

NEW PLYMOUTH BOYS' HIGH SCHOOL

Realising Maori student potential

Improving educational outcomes for Maori students

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The classroom is a fishbowl. You can at least influence the quality of the water.

Despite the efforts and allocation of resources for the past three years at New Plymouth Boys' High School, we are not seeing an improvement in the educational outcomes of our Maori boys. This paper will outline research-based initiatives and in particular outline the practices of four secondary schools that are making an impact on educational outcomes for Maori students.

He mihi nui ki nga iwi o Taranaki. Ko Taranaki te maunga. I nga wa katoa e tu ana te maunga, e whakapiripiri ana ia i nga tangata katoa o Taranaki.

He mihi ki te hapu o Te Atiawa, Ngati Te Whaiti. Ka nui te tautoko kua hoatu ratou ki te kura tuarua tamatane o Ngamotu

He mihi ki nga mate. Kua okioki ratou kua tae ki te kaihangā. Ka maumahara nga kaiako Maori kua ako i te kura i nga wa o mua.

E mihi ana ki te kaupapa o tenei pepa. E hari ana ahau ki te titiro, ki te whakarongo, ki te whawha ki nga taonga o te iwi.

*Kua maumahara ahau i te whakatauki **“Hohunu kaki, papaku uaua”** – no reira kia kaha ki te mahi mo nga tamariki Maori.*

Background Information

If a Maori student stays at New Plymouth Boys High School (Decile 7 single-sex school with 18% Maori population) until the end of Year 13, he is nearly guaranteed to pass Level 2 NCEA; but despite our best efforts at Level 1 NCEA, Maori students are tracking 10% below non-Maori students in gaining the necessary 80 credits. In particular they are below non-Maori academic achievement in external assessments.

The measures NPBHS has put in place to realise Maori student potential are:

- Whanau meet regularly and are used to support Maori students. This group also seeks to improve the cultural profile of Maori within the school. A close relationship with tangata whenua is being developed.
- There are opportunities for Maori students to participate in groups such as kapa haka and to study a course in NCEA Maori Performing Arts.
- HODs are encouraged to be particularly cognisant of the academic performance of Maori students, and take this into account when deciding targets for the following year. Staff have undertaken PD in te reo and tikanga and 25 staff are studying the Mauri Ora Open University Course. Students who gain an “Excellence” in NCEA are presented with certificates at full-school assemblies.
- There is a staff member with the designated role of monitoring, and mentoring Maori students to improve their academic performance. In particular NPBHS has targeted Y11 Maori students (each year about 40 are mentored/monitored). We have trialled the use of MOODLE and e-learning specifically with Maori students.
- Each year the outcomes of Maori students are measured in terms of their behaviour, retention rates, and academic performance and the data collected is used to assess the school’s practices.
- We have encouraged leadership opportunities for Maori students with a Maori student leader in the school, school-wide haka, a room designated as using Maori kawa; head of house/prefects and sport/cultural activities.

Ka Hikitia

Ka Hikitia - Managing for Success: The Maori Education Strategy 2008- 2012 was released by the Ministry of Education in April 2008. It sets the direction for improving education outcomes for and with Māori learners. Ka Hikitia' means to 'step up', to 'lift up', or to 'lengthen one's stride'. Here, it means stepping up the performance of the education system to ensure Māori are enjoying educational success as Māori.

Language is the essence of culture. Through te reo Māori, spirituality and thought are both expressed and valued. People with te reo Māori are confident in te Ao Māori. It is a treasure passed down from ancestors that must be nurtured. It is protected by the Treaty of Waitangi but for a language to live, it must be spoken. *Ka Hikitia – Managing for Success* therefore seeks to ensure that Māori students can access the Māori language education options they want build mātauranga and knowledge of tikanga Māori.

ERO Reports

Promoting success for Māori students: schools' progress (June 2010)

This 2010 report evaluates how schools have promoted success for Māori students since ERO's previous national report in 2006.

The success of Māori students at school is a matter of national interest and priority. ERO has published five national evaluation reports on this topic since 2001. These have identified system-wide issues and recommended steps to be taken by schools and by the Ministry of Education to promote success for Māori in education. This 2010 ERO evaluation indicates that not all educators have yet recognised their professional responsibility to provide a learning environment that promotes success for Māori students.

