2018

Achievement Challenges Plan

Our Vision

Strengthening teaching practice to enhance and transform Christ-centred learning

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Our Community of Learning

Vision

Strengthening teaching practice to enhance and transform Christ-centred learning

Ki nga whakaeke haumi

Join those who can join the sections of a canoe

(a leadership whakatauki)

The Lower North Island Christian Community of Learning (LNICOL) was initially established in December 2016 with two further schools joining in November 2017.

Our Schools

School name	State Integrated Schools	Roll (approx.)	Geographic area
Cornerstone Christian School	Y1-13	490	Palmerston North
Faith Academy School	Y1-8	150	Whanganui
Hastings Christian School	Y1-13	230	Hastings
Longburn Adventist College	Y7-13 Boarding School	250	Palmerston North
Christian School	Y1-8	160	Lower Hutt
Palmerston North Adventist Christian School	Y1-6	80	Palmerston North
Totara College	Y1-13	70	Dannevirke

This gives an approximate number of students of 1430.

History

Our schools were firmly established as a working group together as part of the Lower North Island Christian schools' cluster of the NZ Association for Christian Schools (NZACs). We felt that our background as a group of schools who already knew each other, were used to working together and to sharing effectively in professional learning conferences, inter-school sports exchanges, etc., would enable us to transition readily to the Community of Learning concept.

During 2017 there has been a number of meetings of the principals which, at various times, had other people in attendance, e.g. Board members, Ministry representatives, ECE leaders, staff and leaders from the schools. These meetings have focussed on:

1. who we are as individual schools and as a community
2. where we are going
3. what we want to achieve
4. how we are going to get there

We all recognise that this is a journey that will take some time. However, with our background of knowing each other, our commonality of vision as Christian schools and our strong professional will to raise the learning and achievement of our students, we are confident that we can achieve more together than we can apart. Our journey will focus on:

- learning from each other
- growing together
- growing in our leadership of learning-focussed schools
- raising the professional capability of our teachers
- raising the achievement of our students
- better preparing our students for the world they will enter into and be a productive member of
- better developing the Character of our students and teaching them about the God who loves them

Lines of communication

The Lead Principal will publish a monthly newsletter to all schools and Boards with regular progress updates. He will also coordinate two meetings per term with the stewardship group.

The principals of the schools will be responsible for updating their Boards in our Community of Learning progress as part of their monthly Board report.

The Lower North Island Christian Community of Learning Achievement Challenge Plan will be reflected in the Charter and Annual Plan of each member school.

Our Achievement Challenges

Summary

Our community of learning have identified four Achievement Challenges:

1. raising engagement and achievement in Mathematics
2. raising achievement in Writing
3. raising achievement in Scientific Understanding
4. raising achievement in NCEA

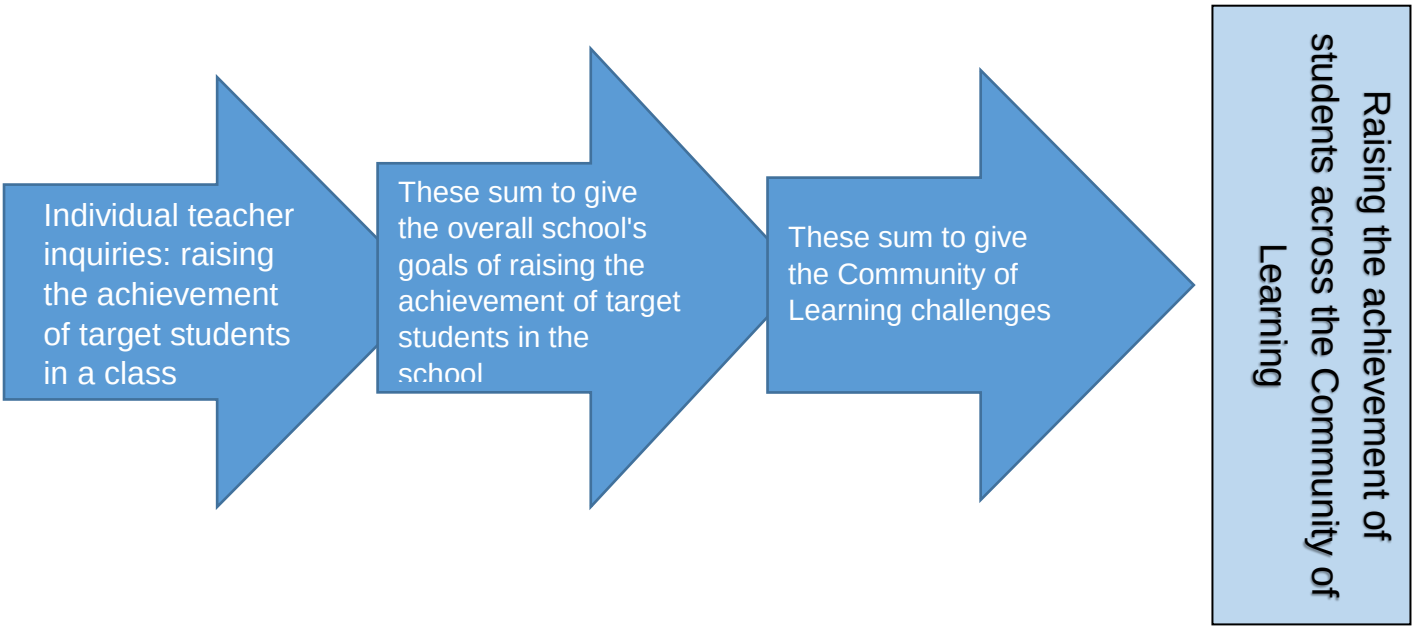
"The heart of the discerning acquires knowledge, for the ears of the wise seek it out."

