

# Te Oro Karaka Tahī Kāhui Ako

## Achievement Challenge Plan

### Introducing Our Community

#### Background

In early 2016 two groups of schools, independently of each other, began having conversations about forming a Community of Learning. One group was made up of rural schools surrounding Palmerston North (Fitzherbert and Te Kawau Clusters) and the other group included four secondary schools, and several Palmerston North primary and intermediate schools.

The rural schools were eager to work together, as well as with other schools, but did not have an obvious secondary school to work with. Students from these rural schools went to all of the secondary schools in the Manawatū.

Several Fitzherbert and Te Kawau Cluster schools were invited to meetings with the other group to explore forming a Community of Learning. After several meetings it was clear that there was a strong and united consensus around forming a Community of Learning. Equally clear was a desire by the participants to work together as one group rather than two or more groups. Due to the number of schools involved two applications were made to form Communities of Learning. However, it was agreed that the two groups would work together as one.

After being approved at the end of 2016 the schools have worked together and have:

- Formed a Steering Committee to lead the group through the initial 'forming' stage
- Held a meeting where schools introduced themselves
- Engaged an 'expert partner' to support the community to agree on its achievement challenge(s)
- Produced newsletters for staff and Board of Trustees members about the community
- Appointed Community of Learning Leaders
- Analysed student achievement data
- Consulted with the mana whenua
- Surveyed the community (Māori, students, teachers, parents & Board of Trustee members)
- Met approximately twice per term to discuss Community matters and to prepare the Achievement Challenges.

## **The Name of our Kāhui Ako**

The Karaka tree is very hardy and known for its glossy leaves and orange berries. Before anyone arrived in Aotearoa/New Zealand it is thought that it only grew in Northland. Over the centuries Māori cultivated and spread the tree throughout the islands when they developed a process to make the berries edible. In effect this hardy tree made up the first orchards grown in this land.

In Palmerston North there is a small remnant of cultivated Karaka trees nestled close to the banks of the Manawatū river and Massey University. This Karaka Grove is thought to have been cultivated by Rangitāne, the mana whenua more than 200 years ago. Currently the grove is marked by three pou arranged in the style of a pātaka (food store). It is a site of great importance and significance to the iwi.

This cultivated Grove of Karaka trees is the metaphor we are using to come together as a Kāhui Ako and the inspiration for our name Te Oro Karaka.

## **The Metaphor**

### **Te Oro -The Grove**

The grove is made up of many trees that have been deliberately planted together. This is representative of all of us who are deliberately coming together to enable a healthy environment where schools are able to work in partnership to nurture and unleash potential across all our schools.

Each tree is separate in its own right just as each school operates in its own right to meet the needs of its students and communities. Just as trees come in a range of sizes so too do our schools.

### **Ngā Hua - The Berries**

The berries of the Karaka tree were an important food source for Māori who ate the ripened outer flesh and the kernel. The kernel required a laborious process to render it edible where it was then consumed as a nut or ground up to make a bread.

This is also representative of the work our Kāhui Ako will do to ensure we are empowering 'future ready learners'.

### **Ngā Aka - The Roots**

Although we commonly think of trees as competing with each other for resources, we now know from a number of studies that they share information and nutrients underground via their root systems. These nutrients often travel from the strong healthy trees to those requiring support or that need a boost. This is also one of the compelling roles within our Kāhui Ako.

## Model - He Whāriki

Our model is based on a whāriki. This is the woven mat that we lay down, to work in our 'oro karaka'. This whāriki delineates our place to meet and establish what really matters. It is our foundation and keeps us protected from the ground, just as our Kāhui Ako will be protected by the values and beliefs that underpin our focus for our tamariki.

This section was written by one of our Kāhui Ako Principals, Helena Baker.

## Our Community

Our community is made up of a wide range of schools, from two sole charge primary schools through to very large secondary schools. Half the schools are located in Palmerston North city with the other half located in rural communities surrounding the city, mainly to the south and west.

Six Early Learning services are now members of the Kāhui with more expected to join.

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| <p><b>Te Oro Karaka Tahī</b></p> <p><b>Schools</b></p> <p>Awatapu College<br/>         College Street Normal School<br/>         Glen Oroua School<br/>         Kairanga School<br/>         Monrad Intermediate School*<br/>         Oroua Downs School<br/>         Palmerston North Girls' High School<br/>         Palmerston North Intermediate Normal School*<br/>         Sanson School<br/>         Tangimoana School<br/>         Winchester School</p> | <p><b>Early Learning Services</b></p> <p>Building Blocks 2<br/>         Camp Street Kindergarten<br/>         Cloverlea Kindergarten<br/>         Hokowhitu Kindergarten<br/>         Milverton Kindergarten<br/>         Riverdale Kindergarten</p> <p>NB: Up to 10 more Services to be added Term One, 2019</p> |
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**Te Oro Karaka Tahī Kāhui Ako** is committed to working closely with Te Oro Karaka Rua Kāhui Ako.

The Schools and Early Learning Services in the Te Oro Karaka Rua Kāhui Ako are:

Aokautere School, Awapuni School, Linton Camp School, Linton Country School, Longburn School, Manawatu Community High School (AE), Monrad Intermediate School\*, Opiki School, Palmerston North Boys' High School, Palmerston North Intermediate Normal School\*, Queen Elizabeth College, Takaro School, Tokomaru School, Turitea School, Awapuni Kindergarten, Linton Kindergarten, Somerset Kindergarten, Takaro Kindergarten, West End Kindergarten, The Cubby House Child Care Centre

\*Both intermediate schools appear in each of the official lists of schools in our Community but they only count for resources in one of the two Communities. This was agreed to by the group of schools to ensure that the Communities reflected the student pathways.

## Our Overarching Challenge

**Our learners will develop a strong sense of well being, cultural identity and have equitable access to innovative, high quality teaching and learning.**

## Our Beliefs and Values

We believe that the role of our Kāhui Ako is to create a coherent pathway focused on empowering lifelong learners for success in their lives. Success in realising our vision will, to a large extent, be determined not only by our ability to develop and sustain strong trusting relationships across the Kāhui Ako but to also be constantly improving our understanding and application of the aho.

Already there are many well established networks within our Kāhui Ako illustrating that effective and focused collaboration can have a profound impact on student learning. These existing networks will be the foundation for growing the relationships and our collective research based practice.

Our aim is to strengthen not only connections between our schools, but also within our community. We propose to establish and maintain strong relationships with the various stakeholders, including local iwi, business, tertiary, parents and BOTs. We will also seek to develop relationships with other Kāhui Ako so as to provide further opportunities for sharing and learning.