Research

1. Te Kotahitanga

Te Kotahitanga (meaning unity) was a research and professional development programme for teachers of students in years 9 and 10. It was part of the Ministry of Education's Te Tere Auraki professional development strategy to improve teaching practice and the engagement and achievement of Māori learners in English-medium settings.

This research project sought to investigate, by talking with Māori students (and other participants in their education) how a better understanding of Māori students' experiences in the classroom and analyses of these experiences might lead to improved policy and teaching and learning that would ultimately result in greater Māori student achievement. It also sought to identify those underlying teacher and school behaviours and attitudes that make a difference to Māori achievement.

The results of this research and professional development were that

- change took place in the teachers' classrooms throughout the whole school and created a 'cultural change' in the school so that all teachers were supportive of and knowledgeable of the new approaches.
- students were able to experience consistency across as many of their subject classrooms as possible.
- there had been a shift from the dominant teacher-directed traditional pattern of classroom interaction to a more balanced approach including more discursive teacher-student interactions
- the belief that an influence on Māori students' educational achievement lay in the minds and actions (positioning within discourse) of the teachers.
- The development of an institutionalized means of teachers collaboratively reflecting upon and changing their practice in light of a range of evidence of student participation and achievement, from a range of measures, provides a way forward which has an explicit focus on improving teaching practice and improving the interaction and quality of relationships between teachers and students.
- There was a significant growth in Māori learner achievement for schools participating in Te Kotahitanga, in some cases twice the expected gain.
- There were fewer students had unexplained absences from school, more learners were engaged, and more said their relationships with teachers had improved.

A full account of the project is presented in a report: R. Bishop et al. (2003) *Te Kotahitanga: The Experiences of Year 9 and 10 Māori Students in Mainstream Classrooms*

2. Rangiātea: case studies and exemplars

These five Rangiātea case studies and exemplars examine five New Zealand secondary schools, each of which is on a journey towards realising Māori student potential.

3. Ruia Tools

Along with the Rangiātea research which this study is based on, the Ministry developed some tools called 'Ruia'. The Ruia tools were released online on 20 April 2012. The tools are contained in two linked websites and provide leaders with resources and practical strategies about teacher appraisal and establishing effective school-whānau partnerships. The tools have been developed with schools, researchers and expert practitioners. They are built on evidence that shows when leaders and teachers engage in culturally responsive practices this has a significant effect on the extent to which Māori learners set and achieve their goals and aspirations. The Ruia tools, along with Rangiātea(exemplars and case studies) and He Kākano (a national professional development programme English-medium secondary and area schools), are part of a suite of tools focused on raising Māori student achievement.

Links <http://www.educationalleaders.govt.nz/Leading-change/Maori-education-success/Ruia-tools-appraisal-and-partnerships>

Appraisal tool: <http://appraisal.ruia.educationalleaders.govt.nz>

School-whānau partnerships tool:
<http://partnerships.ruia.educationalleaders.govt.nz/>

Further reading

1. *Education Counts Te Kotahitanga* homepage. Read the Phase 1, 2, and 3 research reports on the programme.
2. *Ngā Haeata Mātauranga The Annual Report on Māori Education*. Read the latest evidence and data relating to Māori education. This year's report starts the process of reporting on Ka Hikitia Managing for Success Māori Education Strategy 2008–2012,
3. Ministry of Education. (February 2009) *Ngā Haeata Mātauranga The Annual Report on Māori Education, 2007/08*. Wellington: Ministry of Education

4. Promoting success for Māori students: schools' progress (June 2010) ERO report

This 2010 report evaluates how schools have promoted success for Māori students since ERO's previous national report in 2006.

5. Supporting school leaders to meet the challenge of equity

by Marion Fitchett

In this article Marion Fitchett reviews the professional learning opportunities that educational leaders need in order to respond productively to the Ka Hikitia strategy so that Māori enjoy educational success as Māori.

6. Video: Professor Russell Bishop

by EDtalks Russell Bishop is Professor of Māori Education at the University of Waikato and director of the Te Kotahitanga project. Here Professor Bishop talks about the need to provide a classroom context where caring and learning relationships, paramount to the educational performance of Maori students, can be developed.

7. Sam Gets Ahead with Youth Apprenticeships Scheme

by Ngā Haeata Mātauranga The Annual Report on Māori Education 2007/08

In this case study, Aotea College head boy Sam Henare (Ngāpuhi) talks about his personal experience of the Youth Apprenticeships Scheme, an initiative available to support learner decision-making at school.

