endorsed at an operational nor structural level. The many progressive ideas presented within the plan became opportunities lost.

## 2.7 Continued concern

Since the publication of *Moving through sport* the Hillary Commission has gone through several iterations at both structural, operational and branding levels. Such changes were in part a result of another review. A ministerial taskforce produced *Getting Set for an Active Nation* that was presented to the Honourable Trevor Mallard, then Minister of Sport, Fitness and Leisure (Sport Fitness and Leisure Ministerial Taskforce, 2001). Also known as The Graham Report, this document was charged with the task of defining a vision for sport, fitness and leisure for the following 25 years. After widespread consultation, the taskforce detailed several issues that needed Government attention. Of the ten stipulated foci, specific attention was afforded to 'the education sector's approach to physical activity, recreation and sport' which it asserted was 'grossly inadequate' (p. 10). There was also specific mention made about coaching, which the report contended was 'in urgent need of support and development' (p. 10).

Like *Sport on the Move*, this report allocated attention to education, a sector it asserted was not presently playing the role it should in recreation and sport. In particular the taskforce 'noted with real concern the continual erosion of teachers' involvement in organised sport and other extra-curricular activities. They claimed recreation and sport had become marginalised in education and its assigned status had become the 'Cinderella' area of the curriculum. This condition was apparent because 'Teaching is an overloaded profession that does not accord physical education, recreation and sport a priority in school life' (Sport Fitness and Leisure Ministerial Taskforce, 2001, p. 55). The 150-page report advocated rationalisation, accountability and more focused outcomes, familiar tenets of the Neoliberal model. Many of the findings of this report reaffirmed concerns raised fifteen years earlier in *Sport on the Move*.

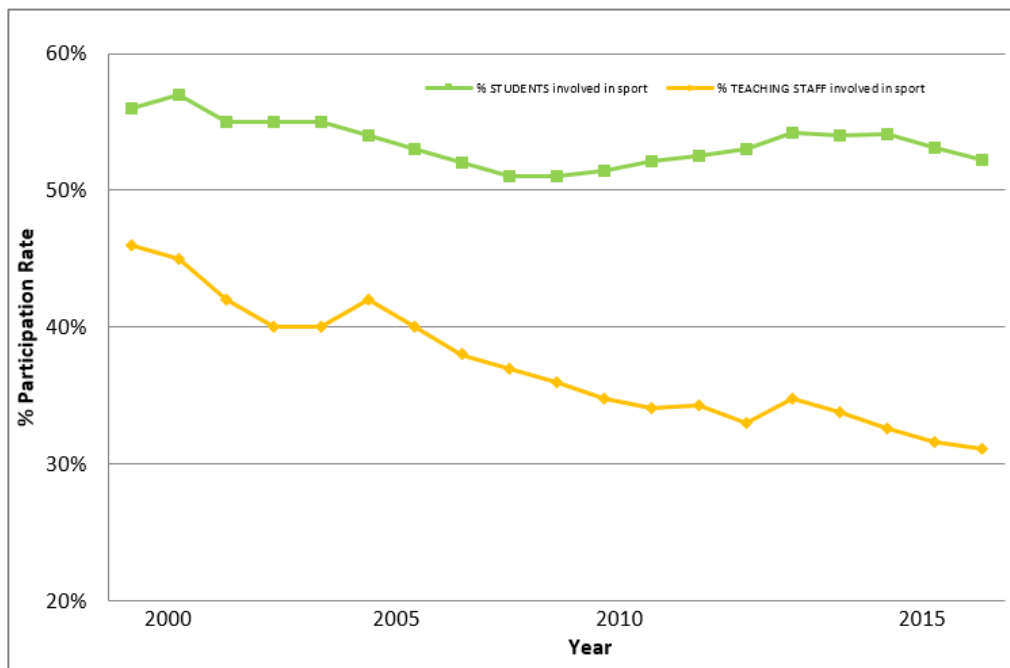
Change had, in many cases, been either glacial or non-existent. Both reports declared education to be an important driver of sport and recreation but was severely under-resourced thus the potential of this sector or society was not being reached. The taskforce thereby recommended a \$25 million injection of funds to implement initiatives to move sport and recreation into the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.

## 2.8 Taking charge and recognising difficulties

Since the publication of *Getting Set for an Active Nation* and following the bedding in of some of the *Sportfit* initiatives there was a steady increase in the number of students playing sport for their schools, an increase in the range of sports being offered and a steady rise in the

number of events being staged. In 1998 the NZSSSC facilitated 93 North Island, South Island or National events in 42 different sport codes. Since then the number of events and the codes offered had expanded, to 226 events in 81 different sports in 2017. And although the number of codes and events staged has continued to grow student numbers have remained relatively constant.

The growth in events and sports codes has been offset against diminishing teacher involvement with sport. Such concern has been documented in numerous Annual Reports of NZSSSC based on the annual census figures. As highlighted in the table below the trend, based on comprehensive census data, shows a relatively constant student participation result as opposed to a declining trend in teacher involvement in secondary school sport. A more disconcerting depiction is the decreasing number of teachers who are coaching secondary school sport. The most recent Annual Report of School Sport NZ indicates that teacher involvement in a leadership capacity (coaching/managing/officiating) had dropped to approximately 31% last year (2018) and of that number, teachers who were coaching had continued to fall registering a result of 16%. Both of these results reflect a sizable and disconcerting issue that has been acknowledged over several years.



**Figure 1: Secondary Student and Teacher participation rates in sport (2000-2018)<sup>2</sup>**

Declining teacher involvement has been greeted with concern by School Sport NZ spanning several years. A position paper produced by Mr. Peter Sharp (the inaugural Executive Officer of NZSSSC) entitled ‘Sport for young people 13-18 years: The role of secondary schools’ forewarned such a decline over fifteen years ago. Sharp argued that school sporting programmes facilitated by teaching staff were confronted by ‘a host of challenges’ (New

<sup>2</sup> Data Source: New Zealand Secondary Schools Sports Council (2018). Census of sport participation. Retrieved from <http://www.nzsssc.org.nz/School-Sport-NZ-Census-Data/School-Sport-NZ-Census-Reports>

Zealand Secondary Schools Sports Council, n.d., p. 7). More specifically, the paper highlighted the scale to which teacher workload and increasing age were contributing to the acknowledged decline. Moreover, the paper recommended a re-evaluation of the status of sport and co-curricular programmes and whether such programmes were reaching their potential and if the current level of servicing could ensure a sustained future. However, the recommendation for the production of a collaborative paper between SPARC, the Ministries of Health and Education and NZSSSC did not eventuate. The matter of teacher involvement has remained a latent issue.

## **2.9 Kiwisport II**

The second iteration of KiwiSport was established in 2009 with three objectives:

1. To increase the availability and accessibility of sport opportunities for school-aged children.
2. To increase the number of school-aged children participating in organised sport.
3. To support children in developing skills that will enable them to participate effectively in sport.

Government funding is channeled into two streams. The first is allocated directly to schools (Direct Fund) while some is paid to Regional Sports Trusts (RSTs) to provide sports opportunities through the Regional Partnership Fund (RPF). At the secondary school level (Years 9-13) schools receive \$23 per student and are given discretion as to how the funding is spent. Schools can also apply for contestable funding administered by Regional Sports Trusts as part of the RPF. During the period of 2009-2011, 68 percent of applications were approved (Education Review Office, 2012).

Secondary schools receive funding on a per student basis and because this is allocated and administered by the Ministry of Education any evaluation of the Kiwisport project falls under the auspices of the Education Review Office (ERO). Since the fund's inception the ERO have conducted one review that included primary and secondary schools during 2010 and a follow-up review in the first half of 2012 (ERO, 2010, 2012). Thirty-two secondary schools responded to the review. The more recent report indicated that seven of the eleven secondary schools that participated in the review reported a large increase in sport opportunities mainly through developing links with community clubs. Moreover, eight of the twelve participating secondary schools reported a large increase in student participation in sports had employed a sports coordinator who often promoted sport within the school, introduced new sports, provided lunch time activities and competitions and coordinated sports teams. The remainder of the thirty-two schools indicated either some or a limited increase in participation or availability of sports opportunities for students. Staffing and the delivery of sport was not addressed in either review.

Over the tenure of Kiwisport there have been multiple mentions of the declining rate of teacher involvement in secondary school sport. On-going concern has been signaled in NZSSSC Annual reports about 'the downward trend of teachers providing sporting leadership as both coaches and managers' (NZSSSC Annual Report, 2011). This status has created a sophism in that Kiwisport has been established to increase the numbers of students



participating in school sport during a time when the number of teachers supporting sport in some capacity is actually decreasing. The goals of the former are potentially conflicted by the state of the latter. It is therefore prudent to investigate the reasons for the acknowledged decline in teacher involvement so the sporting experiences of secondary school students can be appropriately supported and advanced.

### **3.0 RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY**

This project adopted a qualitative approach aimed to provide a representative picture of the current status of teacher coaches in New Zealand secondary schools. There were three phases to the research process:

#### **Phase 1**

Document analysis of the NZSSSC census data from between 2005-2018; NZSSSC Annual Reports 2005-2018 and a selective review of pertinent literature. The research questions were the key points of reference for the collection and analysis of data. A preliminary review of literature was adopted to assist the construction of interview questions.

#### **Phase 2**

Semi-structured interviews with teacher coaches (N=18). Each interview followed a question protocol. To address representation participants were selected to create a sample that addressed school type (single-sex/co-educational; urban/rural; geographic region; State/Private/Integrated/Decile level; low/medium/high). In addition, purposive selection addressed gender and ethnicity of participants. The final consideration was to select a representation of teachers who are currently coaching, teachers who are considering leaving coaching, teachers who have withdrawn from coaching, sports coordinators/directors or teachers who are considering coaching as a future career option.

An email from the School Sport NZ CEO Director was initially sent to the Principal and Sports Director inviting them to participate. If schools supported the invitation a follow-up email was sent with attached files detailing background information about the project and an ethics consent form. Schools were then asked to nominate a teacher coach who would in turn be contacted to confirm approval and potential times to complete the interview. The interviews were conducted either over the Internet or the phone and lasted between 45 and 80 minutes. The interviews were then transcribed verbatim and returned by email to each participant for member checking. Each participant was invited to return their transcript with any additions, deletions or amendments as well as a signed release form. Upon completion of the interviews all transcripts underwent content analysis to note key points and selectively record individual threads that were in turn clustered into themes that became evident across the interview sample. Exact

quotations representing emergent themes were extracted for both reporting and survey construction. Validation of analysis and checking of accuracy of content was sought from all interview participants.

### **Phase 3**

An eighteen-item survey was compiled after the inductive analysis of interview transcripts and relevant documents. The survey was designed to describe the characteristics of a sample group (teacher coaches). The Qualtrics software programme was employed to give teachers on-line access and complete a series of questions that would collectively present a picture based on the topics raised in earlier semi-structured interviews with eighteen teacher coaches. The second role of the survey was to provide information that would assist in addressing the five research questions. The project was designed to provide descriptive data.