Proverbs 18:15

Inquiry targets

It is straightforward to set a goal. However, the reality is that schools have been trying to lift achievement for generations. To actually accomplish this there must be a concentrated and widely-accepted focus on the strategies adopted to reach the goal.

The Achievement Challenges are essential inquiry targets for the Community of Learning as a whole. It is our desire that each school incorporates these into their Annual Plans. Our ultimate goal is for the following to occur so that the Achievement Challenges are not just an added "initiative" but rather a focussed direction. Our shared inquiry model is:



Ideally Community of Learning involvement should not add more workload to teachers but should be a framework within which the teacher inquiries are operating with more support and more ability to meet the goals.

"Continuing to embed systematic teacher inquiry and internal evaluation across the Community of Learning is a next step. Building evaluation practice is likely to help support the collective response of the Community of Learning in addressing the needs of students at risk of not achieving successful educational outcomes."

LNICOL ERO Report 2017

We will endeavour to use various models of mentoring and coaching so that shared best practice, based on learning from inquiry, can flow throughout the Community of Learning facilitated by the Lead Principal, Across School Teachers and Within School Teachers.

Data and Targets for our Achievement Challenges

1. Raising Engagement and Achievement in Mathematics

Data

Students Assessed at Below or Well Below National Standards

	2015		2016	
	%	Number	%	Number
Y1-3	17%	48	16%	48
Y4-6	21%	63	16%	46
Y7-8	23%	52	28%	53
Male	22%	53	17%	66
Female	21%	60	20%	81
Māori	35%	21	23%	27
Pasifika	28%	12	32%	27
NZE	21%	65	17%	72
Total	**147/829 or 19%**			

Points of Interest

Potential focus areas in green:

- Presently 19% or 147/829 students are Well Below or Below
- Of these approximately 1/3 are in Y1-3 and over 1/2 are male
- At each year level in primary schools the number of students achieving Well Below or Below National Standards is:
  - 10% (9/89) Y1
  - 18% (19/106) Y2
  - 20% (20/100) Y3
  - 10% (9/86) Y4
  - 16% (16/98) Y5
  - 21% (21/103) Y6
  - 28% (23/83) Y7
  - 29% (30/104) Y8

Target Students

In Mathematics, our target is to increase the percentage of students achieving At or Above by 10% to 90%. Our timeframe for this would be over the course of four years.

Overall this relates to the following numbers of students being accelerated from Well Below/Below to At/Above:

School*	Numbers of students					
	Year 1-3		Y4-6		Y7-8	
	Numbers under-achieving in 2016	New students targeted to reach 90%	Numbers under-achieving in 2016	New students targeted in Y4-6 to reach 90%	Numbers under-achieving in 2016	New students targeted in Y7-8 to reach 90%
LAC	na	na	na	na	19	14
TC	3	2	4	3	X	X
HCS	4	1	6	2	13	8
FCS	9	4	9	4	8	4
CCS	17	7	15	6	4	1
PNACS	9	5	7	3	X	X
MCS	6	1	5	1	7	5
Total	**48**	**20**	**46**	**19**	**53**	**34**

Note: X=Data is redacted

To ensure Māori and Pasifika are achieving at the same level as NZE students (i.e. 90% achieving National Standards) the following numbers of students (who were Below or Well Below from Y1-8) will be targeted.