We believe that we will be more effective in unleashing the potential of our students if we have stronger and more fluid transitions within and across schools. Consequently, we will focus on increasing coherence in programmes, assessment and pedagogy by focusing on and sharing the excellent practices that already exist within our Kāhui Ako. Eventually, our schools will develop community wide systems to assist with moderation of student standards as well as with the transition between schools.

Developing rigorous systems for continuously improving teacher capability is another exciting opportunity for our Kāhui Ako. Research clearly shows that there is a strong relationship between teacher capability and student learning outcomes. It is in this area that the Across and Within School Teachers (ASTs and WSTs) will play a critical role.

## The Achievement Challenge Model

Our Achievement Challenge model (see page 5) is a whāriki - a woven mat. Weavers use whenu - the vertical threads and aho - the horizontal threads to create the whāriki. The whāriki of our Achievement Challenge has three whenu and five aho.

## Our Whenu

The three whenu are the areas our collaborative research and discussion have identified as the most important for our students and teachers. While each of the whenu is an important area and could easily stand alone, we see that the strength of the model is in the interdependency of each strand of the whāriki - both the whenu and the aho.

## **Our Aho**

We believe that sustainable improvement in the teaching and learning within our Kāhui Ako will evolve from a strong focus on the aho - namely cultural responsiveness, transitions, collaboration, agency and inquiry. We see appreciative inquiries focused on the aho playing a critical role in informing our innovative interventions. An initial focus on these aho will be complemented by collaborative in-school and across-school inquiries based on identified areas of focus evident in the whāriki.

## **The Achievement Challenge Goal**

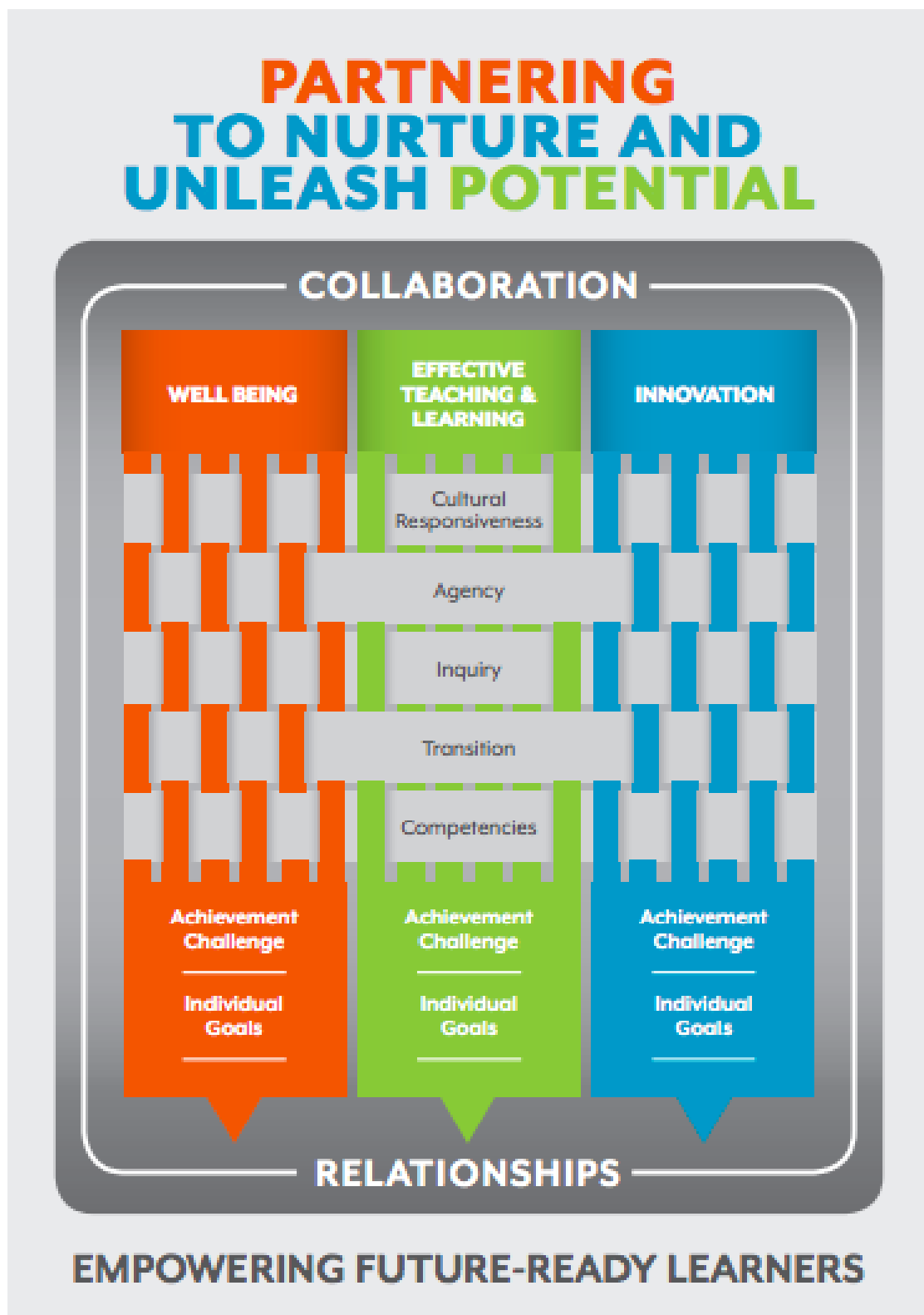
### **Our Vision - Partnering to Nurture and Unleash Potential**

Our goal is for all our students, regardless of background, culture or gender to be achieving at or above their expected level for their age in all curriculum areas, and in particular in the foundation areas of Reading, Writing and Mathematics.

The goal will be achieved through a dual focus on the whenu (Well Being, Effective Teaching and Learning & Innovative Practice) and the aho (Cultural Responsiveness, Agency, Inquiry, Transition & Competencies). We believe that the strength of our model and its potential to make a significant difference for our students lies in our ability to emphasize the interdependence of the strands that make up our whāriki.

Success in realising our goal will be determined not only by our ability to constantly improve our understanding and application of both the whenu and aho but even more importantly by generating a deep appreciation of their inextricable and interdependent relationship.

## Our Kahui Ako Achievement Challenge Model



## Hauora/Wellbeing: Achievement Challenge One

### 1.1 Our Thinking about Hauora/Well-Being

Well-being is fundamental to all activities in our schools and Early Childhood centres, and central to the vision, values and principles of the New Zealand Curriculum. If our young people are to be confident, connected and actively involved as lifelong learners they need to feel happy and secure, have equitable learning opportunities and have their culture, language and identity recognised and valued. Recent research indicates that well-being can protect against mental health challenges and can predict classroom engagement and academic achievement. A leading researcher, Dr Donna Cross, describes well-being as 'the oil of learning'.