The survey sought information about years of service, number of teams and codes coached, sporting background, coaching qualifications, professional development, school policy, reasons for decline in teachers' coaching, identification of pressures both internal and external to the school context, the nature and role of school sport and contribution to job satisfaction. There were opportunities for teachers augment their responses with additional information on selected questions.

The survey was open to all secondary school teacher coaches and could be completed on the Internet. The survey was also designed to work in App format on a smart-phone or tablet. The survey was trialed and refined after feedback before going live. Teachers were given three weeks to complete the survey and any partially completed entries were included to the point of exit if the participant saved their entry. At closure 1,475 responses had been entered.

The Qualtrics software package was employed for the analysis and representation of the survey data. In addition, there were opportunities for respondents to comment on some questions and these comments were incorporated into the same inductive analysis process as the interviews.

## **4.0 RESULTS**

### **4.1 Demographic background**

To background the landscape of teachers who were current, past or prospective coaches a series of demographic questions were asked. Survey respondents were asked to designate the band their level of experience aligned with. This result highlights two key points, the first being the degree of adherence to coaching. A significant proportion of teachers had remained in coaching for many years. Supplementary responses highlighted that a number of teachers had coached for over thirty years. The second point is the dispersion of experience across multiple years. The spread of experience is quite evenly distributed although the 11-15 year band is disproportionately lower.

**Table 1: Number of years coaching a school sports team up to and including this (2019) season**

First year of coaching	5%
Have not coached but involved in another capacity	7%
Between 11 and 15 years	15%
Between 6 and 10 years	23%
Between 2 and 5 years	24%
More than 16 years	26%

Teacher coaches were also asked to specify the number of sports teams they were currently coaching over the space of a school year. The 26% attributed to ‘none’ include respondents who had previously coached, had shifted from coaching to another leadership role (managing or officiating) or who were considering coaching as a future role. The majority of teachers were coaching either one or two teams. Teachers who selected five or more (3%) were asked to specify a number ranging from six to fifteen.

**Table 2: Number of sports teams currently coaching**

None	26%
One	41%
Two	22%
Three	6%
Four	3%
Five or more (please state number)	3%

To determine what time commitment teachers allocated to their coaching, they were asked to specify the number of hours they allocated to their coaching when averaged out across a school year.

**Table 3: Number of hours per week involved in a coaching role when averaged out across the school year**

1 -2 Hours	23%
3-4 Hours	35%
5-6 Hours	19%
7-8 Hours	11%
More than 8 hours	12%

This result also demonstrated a spread. Just over half of respondents allocated between one and four hours while just over 40% allocated five or more hours per week. Of the 12% who selected more than 8 hours the range of specified responses a significant proportion allocated was more than 12 hours. Rowing attracted specific attention where 12-15 hours over seven months was numerously specified.

## 4.2 Coaching backgrounds

Three questions were included to determine what professional and experiential background the teacher coaches had accumulated. The first of these required respondents to recall whether they had received any professional development in extra-curricular activity as part of their pre-service education programme.

**Table 4: Pre-service teacher education programme included professional development about working in extra-curricular contexts provided**

Yes - but very limited attention	14%
Yes	9%
No	67%
Too long ago to recall	10%

Just over two thirds of respondents specified they had no professional development that addressed extra- or co-curriculum aspects of school life. Almost one quarter could either recall a very limited or some professional development. Clearly these results would indicate that tertiary institutions who prepare teachers for secondary school contexts do not address professional life beyond the formal curriculum. This result indicates an initial trend towards what schools and the wider education community expect of teachers who will coach school sport. Clearly, we cannot ask teachers to commit to coaching when appropriate training or support does not figure as part of their professional preparation. While there is an expectation that teachers are suitably trained and qualified before they enter the classroom, there appears to be no equivalent expectation for when the same teachers step out of the classroom to work with students in a coaching capacity. Aspiring teachers appear to have be

given a clear message from teacher education institutions that they do not require professional support or preparation for what is arguably a significant part of school life.

The second background question focused on the experiential background of coaches from a playing perspective. The results from this question indicate that secondary school teachers have come to teaching with high experiential backgrounds in one or more sports for which they are coaching. Over 85% had some level or experience as a player which would reflect on the level of participation that characterises the delivery of sport in this country.

**Table 5: Background as a player in sport(s) coaching in current school**

No player background	14%
Player background in some sports they are coaching but not all	23%
Player background in all sports they are currently coaching	44%
Player background at an elite level in some sports they are coaching but not all	10%
Player background at an elite level in all sports they are coaching	9%

Several teachers shared their playing history, often with diverse backgrounds and often with notable achievements:

I'm a bit of a Jack of all trades myself, so historically cricket and rugby were my two sports growing up, cricket in the summer as well as touch, a bit of social basketball but mainly cricket in the summer and rugby in the winter. I played rugby from when I was six all the way through to 24, progressed at university so represented [a region] at under 19's and 21's for rugby and then change of location and I had a season of premier rugby league for a year and then I stopped playing rugby at 25 and focused on other things, more like tramping and camping, free diving. (Martin)<sup>3</sup>

I played badminton as my sport as a youngster, so I played to a high level of badminton and played for [three provinces] and NZ Universities and continued to play masters when I returned back here to [her province], and I've only stopped playing Badminton probably five years ago. I've also played a lot of squash as well, and I've played premier grade cricket and over the years I've continued to play cricket but worked my way down the grades rather than up the grades. (Renee)

The final background question addressed coaching qualifications. Many players transition to coaching but the question of whether experience as a player is sufficient to coach, including school sport, is arguable. And while it is evident from the above result that professional preparation to coach does not figure in most teacher education programmes, there are opportunities for teachers to complete pertinent coaching qualifications through

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<sup>3</sup> All names assigned to quotes included in this report are pseudonyms to protect participant confidentiality. Where pseudonyms have not been allocated the comment is made by an anonymous survey respondent.

organisations such as Community Sports Trusts or National Sporting Organizations (NSO) amongst others. Several NSO's offer coaching qualifications based on a three-level system; level one being an introductory tier while level three is targeted coaching at a high-performance level. In addition, there are coaching qualifications offered by Universities, Institutes of Technology and Waananga at certificate, diploma or degree level.

**Table 6: Level and number of completed coaching qualifications**

None	53%
Community coach course (generic e.g. Community Sports Trust or NZQA L3)	11%
National sports organization Level 1 (in one sport)	14%
National sports organization Level 1 (in two or more sports)	5%
National sports organization Level 2 (in one sport)	8%
National sports organization Level 2 (in two or more sports)	1%
National sports organization Level 3 (in one or more sports)	5%
Bachelor's Degree in coaching	2%
Higher Degree in coaching	1%

The results illustrate that over half of all teacher coaches have no formal coaching qualification and nearly 80% have either no or only an introductory level of coaching qualification. It also highlights that nearly 20% of teacher coach respondents are well qualified as coaches on a formal level.

Rather than holding formal coaching qualifications a strong experiential background was representative of many of the research interviewees. Being a player was often perceived as sufficient warrant to coach a school sports team. Michael was a typical example. When questioned about what preparation for coaching, particularly coaching qualifications, he reflected on his preparatory days by confessing,

Definitely not sports specific, I suppose I came out of that amateur generation, I was the last of the amateur generation, where you just knew rugby, I didn't want to be told anything anyway, I thought I knew it all when I first started coaching.

Pat also has a background in rugby coaching and commenced his training but withdrew because, 'I found that it was more a paperwork gathering process rather than a coaching, I didn't see the benefit in me as a coach being able to deliver new resources'. Leanne recalled starting coaching in her initial years as a teacher and recalled, 'when I first started out coaching to be honest it was quite overwhelming and even though I am PE trained I was from a player perspective and it is quite a difference from a coaching perspective and I did struggle at times to find resources and those sorts of things initially in my first years.' For many of the interviewees their experience as a player was their fallback position, a status that is echoed by the survey results.

**Table 7: Teacher coaches offered professional development opportunities based on coaching sports at current school**

Offered, but the content or timing were not appropriate	10%
Offered by staff within our school	5%
Offered by an outside agency	26%
None offered	54%
Unsure if they were offered PD	5%

Professional development that focused on extra-curricular activities at an in-service level yielded a similar trend to the pre-service form. More than half of schools have not offered PD in coaching and generally any coaching PD delivered to coaches was resourced by an outside agency. These courses were often publicised to teachers but would generally be held beyond the school gates and outside the school day. For Sonya this meant ‘I would get fliers advertising the course but it was the time side of things, getting there and fitting everything else in as a parent, it just put me on the back foot and I just flagged them.’ Of the eighteen schools who participated in the interviews only one school provided a formal professional development programme for staff. These were facilitated by the Sports Director, Brian, who shared that such courses were an expectation for staff and formed part of a very structured programme. The courses targeted coaches and managers as the school had ‘lots and lots and lots of these’. Brian’s programme was an exception to the rule but what they offered aligned with an explicit sports policy that was both explicit and adhered to. The matter of school sport policy was also investigated in this research.

**Table 8: Teacher awareness of their school’s formal sports policy addressing staff involvement in ECA**

Aware, and the policy is current and codified	18%
Aware, but have never seen it	20%
Not aware of a policy, but there may be one	49%
School does not have such a policy	14%

The returns from this question provided a strong indication that in most schools, teacher coaches were either not aware that their school had a sports policy or if they did, they were unaware of its content or kaupapa (vision). There is a distinct ambiguity relating to the existence or scope of such a document in almost 70% of schools. Given that such a policy should address the schools position on staff involvement in ECA, financial and professional support for staff, travel arrangements, support staff, student coaches, equipment and clothing, intra- and inter-school sport enactment amongst other aspects, the uncertainty assigned to this inquiry invites further attention. The associated interviews with teacher coaches highlighted staff frustration around expectations on staff. Several issues evolved

from these conversations. The most dominant concern was the issue of equity. The inconsistency of staff involvement in ECA (including performing arts, debating, school production etcetera) was seen as a frustration for many staff. While some staff were actively involved in the wider life of their school, others had chosen not to be and this has raised concerns in many staff rooms. The thoughts of Rob encapsulate many of the comments made by other interview participants:

It is kind of like the old unwritten rule, the unwritten expectation is that everybody will in some way look after the debating team, look after water polo team, school production, so everybody that is able to and willing will put their hand up. However, and this becomes a bone of contention for a lot of people in that there are a lot of people that don't, and whether they choose not to or just can't be bothered, they don't believe they're skilled enough or whatever reason, there is definitely a noticeable inequity across the whole school in terms of the extracurricular workload of some staff verses others, people talk about it, but no one will really make a fuss because end of the day you can turn around and say well I'm not going to do that, but it's not really helping the students that are involved in something that they're passionate about.