School	New Māori students targeted	New Pasifika students targeted
LAC	2	X
TC	3	X
HCS	0	X
FCS	6	2
CCS	3	6
PNACS	2	3
MCS	0	4
Total	**16**	**19**

Note: X=Data is redacted

2. Raising Achievement in Writing

Data

Students Assessed at Below or Well Below National Standards

	2015		2016	
	%	number	%	number
Y1-3	24%	68	25%	72
Y4-6	22%	66	17%	48
Y7-8	20%	45	22%	41
Male	27%	107	24%	91
Female	18%	72	18%	70
Māori	27%	34	22%	36
Pasifika	36%	31	36%	31
NZE	19%	90	20%	82
Total	**141/768 or 18.4%**			

Points of Interest

Potential focus areas in green:

- Presently 18.4% or 141/829 students are Well Below or Below
- Pasifika underachievement is high at 35/36% across 2 years
- There is disparity in achievement with around 25% of male Well Below or Below
- At each year level in primary the number of students achieving Below or Well Below is:
  - 23/89 (26%) Y1
  - 30/106 (29%) Y2
  - 19/100 (19%) Y3
  - 14/186 (16%) Y4
  - 13/98 (13%) Y5
  - 19/103 (23%) Y6
  - 19/82 (23%) Y7
  - 22/104S (21%) Y8

Target Students

In Writing our target is to increase the number of students achieving At or Above by 10% (i.e. 90% overall of students achieving At and Above). Our timeframe for this would be over the course of four years.

Overall, in our Community of Learning schools, this relates to the following numbers of students being accelerated from Well Below/Below to At/Above:

School*	Numbers of students					
	Year 1-3		Y4-6		Y7-8	
	Numbers not achieving in 2016	New students targeted to reach 90%	Numbers not achieving in 2016	New students targeted in Y4-6 to reach 90%	Numbers not achieving in 2016	New students targeted in Y7-8 to reach 90%
LAC	na	na	na	na	16	11
TC	3	2	4	3	0	0
HCS	16	12	6	2	18	13
FCS	7	2	9	4	6	2
CCS	28	18	22	12	5	3
PNACS	17	13	6	2	na	na
MCS	5	0	1	0	4	2
Total	**76**	**47**	**48**	**23**	**49**	**31**

To ensure Māori and Pasifika are achieving at the same level as NZE students (i.e. 90% achieving National Standards) the following numbers of students (who were Below or Well Below from Y1-8) will be targeted.

School	New Māori students targeted	New Pasifika students targeted
LAC	1	X
TC	2	X
HCS	1	X
FCS*	3	4
CCS	4	9
PNACS	3	5
MCS	1	1
Total	**15**	**23**

Note: X=data has been redacted

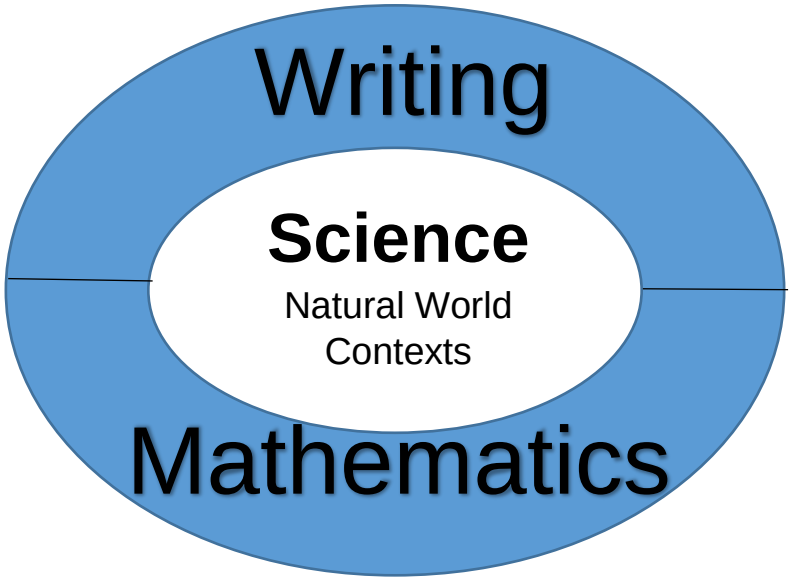
To ensure boys achieve at the same level (ie 90% achieving At or Above) the following numbers of this students should be targeted:

School	New male students targeted
LAC	5
TC	3
HCS	5
FCS	6
CCS	14
PNACS	10
MCS	0
Total	**43**

3. Raising Achievement in Scientific Understanding

This would likely be a natural outflow of the integrated approach to Achievement Challenges 1 (Mathematics) and 2 (Writing). It could be surmised that part of the mathematics and writing pedagogy would be through a lens of (or contexts within) the natural world.

Our teaching of our three curriculum-based achievement challenges could include a thematic approach as outlined in the diagram below where natural world contexts could form the basis for some of the learning in writing and mathematics.



The Place of Science in the NZ Curriculum

The 2010 ERO report (Science in Years 5 to 8: Capable and Competent Teaching ERO 2010) identified that schools face some significant challenges in providing high quality science teaching and learning. These include:

- teachers' lack of confidence and ability to consistently teach science well
- the quality of pre-service science education for teachers
- the need to develop teaching that consistently improves students' scientific understanding and thinking
- the assessment and reporting of science achievement
- school's access to high quality professional development in science

On the basis of this report ERO recommends that schools review the:

1. priority given to science teaching and learning in their curriculum
2. quality of science teaching and learning, using the indicators of capable teaching and learning in ERO's 2010 good practice report."

