# INTRODUCING SOUTH TIMARU KĀHUI AKO

*Our Vision: To improve outcomes for all students through developing a rich, inclusive, collaborative approach across all kura.*

*Our Purpose: Our Combined Kāhui Ako's purpose is to build relationships and develop capacities within and beyond our collective kura so that every learner is supported in their educational journey.*

## OUR HISTORY

South Timaru Kāhui Ako is made up of 8 schools and 9 early childhood centres. It was established formally in 2017 when a group of school and ECE leaders came together to discuss how we could work together as a Community of Learning. It had followed a lot of discussion in the 1-2 years prior as to what we wanted and how our Kāhui Ako would operate. It was decided that the group would be divided into two Kāhui Ako which would operate as one while being administratively separate. Excluding the Catholic schools, there are only 2 schools in the Timaru District who are not part of our Combined Kāhui Ako.

In March 2018 the Lead Principals were appointed for each of South Timaru and North Timaru Kāhui Ako. Since their appointments, the Lead Principals have developed a strategic plan, established communication processes, visited the kura involved in each of the Kāhui Ako and worked to determine the achievement challenges that were most important to the leaders and kura communities.

A Stewardship Team meets several times a year to ensure policies and procedures are established and adhered to, assist with appointments eg Kāhui Facilitators etc. It is made up of the Lead Principals, Board representatives (both school and ECE), and an Iwi representative.

The Management Team is made up of the principals of all kura in both Kāhui Ako and two ECE representatives. It meets monthly to discuss progress, make decisions and provide feedback for the Lead Principals.

All kura are keen to work together in a positive way for the benefit of our students and kura communities.

## KURA PROFILES

**Barton Rural School** is a Year 0-8 co-educational school situated 8kms from the centre of Timaru. As at 1st July 2017, it had 144 students. The school community is predominately made up of families involved in large and lifestyle farms.

*"Since the 2014 ERO review, several new staff have been appointed, along with some new trustees. Over the last three years, the school has maintained high levels of achievement in reading, writing and mathematics against the National Standards. Boys' achievement in reading and writing is lower than girls. However, this disparity has been reducing each year." ERO REPORT SUMMARY 2017*

**St Andrews School** is a Year 0-8 co-educational school situated in St Andrews, 17kms from the centre of Timaru. The school community is made up of families who are involved in farming and local industries. As at 1st July 2017, it had 91 students.

*"The school has responded well to the areas for development identified in the April 2014 ERO report. The school has lifted the proportion of children achieving at expected levels in mathematics and reading and to a lesser extent in writing. The school has participated in a Ministry of Education professional development programme focused on accelerating learning in literacy (ALL). Writing continues to be an area of focus to lift achievement for boys." ERO REPORT SUMMARY 2017*

**Beaconsfield School** is a Year 0-8 co-educational school situated 13kms from the centre of Timaru. The school community is predominately made up of families involved in farming. As at 1st July 2017, it had 98 students.

*"The school's vision is 'Learning for Today to Meet the Challenges of Tomorrow'. The values of respect, excellence, co-operation, curiosity and creativity are known as the EXTRA Values. The school's overarching goal is to ensure all children get the best possible education and achieve to the best of their ability through 'learning, people and environment'. The school's 2017 targets are to increase the number of children achieving in reading, writing and mathematics. There is also a focus on those children achieving well to maintain or improve their achievement levels." ERO REPORT 2018*

**Timaru South School** is a Year 0-8 co-educational school situated in the south Timaru. As at 1st July 2017, it had 206 students.

*"The school's vision and valued outcomes for children are to embrace learning, foster wellbeing and maximise potential. The values are responsibility, respect, resourcefulness and resilience. The school's current aims, goals and targets reflect the school's priorities to improve the wellbeing and learning for all children. The key focus areas include: fostering positive behaviours, raising literacy achievement, children's readiness for learning, wellbeing and social-skill development." ERO FINDINGS 2018*

**Timaru Christian School** is a Year 0-10 state-integrated Christian school. It is a composite school as it has both primary and secondary students. It is situated in west Timaru. As at 1st July 2017, it had 108 students.

