



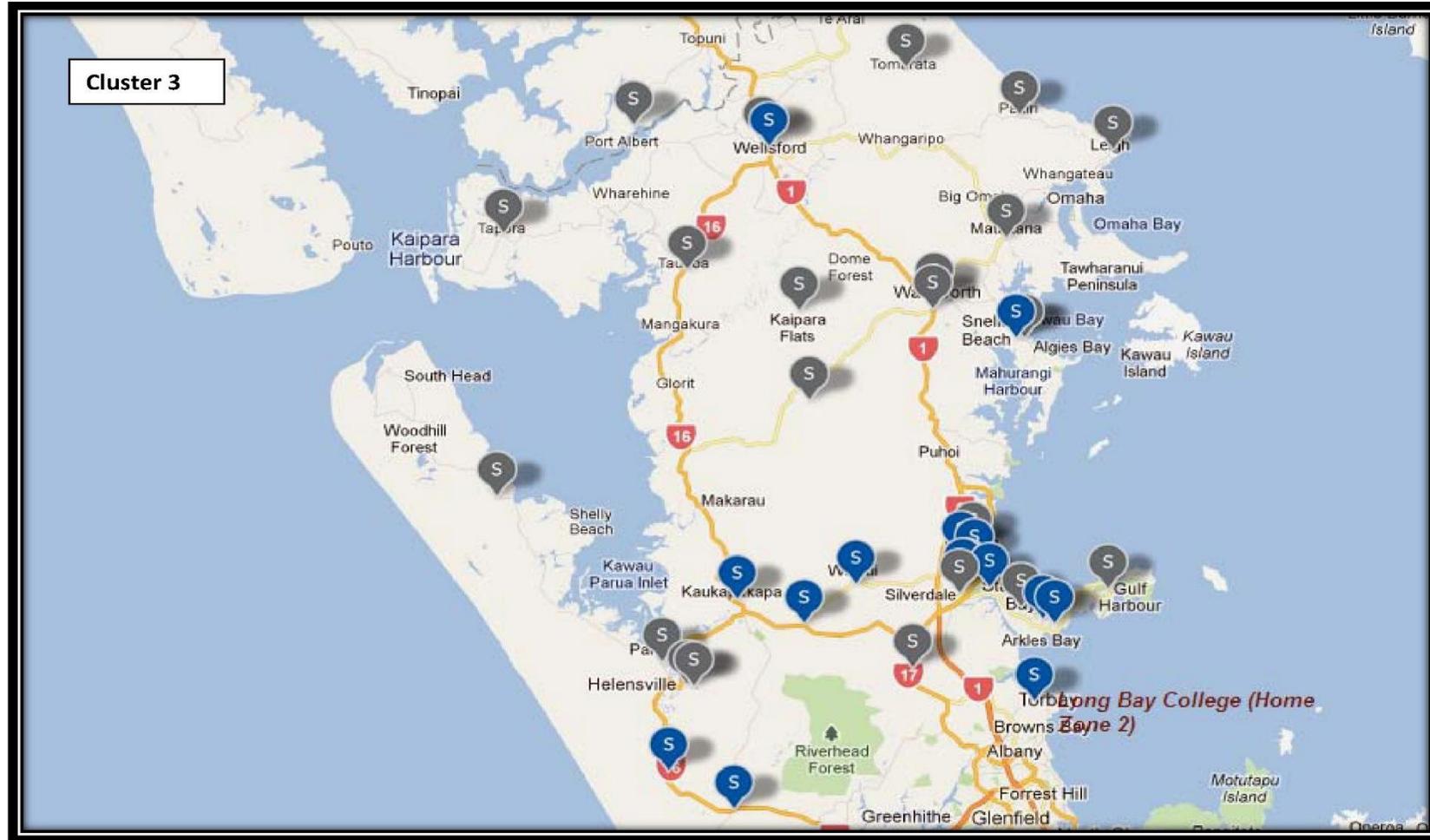
Twin Coast RTL B Cluster

The Practice Leaders

Background to the Twin Coast Cluster



- ▶ The Cluster was formed by the amalgamation of four Clusters:
 - **Kaipara**
 - Helensville/Parakai/Waimauku area
 - Based at Parakai School (two RTL B)
 - **Hibiscus Coast**
 - Orewa/Whangaparaoa
 - Based at Red Beach School (seven RTL B)
 - **Mahurangi**
 - Warkworth/Mahurangi Peninsula area
 - Based at Warkworth School (two RTL B)
 - **Wellsford**
 - Wellsford/Upper Kaipara Harbour/Pakiri area
 - Based at Wellsford School (two RTL B)