The predominant word that many respondents used was *expectation*. In many schools, staff participation in ECA was expected. There was also a perception that the whole issue of staff involvement was 'loose'. Multiple survey respondents alluded to the Secondary Teachers' Collective Agreement (STCA), which infers 'there is no requirement to take a sports team and any school that makes staff do it are dishonest'. There was also a perception that because teachers can only be encouraged to support ECA but not compelled, it meant that in many schools those in senior managerial positions often assumed a 'hands off' approach. Several staff shared conversations with Principals at their job interviews where it was made clear 'there is an expectation, the headmaster does articulate his expectation, we expect our kids to do summer and winter sport, we expect you to be part of that process' (respondent comment). Staff contribution was often described as 'a grey area' yet there was a widespread acknowledgement that ECA makes a significant contribution to the life of secondary schools. Teacher contribution to coaching however, was often unacknowledged at a school management level. For Anna involvement only appeared on the radar because 'to be honest when we have our annual appraisals extracurricular is part of that in terms of noting what we do and us listing our in-school involvement and things and the things we have to do'. The 'hands off' approach to ECA has compounded staff recruitment and retention for roles such as coaching. Any initial expectation expressed to staff by Principals was seldom followed-up or monitored by school management.

One beginning teacher found the whole issue of staff involvement perplexing. The industrial and policy factors did not help:

Yes, it probably is part of the problem and whether there is you're liable for what you pledge or what you commit to offering that could be a good thing, and I could sit here and say yes, I'd like to be a part of our appraisal now and our contracts, because I'm one of those people that are doing what I'm doing (Alice)

These views were confirmed in the survey. Less than 10% of respondents indicated that their Principal formally monitored staff in involvement in ECA. An equivalent number referred to a



member of the school management team. The monitoring task was often conducted by the Director of Sport or of an equivalent title.

**Table 9: Staff involvement in ECA monitored at a formal level**

Monitored by the Principal or equivalent	9%
Monitored by a member of the school management team	10%
Monitored by the Director of Sport or Equivalent	25%
Not monitored and usually involved pleas or shoulder tapping	36%
Not monitored and ad hoc	16%
Other	5%

Beth, a teacher in charge of sport, detailed the reason why she received no support from her Principal. She reflected on the possibility that support and change would only be forthcoming if requests and concerns could be supported with numbers because

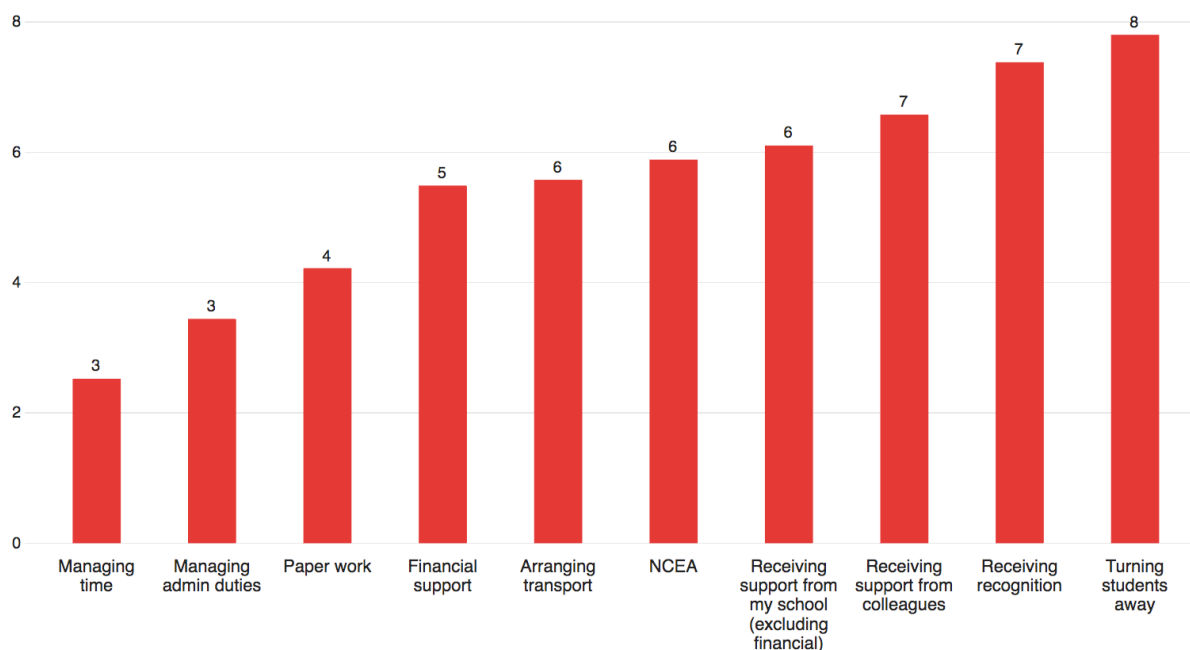
she's stuck in her ways, she doesn't prioritise it. She's a data lady, she's into her data, I don't know, maybe I should give her some data around some of the stuff that we do.

In her interview, Robyn recollected the expectations placed on her at her job interview, but the level of involvement of her colleagues indicated that these expectations were not followed up at a management level:

On accepting a job here there was an expectation that you would help out with those extracurricular activities, involve yourself in sport somehow whether it was managing, coaching, or whatever, there is that expectation but it is not, the staff rates certainly don't reflect that, I guess because it is not really enforced.

### **4.3 Within school challenges**

Interview data provided a number of challenges that teacher coaches often faced. These challenges were divided into two categories. The school gates became the partition between 'within school' and 'beyond school' challenges. Survey respondents were subsequently asked to rank the list of challenges that affected them personally. Mean scores were selected to provide an overall ranking for each of the choices. Unsurprisingly the biggest challenge to teacher coaches was time. Managing time across the school day and over each sport season meant time allocated to sports practices and competitions was often offset against administrative duties, preparation, marking, meetings and pastoral duties. School terms are often marked by numerous pressure points where a teacher's time would be demanded. Many of the tasks teachers were required to perform involved some form of paperwork, which was often resented.



**Figure 2: Ranking of possible within school challenges for teachers who coach<sup>4</sup>**

The three highest ranked challenges all related to workload, an aspect that was repeatedly perceived to have increased in recent years. Part of the blame for this perception was directed at internal assessment and NCEA:

From what I've heard being in the staffroom and hearing other colleagues, NCEA with the significant amount of internals, creates a lot more workload for teachers, most teachers are having every five or six weeks there is some kind of assessment in their course that they are having to push through students, marking, so that creates a lot of time poor situations for staff. (Steve)

For Keith, this issue has compounded over several decades and as a consequence he believed the nature of quality sport in his current school had waned:

I've been coaching school teams since 1980, the grassroots at school level is waning, the strength of the kids themselves, the competition that they can get, so there is a real polarity. The bottom end has dropped out and therefore weaker, the expectations of our top end are greater. We are now wanting our volleyball players, basketball players, rugby players etc. to be performing at a semi-professional if not professional level at 16 years old. My memory would take me back to the point our first teams were competitive week in and week out, but we weren't exposed to the same rigors, the same numbers of games, the same intensity, the same challenges, and from a coaching perspective we had a lot of time to coach. Nowadays with NCEA and the workload expected of secondary school teachers has eaten into a bit of that. We don't have that same quality time.

<sup>4</sup> Mean score – lower score = higher rank.

Extra administrative duties often subjugated Michael’s coaching time to the point where it created a significant role conflict:

I found as a Dean it is incredibly difficult to spend quality time doing my sports, because I had meetings every day after school and because I was a Dean I would show up late to 1<sup>st</sup> 15 trainings, and I'm reliant on them self-managing.

#### 4.4 Beyond school challenges

On the other side of the school gates teacher coaches were faced with another set of challenges. When rankings were calculated by mean, ‘Meeting family obligations’ was selected as the biggest challenge.

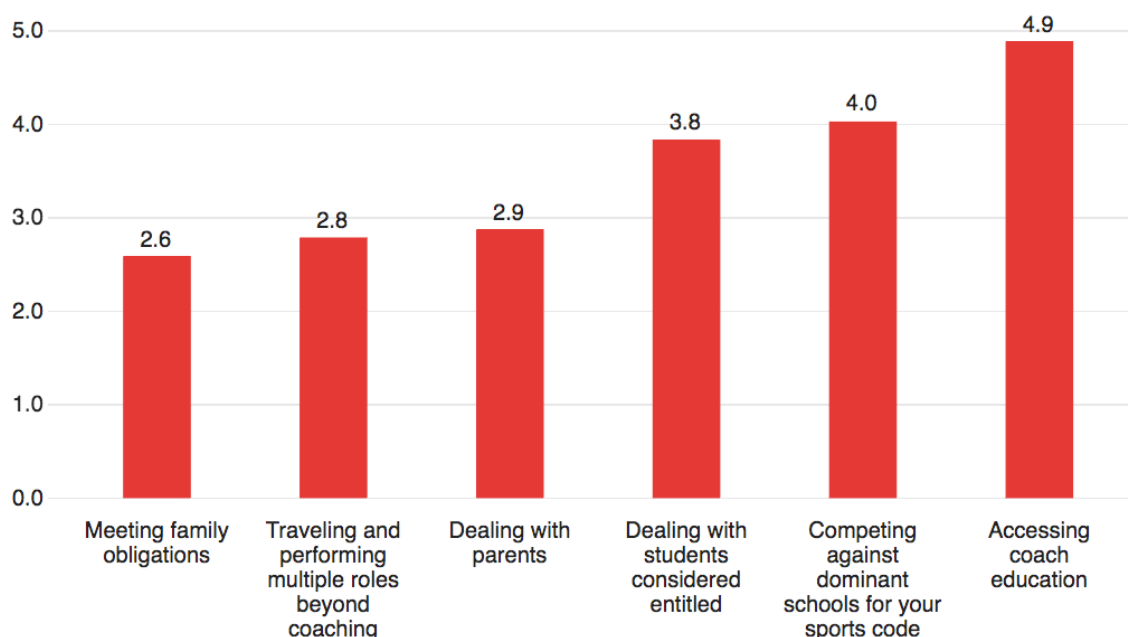


Figure 3: Possible beyond school challenges for teachers who coach<sup>5</sup>

#### 4.5 Family

There was a similar theme to this challenge, namely the matter of time. Coaching often requires attendance at games, tournaments or practices in the evenings and/or on weekends. Over a season this means that many teacher coaches would have to abstain from domestic obligations on a regular basis. The coaches’ unavailability was often a cause for frustration for family members and a challenge in terms of knowing how to address the antagonism of role conflict. Multiple examples illustrated the personal costs of having to deal with such conflict. The extent of frustration was expressed by one of the interviewees who confessed,

<sup>5</sup>Mean score – lower score = higher rank.

I've got to balance; my wife's telling me that I need to look at is this, are you actually helping the kids at the detriment to your own health? I never thought of it like that, she says when you're not coaching you're calm, you're relaxed, your personality changes. When you're coaching you're stressed because 'have I got enough players this weekend, what's happening to this kid at home', because I'm a bit close with these kids I understand their home lives a lot better, last year I had a father who showed up drunk, I had to manage that situation. Students running away from home, online issues, I'm dealing with a lot of stuff, so I'm not just coaching. (Abe)

A similar position was shared by Lela who presented a recurring theme highlighting the value and reward of coaching but having to position the benefits against the realities of family life:

Coaching a team is a great way to relate to students and improve their experience of school. I don't do it anymore mainly because I give so much of the other 6 days of my week to this all-consuming job. My family needs me and my own wellbeing needs me to have some time away. Sundays are admin and marking days so I need Saturdays for myself and my family.