Our Kāhui Ako is committed to working closely with students and their families and whānau to improve student learning. Underpinning student learning is a strong sense of well-being, a sense of belonging, of knowing that teachers care and that all students can learn.

### 1.2 We define Hauora/Well-Being as judging life positively and feeling good.

**Well-being includes the presence of positive emotions and moods (e.g. contentment, happiness), the absence of negative emotions (e.g. depression, anxiety), satisfaction with life, fulfilment and positive functioning.**

### 1.3 Key elements

- Taha tinana - Physical well being
- Taha hinengaro - Mental and emotional well-being
- Taha whānau - Social well-being, and
- Taha Wairua - Spiritual well-being.

(Whare Tapa Whā Professor Sir Mason Durie 1984)

### 1.4 Just Imagine If...

- All of our students were resilient
- All students had very high attendance
- Transitions between classes and between schools are very strong
- There was a very strong relationship between schools and support services
- All teachers were highly skilled at supporting the wellbeing of their students
- We had families who knew how to work collaboratively with schools and teachers
- All staff (and Principals) know they are valued team members and make important contributions, and
- All schools in our Kāhui Ako had students at the centre of everything they do.

| <b>Well Being in Action</b>  |   |
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| <p><b>Our Challenge:</b><br/> <b>Enhance learning by establishing school environments that constantly foster the development of student well-being.</b></p>  |   |
| <p><b>Rationale</b><br/> “Student well-being is strongly linked to learning. A student’s level of well-being at school is indicated by their satisfaction with life at school, their engagement with learning and their social-emotional behaviour. It is enhanced when evidence and informed practices are adopted by schools in partnership with families and community. Optimal student well-being is a sustainable state, characterised by predominantly positive feelings and attitude, positive relationships at school, resilience, self-optimism and a high level of satisfaction with learning experiences”.<br/> ERO Wellbeing for Success: A Resource for Schools, March 2016.</p>  |   |
| <p><b>Actions</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Each school will gather its own baseline data using Wellbeing@school students’ survey</li> <li>● Schools analyse and evaluate their data to identify those aspects of well-being for focus and improvement</li> <li>● Use the Kāhui Ako survey data to identify student, parent, whānau and iwi voice</li> <li>● Provide well-being professional development for all Across &amp; Within school teachers (ASTS &amp; WSTs);</li> <li>● Identify teachers whose teaching practice is exemplary in relation to student well being</li> <li>● Identify ways to share, develop and sustain good practice</li> <li>● Engage facilitators/consultants to assist with the development and delivery of a long term plan for the constant improvement of well-being within and across our schools</li> <li>● Develop a common across school system and assessment tool for measuring improvement in well-being.</li> </ul> | <p><b>Outputs</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Expert consultants have been engaged to coach and mentor the ASTS &amp; WSTs</li> <li>● The consultants, with the ASTs &amp; WSTs, and students have developed a mechanism to describe and measure the learning journey of teachers. This could be a progression or a matrix</li> <li>● External agencies have been identified and involved, and are assisting in the development of student well being</li> <li>● Our stakeholders have been involved and informed, and their voice used when and where appropriate</li> <li>● Systems have been developed through the ASTs &amp; WSTs for sharing ‘best practice’</li> <li>● Within six months of the Achievement Challenge’s approval, a common across school system and an assessment tool for measuring student well-being will have been developed. The assessment tool will possibly include the NZCER Well-being Survey, attendance, lateness, suspension and behaviour data and the regular collection and collation of stakeholder voice.</li> </ul> |



## Effective Teaching and Learning: Achievement Challenge Two

### 2.1 Our Thinking About Effective Teaching And Learning

Richard Elmore in 'School Reform From The Inside Out', encapsulates our thinking about effective teaching and learning: " The idea of improvement means measurable increases in the quality of instructional practice and student performance".

### 2.2 We define Effective Teaching and Learning as that which enables all learners to realise their potential and future aspirations.

### 2.3 Key Elements:

- Supportive learning environment
- Reflective thought and action
- The relevance of new learning is enhanced
- Facilitating shared learning
- Making connections to prior learning and experience
- Providing sufficient opportunities to learn, and
- Inquiry into the teaching–learning relationship.

### 2.4 Just Imagine If...

- Every teacher in every school provided personalised learning experiences for their students
- Teachers placed students at the centre of teaching and learning
- Teachers were continually giving and receiving feedback in an effort to improve the efficacy of their teaching
- Leaders relentlessly kept the focus and conversation on quality student and teacher learning, and
- Through strong collaboration both within and between our schools we bring sustained and systematic improvement to both our teaching and learning.

| <b>Effective Teaching and Learning in Action</b>   |  |
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| <p><b>Our Challenge:</b><br/> <b>Improve student achievement outcomes in Mathematics and Writing by improving teacher capability and by providing learning experiences that allow students to construct their learning through engagement and active exploration.</b></p>  |  |
| <p><b>Rationale</b><br/>           “The learning environment recognises the learners as its core participants, encourages their active engagement and develops in them an understanding of their own activity as learners.”<br/> <i>OECD “The Nature Of Learning”.</i></p>   |  |
| <p><b>Actions</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Each school involved in this area will choose either Mathematics or Writing as their main focus area</li> <li>● The PLD consultants identify with the ASTs &amp; WSTs ‘Best Practice’ in both the teaching of Mathematics and Writing. Share as drafts with teachers, request feedback and make adjustments accordingly</li> <li>● The consultants, with the ASTs &amp; WSTs will develop a mechanism to describe and measure the learning journey of teachers. This could be a progression or a matrix</li> <li>● The mechanism should include the development of student engagement through cultural responsiveness, student agency, inquiry, transition and the development of student competencies</li> <li>● Each school will strengthen its own professional development system for supporting teachers on their learning journey. This will possibly involve the PD consultants and the ASTs &amp; WSTs in observing, critiquing and feeding back to teachers</li> <li>● Individual Schools to work with the ASTs in the analysis of their most recent Mathematics or Writing student assessment data. Identify areas for development and set student assessment goals for the ensuing year</li> </ul> | <p><b>Outputs</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● By late 2018 or early 2019 each school involved in this challenge will have chosen either Mathematics or Writing as their main focus area</li> <li>● Professional Development consultants will be appointed by the end of 2018</li> <li>● The consultants with the ASTs &amp; WSTs will have developed and presented the Mathematics and Writing teacher capability mechanism to all teachers by the end of Term One 2019</li> <li>● The consultants, with the ASTs &amp; WSTs, will by the end of Term One 2019, have assisted each school to develop their own system for supporting teachers on their individual learning journeys (to move across the teacher capability progression)</li> <li>● By the end of Term One 2019 each school will have identified areas for development in either Mathematics or Writing and devised an Action Plan that includes strategies for the improvement of both teaching and learning. As well as end of year student achievement goals another requirement will be to include strategies and accelerated learning goals for specific cohorts of students</li> <li>● A Beginning Teacher Professional Development programme will have been established by mid Term One 2019. As</li> </ul> |