*"Timaru Christian School provides Christian-based education. The school makes effective use of achievement information to make positive changes to learners' engagement, progress and achievement. Children benefit from a broad and interesting, bible-based curriculum. They participate and learn in a caring, collaborative and inclusive learning community." ERO REPORT FINDINGS 2017*

**Bluestone School** is a Year 0-10 co-educational school situated in west Timaru. As at 1st July 2017, it had 520 students.

*"The school's vision is 'inspiring creative, lifelong learners'. Its valued outcomes are for students to succeed academically, and develop attitudes and skills of self-management and good citizenship. To support these outcomes, the school's current strategic goals are to: improve Māori student achievement levels, enrich the whole school culture, start the implementation of the digital technologies curriculum, enhance the Year 7 and 8 students' engagement in their learning.... Since the last ERO review in 2014 the school has opened a bilingual class and has some new trustees on its board. In late 2017, the school introduced a whole-school programme to enhance school culture." ERO SCHOOL FINDINGS 2018*

**Timaru Girls High School** is a Year 9-13 girls school situated near the centre of Timaru city. As at 1st July 2017, it had 498 students.

*"Timaru Girls' High School provides well for its students. Its curriculum is responsive to student needs, interests and connects well with the community. Senior student achievement overall is increasingly positive. Internal inquiry and review practices are strengthening teaching and learning. These are being well led and supported. The school is well placed to sustain and improve its performance." ERO FINDINGS 2015*

**Timaru Boys High School** is a Year 9-13 boys school situated near the centre of Timaru city. As at 1st July 2017, it had 645 students.

*"The school's goal is for each boy to achieve his personal excellence, be respectful, and contribute to the community, with an inquiring and independent mind. Most boys respond well to this school goal. Boys achieve well in NCEA. The school's curriculum is increasingly responsive to students' needs and abilities. The hostel is a significant, positive feature of the school's culture. Trustees and leaders place a high priority on continuous, sustainable improvement." ERO FINDINGS 2017*

> ➢ **Aoraki Explorers** is an early childhood centre which is licenced for 57 children and is situated near the centre of Timaru city.

*"The owners have a strong vision for children and their families. They aim to 'provide high quality care and education that supports children and their whānau to develop the skills, knowledge and values so they can actively and positively contribute to a changing world.' Under their direction, the manager and teachers provide programmes that are based on the philosophies of Reggio Emilia and Pikler. Key aspects of these programmes are the careful preparation of the indoor and outdoor areas to provide interest and promote curiosity and the evident culture of respect. Children show a strong sense of belonging to the centre. They play well together and confidently make choices about what they want to do and where they want to play during the day. They enjoy trusting relationships with their teachers." ERO REVIEW FINDINGS 2016*

> ➢ **Childsplay Homebased Education Service** is licenced for a maximum of 80 children around Timaru.

*"The service is well led and managed by an experienced team of early childhood education teachers, including the owner/manager. A number of the educators within the service have been with the service for a long time. A feature of the service is the management focus on developing a sense of belonging and community for educators, children and parents. The visiting teachers organise playgroups twice a week and excursions into the local area once a month. These events extend on the learning programme offered to children. They also provide opportunities for children and educators to develop social relationships beyond the home-based care setting." ERO FINDINGS 2013*

> ➢ **Creative Corner Early Learning Centre** is an early childhood centre which is licenced for a maximum of 50 children and it is situated next to Timaru Girls High School.

