

APPENDIX C: LETTER TO MĀORI MEDIUM SCHOOLS

5 October 2001

The Principal
«Schoolname»
«Address_1»
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Curriculum Stocktake:
National Sampling Study
The School of Education
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Tēnā koe e tē rangatira i runga i te maanakitanga o te wā

Re: Curriculum Stocktake; National School Sampling Study

Further to our earlier telephone call, below is an explanation of the research project we spoke about at that time plus details of how you might be involved in the project.

You will no doubt be aware of the Ministry's Curriculum Stocktake initiative to look at the experiences of teachers in implementing the New Zealand curriculum since 1993. As part of this Stocktake, the Ministry of Education has contracted the University of Waikato to carry out a major study of the actual experiences of teachers in their work with the various curriculum documents. This National School Sampling Study will collect information from teachers in both English and Māori medium schools.

The project has the strong endorsement of the New Zealand Principal's Federation (NZPF), NZEI, the Association of Proprietors of Integrated Schools, the Independent schools Council, Intermediate School Principals' Association. The project is seen as a valuable opportunity for teachers to make their views known; to report on what is working effectively for them, and what needs to be put in place to help them in their work. We have already met with a number of teachers throughout New Zealand to discuss the best ways of proceeding with this evaluation project in English medium and Māori medium schools.

Prior to undertaking this research in the Māori-medium sector, we consulted with a wide range of educators and have received very clear guidance about the procedure of the research. The three groups we spoke to were clear that:

- a) The research should take place in Māori medium schools as it would be very useful to find out the problems being faced by teachers themselves, what is working for them and what could be done to help improve curriculum understanding and implementation.
- b) While the research should be done, it must not be done in such a way that there would be a comparison between the English medium and Māori medium settings. This was considered necessary primarily due to the time delay in the implementation of the curriculum documents in the Māori medium sector.
- c) Researchers should be able to allow teachers to participate in the research in either the Māori language or the English language as they so choose.
- d) Taking these considerations into account and also Māori preferences for face to face conversations with people whom teachers know and whom teachers know are knowledgeable about both Māori medium curriculum implementaton and Māori medium teaching in general, it was suggested that face to face interviews, conducted by trained and knowledgeable people in the field would be the preferred research approach. (This is in comparison to a questionnaire approach that is being used in the English medium sector.)

As a result of this consultation, we intend proceeding with the research in a number of schools so that Māori medium schools are able to benefit from this project in the manner identified in the consultation round.

A three year project

As the project runs for three years, and as we will be focusing on different documents at different times, we would appreciate your school's participation over this time. The timeline is as follows:

Year 1: Late 2001 - Interviews will involve an overview of curriculum change and focus specifically on Pāngarau, and Te Reo.

Year 2: Mid 2002 - The interviews will focus on Tikanga-a-iwi, Pūtaiao and Hāngarau.

Year 3: Early 2003 - The interviews will focus on Hāuora and Nga Toi.

Research for 2001

- As per our phone call we would like to interview those teachers of your staff who teach in your immersion/bi-lingual unit and who use the Māori medium curriculum documents. We will talk to them about general issues associated with the implementation of the Māori medium curriculum and issues related specifically to Pāngarau and Te Reo.

We will fund a reliever for the day to release your staff on a rotational basis hour-by-hour so that our researchers can talk with each teacher in turn.

We will telephone you again in week one of term four (i.e. between the 8th and 12th of October) to confirm these arrangements and to finalise a date for the visit.

The provisional list of the researchers involved in the project is as follows: Doug Putaranui, Neil Rogers, Richard Hill, Ngarewa Hawera, Leanna Herewini, John Ohia and Christina Cram. Two researchers from this list will be involved in the interviews with your staff.

Thank you for your participation in this project.

Mā te Runga Rawa koutou, e maanaki, e tiaki.

Russell Bishop PhD

Professor of Māori Education