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Establish a 'Beginning Teacher' professional development programme focused on both the teaching of Mathematics and Writing. Set the programme up as above but with more structure and initially utilising a more measured and personalised approach</li> <li>● Acceleration plans are implemented and monitored to improve achievement for specified cohorts of students</li> <li>● Regularly gather student, teacher, leader, parent and whānau voice. How are we doing? What changes do we need to make to be even more effective?</li> <li>● Investigate and source effective resources, programmes and personnel that/who can be of value in advancing student and teacher learning</li> <li>● Organise Mathematics and Writing moderation across the Kāhui Ako</li> <li>● Decide which assessment tools will be used to measure student progress across the Kāhui Ako.</li> </ul> | <p>part of the programme an effective mechanism to describe and measure the learning journey of each teacher will be established. This could be a progression or a matrix. Movement by teachers will be monitored through self-assessment and the involvement of the WST, the Tutor Teacher and the respective Principals</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Stakeholder voice will have been gathered, analysed and actions considered at least twice a year</li> <li>● Regular moderation meetings will have been organised throughout each year</li> <li>● There is a coherent student assessment system in place for both Mathematics and Writing across all schools. Assessment data has been gathered at least twice yearly and analysed, evaluated and changes made so as to meet the changing needs of the students and to address areas of concern. The assessment data has been used both collectively and by individual schools to determine our success or otherwise in meeting our targeted goals</li> <li>● Students requiring learning support have achieved realistic personalized goals</li> <li>● Improvement in teacher capability will be monitored through self-assessment and the involvement of both the ASTs &amp; WSTs and the respective Principals.</li> </ul> |
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## **Innovation: Achievement Challenge Three**

### **3.1 Our Thinking about Innovation**

We will endeavour to empower all members of our community to develop a mind-set of continuous innovation. We believe that by encouraging and valuing curiosity, informed risk taking and creativity, we can introduce innovations that significantly improve student learning outcomes. We understand that 'creativity is where we start to think differently and innovation is where creativity comes to life.' Support will be given to explore new and innovative practices that are responsive to the needs of our learners.

### **3.2 We define Innovation as the mind-set of continuous curiosity that leads to improved teaching and learning.**

### **3.3 Key elements**

- Having an open-mind/growth mindset
- Informed risk-taking
- Curiosity
- Creativity
- Responsive
- Support, and
- Visionary.

### **3.4 Just Imagine if...**

- We shared innovation across our schools
- Teachers had time and support to develop and implement innovative practices
- Every teacher and student had time to follow their interests, and
- Pedagogical practices were always innovative and adaptable to the needs and interests of students.

| <b>Innovation in Action</b>   |   |
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| <b>Our Challenge:</b><br>Provide innovative learning experiences that help each student to develop as a whole person, that maximise their potential and that empowers them to be future ready.  |   |
| <b>Rationale</b><br>We believe that by encouraging and valuing curiosity, informed risk taking and creativity we can introduce innovations that will significantly improve student learning outcomes. Our belief is that 'creativity is where we start to think differently and innovation is where creativity comes to life'.  |   |
| <b>Actions</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Engage a consultant to introduce the topic 'The Power Of Innovation'</li> <li>● ASTs discuss 'The Power of Innovation' with teachers in individual schools or small groups of schools to identify strategies and/or mind-sets that would be useful for educators to adopt</li> <li>● Identify innovative practice that already exists within the Kāhui Ako</li> <li>● Provide opportunity for teachers to visit schools to observe and discuss innovative practice</li> <li>● The ASTs to support individual schools or groups of schools to identify and develop an innovative approach to teaching and learning. Examples might include <i>Project Based Learning</i> or <i>Play Based Learning</i> or <i>Developing 21st Century Competencies</i> or <i>Teaching and Learning Tikanga Māori Through Local Iwi and their Stories</i> or <i>Transition Between Schools</i> or <i>Developing Innovative Learning Environments</i>. The possibilities are endless but <u>must</u> involve the students in the decision making, setting the objectives, planning the learning activities, the identification of the expected outcomes and the assessment process</li> <li>● At least twice a term provide opportunities for schools or groups of schools to share their innovative practice successes and frustrations</li> </ul> | <b>Outputs</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Early in Term One, 2019 invite schools to nominate examples of innovative practice within their own schools and set up a programme for teachers to visit these for observation and discussion</li> <li>● Schools work with their respective ASTs to identify and clarify their ideas and thinking about a possible innovation that has the potential to make a significant difference in terms of student learning outcomes</li> <li>● By the end of Term One 2019 schools or groups of schools to have developed an Innovation Action Plan that specifies Goals, Key Tasks and Expected Outcomes</li> <li>● The planning shows explicit evidence of a focus on cultural responsiveness, student agency, inquiry, and the competencies</li> <li>● Progress toward the achievement of the Expected Outcomes has been regularly monitored by the Principals and the respective ASTs</li> <li>● Sharing sessions involving other Kāhui Ako schools and the stakeholders have been a regular feature of the innovative exercise.</li> </ul> |

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Involve all the stakeholders in the sharing sessions</li><li>● The ASTs together with a consultant and Principals develop a system for assessing the impact of each innovation.</li></ul> |  |
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## The Aho

### Te Aho Tuatahi – Culturally Responsive Practice

#### 4.1 Our Thinking about Culturally Responsive Practice

We believe that the development of a shared understanding of culturally responsive practice will be crucial to the success of our Kāhui Ako. Our initial focus will be to seek local iwi, community and whānau voice and perspectives in strategic planning. The diversity of our community will provide opportunity to investigate the feasibility of delivering the curriculum using culturally appropriate methodologies.

Culturally Responsive practices acknowledge the strengths that students bring to school. They are identified, nurtured, and utilized to promote student achievement. (Richards, Brown, & Forde, 2006).

Culturally responsive teaching uses “the cultural knowledge, prior experiences, frames of reference, and performance styles of ethnically diverse students to make learning encounters more relevant and effective for them” (Gay, 2013).

Culturally relevant practices that teachers can use to support their students include:

- Modeling, scaffolding, and clarification of challenging curriculum
- Using student strengths as starting points, and building on their funds of knowledge
- Investing and taking personal responsibility for students’ success
- Creating and nurturing cooperative environments
- Having high behavioural expectations
- Reshaping the prescribed curriculum
- Encouraging relationships among schools and communities
- Critical literacy
- Engaging students in social justice work; making explicit the power dynamics of mainstream society, and
- Sharing power in the classroom.