*"A strength of this centre is the way in which children take part in meaningful learning experiences. Children have strong friendships. They play purposefully in groups, both independently and supported by teachers. Teachers are responsive to individual children. They have genuine conversations with children that encourage them to think more deeply and help them to develop their play ideas. Teachers make good use of information about children provided by their parents when planning the programmes." ERO FINDINGS 2014*

> ➢ **Hanan Free Kindergarten** is situated in south-west Timaru and it is licenced for up to 42 children aged over 2 years.
*"The kindergarten's moemoeā/vision is made up of three values. These are manaakitanga, whānaungatanga and interdependence. The values guide the curriculum and teaching practices. They are evident in the positive and meaningful relationships that teachers have with children, parents and whānau. Teachers provide a positive, welcoming and familiar environment that supports a sense of belonging and promotes the engagement of all children." ERO FINDINGS 2018*

- **Kowhai Free Kindergarten** is situated in south-west Timaru and it is licenced for up to 40 children aged over 2 years.

*"Teachers in consultation with community members have developed a clear vision and priorities for children's learning. These are expressed as:*
- *Manaakitanga - caring respectful sustainable relationships*
- *Kotahitanga - children learn to work together as one*
- *Whanaungatanga - children make connecting links with their community and develop ways to make sense of the world around them*
- *Aroha - children learn to keep safe, and know that their potential can be realised." ERO FINDINGS 2018*

- **Little Wonders Childcare** is situated in west Timaru and is licenced for up to 75 children.

*"Children benefit from respectful interactions with each other and their teachers. They are settled and confident in the centre's environment and with their teachers. They are encouraged to make choices and to be independent and self-managing. Children enjoy friendships with each other and play well for sustained periods of time. Infants and toddlers are well supported in their learning and development. Their learning environment is spacious and thoughtfully arranged to ensure low stress and safety for those not yet mobile. They benefit from caring relationships and unhurried time with their teachers. Teachers' responses to children show a good understanding of how children develop and learn. Routines such as kai time are used well to support children's oral language and self-help skills." ERO FINDINGS 2017*

- **North Haven Childcare and Education Centre** is situated near the centre of Timaru city, across from Ara Polytechnic. It is licenced for up to 50 children.

*"Children's sense of wellbeing and belonging is supported by staff who know them well and care about them and their learning. The children are settled, have friendships, and play well together and alongside each other. They confidently make choices, approach teachers for help and enjoy the friendships they have with one another. Teachers deliberately build children's oral language and social skills. Infants and toddlers are well supported in their learning and development. They benefit from teachers who are warm, caring and nurturing. Teachers are responsive to children's verbal and non-verbal cues and their care needs." ERO FINDINGS 2016*

- **Te Kouka Free Kindergarten** is situated near Timaru city centre and it is licenced for up to 44 children, including those aged under 2 years.

*"The kindergarten's moemoeā/vision is to, "create a community of powerful learners". This is supported by the curriculum priorities of manaakitanga, kōtahitanga, ako and tangata whenua. These priorities guide the curriculum and teaching practices. Teachers use their knowledge to plan experiences, and to adapt the learning environment to support children's learning and progress." ERO FINDINGS 2018*
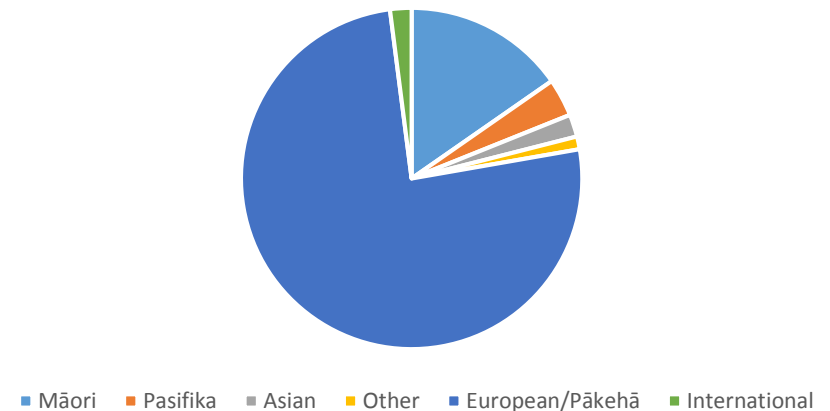
➢ **Timaru Christian Preschool** is an early childhood centre situated on the same site as Timaru Christian School. It is licenced for up to 45 children aged over 2 years.