This is one approach our Community of Learning will take.

Data

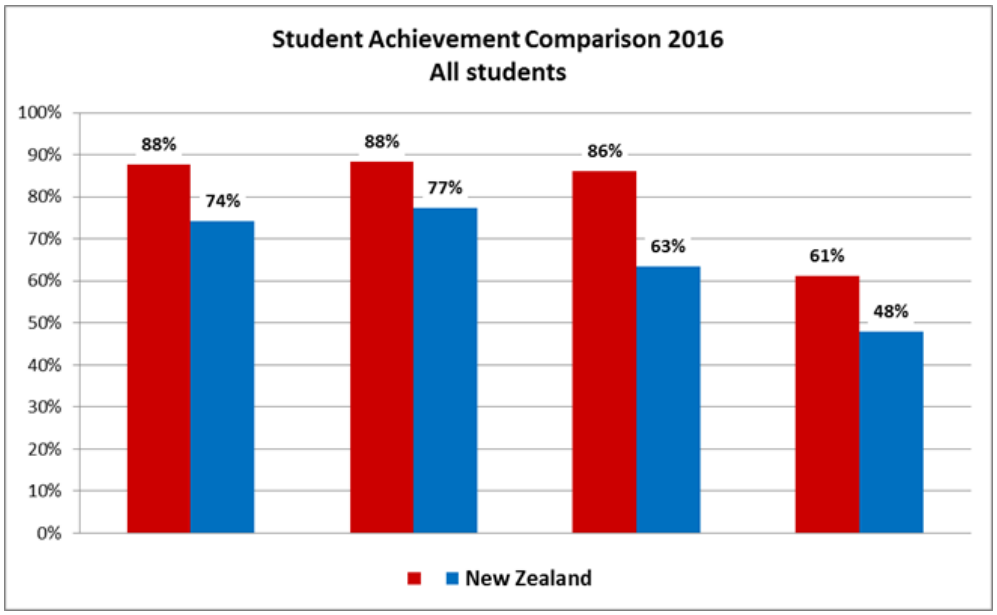
There is currently little standardised assessment of Science below Year 11. There are a few testing types which we could use. However, these are not considered useful for the current challenge. Therefore one of the foci for this Achievement Challenge is to review our present reporting mechanisms and develop community-wide Science assessments for our key year levels and to determine future learning goals as well as evaluation systems.

4. Raising Achievement in NCEA

In our Community of Learning there are three secondary providers who deliver NCEA and one who delivers Accelerated Christian Education certificates to Y10-13 students.

All Student Data (Roll Based)

As can be seen in the data below our Community of Learning composite schools are consistently well above the national average in NCEA.



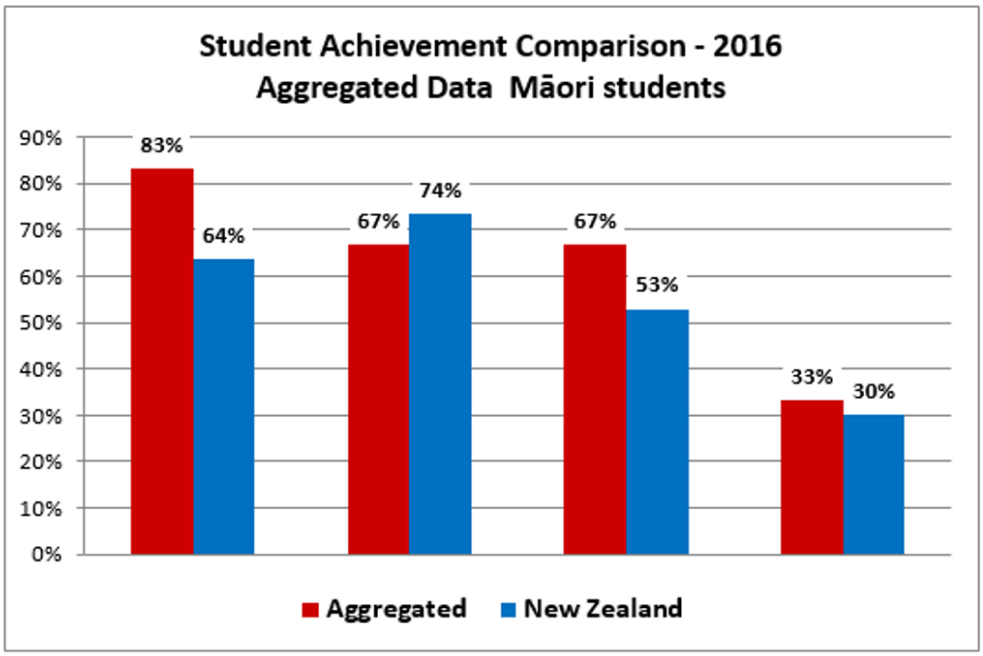
The red column is the aggregated COL data. The bars from left are: achievement of certificates in NCEA Levels 1, 2, 3 and University Entrance respectively.