(Morrison, Robbins, and Rose, 2008)

Research has further defined culturally based education programmes as

- Those that recognize and use of first languages
- Having pedagogy that stresses traditional cultural characteristics and adult-child interactions
- Having pedagogy in which teaching strategies are congruent with the traditional culture, as well as contemporary ways of knowing and learning
- Using a curriculum based on traditional culture that places the education of young children in a contemporary context
- Having strong community participation in the planning and operation of school activities; and
- Acknowledging and using of the social and political mores of the community.

(Demmert and Towner, 2003)

**4.2 We define Culturally Responsive Practice as practices that support the achievement of all students by providing effective teaching and learning in a “culturally supported, learner-centred context”.**

**4.3 Key Elements**

- Use of knowledge, experiences and strengths of students
- Use of knowledge, experiences and strengths of whānau and iwi
- Collaboration with families and communities
- Cooperative learning environments.

**4.4 Just imagine if...**

- The tangata whenua were directly involved in the schooling of their tamariki
- Teachers knew where ALL their students came from and in particular deliberately made an effort to build partnerships between teachers, Māori and Pasifika learners, whanau, hapū and iwi
- All teachers had a strong focus on mohio: knowing how to validate and affirm Māori culture and how to apply that knowledge
- All teachers genuinely cared about what ALL students think and talked to them regularly about their learning
- Teachers regularly shared good and bad news about their students learning with parents and whānau and iwi
- ALL students and teachers (ECE to Secondary) learned to speak Te Reo and learned about our Manawatū and New Zealand Māori history and heritage, and in doing so took full advantage of local resources like Wildbase Recovery in the Esplanade.

## **Te Aho Tuarua - Developing Learner Agency**

**5.1 Our Thinking about Agency**

When learners move from being passive recipients to being much more active in the learning process and more actively involved in the decisions about the learning, then they have greater agency.

Core Education believe there are three things that could be considered the central features of our understanding of learner agency. The first is that agency involves the initiative or self-regulation of the learner. The second is that agency is interdependent. And thirdly, agency includes an awareness of the responsibility of one's own actions on the environment and on others.

Our student survey revealed that many of our students had limited influence and involvement within their respective schools in relation to decisions made about organisational matters and their learning. We believe that students are likely to connect more strongly and enthusiastically with their learning when afforded greater control or agency. Building the capacity of our students to become more self-directed, purposeful and in control of their learning is consistent with the key competencies. Learner ownership of



and responsibility for their learning is critical if our students are to adapt to and meet the challenges of the 21st Century.

**5.2 We define Learner Agency as learners having “the power to act”. Agency is when learning involves the activity and the initiative of the learner, more than the inputs that are transmitted to the learner from the teacher, the curriculum, and/or the resources.**

(Core Education)

**5.3 Key Elements**

- Ensuring curricula are culturally responsive and engaging
- Assisting students to develop a growth mind-set
- Developing student motivation and engagement
- Nurturing, coaching and making changes to pedagogy that will lead students to take greater control of their learning
- Actively seeking student input into learning activities, and
- Gradually shifting the balance from teacher directed to more self-directed learner approaches.

**5.4 Just imagine if...**

- All students took responsibility for their learning
- All students were actively involved in designing their learning pathways
- Teachers were effectively supporting students to select learning pathways, and
- Teachers were comfortably coaching learning.

## **Te Aho Tuatoru – Teaching as Inquiry**

**6.1 Our Thinking about Teaching as Inquiry**

The aim of teacher inquiry is to improve outcomes for all students. To inquire effectively, teachers have to be open-minded, persistent, self-critical, reflective, and empathetic. Teachers allow themselves to be uncertain, to stand back and examine their practice, and then use what they find as a basis for change. Teaching as inquiry is about being willing to take risks, to be wrong, to fail and then change direction and start again. It is about reflecting on what teachers do and then adjusting their practice in relation to the findings - sometimes in a small way, sometimes much bigger.

The focus of inquiry should come from the interaction teachers have with their students. The key to effective inquiry is that it happens in a systematic and continuous manner and that it leads to changed and improved thinking and teaching.

**6.2 We define Teaching as Inquiry as a systematic process teachers develop to ensure practice meets the needs of diverse learners.**

### 6.3 Key Elements

- Inquiry is based on the needs of students
- Teachers should inquire because they genuinely want to be better teachers
- Teachers must be honest and reflective, and
- Teachers should be supported to inquire into their practice.

### 6.4 Just Imagine if...

- Every teacher was using Teaching as Inquiry to effectively explore their practice
- Teaching as Inquiry was viewed as a key tool to develop and enhance teaching practice by all teachers
- Changes in teaching practices were obviously linked to the outcomes of Teaching as Inquiry, and
- Changes to student achievement outcomes were seen as the result of reflective practice and inquiry by all teachers.

## Te Aho Tuawha – Transition

### 7.1 Our Thinking about Transition

When students change class within or between schools, they must adjust to new surroundings, become familiar with new teachers and peers, learn new ways of working, and make sense of the rules and routines that operate in their classes (Sanders et al, 2005). While students are navigating the formal school environment, they are also adjusting to the social changes that happen when changing settings.

The National Middle School Association (1995) identified five key aspects occurring when adolescents move from childhood to adulthood that are useful to consider when thinking about the provision for students at transitions. They are intellectual, social, physical, emotional and psychological, and moral. Similarly, the Carnegie Council on Adolescent Development (1989) asserted that students' academic failure can be partially accounted for by the mismatch between the school's organisational structure and curriculum, and the intellectual, social, physical, and emotional needs of adolescents.

We believe better understanding of the transitions that our learners move through in their learning will enable us to focus on developing a more coherent system. We will review the quality and efficacy of the transitions that learners experience as they move through their schooling and into tertiary education and employment. We plan to strengthen the relationships and transitions between Early Childhood and primary schools, primary schools and intermediate schools as well as primary schools (including intermediate schools) and secondary schools by clearly identifying the expected outcomes at these transition points.

### 7.2 We define transition as the experiences that students have as they move between education settings.

### 7.3 Key Elements

- Open, honest and professional communication;
- Consistent coherent and useful information shared;
- Effective teachers use a range of competencies;
- Well being focused actions, and
- Family and whānau friendly.

### 7.4 Just imagine if...

- All information about students involved in transition was beneficial to learning
- Students and their whānau were actively involved in transition
- All learners move smoothly through education settings, and
- Transition enabled strong professional relationships to be developed
- Students are enabled to develop a strong sense of belonging.

## Te Aho Tuarima – Competencies

### 8.1 Our Thinking about Competencies

People use competencies to live, learn, work, and contribute as active members of their communities. More complex than skills, competencies draw also on knowledge, attitudes, and values in ways that lead to action. They are not separate or stand-alone. They are the key to learning.