Many teacher coaches argued that there had to be a trade-off. If they agree to coach and give up part or all of their weekends, their families miss out. The preferred option was to move school sport competition away from weekends (Wednesday afternoons was often the suggested alternative) giving them family time and allowing them to continue coaching:

My husband gets upset at the hundreds of unpaid hours I put into it and the time away from family. Being paid a 1/4 of a unit is a joke as once it is taxed it is pathetic. I am really stupid to keep going but I love netball and I want the students to have a cool sport that is run well. (Celia)

For many survey respondents the trade-off between family and sport meant a zero-sum outcome. A typical response stated 'time management is my biggest barrier, as workload has increased and family obligations have increased I have chosen to opt out' (Beth).

The second-ranked beyond school challenge addressed the extra aspects of being a teacher coach. The issue of transport was alluded to by both urban and rural respondents. For many teachers living in smaller communities competition often meant driving students long distances to participate in competitions. This was seen as a disincentive because 'I'm not sure if you think about the current climate with teaching in NZ I'm not sure the good will is there for people to be jumping up and down and say 'hey pick me I'd like to give up all of my Saturday to drive to Wellington and back using my own petrol' (Aaron). Such a view was acknowledged as a primary reason that Sports Directors assigned to their drop off in coach numbers. On reflection he confessed, 'Many teachers do not take up a coaching role due to the travel. If time was given back it would make a coaching role more convenient.' For those who had continued to coach a major disincentive was the multi-faceted nature that often characterised their coaching roles because '[A]s a coach you are not the coach anymore you are the coach, manager, driver, counselor, fundraiser, organiser'. By contrast the support offered by parents helped reduce the workload that coaches often registered as part of their wider roles:

I basically have kept coaching because I have had really awesome parent managers who can do a lot of the admin stuff for me and take away that time pressure. Having capable, positive managers (whether they are other teachers or parents) can make a massive difference to workload. (Latisha)

This endorsement of parental support contrasted with the challenge of dealing with parents, which was often seen as a formidable task. For one interviewee this challenge was the most problematic for staff at her school:

The most commonly discussed reason for withdrawing from coaching at our school is dealing with parents. Parents have become absolutely overbearing and intrusive into school sport. All younger and older teachers I have talked with, voice parent interference and schools entertaining and welcoming parent interference as the number one reason for not wanting to coach. (Kim)

Kim was not the only interviewee who cited dealing with parents as a major challenge. Parents were often viewed as unappreciative, and a similar disposition was commonly assigned to students. Although 'we coach out of obligation and love of sport it is increasingly difficult to fit it in to an ever-increasing workload and unappreciative parents and students'. Anna shared her concern that the treatment she received from students was often marked by a climate of entitlement and an absence of appreciation. She consequently walked away from coaching a sport she loved.

One of the reasons why I stopped coaching one of the top teams was because they treated you like shit in the end. It was they expected you to be there, they expected you to do everything, you were there to respond to all their needs but there was no simple thanks for it at the end of it. You think well actually I'm not giving up all my spare time to not feel valued.

As a sport director Neil has become frustrated at what he perceives as a growing reason teacher coaches were disengaging:

A lot can be to do with the kids... a lot of teachers, the ones that are giving up... that won't do it again next year is because you put all this effort in and you design all these coaching sessions and then the kids don't turn up. Once you've done that a few times you don't want to do it again.

Neil's concerns were similar to those of Pat, a coach of many sports teams across several codes over many years. Pat has seen a shift in the expectations and commitment of students who do not seem to share values that are often associated with being a team member. The passing of years had seen a shift in commitment from some students because 'now they turn up with all sorts of issues and pull out of games for non-important reasons 10min before they are expected to be there'. Pat believed that players had become 'more needy, less committed and less reliable and this is what is killing it for the coaches and managers.' Commitment was also selected as a concern by a volleyball coach. After financially supporting two players by subsidising their costs to go to a tournament the nature of the reciprocity of one student left him perplexed:

So the volleyball is a classic example, last year they knew that I could get the funding for them to go to the nationals, we took a team up there, two of the boys

couldn't afford to go, so our principal paid the \$100 for those two boys to go up to the tournament, halfway through the tournament when the results weren't going so well and I had to tell the players whose attitude wasn't right, he turned to me and he said 'this really sucks, like I'm wasting my time up here'. That really summed up to me some of the challenges I face. I feel like at times they're just ungrateful. (Aaron)

Pat's concerns were endorsed by several interview participants. Their selection of the word 'commitment' surfaced in many conversations and was often coupled with an assertion that this value had diminished. One athletics coach, who had promoted and coached his sport for over thirty years confessed he was a bit 'old school' but over many years he noted a distinct shift:

I'm seeing a shift in values and attitudes. I see a lot of, if you didn't turn up to practice your dad would kick you in the arse and say 'go around and apologize to the coach and you'll be there on Tuesday at four o'clock on the dot.' That's the commitment thing I don't think it's as strong as it was. (Haden)

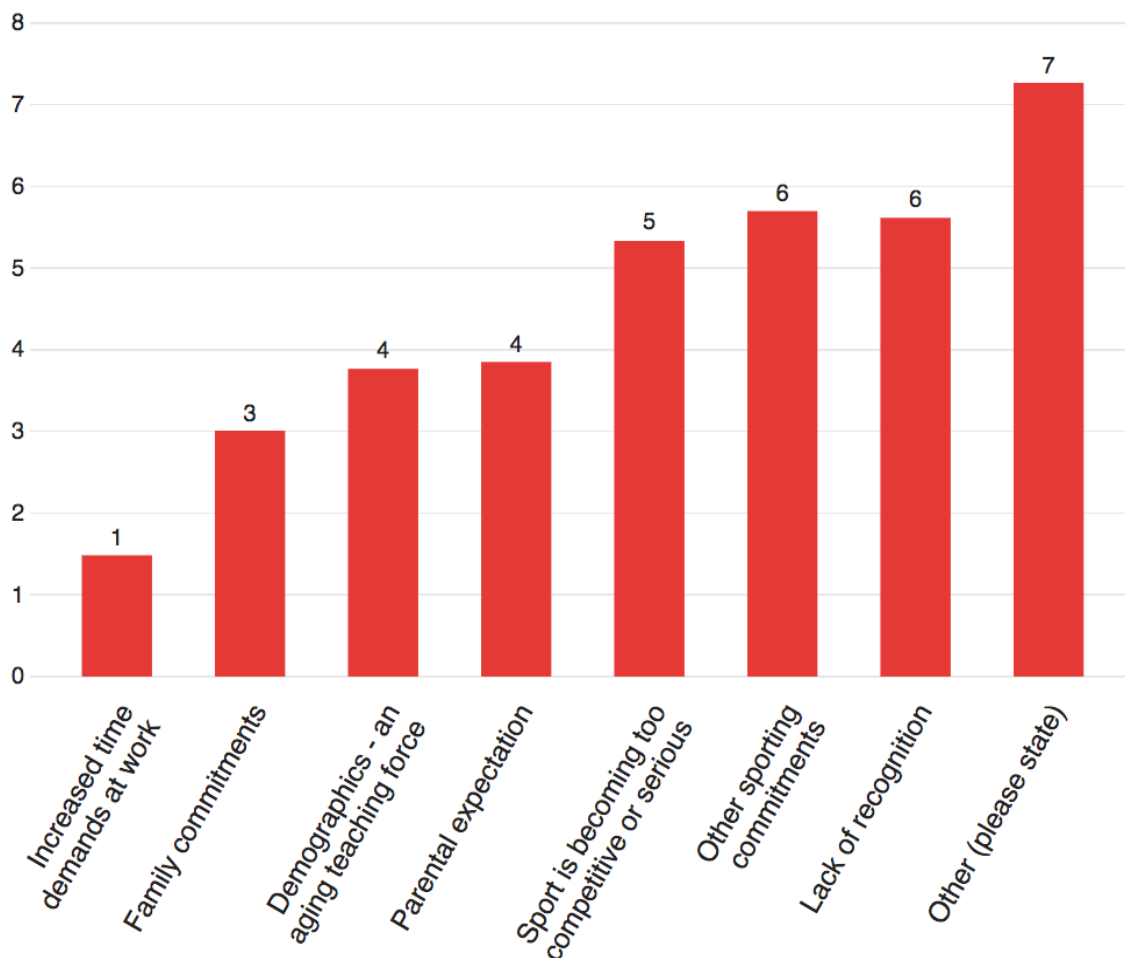
This shift in attitude and behaviour was further illustrated by a school rugby coach who shared what measures he has had to take to address a self-imposed sense of entitlement one of his players exhibited:

My #8 - he played for the [region's representative] under 16's. But when they come back to the school it is like I'm the big dog in the school, I can show up late, I can wear my uniform incorrectly, I can etc. and trying to get them to sign an agreement for example with me with my 1st 15 kids a set of standards that each kid, you're paying 85% attendance, you'll be punctual to school you attend all trainings, you'll hand in paperwork when it's required, basics that make a coach like me not have to deal with the Principal in my ear because six or seven of your boys are consistently late to school. (Tony)

In addition to attitudinal factors, the matter of profile was also alluded to. The recent foray into television coverage of school sport by Sky Sport (rugby and netball in particular) has proven to be a recognised conflict for some coaches. As one rugby coach lamented:

The weekly thing where they are now on TV... I was in that situation the week of a TV game or even the month prior to the TV game you may as well not have school because the boys are not interested in school.... most of them play rubbish because they're focused on the TV instead of playing, which is another conundrum they need to get used to. (Mike)

Clearly there are a multitude of challenges teacher coaches are facing. And to gauge teacher coaches' perspectives on how the multiple challenges identified have impacted on the acknowledged reduction in coaching numbers it is prudent to secure their interpretation of the strongest reasons behind this chronic trend. Suggested reasons have been the topic of conversations in many staff rooms and wider forums, but the research survey offered an opportunity to move beyond anecdote.



**Figure 4: Strongest reasons behind the decline in the number of teachers' coaching sport<sup>6</sup>**

#### **4.6 A Matter of Time**

Survey respondents emphatically nominated 'increased time demands at work' as the strongest reason for the decline in the number of teachers coaching sport. The nature of teachers' work and the increasing demands being placed on them meant that coaching sport often presented as a formidable part of their teaching lives. Additional survey and interview comments illustrated the reluctance and frustration many teachers assigned to their personal coaching situations or those of colleagues. Many respondents argued that this aspect of their job 'is just becoming too hard, it is so paper intensive now teaching it is ticking boxes, making certain that your kids are getting these sorts of grades, and self-appraisal and teacher registration, this registration thing is absolutely bizarre!' This view was indicative of a sizable response that either endorsed or intimated that the decline in coaches was evident because 'It is all about time. Teachers are being expected to do more and more paperwork. Some feel resentful and therefore don't want to contribute their own time for free'. A younger teacher

<sup>6</sup> Mean score – lower score = higher rank.

endorsed the increasing demands being placed on teachers' time as a widespread reason for the drop off in coaching numbers:

Probably the workload demands of teaching, because everyone seems to be pretty time poor and then forever, whether you're planning, you're marking, you're report writing, you're doing paperwork or whatever, it certainly sucks up a lot of time and then that's enough to put people off, well I think coaching and that because that's additional time that they're giving to a school. Whereas for everyone else, you do your own thing, live your own life as well, I think that's a huge thing. (Beth)

The widespread acknowledgement that workload and the associated time commitment are eroding coaching time was strongly conveyed by Dale. Like many respondents the identification for reasons was not the biggest issue; a more pressing issue was the need to interrogate what the education and sport sectors are going to do about it.