Aggregated				
	Year 11	Year 12	Year 13	Year 13
Year	NCEA Level 1	NCEA Level 2	NCEA Level 3	UE
2013	85%	81%	76%	77%
2014	86%	90%	79%	61%
2015	86%	85%	87%	64%
2016	88%	88%	86%	61%

New Zealand				
New Zealand	Year 11	Year 12	Year 13	Year 14
Year	NCEA Level 1	NCEA Level 2	NCEA Level 3	UE
2013	71%	72%	58%	52%
2014	73%	75%	60%	46%
2015	74%	77%	63%	49%
2016	74%	77%	63%	48%

Māori ***Student Data (Roll Based)***

In 2016 the Community of Learning Māori students achieved rates were higher than the national average with the exception of Level 2.



The bars from left are: achievement of certificates in Level 1, 2, 3 NCEA and University Entrance respectively.

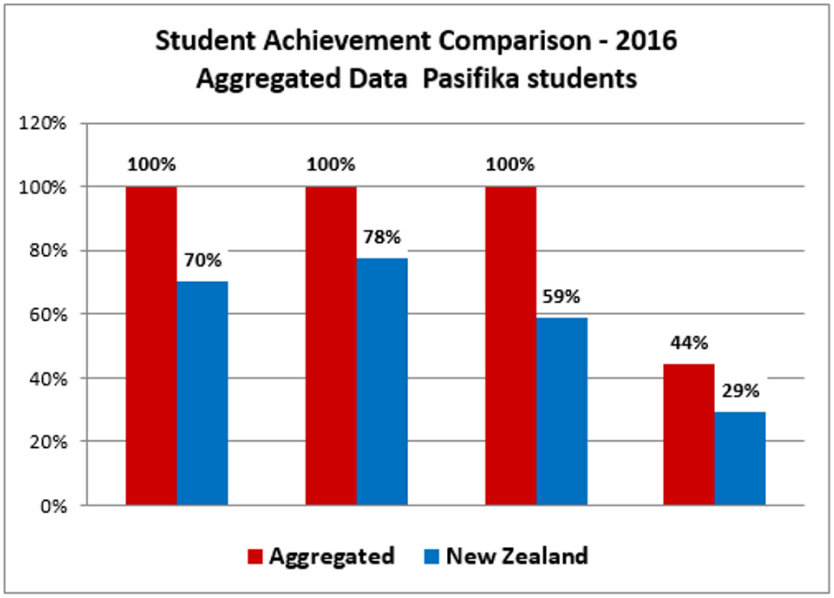
The Data and NZ Comparisons for Other Years

Aggregated				
Māori	Year 11	Year 12	Year 13	Year 13
Year	NCEA Level 1	NCEA Level 2	NCEA Level 3	UE
2013	50%	58%	100%	100%
2014	40%	71%	80%	20%
2015	67%	57%	80%	40%
2016	83%	67%	67%	33%

New Zealand				
Māori	Year 11	Year 12	Year 13	Year 14
Year	NCEA Level 1	NCEA Level 2	NCEA Level 3	UE
2013	56%	63%	45%	35%
2014	60%	68%	47%	28%
2015	63%	71%	52%	31%
2016	64%	74%	53%	30%

Some variation can be seen between the relative successes of Māori students compared with total NZ numbers. Generally our Community of Learning schools have performed well with some years being exceptions. This may be due to low overall numbers of Māori students.

Pasifika Student Data (Roll Based)



The bars from left are: achievement of certificates in Level 1,2,3 NCEA and University Entrance respectively.

Aggregated				
Pasifika	Year 11	Year 12	Year 13	Year 13
Year	NCEA Level 1	NCEA Level 2	NCEA Level 3	UE
2013	100%	33%	100%	100%
2014	100%	100%	25%	
2015	100%	100%	100%	100%
2016	100%	100%	100%	44%

New Zealand				
Pasifika	Year 11	Year 12	Year 13	Year 14
Year	NCEA Level 1	NCEA Level 2	NCEA Level 3	UE
2013	65%	68%	48%	35%
2014	68%	75%	52%	29%
2015	71%	76%	58%	30%
2016	70%	78%	59%	29%

The table on the left outlines Pasifika achievement for the Kāhui Ako over time; the table on the right outlines Pasifika achievement for New Zealand. This data again shows that, generally our small number of Pasifika students have achieved well in comparison to total NZ figures.

Gender Differences (Roll Based)

	2013		2014		2015		2016	
	Female	***Male***	***Female***	***Male***	***Female***	***Male***	***Female***	***Male***
NCEA L1	80%	90%	86%	85%	88%	83%	89%	87%
NCEA L2	83%	76%	82%	96%	89%	77%	95%	81%
NCEA L3	96%	84%	91%	60%	88%	85%	91%	81%
UE	94%	66%	77%	37%	61%	67%	69%	52%

The table indicates periods of time when both genders reach comparative achievement levels whereas at other times there is considerable variance (i.e. 10% or greater). This appears to occur most frequently at NCEA L3 and UE levels. As a Kāhui Ako we would inquire into this further as we move towards meeting our target in this area.