The development of competencies is both an end in itself and the means by which other ends are achieved. Successful people make use of the competencies in combination with all the other resources available to them. These include such things as personal goals, other people, community knowledge and values, cultural tools and the knowledge and skills found in different areas.

People adopt and adapt practices that they see used and valued by those closest to them, and they make these practices part of their own identity and expertise. Competencies continue to develop over time, shaped by interactions with people, places, ideas, and things. People need to be challenged and supported to develop competencies in contexts that are increasingly wide ranging and complex.

In thinking about competencies we believe our work should focus on the competencies of all involved in our Kāhui Ako - students, teachers, school leaders, ASTs & WSTs, and Kāhui Ako Leaders.

### 8.2 We define competencies as being more complex than skills. Competencies draw on knowledge, attitudes, and values in ways that lead to action. People use these competencies to live, learn, work, and contribute as active members of their communities.

### 8.3 Key Elements

- The New Zealand Curriculum lists Key Competencies for students, and
- Describing the competencies for those working with teachers (e.g. School & Kāhui Ako Leaders, ASTS & WSTs) will assist us to meet the Achievement Challenges.

### 8.4 Just imagine if...

- All our students confidently display the competencies
- Teachers are deliberately delivering learning that incorporates/focuses on competencies, and
- All teachers have a shared understanding of what competencies entail.

## Relationships and Collaboration

**In our whāriki, relationships and collaboration surround all of the whenu and aho, and are a critical component of our Kāhui Ako, uniting us and supporting us to reach our achievement challenges. Successful collaboration is dependent upon strong, meaningful and culturally responsive relationships.**

### 9.1 Our Thinking about Relationships and Collaboration

We have all agreed that opportunities for teachers to collaborate together in positive relationships will benefit their professional growth as well as the learning of their students. Collaborative cultures encourage teachers to team up to improve student learning beyond what could be achieved alone.

We are also mindful that working together for the sake of working together is not enough. To be effective, collaboration must be focused purposefully and in our case directly related to our Achievement Challenges. Collaboration can take many forms including teachers working together through teaching as inquiry, critiquing and evaluating each other to solve issues of concern and the spreading of good ideas and innovative teaching practice within and between schools.

### 9.2 We define collaboration as members of an inclusive learning community working together as equals to assist students to succeed. There is an underpinning expectation of vulnerability and exposing one's own practice to critique and feedback. The focus is generally on improvement, and often some form of critical reflection supports the development of collective skill and expertise.

(Core Education)

**We define relationships using the theory of Sir Mason Durie (2014 and 2016) who describes a state of mauri ora as being demonstrated when a person is engaged in positive relationships with others, feels a sense of belonging, is spiritually and emotionally strong and is positive and energetic.**

**Collaboration is built on a foundation of mutually trusting and respectful relationships. Collaborative relationships operate where individuals work with specific intent, through agreement to a common purpose or goal.**

### **9.3 Key Elements**

- Collaboration builds strength in relationships and in learning
- Honest trusting relationships based in a sense of belonging
- Collaboration builds consistency across schools (practice, expectations, vocabulary), and
- Collaboration is student focused.

### **9.4 Just imagine if...**

- Students can learn flexibly across our schools to acquire knowledge, develop skills and shared ideas
- We can invest resources in teacher education to develop coaching and mentoring expertise
- Through collaboration we can guide individual learning pathways for all learners
- Strong formal and informal professional relationships were used to build effective teaching and learning
- Members of our Kāhui Ako experience a state of mauri ora, demonstrated through positive relationships with others, a sense of belonging, spiritual and emotional strength expressed through positivity and energy.

## Evidence to Support our Achievement Challenges

### Student Achievement in our Kahui Ako

In this section we explore the achievement of our students. For primary and intermediate schools National Standard data for 2013 - 2016 was considered. It is understood that the Kāhui Ako will not be using National Standards from 2018 and onwards, however it was felt that this existing data demonstrated trends that were very useful to set baseline data from which to set initial targets.

In secondary schools NCEA data for the same period of 2013 – 2016 was analysed, as well as further analysis of 2017 NCEA data as per the data profile. This latter information allowed overall targets to be set as per the profile page.

The large and diverse group of schools that make up our Community of Learning means that arriving at strong conclusions about the achievement of students needs to be done cautiously.

### Primary and Intermediate Schools

#### Priority Groups

A priority group is one where the percentage of 'below' or 'well below' expectation was around or more than 25% of the group. The following groups were identified.

#### Reading

Over the four years 2013 - 2016 the overall percentage for students achieving 'at' or 'above' expectation in Reading were similar each year at around 81%. Females had slightly higher percentages in the 'at' and 'above' groups than males. Reading has not been identified as priority when compared to Mathematics and Writing.

#### Priority Groups

- Pasifika - approximately one in three Pasifika students were recorded as being 'below' or 'well below' in Reading.
- Māori - slightly more than one in four Māori students were recorded as being 'below' or 'well below' in Reading.
- Males, while not a priority group, would benefit from more attention to their achievement in Reading.

#### Writing

Over the four years 2013 - 2016 the overall percentage for students achieving 'at' or 'above' expectation in Writing were similar each year at around 75%. Females had noticeably higher percentages in the 'at' and 'above' groups than males. Writing has been identified as a priority.

#### Priority Groups

- Pasifika - approximately two in every five Pasifika students are recorded as being 'below' or 'well below' in Writing.
- Māori - around one in three Māori students are recorded as being 'below' or 'well below' in Writing.

- Males - around one in three male students were recorded as being 'below' or 'well below' in Writing.
- Year 7-8 students - around one in three students in Years Seven and Eight were recorded as being 'below' or 'well below' in Writing.
- New Zealand European and students in Years 4-6, while not a priority group, would benefit from more attention to their achievement in Writing.

### **Mathematics**

Over the four years 2013 - 2016 the overall percentage for students achieving 'at' or 'above' expectation in Mathematics were similar each year at around 73%. Males and females had similar levels of achievement. Mathematics has been identified as a priority.

### **Priority Groups**

- Pasifika - approximately two in every three Pasifika students were recorded as being 'below' or 'well below' in Mathematics
- Māori - around one in three Maori students were recorded as being 'below' or 'well below' in Mathematics
- Year 7-8 students - around one in three students in Years Seven and Eight were recorded as being 'below' or 'well below' in Mathematics.
- Overall results suggest that all students would benefit from a focus on Mathematics education.

### **NCEA Results**

A significant amount of NCEA data was analysed, including aggregated results for the two secondary schools in our Community. It is the aggregated results for 2013 - 2016 that are discussed here. The percentages achieving NCEA at each level compared to New Zealand wide figures have been used.