*"Children are warmly welcomed into the inclusive, calm environment of the preschool. They play together cooperatively. Children have many opportunities to choose activities from a range of equipment and resources in spacious indoor and outdoor areas. Children experience positive, respectful interactions with their teachers. They are encouraged to be independent and to develop their self-help skills. Teachers include several aspects of literacy, numeracy and bicultural practices in the learning programme." ERO FINDINGS 2015*

### South Timaru Kāhui Ako Roll by Gender as at 1 July 2017



■ Female  ■ Male
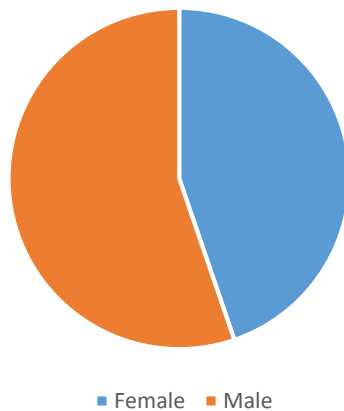
### South Timaru Kāhui Ako Roll by Ethnicity as at 1 July 2017



■ Māori  ■ Pasifika  ■ Asian  ■ Other  ■ European/Pākehā  ■ International

**KURA ROLES - Across School Roles** *(Kāhui Facilitators)*

Across the two Kāhui Ako there will be up to 7 Across School Teachers appointed. Their titles will be KĀHUI FACILITATORS to reflect the collaborative nature of their roles. Teachers will be appointed to these roles because of their ability to develop relationships, lead change and work in a collaborative way across a variety of settings. 2 Kāhui Facilitators will focus on preschoolers to Year 3s, 2 will focus on Year 4-7s, 1 will focus on Years 8-11, and one will work with priority learners. This structuring of the distribution of the roles has been chosen as it allows the Facilitators to work with key groups of practitioners at identified student transitions the educational 'pipeline'. As the roles are developed and embedded the distribution will be further evaluated with the intention of moving into the secondary / teriary interphase. To ensure collaboration and a sharing of ideas, Kāhui Facilitators will meet with Kura Collaborators every week, either one-to-one or in a small group situation. This will be an opportunity to reflect on what is going well, sharing ideas, seeking feedback and suggestions etc. This will allow the Kāhui Facilitators to make connections across kura and develop their own ability to 'lead leaders'. Kāhui Facilitators will also be responsible for leading an interest-based inquiry for teachers across sectors.

Kāhui Facilitators will meet with Lead Principals once per month to reflect on their own learning, share progress towards goals, seek resourcing as required etc. There will also be opportunities for Kāhui Facilitators to undertake professional development alongside Kura Collaborator, DPs and APs. Kāhui Facilitators will be expected to liaise regularly with a member of senior management at each kura they are involved in to ensure collaboration is promoted and valued.

**Within School Roles** *(Kura Collaborators)*

Within School roles will be appointed by schools as per their entitlement. Their titles will be KURA COLLABORATORS to reflect the collaborative nature of their roles within their own context. Where a school is not entitled to a Kura Collaborator, they will be given one from the resources available to the Kāhui Ako as a whole. The aim is to have a practitioner on site at each kura that will

  I.    Lead the circle of inquiry
 II.    Provide an onsite extension to the work of the facilitator
III.    Be a vehicle for maintaining the profile of the Kāhui Ako.

By ensuring where possible, that there is an 'in house' link to the work of the Kāhui Ako it is believed that the work will be better contextualised to the specific needs of the kura community. It is also believed that there will be greater 'buy in' from the kura.