There's a wide variety of reasons for that, workload, the basic requirements of being a classroom teacher have changed and increased and I don't think people have the time or the inclination, or the spare time to give up and be involved, or just the way they're feeling around teaching in general, so a lot of people remove the word good will, probably one of the most important things we need to be talking about before it's too late!

Dale was referring to the percentage of teachers who were coaching during the previous year's census (2018). He predicts the disturbing reduction in numbers across the country would continue unless something drastic is done. This viewpoint was expressed by many survey respondents. A typical viewpoint was 'there is a drastic decline in teachers in NZ but if we think the 17% is bad now, you wait in a couple of years' time!' (Dale).

Time for family was not only recognised as the primary 'beyond the school gates' challenge, it was also ranked as the second most likely reason for the reduction in coaching numbers. The antagonism that coaching often creates in teachers' lives is probably best illustrated by Carl who toggled between his reflective comments and those of his wife:

But also my wife, I'm under pressure from my family in terms of those were my single years through my 20's, now that I'm in my 30's and I got married last year, my wife asked a simple question "where's the remuneration for the amount of hours that you're doing to coach these kids." In other words, I get paid to teach, "but you're away from me 22 Saturdays of the year", whereas this is from her point of view... "where is the balance, and then you come to a Sunday and you're smashed, you're shattered, you just want to Netflix" and my health's taken a hit.

In addition to the time requirement, many coaches highlighted the dilemma often created when coaching a school team meant that the teacher's own children could not be supported as they could not be in two places at once. For some teachers this meant that a 'family first' stance would mean that if the school team played on a weekend, they could not attend. Other teachers had devoted many years to coaching on weekends or evenings but circumstances had led to a rethink and shift in their priorities. For Mike such a shift had been hugely beneficial:



This is my first year in 21 years of not coaching school sport. I have loved coaching but it has been at the expense of my own children and I have felt bitter about the effort I put in to miss my own children's sport. I have struggled with the balance of expectations vs. lack of commitment to training and improvement. I am now much less stressed and enjoying supporting my own children.

This viewpoint was echoed on multiple occasions, often by teachers who had coached for more than twenty years. Sarah had finally become frustrated at the lack of support she and her colleagues had received:

Teachers are not valued enough for the time they put in. I have taught for 25 years and still coach 3 different teams because I know the kids will miss out. However, it's taken me a quarter of a century to say NO and next year I will do something for my own children and their sports not those who I have invested all my time into at school who at the end parents don't even watch them, pay fees, or know what the hell their own kids are doing!

#### **4.7 A generation leaving**

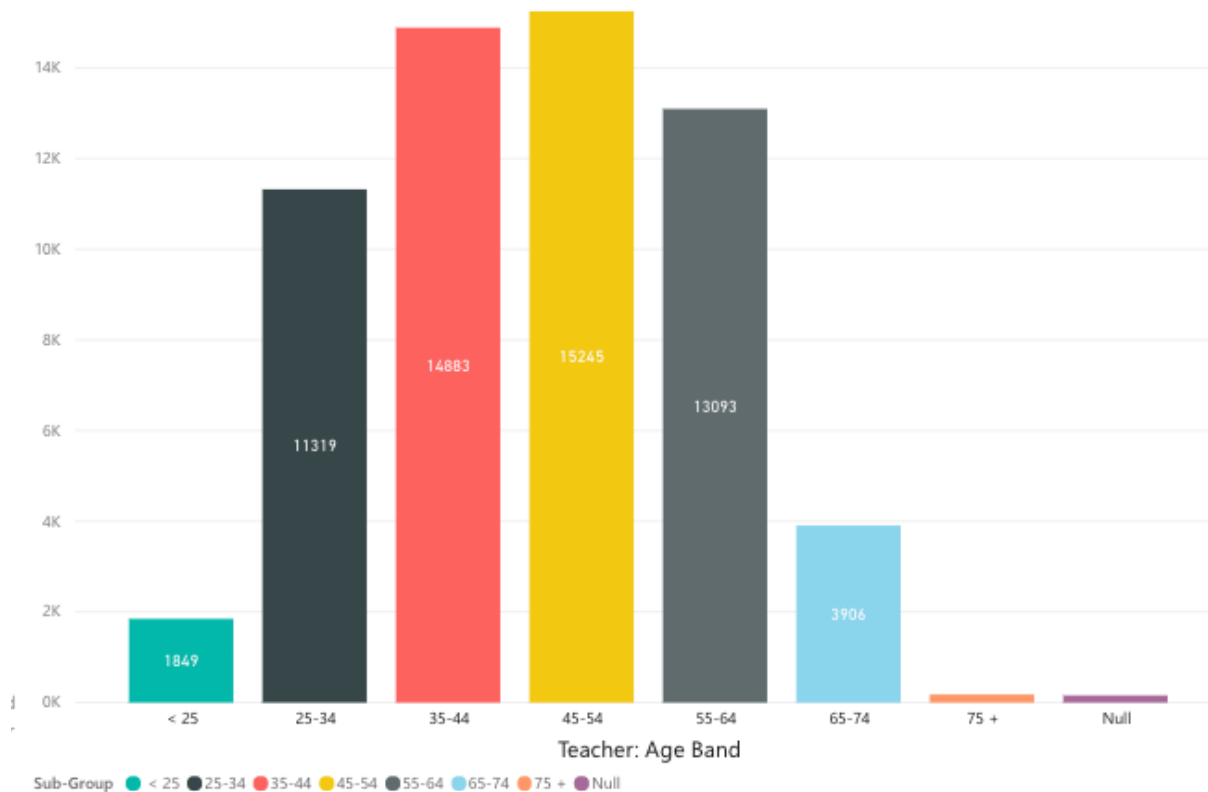
The thoughts of many years volunteering by some coaches were perhaps a window to the third reason for the decline in teacher numbers. Like many countries, Aotearoa New Zealand has an aging teaching force. There is a significant number of teachers who are fifty-five years or older (see Figure 5 below). This skew has significant implications for what future staff rooms could look like in the next decade and how the teacher demographic will change the nature of life in secondary schools. From a coaching perspective, there is also a likelihood that schools will be challenged to replace retiring teachers who have coached for many years as well as those who believe they have done their share and opt out of coaching.

These demographic changes were often the topic of discussion by current and past coaches as well as sports directors. Perhaps the most vivid example was shared by Mike, a Sports Director of a large urban secondary school who implored,

it's a pandemic for me just seeing we could have 20 people retire in one year. What happens next year, who's going to pick up the pieces, are they going to start from scratch, or it was all about scaffold and put the right people in the right places?

## Teachers

Display: Count | Filtered by: Year: 2018 Teacher Day Relief: No



**Figure 5: Secondary school teacher age demographic**

Succession was a common concern for staff who were managing sport. While not on the same scale as Mike, another teacher in charge of a sport raised a concern that teachers replacing retiring staff will not necessarily assume all the roles of their predecessors. He was frustrated because ‘I had two new staff replace retiring staff who coached and... Neither of those two staff were willing to put their hands up to get involved in rugby teams now that for me is a cultural shift from when I was at school’ (Graham). This viewpoint flagged an issue raised by many respondents about the greying teacher force. Long serving teachers, many of whom had coached sports for a number of years also observed a reluctance by younger teachers to get involved in a coaching or leadership capacity:

Maybe it is a generational thing, I have coached for 27 years and see it as part of my job and how I was raised to give back. Kids today! The new generation of teachers, what are they like when it comes to giving of their time?

I still think it is part of my job, but am beginning to resent the fact that many of the younger teachers will not do anything other than classroom teaching. Those of us who do manage and/or coach have a lovely collegial relationship and we all help each other

Millennial teachers coming through struggle with the idea of volunteerism and value their own time. This is placing extra stress on other staff, so school sport is slowly getting strangled away.

Having been involved in coaching for 30 years I fully support teachers coaching however the younger teachers feel their workload is already too high and they want compensation for it.

Many young teachers do not like to get involved with coaching. When I have a look at the age of coaches and managers they are all oldies like me.

Younger teachers also had a viewpoint in relation to demographics. In her interview Angela shared her resentment that her older colleagues believed they were entitled to step aside, in part because they could not resource newer sports that students nominated:

They're old, they should retire, cynical, no, some of them are older and they've probably as they like to say 'we've done our time it's now your time' to the young ones, so they probably think they've done their duty 20 years ago. They are the less able physically, they don't have the experience in most codes that we are desperate for.

A further issue raised the matter of succession from the younger teacher's perspective. As one 'more junior' teacher indicated, 'we only have two teachers under the age of 30 at our school, me being one, and I have been out over 20 days this year for sport' (Alex).

Clearly, there are multiple concerns related to the teacher demographic and its impact on the future of sport in schools. Succession will need to be a primary consideration as in addition to a large number of teachers retiring or leaving there is also a need to retain current teacher coaches:

Look after and support the coaches you have. Have someone whose job it is to deal with parents - deal with complaints, educate them on their roles and how best to support and grow positive, grateful and contributing athletes. Have sports policy to protect them and to guide them on best practice to provide consistency.  
(Kerry)

#### **4.8 The Parent Factor**

Parental expectation and interference were prevalent in many coaches' lives, particularly those who coached sports where potential career pathways or scholarship opportunities existed. Parents have received increasing attention from researchers and social commentators, including the media as the perceived stakes associated with school sports have intensified (Bodey, Judge, & Hoover, 2013; Jay Coakley, 2006; Kaplanidou & Gibson, 2012; Knight, Neely, & Holt, 2011; Trussell & Shaw, 2012; Wheeler & Green, 2012). Brad, a long-established Director of Sport at a large urban school stressed that this was both an historical and an escalating issue while Jo lamented that as a coach there was a perception by some parents that she was fair game for parents irrespective of where or when she might be going about her life:

It's the small stuff that no one else sees and that's the same with coaching ... you're not in at work, and they'll come up to you in the supermarket and they'll have a go at you, they will have a go at you 7pm at night, that's my job, now I'm at home.

Yes that's always been a factor, as far as I've been coaching I've always dealt with some form of parents' complaints, one way or another about selection or player position, things like that, a lot of teachers don't want to deal with that which is fair enough. (Brad)

Like many issues pertaining to school sport there was a mix of perspectives. The difficulties dealing with demanding or interfering parents were set against the many acknowledgements by teachers that their school sport programme could not survive without the valued support of parents. By example a teacher in charge of netball declared that she had twenty-two netball teams, twenty of which were coached by parents and only the two top teams had teacher coaches. Schools were often sites of both parent support and parent contrariety. The ranking of parental influence and the many comments directed toward parental factors does however signal why some teacher coaches have removed themselves from this role.