Compared to the results for New Zealand the aggregated NCEA data for our Kāhui Ako showed:

- Similar percentages of student achievement at NCEA Level 1
- Our results fluctuated at Level Two but were mostly similar or ahead of the national figures
- At Level Three results fluctuated - two of the four years results were ahead of the national figure and for two years our results were behind the national figures; and
- For University Entrance our results were similar or behind the national figures.

Overall, the data showed:

- Māori students in our Community had achievement that was similar and generally ahead of the achievement for Māori students in the rest of New Zealand
- Pasifika students in our Community had fluctuating but generally better percentages of achievement over the four years compared to Pasifika students in the rest of New Zealand
- European students in our Community had consistently lower percentages of NCEA achievement compared to European students in the rest of New Zealand
- Boys in our Community had fluctuating results over the four years that were similar or slightly behind that of boys in the rest of New Zealand

- The percentage of girls' NCEA achievement in our Community was ahead of that of girls in the rest of New Zealand, except at Level One where students in our community had lower percentages than the rest of New Zealand
- The percentage of Māori student achievement at Level One and Two was similar, but slightly less than the achievement of European students. However, at Level Three and University Entrance the difference between the groups was more pronounced with greater percentages of European student achievement at these levels
- The drop in Leavers with NCEA Level 2 across the two schools is significant, therefore this become a priority target.

### **Priorities / Targets**

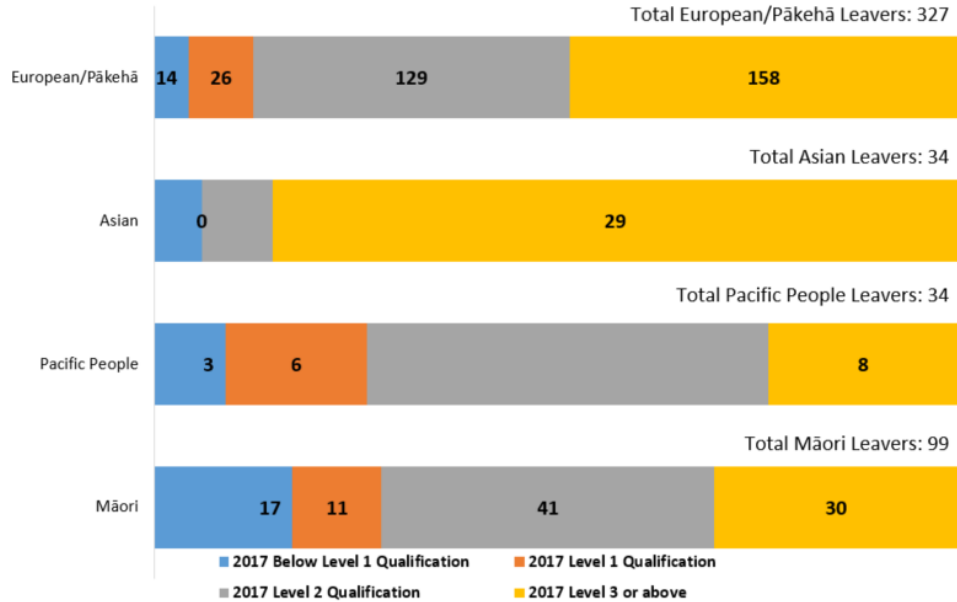
It continues to be recognised that achievement at NCEA Level 2 provides a more positive pathway for students into further education or employment. As per the profile using 2017 data targets have been set for:

- Proportion of Leavers with NCEA Level 2
- Proportion of Leavers with NCEA Level 3



# Palmerston North City & Rural Schools Community of Learning One

## NCEA



### Total Female Leavers

343

- 255 NCEA Level 3 or above
- 61 NCEA Level 2
- 13 NCEA Level 1
- 14 Below Level 1



### Total Male Leavers

127

- 27 NCEA Level 3 or above
- 34 NCEA Level 2
- 40 NCEA Level 1
- 26 Below Level 1



Proportion of leavers with NCEA level 2 or above:

80.2% Down -8.5%

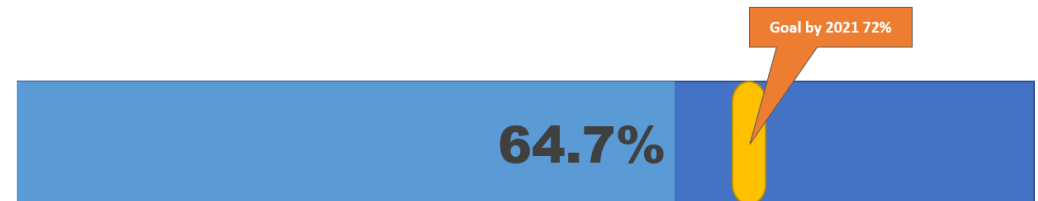
Proportion of leavers with NCEA level 3 or above:

64.7% Up 2.5%

Proportion of leavers with NCEA level 2 or above:



Proportion of leavers with NCEA level 3 or above:



**National Standards 2016**

**Primary (Ages 5-13)**

Achievement  
Student at or above National Standards  
Reported numbers based on



**Reading** (1428 Students)  
81.7%



**Writing** (1428 Students)  
77.7%



**Mathematics** (1428 Students)  
82.9%

**Māori**

**Reading** 74.5% (314 Students)  
**Writing** 65.4% (318 Students)  
**Mathematics** 70.4% (318 Students)

**Pacific People**

**Reading** 58.3% (48 Students)  
**Writing** 60.4% (48 Students)  
**Mathematics** 58.3% (48 Students)

**Asian**

**Reading** 75.8% (186 Students)  
**Writing** 76.3% (186 Students)  
**Mathematics** 88.2% (186 Students)

**European/Pākehā**

**Reading** 86.8% (880 Students)  
**Writing** 83.4% (876 Students)  
**Mathematics** 87.6% (880 Students)

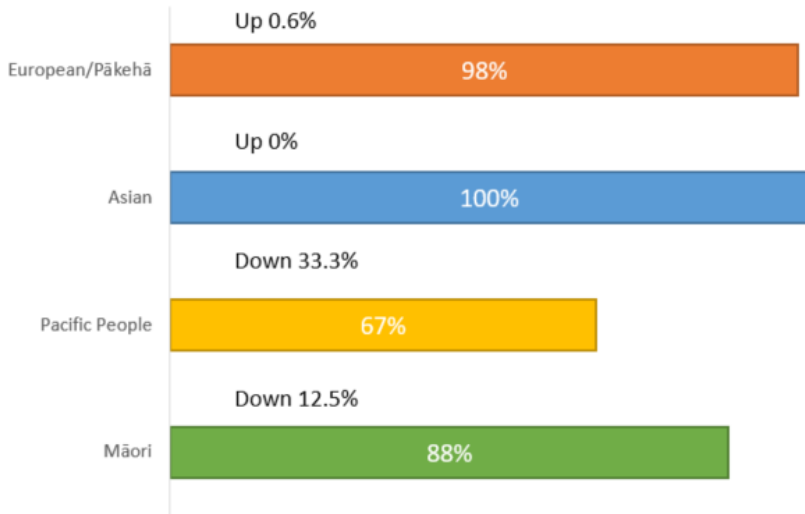
Writing



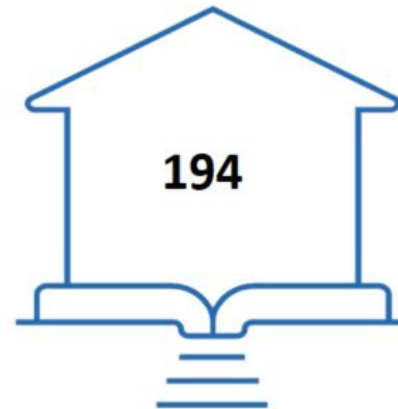
Mathematics



**Early Childhood Education (Ages 0-6)**  
**Prior Participation** 2017



Total participation in ECE:  
Down 1.7% to **96.9%**



Children started school between  
January and December 2017

## Kāhui Ako Surveys

### Background to the Surveys

The idea for surveys came about through our desire to engage with as many members of our community as possible around the themes we had identified. Key groups we identified included Māori, students, parents, teachers and Board of Trustee members.

After discussion with iwi representatives it was agreed that seeking the views of Māori would be undertaken locally by schools or clusters. All other groups were invited to participate in electronic surveys. There were three main themes in the surveys - effective teaching and learning, innovation and wellbeing, which are the whenu in our Achievement Challenge model.

In total five hundred and seventy three people completed a survey.

### Student Survey

Students indicated that:

- They strongly believed their teachers are focussed on them as learners
- They were very positive about school
- Most but not all found learning challenging and interesting
- One third had found changing schools difficult, and
- They felt they had significant input into their learning.

### Teacher Survey

The analysis of the Teacher survey showed that:

- They believe very strongly that they are focussed on their students well being and learning
- They believe they acknowledge the backgrounds of their students
- Their students were actively involved in decisions about their learning
- Their school looks after their well being, and
- If they could change one thing it would be to have more time to plan and teach.

### Parent Survey

The Parent survey showed that:

- They were very clear in their belief that teachers are focussed on helping their children learn
- Teachers look out for their children, but
- Less well supported were parents beliefs about how they were being informed about their child and how they were learning, and
- If they could change one thing it would be to have smaller classes.

### Board of Trustees

Board of Trustees voice indicated that:

- They strongly believe teachers are learning and student focussed
- Their schools are focussed on building teacher capability
- Student and staff well being was a priority and was well catered for in their schools, and

- That innovation was happening at moderate levels in their schools.

### **Connected Questions**

Through all four surveys a number of similar questions were asked of each of the groups. This was to measure the level of coherence between the groups. These findings indicated the following:

- All four groups strongly believed teachers were finding 'new and interesting ways' for students to learn
- Parents and teachers were clear that learning was challenging and interesting. However, students were less enthusiastic on this point
- Teachers, parents and Board members stated that student Haurua/Well Being was well looked after, and
- All four groups strongly believed that students and their backgrounds were respected.

When thinking about what they were proud of or valued in their school four significant themes were identified by all four groups. They are;

- Teachers Learning;
- The friendly atmosphere at their school, and
- Relationships.

When invited to suggest what they would like to change to improve teaching and learning at their school, answers tended to reflect the worldview of the respondents.

- Teachers and teaching was mentioned by students, teachers and Board members
- Aspects of curriculum and learning was mentioned by students and parents, and
- Class sizes was a consistent theme from teachers, parents and Board members.

Thinking about skills for the future themes mentioned included:

- Relationships
- Digital technology
- Communication
- Curriculum, and
- Personal skills.

When asked about what things schools are doing to better prepare students for the future four themes were highlighted. They are:

- Learning
- Digital technology
- Skills, and
- Relationships.

## Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation

### Planning and Goal Setting

Rather than having a set of prescribed common goals or targets covering all twenty three schools we believe that allowing each school to set its own goal/s within the parameters of the three whenu will be more powerful given that it offers each school greater opportunity, ownership and the autonomy to align their own school developmental priorities with those of our Kāhui Ako. We also believe that there will be real benefits to schools who have set similar goals or targets collaborating and working together towards their goals. The support and exchange of knowledge, experiences and ideas will enrich each school involved.

Initially we envisage our ASTs, the lead Principals and the individual school Principals working together to identify each school's area(s) for improvement, their goals and the strategies that they will employ in relation to the Achievement Challenge Plan.

### Monitoring

Monitoring will be determined by each work group and may include:

- Implementation of the plan and each school's or group of schools' targeted plan
- Implementation of change processes across our Community
- Regular review of our targets
- The development of systems and processes to gather evidence of shifts in pedagogy, school practices, student voice, whānau engagement and achievement data, and
- Individual school Charters to ensure that their Strategic and Annual Plans and targets to raise achievement at least in part reflect the Kāhui Ako goals and aspirations.

### Evaluation

The Lead Principals will work closely with the ASTs to develop an effective evaluation model.

This will focus on:

- Beginning and end of year student achievement data with comment on its significance as it relates to individual school and Kāhui Ako targets
- Evidence of changes in pedagogy and school practice
- Student, parent, whānau and teacher voice
- Analysis of the outcomes in relation to the targets;
- Next steps for each school and for the Kāhui Ako as a whole, and
- Identification of area(s) that need a stronger focus.

## Reporting

The lead principals will coordinate the preparation of reports for Boards of Trustees to be made available throughout the year.

These will cover:

- Targets and priorities
- Key aspects of implementation
- Interim (June) and end of year(November) student achievement data with commentary on its significance in terms of targets
- Emerging evidence of changes in pedagogy and school practices, and
- Resourcing requirements.

The Governance Group will facilitate a combined Board of Trustees meeting at least once a year to celebrate progress and to provide next steps information. The information provided will be based on robust quantitative and qualitative achievement data.

## Student Voice

- We will continue to gather a range of qualitative data particularly in relation to the learning of ākonga, well-being and teacher practice
- We will share examples of student voice through our website to help develop a culture of student agency.

## Parents, Family and Whānau

- We will further develop our website as an across community communication system that will grow into a powerful medium for information sharing and celebration
- Schedule community workshops, seminars and conferences to celebrate learning, our progress ,our achievements and our work generally, and
- Continue to consult with the Kāhui Ako's stakeholders on their aspirations for our learners.