Targets

We would like to raise all of our secondary school achievement levels (NCEA L1-3 and UE) across our Community of Learning to 90% or above for both genders, with specific targets for both boys and Māori students.

Senior students leave secondary schools all through the year since most are 16 years old or over. Targets around endorsements may also be developed as our Community of Learning continues to refine its processes.

Totara College and ACE certificates

Totara College is our one school that does not use NCEA for senior students. They use a separate assessment system called ACE (Accelerated Christian Education). Their data and targets are below.

Number of Students

Year	Year 11	Year 12	Year 13
2016	5	3	3
2017	3	5	5
2018	4	5	5

Achievement Challenge and Targets

Year	Year 11	Year 12	Year 13
2016	X	X	X
2017 (projected)	X	X	X
2018	X	X	X

Note: Data has been redacted

Our Strategies to Achieve our Challenges

1. Engagement Strategies

Focus on Improving Classroom Practice

This will involve using modern research and thinking, specifically the strategies outlined in “Visible Learning in the Classroom” by John Hattie. This will lead to both improved engagement and learning for the students.

Contexts

Mathematics

One strategy we will use is to reintegrate contexts into the curriculum in a cross-curricula model. Natural world contexts, particularly, hold considerable engagement value for students and so we will investigate the thematic use of natural world contexts for the development of both Mathematics learning and communication (especially writing) development.

Another strategy is to see Mathematics teaching taught using increasing natural world, and other real world, contexts to teach the development of number understanding. We believe this approach will increase engagement in Mathematics and increased engagement will lead to increased achievement.

This approach would be underpinned by discovery, experimentation, fun and hands on learning activities.

It is the glory of God to conceal a matter;
to search out a matter is the glory of kings.

Proverbs 25:2

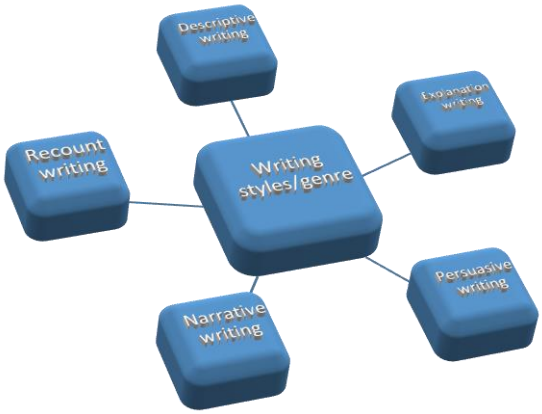
As Christians, we also believe that a greater understanding of the natural world and the way God has created it will lead to a greater understanding of, and devotion to, God himself.

The heavens declare the glory of God;
the skies proclaim the work of his hands.
Day after day they pour forth speech;
night after night they reveal knowledge.
They have no speech, they use no words;
no sound is heard from them.
Yet their voice goes out into all the earth,
their words to the ends of the world.

Psalms 19:1-4

Writing

Communication through Writing also finds its natural learning optimum when taught through contexts. Even when using a genre based approach in Writing, using engaging contexts can take a lesson from dull to vibrant.



There has been much contemplation over the years about how to produce good writers. Since NAG 2a was included in the Education Act, Writing has consistently been the lowest of the National Standards when considering overall national achievement. Boys, in particular, are seen to struggle in this area. Ethnically, Māori and Pasifika culture are generally below Pākeha and Asian students in their Writing achievement as a national cohort as well.

Our focus is to raise achievement in Writing across the Community of Learning by focussing on Writing across the curriculum. This will involve using contexts provided by the other learning areas as ways to focus on Writing. These learning contexts could include examples such as:

- writing about natural contexts (as considered by Sir Peter Gluckman above) e.g. describing the appearance of a leaf in autumn compared to a leaf in summer
- writing a poem about Matariki and its importance for early Māori families as a part of an astronomy unit
- reporting on a new product made to meet a certain need in technology and persuading an audience to use it
- learning to describe native birds in Te Reo and English and being able to say both with correct pronunciation
- reflecting on a bible story read in devotions and writing what God was meaning in that passage

Games

Research from the Ontario Education sector shows they have focussed on games and play as significant ways to engage students better. They have also seen the natural link between science and math:

Have Fun with Math! …

"… games and play have more positive effect on motivation and retention of knowledge than conventional instruction."