#### 4.9 Teacher coach intentions

To gain an idea of teacher coach status over the coming years, survey respondents were asked to signal the level of likelihood they will be coaching in the next three years.

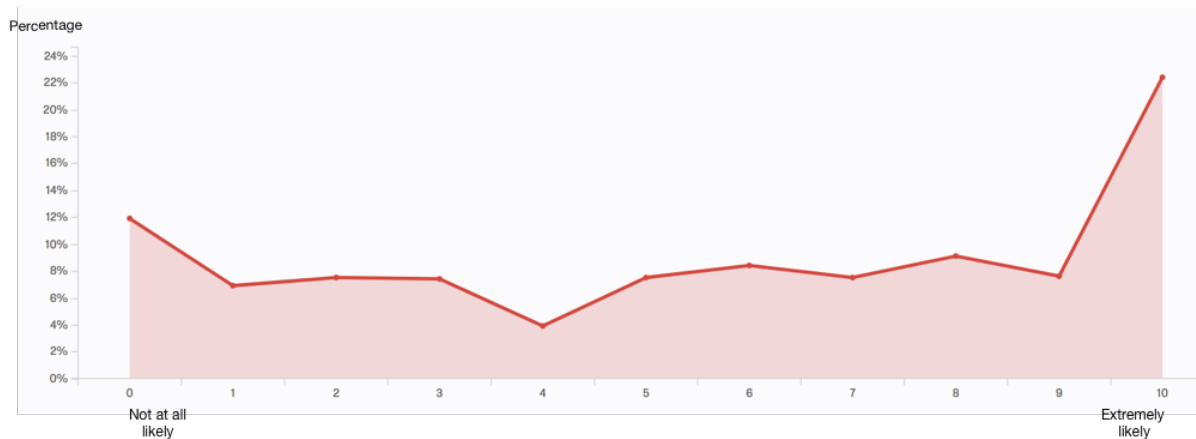


Figure 6: Intention to continue coaching over the next three years

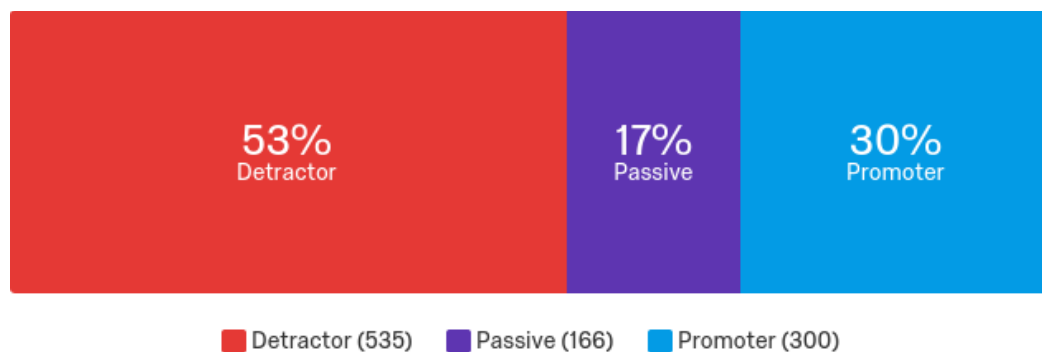


Figure 7: Continuance as detractor, passive or promoter

Of the respondents who completed this question in the survey there was a clearly defined group who would be classified as 'promoters', stating their intention to coach over the next three years was extremely or highly likely. Teachers who situated themselves at this end of the scale could be described as both devout sports people and willing supporters. These promoters have infused sport, and in particular coaching, into their careers, often regarding it as a vital aspect of school life. Michael holds a middle management position and the administrative role will often be balanced against the pleasure he extracts from his coaching role:

My job is often a very frustrating one and sometimes if it's a Tuesday or a Thursday the only thing I look forward to is school finishing and just being able to get out there and if you've got yourself a group of kids that are enthusiastic and are wanting to learn and give of their best, well to me that makes up for some of the crap sometimes that you have to go through during the day. [

Another interviewee discussed how, after initially allowing time to her induction into teaching, Alice took on a coaching role and an opportunity to pursue her love of sport as well as spending time with students in a context outside the classroom:

I'm a sport nut so it doesn't matter what I coach I just enjoy it. Personally you either enjoy it or you don't and I understand, but if I were to go back and look at what the teachers that participate in the sport get out of it and I throw myself into that category a couple of years ago, is that you get a closeness to the students that you'd never get standing up in class and disappearing at three o'clock in the afternoon.

#### **4.10 Devout support**

Despite the recognised decline in the number of teachers offering to coach there remains a core who have coached for a number of years and who have every intention to continue supporting school sport. This 'long-standing' group can be found in staff rooms up and down the country, having spent many hours on the sidelines of courts, fields, pools and arenas often sharing their passion for a sport that has been a significant part of their lives. These coaches have been the backbone of secondary school sport, often attracting colleagues and students with their almost zealot-like advocacy. Regrettably, they are a small and diminishing representative group. As the above graph indicates, there are a disconcerting number of teachers who have expressed varying degrees of doubt as to whether they will be coaching in three years-time.

#### **4.11 Consequences of leaving**

Many respondents expressed a firm view that coaching will not be part of their roles as teachers in the short term. Others indicated they are likely to leave coaching unless things change. A third group who are also considering leaving coaching only maintain their coaching role because they know there is nobody to assume their role should they step aside. Allan was a classic example of this group, confessing, 'I probably consider quitting at the end of every season, you say 'that's enough for me, it's time for somebody else.' Nobody else comes

along and you don't want to let your boys and your families down so you go again'. A similar conundrum was explained by Rob, a football coach in a rural secondary school:

I suppose it would be easy for me to not coach but I guess the bottom line is if I don't do it, I'm not sure who is. If somebody walked into my office tomorrow and said I'd really like to coach the girls 1st 11 and I've done these courses and this is my experience, I would be more than happy for them to do it.

Like many of their colleagues this group has retained their respective coaching roles only because they are aware that their departure would probably mean their students would miss out and their sport could either dwindle or even vanish.

Some teachers had already decided that the current year would be their last as a coach. This was often a decision made after evaluating the degree to which things had changed in their own school and the effect such change was likely to have on them personally:

Sadly, with an aging teacher population who feel they have 'done their time', and younger teachers rightly prioritising their own families, the demands for music, culture and other duties within schools I believe teachers are exhausted. I am involved in two codes and will be removing myself at the end of the year. (Tia)

Another example that fell into the 'detractor' group (53%) endorsed the impact of multiple factors, in this case, time and financial cost:

I am not going to be coaching next year - for the last four years I have paid for extra child care for my own children to coach a school team and manage two others. There is no extra support to do this.

The proportion of teachers considering or confirming their withdrawal from coaching in the shorter term presents as a despairing outlook. The chronic trend of teachers leaving coaching is destined to continue unless incentives are presented at a systemic level.

#### **4.12 Incentives needed**

The recognised decline in coaching numbers along with demographic factors previously discussed infers that to recruit and retain teachers there will need to be incentives presented if the decline is to be reduced, arrested or reversed. Interviewees were asked to offer what they believed to be ideal incentives to recruit teachers as coaches. Suggested incentives were then listed in the survey and respondents were asked to rank these. The results from this task are two-fold. The first provides a summary of how the incentives were ranked.

The issue of time was once again foremost in the minds of teachers. Time or payment both signaled a need for compensation. These two incentives were clear standouts as nominated by survey respondents. Time-in-lieu was nominated as the most attractive means of rebalancing the hours allocated to coaching. Reduced duty, supervision, exemption from collegial coverage or days in lieu from tournament attendance were seen potential options.

**Table 10: Ranked potential incentives to recruit and retain teachers as coaches**

Compensated for time with reduced duty or supervision	30%
Formalised payment (contract)	26%
Compensated for time with exemption from cover for absent colleagues	13%
Clear policy regarding financial compensation (travel accommodation clothing etc.)	9%
School pays for coach education courses	5%
Public recognition by school management	5%
Koha (compensation/gift)	5%
Teacher only days for coach education	4%
A dinner for school coaches	2%
Financial support to attend teachers' tournament	1%

The second result related to recruitment incentives provides a ranking by mean. This outcome depicts the overall status for each incentive when all ranking levels are included. The lowest mean value indicates the highest ranking (most favoured as an incentive).

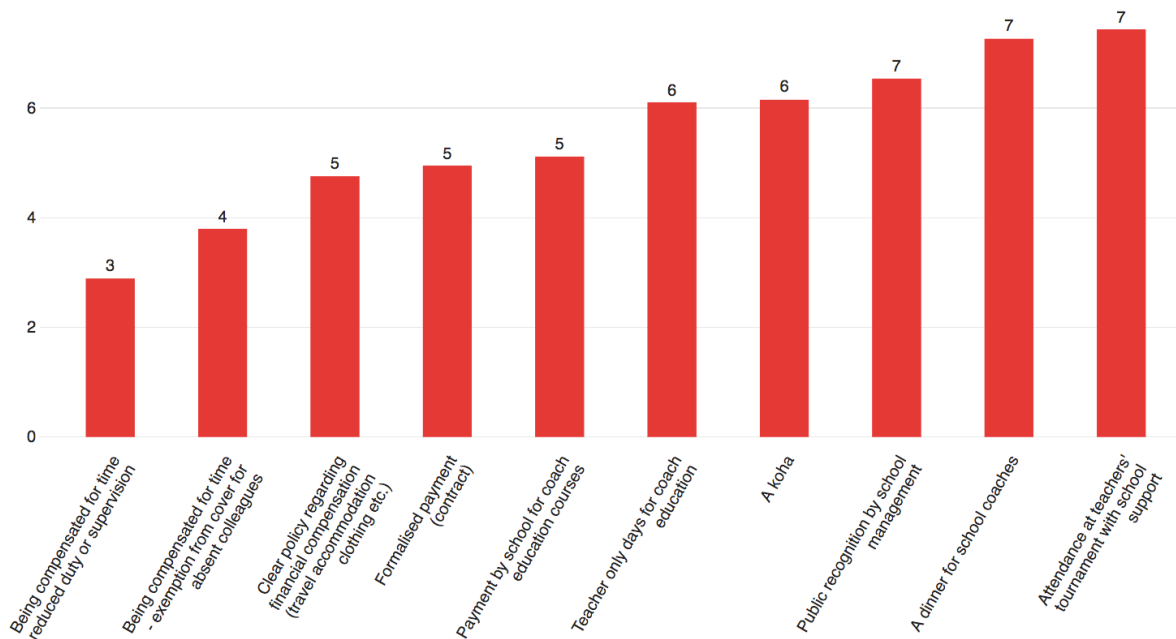
The application of mean scores presents a stronger picture for time compensation. Respondents endorsed time compensation as the two highest ranked incentives. Anonymous supplementary comments from the survey and interviews endorsed these rankings:

Time allowance would be the biggest incentive - being involved in sport changes the nature of the relationship, for the better, between the teacher and the students, but often the core teaching work, NCEA and family commitments doesn't allow for the extra time and pressure that coaching brings.

