Reducing School Stand-Downs –
A case study of one New Zealand secondary school

A thesis presented in partial fulfilment of the requirement for the degree of
Master of Education (Educational Psychology)
At Massey University
New Zealand

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November 2013
In 2012 schools in New Zealand stood-down over 13,000 students as a result of behavioural difficulties. Within this data are a disproportionate number of low decile, male and Māori students. This present study examines the stand-down processes at one secondary school to compare the study school’s stand-down data with national norms, and conduct a case study within the school to gather different perspectives on a stand-down event from two students, their families, and school staff. Possible ways to reduce stand-downs and intervene early before behaviour peaks to a level that may justify a stand-down are examined from a global view and then in relation to the specific contexts at the study school. Successful measures that can lead to a reduction in school stand-downs include the implementation of a positive behaviour framework such as School-Wide Positive Behaviour for Learning which is being promoted and implemented in New Zealand, which take a targeted, tiered approach to behavioural interventions. Restorative Practices and seeking interventions that assess the function of student behaviour are also highlighted as successful measures to reduce the time students spend out of school as a result of behavioural incidents.
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