8. Promising Results from Four-Year Te Kotahitanga Journey

by Jacqui Gibson

This article looks at Massey High School's 4-year experience with Te Kotahitanga and the results it is seeing.

9. Talented and Inspired Leadership the Key to Education Success

by Ngā Haeata Mātauranga The Annual Report on Māori Education 2007/08

This case study explores how Te Kopuru School's principal Lee Anderson has spent the past 8 years changing the culture of her small Northland school to improve the education, social, and cultural outcomes of the school's Māori learners.

10. Trusteeship: a special opportunity for whānau

by Ngā Haeata Mātauranga The Annual Report on Māori Education 2006/07

In this case study, long-serving school trustee and New Zealand School Trustees Association president Lorraine Kerr talks about the important contribution whānau can make to school boards, noting that boards need an ability to analyse, understand, and tackle complex problems in commonsense ways.

11. Otago School Links Literacy Success to Education Partnerships

by Ngā Haeata Mātauranga The Annual Report on Māori Education 2007/08

This case study focuses on Wymondley Road School principal Tone Kolose and his school's experience of boosting the literacy achievement

of its mostly Māori and Pasifika learners. School data shows more than 50 per cent of students in years 4 to 6 are writing at or above the national norms – a significant improvement on the previous year.

12. Supporting rangatahi with common-sense solutions

by Ngā Haeata Mātauranga The Annual Report on Māori Education 2007/08

In this case study, Newlands College deputy principal John Murdoch reflects on his school's experience in setting up a whānau advisory group. The group began in response to data showing the college's year 9 Māori students were struggling.

13. How Māori Learners Transition to School

by Ngā Haeata Mātauranga The Annual Report on Māori Education 2007/08

This case study looks at how two early childhood education services in the Waikato region are supporting vulnerable whānau to develop their knowledge and skills and get hooked into the education system early.

Methodology

The questions listed below were used as a basis for a visit to the identified schools

Rangiātea case studies and exemplars

Developed in partnership with schools by the Ministry, researchers and expert practitioners Rangiātea is one in a series of tools that provides leaders with materials to strengthen their school's capacity to support improvements in Māori student achievement.

These tools respond to research and Māori learner experiences that identify that when leaders and teachers engage in culturally responsive practices this has a significant effect on the extent to which Māori learners set and achieve their goals and aspirations.

The Rangiātea case studies and exemplars demonstrate the journey that five New Zealand secondary schools are on towards realising Māori student potential.

The case studies look at the strategies used by school leadership teams and report on the key factors that are contributing towards lifting Māori student achievement in their schools. The exemplars step through how a particular programme has been used successfully in each school. Schools that I visited are:

- Western Springs College – individualised monitoring of achievement
- Opotiki College – creating educationally powerful connections
- Hamilton Girls' High School – Māori student engagement
- Hastings Boys' High School – pastoral and careers education

In these Rangiātea case studies the leadership qualities of the principals are highlighted as a feature of how the school has raised Māori achievement. For example, they:

- are enthusiastic advocates of putting learners at the centre of what the school does
- have high standards and expectations of Māori students
- distribute leadership throughout the school and involve their board and their community
- focus on professional development and are involved in all professional conversations with staff
- look at what other schools are doing, and get expert help from others
- resolve conflict quickly
- articulate their focus on raising Māori achievement throughout the school community.

Questions arising from the case studies

Use the strengths of school leadership.

1. What are the strengths of the distributed leadership at your school, and how have they been developed to raise the achievement of Māori students?

Nurture positive relationships with staff and students for raising Māori achievement

2. How have positive relationships be developed to further improve outcomes for Māori students?

Use data to identify the strengths and needs of teachers, and their students.

3. What are ways your school uses data to feed into strong professional conversations which improve the quality and relevance of teaching and learning for all students within the school.

The Hamilton Girls' High School case study identifies that knowledge and pronunciation of te reo Māori is a challenge for school leaders.

4. How has pronunciation and use of te reo been addressed?

The Opotiki College project focuses around the quality of teaching and learning – the “Opotiki Pedagogy”.

5. How do you direct your resources to identify and address the teaching and learning issues you faces? How do you help teachers and students to realise their potential?

The Headmaster at Hastings Boys' High School clearly articulates the values and expectations of the Rangiātea project to students.