I think the biggest problem that pulls people away from coaching is time. There has been a huge increase in the administrative demands on teachers (for course work and extra-curricular) coupled with the trickle-down effect of professionalism in sport increasing parents' expectations. Meeting all of these is hard work. This is the challenge for top teams. For lower teams, finding people with the expertise and who have time (again due to increase in workload) is difficult.

I'm a part-time teacher, and I still [coach]. Yes, to be honest with you, I went part-time partly because of that; I wasn't actually able to cope with it and I was lucky cos my husband supported me, I was able to do that, and I had a couple of kiddies so I went part-time to actually manage all that work expectation.

Also, "time in lieu" should be considered essential when taking students over weekends.



**Figure 8: Ranking of potential incentives to recruit teachers as coaches<sup>7</sup>**

Some teachers referred to the experience of coaching students as the primary incentive to continue coaching, but was challenged by other disincentives:

The most valuable incentive for coaching is the experience of making a contribution to the lives of the students. This is inherent in the job. The reasons that I would consider coaching less have nothing to do with the coaching itself, more the wider demands of the school and my job that make everyday life increasingly untenable.

The third ranked incentive by mean score was the need for clear policies regarding compensation for teacher expenses, transport, mileage and time. This result aligns with the ambiguity expressed by teachers regarding the existence or content of a formal sport policy at their respective schools. This result presents as an invitation to schools to evaluate their sport policy and remove any potential ambiguity while also raising awareness.

Clear policies regarding payment and reimbursement is an example of how disparate teachers' views are toward how policy should be both codified and enacted. Many schools seek the services of community volunteers, some of whom are parents, yet there are mixed views about how schools should address payment and expenses for those who adopt a coaching role. Survey respondents were asked what their preferred coach payment option should be.

<sup>7</sup> Lower score = higher overall rank.



**Table 11: Preferred payment options for coaches**

Schools should appoint paid coaches in addition to teacher coaches whose coaching expenses are funded	18%
Schools should appoint approved community coaches in addition to teacher coaches and an allowance plus expenses are funded for both	49%
Schools should appoint approved community coaches in addition to teacher coaches and only expenses are funded for both	18%
Other	15%

There is a clear range of perspectives regarding coach payment or reimbursement. The inference would be any policy or action may not be a one-size-fits-all but rather schools may need to adopt a situational approach. This view was represented by several respondents, one of which suggested 'I think each school needs to follow what works for them but payment of anything other than expenses increases inequity between schools that can afford to charge parents and lower decile schools that can't'. The preferred survey option is to pay teachers and approved community coaches an allowance plus expenses, an option that was nominated by half of all respondents. There was an even endorsement of reimbursement of expenses only for coaches and the alternative option of paying outside coaches as well as paying coaching expenses of teacher coaches. The 'Other' category attracted a 15% nomination and included disparate viewpoints regarding payment.

#### **4.13 Payment as a polemic**

There is a clear division between teachers regarding direct payment for their coaching duties. This division is reflected in the two results regarding incentives. Although payment was the second highest incentive to be ranked at #1, the mean score reduced that ranking significantly, indicating many survey respondents assigned it as less preferred. The mean score thereby dropped its overall position to #4.

The issue of payment presented as a polemic. Teachers were strongly divided about the inclusion of remuneration for coaching. On the one hand many teachers held a position that sport in schools should be accessible for students and considered their role was to provide support and leadership in whatever capacity they could. Many alluded to the positive opportunities they had experienced as athletes and believed they had an obligation to give back to their sport and continue as servants to the needs of today's students. On the other hand, there was a somewhat emphatic view that they now worked in an environment where competition for teacher's time and the diminishing numbers of coaches was an indicator that there needed to be incentives to both recruit and/or retain teachers as coaches.

No, and that's a philosophy thing, I've spoken to coaches and they don't want to get paid... It's their philosophy about giving back to the community, they also don't want to get into that, and I do understand the different levels of expectation

that comes from the community when they start to do a user pay concept or philosophy with that.

I definitely think there should be payment, long gone are the days where everyone chips in and does their bit, because everyone is so time poor now, there should be some financial incentive or compensation, because it doesn't really matter what you do you are always putting in time and effort, and the more I noticed more and more teachers who are saying no to coaching, it is becoming harder and harder for schools to fill those positions.

Coaching within a school setting should not be funded - we are an academic institution first and foremost. There are massive benefits for coaching a team in terms of classroom productivity and so that should be the reward - not financial. Unfortunately, the place of sports within the spotlight for some schools means that coaching is massively funded and the coaches receiving the payments are not teachers (despite protestations that suggest otherwise). Level the playing field again and some of these retention issues will be sorted.

If you pay a teacher to coach and give them job descriptions and expectations that go with the pay you will find more teachers will be involved and do a better job and give more to the cause.

I don't coach to be paid, and I don't necessarily think payment is the way to encourage teachers to be active in extra-curricular activities.

There was also a clear viewpoint that supplementary payment to teacher coaches would be a Pandora's box for school sport. Many teachers expressed the view that going down the payment road would compound current inequities and introduce new problems:

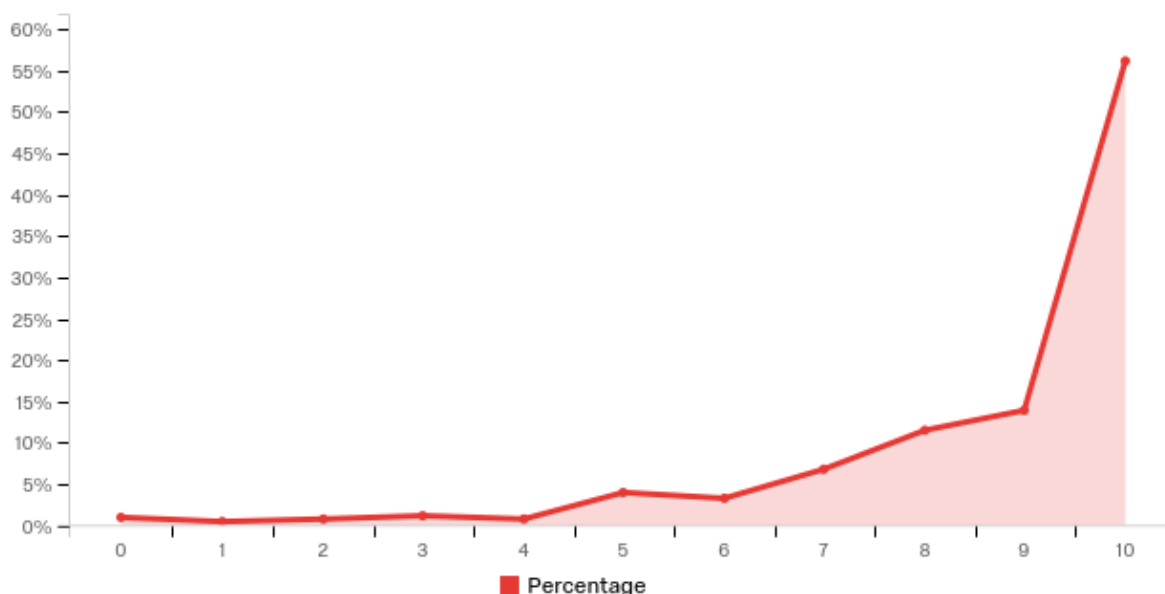
Introducing payment means additional issues such as performance-based Pay. This is what is dividing and ruining teaching and we do not need this in school coaching. School sports teams have already lost focus on what is important, and that is the players and their enjoyment. Paying school coaches will serve to ruin school sport further, increase the amount of buying in players from other schools and increase the amount of coaches who are pay driven and not athlete driven.

Paying coaches and increasing the intensity of sport will also increase the number of one-sport students and students should be playing a range of different sports. I am an international coach as Head coach of a National team and I believe that students should play a range of sports!! NZ is ruining school sport!

Paying coaches perpetuates the inequality rife in secondary school sport. Payment attracts status coaches who are then marketed to prospective students as a means of bettering their career prospects in a sport which in turn strengthens some schools whilst weakening others which of course privileges schools with money or access to resourcing they can market.

#### 4.14 Keeping sport in education

While sport has remained a significant part of secondary school life it requires considerable amounts of resourcing and funding. Opinions about the justification for the place of sport in education are often varied and at times antagonistic. The time demands sport can place on students and teachers are often seen as contrary to the academic goals many schools advocate. Given the arguments that are often made both for and against the presence of sport in schools interview and survey respondents were asked whether sport should remain as an aspect of school life.



**Figure 9: Sport must remain part of school life<sup>8</sup>**

The results from this survey question clearly endorse the place of sport in education. As Table 12 below illustrates, just over 70% of survey respondents selected nine or ten as an endorsement for sport to remain a part of secondary school life. Moreover, 89% allocated a rating of seven or above. At the other end of the scale 9% of respondents allocated a rating of five or below. Clearly, irrespective of the issues associated with teacher recruitment and retention, there remains widespread affirmation that sport should continue to be a part of school life. These results infer that there are still a significant number of ‘sport evangelists’ (J. Coakley, 2011; Giulianotti, 2004) within Aotearoa New Zealand education who support the educational benefits of sport participation to students.

<sup>8</sup> Strongly disagree 0 to Strongly agree 10

**Table 12: Sport must remain part of school life<sup>9</sup>**

0	1%
1	1%
2	1%
3	1%
4	1%
5	4%
6	3%
7	7%
8	12%
9	14%
10	56%

Such support was expressed by several interview participants who, at times, declared an almost evangelical declaration for sport. Their reasoning was often considered and usually quite emphatic:

Because I like sport, I like watching it, I like playing it, I enjoy it, you do build relationships with students in those particular codes, and that's important because you see kids in a different light outside of the classroom. (Grace)

It would be very sad and our schools wouldn't be the same if it weren't for sport and coaching... if there was some way to incentivise it more to get students more involved in it, and also to get more teachers coaching, the benefits to the schools and to society would be pretty cool. (Kevin)

Coaching/managing school sports is one of the most rewarding parts of a teacher's job. The relationships built with students and their whaanau cannot be measured, but are incredible. Sports are expensive to play and schools make payment a necessity and therefore a barrier to participation. Address that first, and school sport will flourish. (Joel)

The final survey item sought to determine the level of job satisfaction that teacher coaches assigned to their extra-curricular duties.

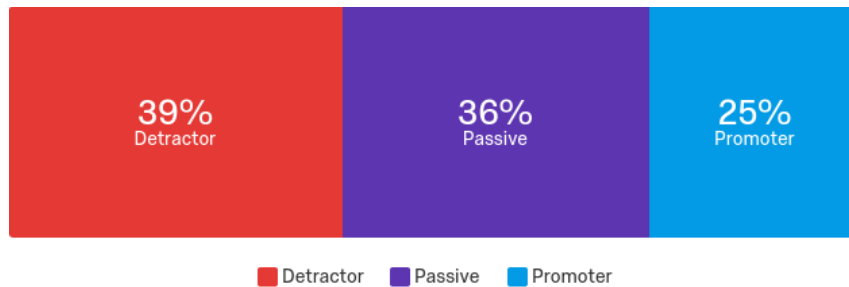
#### **4.15 Coaching and job satisfaction.**

Teacher job satisfaction has piqued the interest of educators and academics for many years. It is often framed around a sense of fulfilment and gratification they derive from conducting

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<sup>9</sup> Strongly disagree 0 to Strongly agree 10.

their roles as teachers (Locke, 1969). Satisfaction and extra-curricular involvement have also yielded a range of motives nominated by teachers including continuing their passion for a particular sport, wanting to contribute to the wider life of the school, building meaningful relationships with students or increasing their standing on job performance and or profile (Winchester, Culver, & Camiré, 2011).



