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POOLS2SCHOOLS – A WATERSAFE AUCKLAND INITIATIVE FOR SCHOOL AQUATIC EDUCATION

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Abstract The Pools2Schools programme aimed to deliver a multi-dimensional aquatics education programme within a cluster of schools. Funded by Sport Auckland, the programme consisted of professional development for teachers, poolside support, provision of classroom resources and extracurricular activities.

Aims/Objectives/Purpose The aim being up-skilling the teachers to meet the requirements of the New Zealand Curriculum, to ensure students have the opportunity to learn basic aquatic skills and increase participation.

Methods Classes mostly consisted of fundamental skill development in swimming and water safety, with extracurricular sessions consisting of aquatic sports including squad coaching, flippa ball, snorkelling, surf lifesaving, as well as remedial classes. Ten organisations have been involved in the programme, with around 2100 students taking part across 11 schools. For schools in the cluster without a pool, a portable pool was used.

Results/Outcome ‘Our staff, students and community benefited from our participation in this project in a number of different ways. I am of the opinion that this is mostly due to having a facilitator working with the teachers, providing professional guidance at all times. This support is in addition to the professional development staff meetings we had. Very few projects have this level of support and professional development for staff and the results are a reflection of this’—Principal.

Significance/Contribution to the Field The programme has had many positive outcomes for students, schools and the wider community. Students have had huge increases in swimming, water safety skills. Teachers have noted development in their ability and confidence to deliver aquatic programmes. Parents mentioned the positive outlook the students now have about swimming.