

## Second United States - New Zealand Education Policy Roundtable

Auckland, New Zealand  
December 4-8, 2006

The second United States-New Zealand Education Policy Roundtable was held in Auckland on December 4-8, 2006. Hosted by the University of Auckland and guided by the leadership of the New Zealand Ministry of Education, the second Roundtable was attended by distinguished scholars and policymakers from both nations, with participants from the Ministry of Education, the University of Auckland Faculty of Education, the Victoria University of Wellington, and the NZ Council for Educational Research representing New Zealand, and an American delegation comprising representatives from the University of Pennsylvania Graduate School of Education (PennGSE), the Consortium for Policy Research in Education (CPRE), and the Spencer Foundation. Associates from France and the United Kingdom observed and offered their expertise as well.

Organized under the themes of formative assessment, teacher learning, literacy and numeracy, the second US-New Zealand Roundtable afforded the members of both delegations the opportunity to advance the exchange begun during the first Roundtable in Philadelphia in October, 2004. During the conference sessions, participants presented papers and talks on recent developments and research in the areas of professional learning, formative assessment in literacy and numeracy, and school improvement. The delegates also participated in visits to area schools to observe classroom practices, as well as enjoying a tour of local vineyards. Concurrently with the Roundtable sessions, numerous participants engaged in presentations and discussions concerning CPRE's research investigation into the role of policy supports for the use of formative assessments in the United States, England, France and New Zealand. The study, **Using Formative Assessments: The Role of Policy Supports**, examines how elementary teachers use formative assessments to improve their practices and, ultimately, student learning.

During the closing session on December 8, the participants summarized the preceding discussions and identified areas of common research interest, with each delegate nominating which areas would be of individual interest to him or her. GSE International is now working with the University of Auckland, the New Zealand Ministry of Education, and the New Zealand Embassy in the United States to plan next steps, including a third Roundtable. In addition, the Spencer Foundation has generously offered to host additional discussions concerning the Role Project during the next American Educational Research Association (AERA) annual meeting in Chicago in April 2007.

The first United States-New Zealand Roundtable was initiated by GSE-International in partnership with the New Zealand Ministry of Education, in order to establish a cooperative forum for exchange and mutual exploration of important questions in education policy and reform in both nations. The first roundtable, held in Philadelphia in October 2004, was coordinated by GSE-International, with academic direction and delegates provided by CPRE. New Zealand was represented by an eleven-member delegation under the leadership of Mr. Robert McIntosh, Deputy Secretary of the New Zealand Ministry of Education. Discussion focused on the policy framework of education within the U.S. and New Zealand, and more specifically on how professional learning is supported through national strategies and school improvement initiatives.