Every school is expected to assign a member of the senior management team to oversee the role and responsibilities of the Kura Collaborator within their own kura, with a focus on well-being and imparting their own knowledge with their colleague. To ensure collaboration and a sharing of ideas, Kura Collaborator will meet with Kāhui Facilitators every week, either one-to-one or in a small group situation. This will be an opportunity to reflect on what is going well, sharing ideas, seeking feedback and suggestions etc. There will also be opportunities for Kura Collaborator to undertake professional development alongside Kāhui Facilitators, DPs and APs.

| | | TEACHING | | | | PARTNERING | | | | BUILDING | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Ngai Tahu Education Priorities | Tataiako Competencies | 2018 | | | | 2019 | | | | 2020 | | | |
| | | Term One | Term Two | Term Three | Term Four | Term One | Term Two | Term Three | Term Four | Term One | Term Two | Term Three | Term Four |
| Create pathways / Prioritise success / Provide leadership / Promote innovation | **Ako – practice in the classroom and beyond** | | | Develop action plan with KF/KC | PLD for Principals | Tchr PLD | PLD for DP/AP/ KF/KC | PLD based on inquiries | | Tchr PLD | | Review Ach Chall | |
| | | | | | KF/KC Training | Within and across school inquiries begin | | | Inquiry reviews | Within and across school inquiries begin | | | Inquiry reviews |
| | | | | | | Principal/Headteacher focus-3 per year. (3x2 hour per focus) | | | | Principal/Headteacher focus-3 per year. (3x2 hour per focus) | | | |
| | **Whanaungatanga – relationships with high expectations** | Appoint Leads | Stewardship Team Appt | KF/KC Appt | KF/KC Training | Tchr PLD | PLD for DP/AP/ KF/KC | Review KC | | Tchr PLD | | Review KF/KC | |
| | | | | Develop action plan with KF/KC | Appraisal of lead roles | Review lead roles | | PLD based on inquiries | Appraisal of lead roles | Review lead roles | | Review Ach Chall | Appraisal of lead roles |
| | | | | | | Within and across school inquiries begin | | | Inquiry reviews | Within and across school inquiries begin | | | Inquiry reviews |
| | **Tangata Whenuatanga – place-based, socio-cultural awareness and knowledge** | | | Develop action plan with KF/KC | KF/KC Training | Tchr PLD | | PLD based on inquiries | | Tchr PLD | | Review Ach Chall | |
| | | | | | | Within and across school inquiries begin | | | Inquiry reviews | Within and across school inquiries begin | | | Inquiry reviews |
| | **Manaakitanga – values – integrity, trust, sincerity, equity** | | | Develop action plan with KF/KC | KF/KC Training | Tchr PLD | | PLD based on inquiries | | Tchr PLD | | Review Ach Chall | |
| | | | | | | Within and across school inquiries begin | | | Inquiry reviews | Within and across school inquiries begin | | | Inquiry reviews |
| | **Wananga – communication, problem-solving, innovation** | Com Plan Dev | Engage Runanga | Data Capture | KF/KC Training | Tchr PLD | PLD for DP/AP/ KF/KC | PLD based on inquiries | | Tchr PLD | | Review Ach Chall | |
| | | | Create Strat. Plan incl Ach Chall | KF/KC Appt | Develop report/record methods for KF/KC | Within and across school inquiries begin | | | Inquiry reviews | Within and across school inquiries begin | | | Inquiry reviews |
| | | | Steward. Mtg | Develop action plan with KF/KC | Steward. Mtg - review | | Steward. Mtg | | Steward. Mtg | | Steward. Mtg | | Steward. Mtg |
| | | Monthly Management Meetings | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | EVIDENCE | | | | PATHWAYS | | | | LEADING | | | |