**Figure 10: The degree to which coaching school sport contributes to participant’s level of job satisfaction<sup>10</sup>**

**Table 13: Contribution of coaching to job satisfaction**

0	4%
1	3%
2	4%
3	5%
4	3%
5	12%
6	9%
7	15%
8	21%
9	9%
10	16%

International research has highlighted the presence of role conflict often experienced by teachers but also cautions the allocation of causes rather than considering a multidimensional perspective that accounts for the situational and ever-changing contexts that coaching occurs within (Richards & Templin, 2012).

<sup>10</sup> On a scale from 0 [Not at all] to 10 [Significantly].

The findings from this study support Brunetti's (2001) research that involvement in extra-curricular coaching may have a positive impact on secondary school teachers' job satisfaction. More specifically, the findings endorse work carried out in Canada that indicates coaching sport has a small but significant impact on teacher job satisfaction particularly when job stressors are taken into consideration (Rocchi & Camiré, 2018).

The interviews and survey data presented a variance of the degree to which coaching contributes or does not contribute to job satisfaction. Interestingly, nearly half (46%) of respondents selected eight or higher as indicators of the contribution of coaching to their job satisfaction. There was also a sizable proportion who allocated a moderate score (40%) for coaching as a contributor to their job satisfaction. The other 14% scored this aspect of their teaching role as an area of discontent, frustration or indifference. Many of the survey respondents added that satisfaction was gained when they looked at the bigger picture beyond the actual coaching context. By example one respondent stated, 'the real incentive for coaching is that you become part of the fabric of the school. If you aren't involved in sporting or cultural activities you aren't really engaged in your school community.' Other responses highlighted the impact and value coaching sport had on their students. A typical response advocated that 'we should do it as part of our job if we have the ability to do so. What a great way for students and teachers to see each other in different contexts'.

Ross, a coach also holding a management position in his school, lamented that he was unable to draft colleagues into coaching and experience the pleasure he derived from this aspect of his job. He proclaimed, 'I coach because it's the most enjoyable part of my job and I wouldn't like to give that up, but unfortunately I'm not able at the moment to pass that enjoyment on to others.' His response was typical of the 'promoter' group who were quite steadfast in their advocacy. Coaching was often an elixir for their teaching lives as Ray touted:

For me I did a cricket practice yesterday afternoon. I had 1001 things I could have and should have done, but to get out there on a beautiful afternoon and have 90 minutes with motivated kids that are wanting to learn it was the best thing I could have done.

Many respondents framed coaching as a costs and benefits challenge. Seeing coaching as a part of the job marked by value but also potential stressors was indicative of many interview and survey responses:

The role of the teacher coach is not hard – but it can be onerous when picking and dropping off students, lasting for 15-20 weeks during the school terms. I do it because I believe that students should have sport / exercise as a normal part of life and because I enjoy my sport I like to see students make progress and enjoy it too. That is what has kept me in coaching for over 30 years. (Claire)

Personally, as a third-year teacher, I am extremely overwhelmed by my workload and on top of this I am the sole coach for a demanding sport - which involves lots of travel and overnight events (some are week-long). This year, the time demands of my sport have negatively impacted my teaching / classroom performance (which in reality is my main role as a teacher). Coaching greatly increases my job satisfaction, but it is not sustainable. (Beth)

The enjoyment factor and relationship with students tend to out-weigh everything else. (Kyle)

The third group of responses served as windows on how or why coaching no longer contributed to job satisfaction. Stacey bemoaned,

I've been coaching for years. I just don't enjoy it anymore. There are so many expectations placed on us as teachers who coach. Coaching as well as being a full-time teacher has meant I hardly get to see my own children.

Other teachers selected issues and inequities that have affected the purpose and operation of sport in either their school or community. For Leanne the satisfaction she derived from bringing her students through their sport programme was diminished by the emergence of poaching by bordering schools:

In our community I can see that has happened quite significantly, we've got schools in [her city] that poach young athletes at intermediate level and will promise them a scholarship at their intermediate, which is a joke because it's an intermediate public school. Locally... we've lost a number of talented athletes to [that school] all the way on the other side of town because they have been poached - shoulder tapped and told to come over. It's quite unhealthy, I really believe it's unhealthy with this poaching that's going on.

Poaching was not the only issue that had taken the fun out of school sport. Several respondents referred to the growing inequities that collectively challenged what educative sport should be:

I think maybe community have lost sight of the big picture behind sports, the importance in someone's well-being and in all areas of well-being not just the physical so maybe as a community we've lost sight of the importance of everyone having an opportunity to get involved in something they feel comfortable with and enjoy getting involved in.

The role of sport (and other co-curricular activities in schools) is hugely valuable. If we just dropped teachers' contact hours to say 2 hours less a week, more might just be inclined to be involved. Others may be put off by the current view of sport in NZ with its emphasis on professionalism and \$\$\$'s. If sports codes were driving sport less in the age groups, less of that approach would be flowing over into schools - plenty of students I have coached hate the way some schools front up with their special paid coach, their special gear, their special attitudes - what do we actually want them to learn though involvement in school sport? There is a lack of clarity around that and a lack of bravery on the part of schools, teachers and perhaps also School Sport NZ to consider addressing that question and advocating for a different model rather than the mini version of professional sport we are placing into schools.

When teacher coaches see sport shift away from its educational roots there is a risk they will no longer support something that they deem to be either inequitable or incompatible.

## 5.0 LOOKING BACK AND MOVING FORWARD

Prior to the publication of *Moving through Sport* in 1997, a two-day national forum was held in Auckland to collaborate on what would be the foci and contents of the junior sport document. Professor Daryl Siedentop of The Ohio State University delivered a keynote presentation to that group, highlighting the significance of the forum while stressing the importance of junior sport to this country's larger sport culture (Siedentop, 1995). His address was acclaimed internationally and continued to be published in multiple citations (Siedentop, 2001, 2007) particularly for his argument for the educative goal of junior sport. This goal espouses the developmental and educational benefits sport provides to its participants. Siedentop advocated that 'for programmes to be effective for voluntary participation, they have to be accessible, safe, and attractive, which are some of the most compelling reasons for developing and sustaining a comprehensive, inclusive school sport programme' (Siedentop, 2007, p. 21). Schools are ideally placed to ensure the tenets of educative sport are both supported and advanced. Moreover, teachers are ideally situated to ensure students and the sport they play are both protected and guided in a way that the educative goal is upheld. Many of the respondents in this research have highlighted the shifts affecting the nature of sport, including at a junior level. And while the research participants overwhelmingly endorsed the school as the preferred site for the conduct of junior sport, many are less enthusiastic about some of the changes that are responsible for their stated reluctance to maintain active support roles. If teachers continue to walk away from coaching roles, then school sport cannot be sustainable, its place in schools will not be viable and student access to positive sport experiences will be threatened.

The aforementioned shifts in junior sport were acknowledged in the recently released agreement between Sport New Zealand and five of the major NSOs: Cricket, Football, Hockey, Netball and Rugby. The collaborative announcement secured full-page spreads in daily newspapers and were headlined: 'It's time to change our approach to youth sport'. The contributing organisations acknowledge the need to rejig the nature and operation of junior sport with an associated monitoring of whether junior sport in its current guise is actually providing the types of experiences most young people are seeking or whether junior sports have fallen prey to the spectre of adult sport models marked by specialisation, intensive training and performativity.

This collective acknowledgement aligns with the recently released Sport New Zealand Strategic Plan and Strategic Direction; *Every Body Active*. In these documents specific attention is awarded to rangatahi (12-18 years) who are deemed the most 'at-risk' group of any age cohort. Sport New Zealand's data highlights the tipping point of 15 years where young people often begin to demonstrate reduced levels of physical activity. In response to this concerning acknowledgement Sport New Zealand have indicated a need for investment and initiatives that provide better youth sport opportunities. Schools in general and teachers in particular are uniquely placed to promote and provide such opportunities. Nowhere is this better illustrated than the discussion carried out with one interviewee. Phil, the sports director for a large regional single sex school lamented that their school could not supply coaches for the 60 basketball teams born out of student interest. They consequently had to reduce the team count by one third meaning 'because we have a staff member with every



team, we could only staff 42 this year.’ It is concerning to think that students are either missing out, their experiences are diminished or their desire to seek physical activity through sport are challenged by a system that is arguably under immense pressure.

Numerous conversations carried out with interview participants highlighted the ‘pied piper’ effect often witnessed in schools. Often the passion for a sport offered by one teacher would have a magnetic response from students, willing to learn, to perform and to grow under the tutelage of that teacher coach. The challenge will be to position those coaches in front of our young people and to ensure that as teacher coaches they are supported appropriately.

The most recent School Sport NZ census indicates there were 4,617 secondary school teachers operating in a coaching capacity (New Zealand Secondary Schools Sports Council, 2018). One decade ago that number was 5,443 representing a reduction of 826 teachers in ten years. The inference can therefore be that, on a national level, each school year there are between 80 and 90 fewer teachers coaching school sport than the previous year. This trend is not short term. Analysis of census data over several years reveals a perpetual drop-off in numbers with little if any arrest or reversal being likely unless drastic changes are made at both a situational and systemic level.

For several years, our secondary schools have had to adopt strategies to address the teacher coach drop off. These have included seeking the support of community members, sports clubs, parents and senior students; asking current coaches to take on more coaching roles and in some schools that are well resourced and financially advantaged, hire coaches who are paid to coach selected teams or groups in chosen sports. While these actions are noble and have to some extent ameliorated the declining numbers, they have failed to address the more pressing issue of why teachers continue to disengage from coaching or equally, what must be done to attract or recruit teachers who have severed ties with coaching, back into the sport milieu. Findings from this research offer a bank of reasons why teachers have chosen to cease coaching or are considering a separation from their coaching roles. Moreover, participants in this research project have indicated their preferred incentives to recruit and retain teachers as coaches.

## **The need for collaborative attention**

The severity and duration of the teacher coach dilemma has been acknowledged in NZSSSC Annual Reports spanning the last fifteen years but any solution will require more than the attention of one organisation. If any reversion of the teacher coach descent is to eventuate then schools, including Principals, Sports Directors and Boards of Trustees, and kindred Government agencies including Sport New Zealand and The Ministry of Education in liaison with School Sport New Zealand (NZSSSC) will collectively need to commence a conversation about how teacher coaches and schools can be both supported and resourced at an operational, fiscal and policy level. Teacher coach attrition is a serious matter that deserves serious attention, serious examination and more than serious dialogue. Attention must be shared and coordinated if solutions are to be reached.

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