6. In what ways does your school leadership team convey their values and expectations to students?

Western Springs College is able to attract teachers who are committed to the improvement of Māori students' achievement. As a result they are able to develop challenging and appropriate programmes for their students. Their students believe that their teachers have a high commitment to this development

7. In what ways do your teachers have a focus on the achievement of Māori students? What induction programmes do you offer to new staff?

Things to discuss during the school visit

- Teachers talking about high expectations of their Maori students
- Teachers providing quality feed-back and feed-forward
- Whanau expressing a sense of belonging
- Kapahaka group
- Te Reo Maori spoken
- Correct pronunciation by all
- Signage
- Maori art displayed
- Zero tolerance for Maori failure
- Informed supportive BOT
- Relevant PD for teachers
- Evidence of Maori achievement
- Maori teachers
- Maori in management
- Maori role models

While interviewing the Principals certain values became apparent in the things they said. It was a privilege to meet them and I admired their passion for the job. They all said things were going well because of distributed leadership and the great Senior Management Team they had.....I note that effective Principals always credit success to others!!!!

Ki nga Tumuaki, Ka whakamiharo atu ahau o koutou mahi awhina I ahau.

Presence, engagement, attendance

The classroom is a fishbowl. You can influence the quality of the water. You can put more chemicals in the water.

We are about 24/7 wrap-around educational experiences

My job is to get the students over the finish line

You have to put your heart and soul into the job

It takes a long time to imbed change

I am I can I will

Learning is about service

Come off the page

Connection matters

Live the values rather than talk about them

I want my staff to feel like a beginning teacher

You have to be "warm strict"

Practical Suggestions based upon observations

The commonly held belief that what works for Maori students works for all students is accurate from what I observed, but there is also a wider culture of biculturalism in the schools which underpins structures and strategies. My view would be that schools could implement strategies to improve Maori educational outcomes but the cultural shift, although taking a lot longer, needs constant attention. Institutional racism certainly doesn't assist all students reaching their potential.

1. Set up the structure

- Senior Management – someone has the responsibility of Maori achievement – *some schools had HOD Maori in Senior Management but all agreed it should be the right person and not necessarily a Maori teacher. The question was raised by one person how could a non-Maori lead things Maori in the school but I saw effective practice from a member of Senior Management who was not born in New Zealand.*
- Group such as Middle Management, Curriculum Committee, Faculty Heads or HODs discussing the wider school issues – other labels used were Aspiring Leaders Group, Teaching and Learning Group. *The title given to groups is important*
- Teachers of Maori students report to Principal. *Rather than Te Reo teachers they are called TOMS*
- HODs or Faculty Heads report to Principal. *Included in the report is an analysis of Maori results*
- Clear strategic plan. *The analysis of the Maori cohort is an important part of the plan.....including data on Iwi, Maori Teachers, assessment results, retention rates.*
- Appraisal system. *All Principals mentioned the importance of this for the students and the accountability of all staff.*
- Mentor or Maori liaison teacher who targets Maori students at-risk. *The mentor reports to the Principal (in one case to the Academic Director of Maori students) on actions undertaken and an analysis of effectiveness*
- Link with feeder schools *regular meetings ensures consistency of practice – if possible this is iwi based and lead*

2. Focus on Learning

All the schools observed believed in a general education (holistic, rounded, balanced) that included sporting, cultural, leadership and service opportunities BUT the top priority and constant focus was on academic pursuits

- Professional learning community – staff read and have professional conversations about Maori issues *Staff were given material to read and e-portfolios were presented. In a staff meeting the topic of conversation was “What does a classroom look like where Maori students feel comfortable” The discussion soon moved away from appropriate pictures, student work to a deeper level.*

- Lead Learning coaches *Once again the title is interesting. They meet in pairs and then with ten staff. PD is seen as important.*
- Learning Centre *This does not necessarily mean extra help for struggling students I saw examples of self-referral where students wanted to re-sit an assessment to gain a higher grade. This idea could be a good base for coaching students.*
- Academic Director for mainstream maori students. *Similar to a Dean but focussed solely on academic results. Links closely with a mentor.*
- Assemblies – *so important for the cultural aspect. Emphasis on results.*
- School pedagogy *This is the way we teach at our school – highly structured lessons, collaborative, a clear understanding of what classes should look like. The school also has a 3 period day, which means more teaching/learning time and that lessons have to be well-prepared and student-oriented.*
- Employ, recruit staff committed to the ethos of the school. *In two cases the Principal had very clear questions about expectations including learning te reo. In another case it was more general with comments such as “If you don’t want the student back in your class there’s no job for you at this school.” Another school runs the Te Kotahitanga programme for all new teachers as part of an induction programme.*
- Te Kotahitanga *imbedded in the school’s culture*
- PD for staff. *A great opportunity for tangata whenua involving a marae visit.*