The Challenge

- ▶ How to create one new Cluster out of four successful Clusters





The Options

- ▶ Keep each satellite as a separate entity
 - No Deal
- ▶ Move everyone under one roof at Red Beach School
 - No Deal
- ▶ Have everyone working outside their satellite areas
 - No Deal
- ▶ Choose a middle way
 - O.K. then....I'll take the offer



The Middle Way

- ▶ We had to develop:
 - Common policies and procedures
 - Common Referral forms and Practice formats
 - An intake process in which all the RTLB were included
- ▶ To do this, a variety of working groups were set up.
 - Each had a representative from each of the four satellites
- ▶ I knew there was a big task ahead.

I needed help.
I needed Practice
Leaders





Initial Appointments

- ▶ Two Practice Leader positions were advertised internally in the first term. They were for a fixed term for the rest of the year.
- ▶ The Job Description was specific.
 - To assist the Manager in:
 - Implementing the Transformation
 - Assisting the individual RTL B in their teams to adjust to the changes
- ▶ The members of each team were a mixture of each satellite area

Progress in the First Year



- ▶ Progress was slow but steady
- ▶ We gradually overcame:
 - Patch protection over forms and referrals
 - ‘Forgetting’ to keep their Google Calendars up to date
 - Only having their own mobiles on rather than the Cluster issued phone
 - All the other little things that people do when starting on the change curve
- ▶ At the same time, the Practice Leaders and I were developing a very useful and supportive leadership team.
 - As this developed so the changes matured and bedded in.



New Positions

- ▶ After the first year, three Practice Leader positions were advertised
- ▶ The three appointed came from Red Beach, Wellsford, and Parakai thus covering the Cluster as a whole
- ▶ Once again each Practice Leader team was a composite from across the Cluster
- ▶ We now started looking at stronger ways in which to consolidate the Cluster.



Responsibilities Increase

- ▶ Each Practice Leader was now also responsible for two teams:
 - Their Practice Leader team. The membership remains constant.
 - Their Discontinuation team. The membership changes each term.
- ▶ The Cluster was coming together well but a problem remained:
 - Consistency of practice and the associated paperwork.
- ▶ What could we do?
 - The solution needed to be simple and straight forward
 - It had to be capable of being readily adopted by the Cluster as a whole.

The solution: SchoolGate



- ▶ SchoolGate provides for our Cluster:
 - An accurate database which generates the required statistical returns
 - A case management system based on the Toolkit
 - This has replaced 90% of the paperwork associated with referrals
- ▶ The referral documentation can only be seen by:
 - The respective RTLBs – each can only see their own referrals
 - The Cluster Manager and the Practice Leaders
- ▶ Introducing SchoolGate has provided the means for everyone to follow the Cluster way – RTLB and SENCO. PL and CM.
- ▶ The Cluster is now nearly fully consistent in its practice.



Communication

- ▶ The three Practice Leaders and I meet each week on a Friday morning.
 - Coffee is an important part of this meeting
- ▶ The Practice Leaders meet with the members of their team both individually and as a group
- ▶ The Cluster meets as a Cluster four times a term
 - For half a day on two occasions
 - For a full day on the other two occasions

Other Tasks



▶ Referrals

- The three Practice Leaders and I, together with two rostered RTLB, form the Referral Panel.
 - This panel was formed with the unanimous support of the RTLB
 - The structure allows for greater flexibility in the timing of the intake meetings

▶ Appraisals

- I undertake the formal appraisals each year
 - The Practice Leaders hopefully cut things 'off at the pass' before they come to my official attention
- ▶ The PLs take a real pride in their teams.



Where to from here?

- ▶ The Practice Leaders have come a long way, especially from an initial reluctance to comment professionally upon their colleagues' work.
- ▶ The full appraisals are still carried out by the Cluster Manager. The time is however approaching when the Practice Leaders will contribute more to this process.
- ▶ At the moment we are debating whether the PL positions should remain fixed term or become permanent.
- ▶ My next step for the Practice Leaders?
 - Formal leadership training.
 - If anyone has any suggestions of a provider ...?



Conclusion

- ▶ The Practice Leaders have been an integral part of the development of the Twin Coast RTL B Cluster.
- ▶ As the Cluster has developed, so have the Practice Leaders. They now:
 - Have taken ownership of the professional development of their teams
 - Contribute effectively to the future development of the Cluster
 - Taken a lead in the direction in which the Cluster progresses
- ▶ It is my belief that:
 - What is in place will continue to grow and develop
 - Our Practice Leaders will be the next generation of Cluster Managers.