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The fire appeared to have spread 200 to 300 metres.

Mr Cook said it was in a similar location to one earlier this year.

The Hidden Trails Half Marathon is scheduled to take place in the reserve on Sunday but event spokesman Peter Wright said it was unlikely the fire would affect the



race's running. However, he said he would reassess the situation when it was under control.

Photos Stuart Cook

Decile changes for 11 schools - five win, six lose

Neryda McNabb
Education reporter

ONE of the Eastern Bay's smaller rural schools is reeling in the wake of decile changes that will carve about \$4500 off its annual budget.

While this might not be much money to a larger school, it is a cost that Thornton School, with just 100 pupils, will find difficult to absorb without cutting teaching resources.

The school was the big loser in new decile ratings, recalculated based on last year's census, moving from decile 5 to decile 8.

Deciles indicate the extent to which a school draws its students from low socio-economic communities, with decile 1 schools having the highest proportion of students from poor communities.

Most Eastern Bay schools have retained the same decile rating and will therefore continue to receive the same

or similar levels of state funding. Eleven schools' ratings in the Whakatane and Kawerau districts changed - five falling and six rising.

Among those that have changed there are more losers than winners, with Thornton School the most seriously impacted.

For principal Shelley Bremner, the news came as a complete shock.

"In a small school like ours, when you have done your budget and put it into your strategic plan, to turn around and say it's not going to happen is a bit of a surprise."

She cannot understand where the change has come from because the school community remains the same. The only thing the school could do was cut back, Mrs Bremner said.

She did not expect the ministry of education's transitional arrangements to help schools adjust to new funding levels would help much.

"Those static costs, like power and

School	Decile now	Decile 2015	
Allandale	3	2	\$\$ WINNERS
Matata Public	5	4	
Nukuhou	4	3	
Otakiri	6	5	
Trident	5	4	
Waiohau	1	2	\$\$ LOSERS
Te Teko	1	2	
Thornton	5	7	
Edgecumbe Primary	2	3	
Te Mahoe	1	2	
Ruatoki	1	2	

RATINGS: The decile ratings of the above schools have changed. Where ratings decline, schools receive more funding.

rates, don't change so we'll be cutting back on the teaching resources because that is the only place you can make

changes.

Whakatane's Allandale School was one of a number of schools to move down a decile, earning it extra funding.

The school has moved from decile 3 to decile 2, where it was prior to the 2006 census.

Principal Drew Manning said he doubted the "extra couple of thousand" would have much impact spread over 400-plus students, but the lower rating would bring other benefits.

"The big thing is there are a lot of programmes that are there to help communities and they are generally for decile 1 and 2 schools, so it puts Allandale back into that; there's a lot of external support there for us as we hit decile 2."

Whakatane Great Outdoors

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