Jonnavitula and Kinshuk[12]

> At their core, experiential learning activities in informal contexts, actual or virtual, are designed so that when children play, engage, explore, or interact, they cannot *not* help but learn science and mathematics because they are doing science or mathematics.[5] Further, initial curiosity in science or mathematics has the potential to evolve into genuine interest. The "wow" factor that first captures a child's attention is likely to contribute to the development of greater understanding of, and positive attitudes toward, mathematics and science.

(http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/literacynumeracy/inspire/research/WW_MakingMath.pdf)

Information Technology (IT)

Use of computer-based applications and programmes are well known to engage students in the learning process.

We intend to increasingly harness some of the new pedagogies using IT. Many of our schools are already well on the way in this area and there are ample opportunities for learning from each other and gaining new learning.

Improved Learning Relationships and Holistic Well-being Strategies

As Christian schools, we are firm believers in teaching the holistic person. We believe the character development aspect of schools is more important than the more one dimensional qualitative data. When students fail at schools it often has more to do with their emotional, physical and stability needs rather than their educational development. It is difficult for students to learn effectively in an environment where there are issues such as:

- conflict
- bullying
- family dysfunction
- disharmony
- lack of consideration of them as individuals
- lack of consideration of their social, psychological and developmental needs
- lack of consideration of their potential career direction and personal strengths
- lack of consideration of their concepts regarding self and personal spirituality
- lack of consideration of their cultural needs
- friendship development is difficult and peers are not inclusive

The initiatives we are looking at across our Community of Learning are:

a. Restorative Practice

Restorative techniques have become common across the sector and are effective at giving students techniques to resolve conflict. These techniques can be used in schools to assist in conflict situations between students or between teachers and

students. While they are learning these techniques, students are learning a much more effective means of resolving conflict with others and hence are being given strategies which will help them throughout their lives.

b. Positive Behaviour for Learning (PB4L)

Four of our schools are already PB4L schools and we have found these strategies work very well in the context of our Christian Special Character. Strategies are values-based and seek to improve school culture through a focus on community accepted values. PB4L involvement includes being rated on an accountability matrix (the SET – school evaluation tool) and analysing behaviour data to see where teaching needs to be focussed.

PB4L techniques focus more on teaching and affirming positive behaviours rather than disciplining negative behaviours.

c. Peacemakers

Our NZACs cluster has already been involved in a conference on Peacemaker strategies which most of our schools have adopted. These strategies give a framework for resolving conflict in a biblical and God-pleasing way. Restorative justice is one of the techniques which can be used at one point in the Peacemakers framework to mediate conflict between people.

d. Character Development

Our Christian schools are focussed on the whole person and particularly their character developing as they progress in their lives from children to adults and then become citizens who have a positive impact on our society. We will seek to further hone our character development programmes in line with the Key Competencies and Values and Principles of the NZC.

e. Focus on God, Devotions, Prayer and Bible Study

These things are important to us as Christians and we look to holistically weave our Christian Special Character throughout our curriculum and across our Community of Learning.

f. Holistic Health Model

Biculturalism is at the heart of the Treaty of Waitangi and as such it is our Treaty responsibility to ensure that Māori whānau and Tauira are accorded the rights in the Treaty. In education this would equate to the right to a full holistic curriculum focussing on all 4 walls of Mason Durie's Te Whare Tapa Wha model.

In our Community of Learning we will focus on the spiritual health of our Tauira – Te Taha Wairua. Our desire to see students' wellbeing improved will focus on initiatives which are currently in the NZ Education system to see students grow in their Christian character and in their ability to operate as fully functioning citizens in NZ and beyond.

2. Data Gathering Strategies

The learning data we will use to assess how well we are tracking towards our objectives will be:

- our Community of Learning yet-to-be determined version of agreed assessment tools and progressions for each year level
- NCEA data
- E-asTTle data at Years 9 and10 with the potential to develop our own expectations for the expected learning progressions at these year levels.

As a Community of Learning we will also develop monitoring, reviewing and reporting mechanisms that will focus on student progress and achievement as well as progress of the implementation plan and the change process, i.e. a model of evaluation.

Student voice
Since these are engagement strategies the views of the students will be valuable in assessing how well they are engaged in each learning opportunity. Alongside surveys we will use formative assessment practices to assess and review student engagement in learning.

Whānau voice
It will also be useful to survey and analyse how whānau consider their children to be engaged in the various aspects of the schooling associated with our Achievement Challenges.

Names
Knowing the names and tracking the achievement of all of the targeted numbers of students given above.

Student Management System
Consistent use of SMS systems, processes and practice within and across schools.