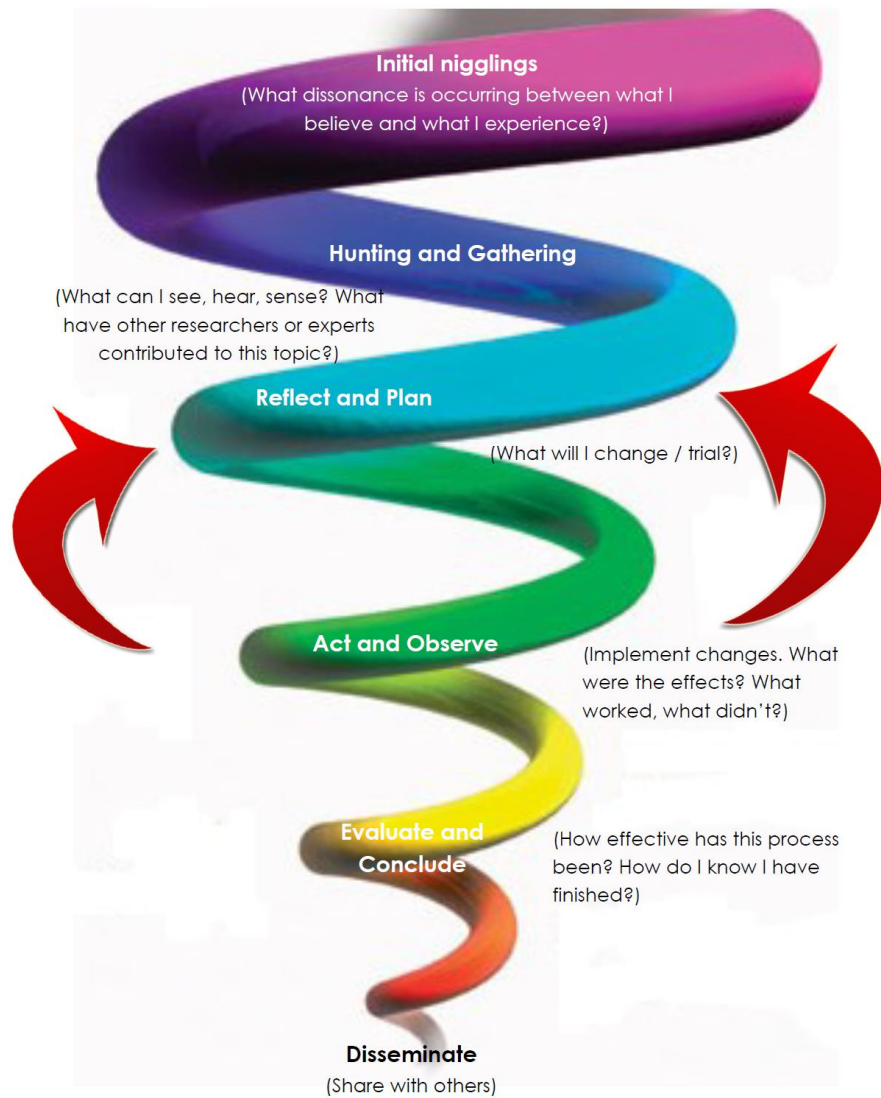*Combined South and North Timaru Kāhui Ako Strategic Plan 2018-2021*

**Strategic Plan**

The focus of all activities will reflect the Education Priorities of our mana whenua (Ngai Tahu), and relate to one or more Tataiako Competencies which are relevant to learners of all levels, abilities and cultures. The domains surrounding the plan identify the things we will be regularly monitoring and reviewing. Actions taken are colour-coded to show relation to the aspects being monitored.

## COLLABORATIVE INQUIRY – CREATING A NEW WAY OF WORKING TOGETHER

The Management Team agree that the New Zealand Education System is based on a competitive model in which resourcing is heavily linked to student population. While there are some initiatives that provide for particular groups of students eg ESOL, Special Needs etc, the general understanding is that the bigger the school roll, the bigger the funding and the more staffing allocated. While this may seem fair, it disadvantages schools with a larger percentage of students with additional learning and behavioural needs. There are a large number of schools and ECEs in the Timaru District and so movement between schools is fairly common if a parent feels their voice is not being heard or their child's needs are not being met in the way they expect them to be. Because of the way this system is designed, schools 'compete' for students and this competition has, historically, meant there have been pockets of collaboration across kura but in a somewhat limited way. The commitment of the Timaru schools and ECEs to the Kāhui Ako signals a desire for us to come together as an educational community, to share knowledge, skills and understanding in a way which will benefit all students in our district. Ultimately, every student, regardless of the uniform they wear, will be important to every educator in our area.