3, Focus on assessment results, pass rate

- Catch up after school. *If a student fails a unit he/she goes to “catch-up”*
- Students sit reassessment opportunities during allocated times. *This is done in some schools just prior to entry submission to NZQA*
- Sit internals during external exam time. *There is an emphasis on internal assessments in the school. Realignment will be a major issue*
- Courses targeted to suit the students
- Senior students assist Level 1 NCEA students
- A certain level must be obtained before results entered with NZQA. *Some students are on two-year programmes and their results are submitted in the second year.*

4. Use of data

- Maori data is collected and is the basis for a strategic plan for Maori students.
- Data is distributed and made teacher-friendly. *Teachers were using data to set appropriate courses and inform teaching practices.*
- Report card shows analysis of data
- HODs design interventions based on data. They identify Maori results and set targets

- Each student is involved in goal setting. Careers involved. *Career choice influences course choice.*

5. Use of Te Reo

- Where appropriate local dialect and stories are used. *There is an important issue based on the integrity of local iwi and their reo. Understandably local iwi want their reo taught in their schools – this has implications for the “compulsory” teaching of te reo*
- Junior courses compulsory tikanga/reo
- Te Reo is spoken around the school and pronounced correctly. *All schools emphasised correct pronunciation as a sign of respect.*
- Te Reo is taught to the staff
- Karakia to begin hui

6. Area for Maori students

- Schools had an area where Maori felt totally comfortable.
- The positioning of a Marae is important. *The marae was used regularly by schools and students felt at ease with the kawa*
- All students are welcome to the Maori area, but the kawa is Maori

7. Building relationships, making a connection

- Every school stressed the value of developing close relationships with the Maori students.
- Meetings outside the school, bbq, marae
- Engagement of students with high expectations. *You will not fail*
- Restorative conferences were seen as the best way to deal with recalcitrant Maori students. *One school refuses to suspend students*

8. Attendance at school is necessary

- Schools had a “90s group” with rewards for over 90% attendance. In one school if over 95% attendance you were named in the newsletter and assembly. You have to have a 90+ attendance rate to participate in the Ball, Sport, KapaHaka etc

9. Link with whanau

- iwi parents feel included and valued. They are surveyed for opinions
- Link with hapu important – iwi have an education plan and local schools are part of that. *Education is driven by the tangata whenua*

10. School haka

- All students learn and perform a school haka

11. Choice of Rumaki or Mainstream

- With increasing numbers from kura kaupapa, schools run two programmes for Maori – Rumaki for fluent speakers and Mainstream for non-fluent speakers. *It is interesting to note that some students fluent in te reo were opting for mainstream classes.*

Checklist of ideas.

ideas to improve Maori educational outcomes

- Someone in Senior Management has the responsibility for Maori student achievement
- Middle Management discuss ways Maori academic achievement can improve
- Academic Director for Maori students is appointed
- Teachers of Maori Students report on the progress of their students
- Strategic plan is clear on expected outcomes for Maori students
- Appraisal system incorporates accountability for Maori results
- Mentor appointed to monitor Maori students
- Regular contact with feeder schools ensuring consistency of practice
- Staff are aware of tikanga, correct pronunciation etc
- Learning Centre for Maori students to “catch up” or improve results
- Assemblies reflect biculturalism and the emphasis is on academic success
- All teachers teach in a “school-wide” pedagogy
- Staff recruited are supporters of biculturalism and keen to be involved in things Maori. All new teachers have an induction programme.
- Use of programmes such as Te Kotahitanga
- Regular PD is provided for staff on things Maori
- Courses targeted to suit the students as part of individual planning and goal setting
- Data is used effectively to improve educational outcomes
- Te Reo is used in the classroom
- Marae or Maori area is well-situated
- High expectations for Maori students. Zero tolerance for Maori failure. Students involved in decisions for their future.
- Engagement of whanau. Tangata Whenua involvement in decision making.
- High attendance rates of Maori students
- A school haka
- Rumaki offered for fluent speakers of te reo
- Te Reo is seen and heard around the school. Bicultural entry to the school is evident in signage, art work etc and school website/facebook page reflect bicultural ethos.