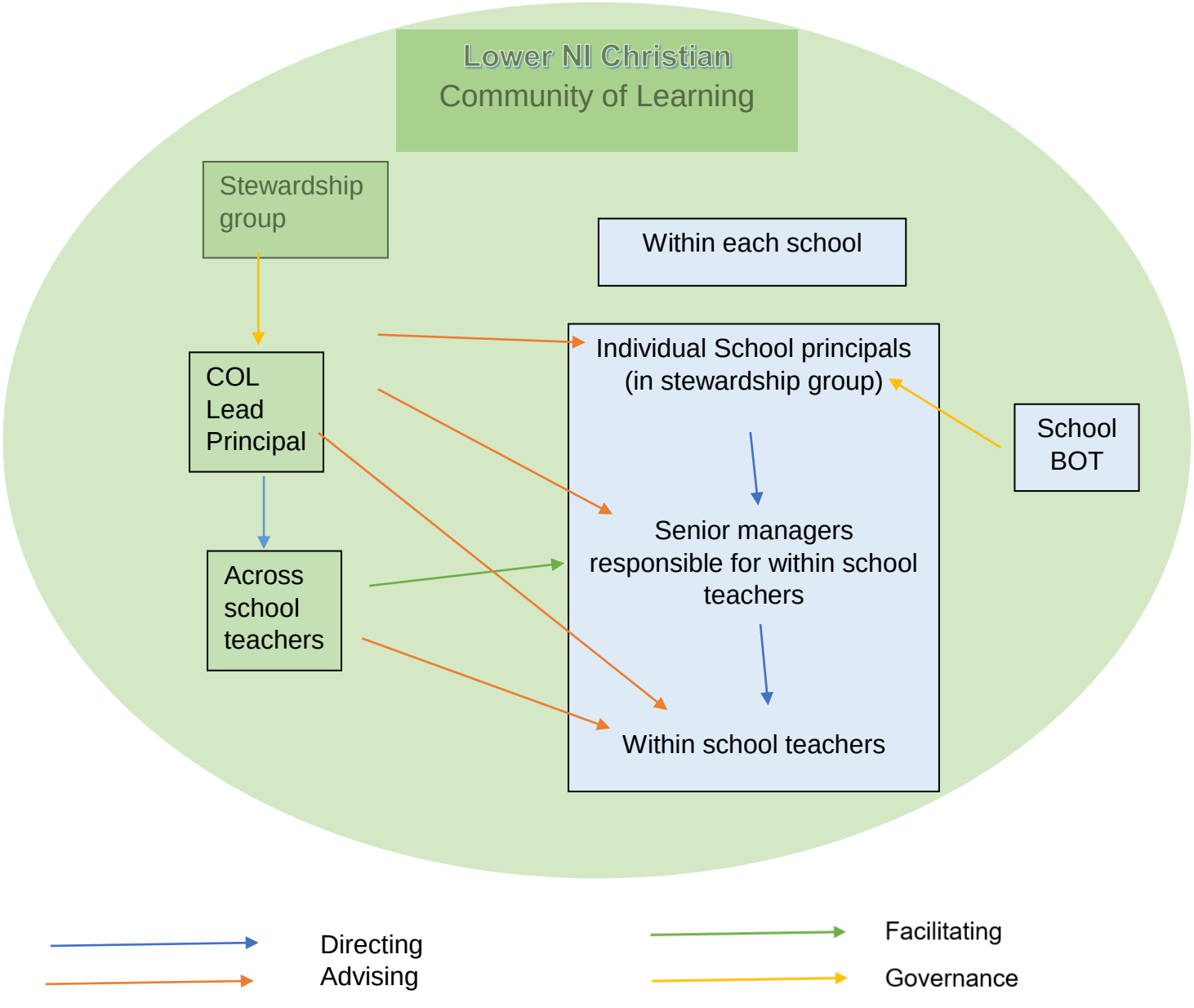
Reporting strategies and on-going monitoring
When the data has been tracked it will be reported to and discussed across our Community of Learning. The monitoring of our Community of Learning's progress towards our objectives will be based on yet-to-be determined version of agreed assessment tools and progressions for each year level alongside the use of NCEA data and compared longitudinally.

3. Leadership development

One key area for our schools to grow as we develop as a Community of Learning is in the area of leadership development. The advent of Communities of Learning has given the education sector a unique method of growing leadership within our schools and within the overall Community of Learning.

There are four main tiers of leadership which will flow from the Community of Learning, all of which will necessitate growth and development by groups and individuals at these levels. We will endeavour to use various models of mentoring and coaching so that shared best practice in leadership can flow throughout the Community of Learning.

Levels of Community of Learning Organisation



Responsibilities within These Levels

Community of Learning Lead Principal – overall responsible for progress of the Achievement Challenges

Stewardship group – works with the Lead Principal to facilitate the Community of Learning's goals

Across school teachers – responsible to the Lead Principal. Together they comprise the key team for considering strategy and data

Within school teachers – these people are where the "rubber hits the road." Their role is to see the pedagogy and strategies agreed by the team, facilitated throughout their school

School principals – these are the leaders of each school. They work with the Lead Principal and members of the Community of Learning team to support the growth of teacher capability and improvement of student learning

Senior managers responsible for the within school teachers – these managers are there to assist the within school teachers to facilitate the Achievement Challenges