Collaborative inquiry is the means by which we will endeavour to uncover and better understand the needs of our students, and by which our practice will be shaped. This inquiry will be based on the Action Research model and be underpinned by the principles of the Kaupapa Māori Research model.

**Initial nigglings**
(What dissonance is occurring between what I believe and what I experience?)

**Hunting and Gathering**
(What can I see, hear, sense? What have other researchers or experts contributed to this topic?)

**Reflect and Plan**
(What will I change / trial?)

**Act and Observe**
(Implement changes. What were the effects? What worked, what didn't?)

**Evaluate and Conclude**
(How effective has this process been? How do I know I have finished?)

**Disseminate**
(Share with others)

**Aroha - Kānohi kitea - Manaaki Tangata - Whakawhanaungatanga**

**Action Research Model**

Action Research allows flexibility and encourages constant reflection, accommodating changes in direction as a result of our improved understandings.

The benefits of an action research methodology include:

- enhancing the participants' understandings of their practices and the situations in which they are conducted (Prodait, 2006)

- a focus on improving practice – praxis-related research (Locke, Alcorn, O'Neill, 2011)

- an ability to involve people in informing and implementing this process of change (Townsend, 2011)

- an opportunity to produce research outcomes which more authentically reflect the opinions of the community in question (Townsend, 2011, p.5)

- a desire for the construction of knowledge to be liberating and not controlling (Townsend, 2011, p.5)

The disadvantages of this model are usually based around time constraints. Fortunately, the kura in our Kāhui Ako are committed to a long-term relationship and time limit and constraints are not something we impose upon ourselves.

➢ **Initial Nigglings**

Action research is praxis-based research, it aims to improve practice and it has to arise out of a perceived need. It is those 'initial nigglings' which prompt action and provoke discussion about what could be improved. Our needs (focus areas) have arisen out of our perceived needs and observations within our individual kura. Finding common foci

for a large group of kura has been an important part of our process, and the challenge is to now align our 'hunches' with expectations and achievement.

## ➢ Hunting and Gathering

There are many stakeholders in our Kāhui Ako. Families come from a wide catchment area, hold a range of socio-economic positions and represent a wide variety of cultures. While our concern is shared i.e the education and well-being of our children, there are a lot of differences across the stakeholders. The Kiwi Leadership for Principals document (2008) explains, "The people who make up a school community are not typically of one mind on many issues. There will often be a range of views across different interest groups on educational matters. Effective principals are sensitive to these differences and work with groups and individuals to develop common understandings, and ideally consensus, on key educational issues." (p. 21). The role of the Kāhui Ako leaders is to ensure all groups are respected and have equal opportunity to contribute to the research.

A wide range of tools can be used to gather information about our current situation. The Management Team is very keen to employ a combination of both qualitative and quantitative data. While we have some basic baseline data, this process of sourcing data will become part of our inquiry process as we determine what is important, relevant and useful information to be collecting and measuring. As we are Professional Educators, an important source of information will be found in research articles and texts about our focus areas. Over time we may find that our own inquiries enable us to contribute to the pool of knowledge based on our experiences across the Kāhui Ako.

Much of this work will be done once we are able to employ our Kāhui Facilitators and Kura Collaborators.

## ➢ Reflect and Plan - Interpretation of data

During this stage, we will reflect on our findings and look for ways to address the needs that have arisen. This will be a time of creativity, sharing of knowledge and best practice within and across kura, and educators will be given the freedom to experiment and innovate so that we can find new ways to address identified problems. We anticipate having multiple interventions and initiatives running across our Kāhui Ako at any one time. They will be things that the teachers are committed to and that they believe will have a positive impact on their own kura.

## ➢ Act and Observe - Trial

Time will be allowed for changes in practice to have an effect. It is important to use a range of observation tools during the implementation phase. These may include observations, audio and video recordings, photographs, journal entries and interviews.

> **Round and Round - Flexibility of direction, improvements and changes**

Throughout the process, the Kāhui Facilitators, Kura Collaborators, School Leaders and Management Team will meet to discuss the effects of the actions, view and interpret the observational data. This should lead to further suggestions of action and improvements to the research. It may take several cycles of trial and error and cannot be limited to a time period as the point of the research is to seek improvement, not to simply carry out an experiment.

> **Evaluate and conclude - How will we know when we are finished?**

One of the challenges of this research will be determining when we have finished, when we have achieved our goal and answered our question. While targets are a part of the requirement of measuring student achievement, observations will also be required over an extended period of time, as will shared conversations with members of the Kāhui Ako and a realisation that all possible actions have been exhausted. It may be useful to work backwards with the leaders of the Kāhui Ako during the initial action planning, asking them 'What will each of our foci areas look like, feel like and sound like once they are achieved?' The criteria they create following that discussion may help us to know when we are finished that aspect of our journey. It is also very likely that the conclusion of this research will signal the beginning of a new stage of research for our kura.

**Kaupapa Māori Research Model**

The Action Research we will carry out will be based upon the principles of Kaupapa Māori Research. The key elements we will incorporate are:

> Aroha – affection, compassion, love
> Kānohi kitea – the importance of a physical presence, meeting people face to face so they can feel valued and can "evaluate the advantages and disadvantages of becoming involved." (Cram and Pipi, 2000 as cited in Rangahau)
> Manaaki Tangata – to support, protect and show respect for people. It "acknowledges that learning and expertise exist in both parties." (Rangahau).
> Whakawhanaungtanga- establishing relationships and relating well to others, "an unspoken but implicit commitment to other people." (Bishop, 1988, p. 203, as cited by Rangahau)

These principles must be modelled by the leaders of the Kāhui Ako; Management Team, Lead Principals, Kāhui Facilitators and Kura Collaborators.

*References:*

- ✓ Locke, T., Alcorn, N., & O'Neill J. (2011). *Ethical issues in collaborative action research.* Paper presented at the Collaborative Action Research Network (CARN) Conference, Vienna, November 4-6, 2011.

- ✓ Ministry of Education. (2008). *Kiwi leadership for principals: principals as educational leaders.* Wellington.

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  http://www.prodait.org/approaches/research/features.php

- ✓ Rangahau (n.d.). *Introduction; Method.* Retrieved from the World Wide Web on 25th September 2012: http://www.rangahau.co.nz

- ✓ Townsend, A. (2011). *Unpicking the principles and problems of participatory interventions: questions and challenges for action research.* Paper shared at NZ CARN seminar, Canterbury, Massey & Waikato, April 2012.

**EVIDENCE SUPPORTING OUR ACHIEVEMENT CHALLENGES – The process that has led us to this point.**

While student achievement is the key driver for the establishment of Communities of Learning, it has been the opinion of our Kāhui Ako from the beginning that if certain elements are not considered, particular basic human needs are not met, and if effective processes are not put in place, a student will not be able to reach their full potential. Our combined experiences over time and place have taught us that if a child does not have good nutrition, a safe environment, an understanding of who they are and their value to the community, they are less likely to be able to focus on their learning. A child who is stressed or does not know what is expected of them and where they are heading, is disadvantaged in their learning and so that student's achievement is restricted. Children are not isolated or separate to their environments and relationships and so, to eliminate the negative impacts of those variables, our kura are committed to treating our students as 'whole' people rather than focusing solely on student achievement data. We believe that by doing so, student achievement will naturally be raised because our children will be in a better place mentally, emotionally, physically, socially, academically and spiritually.

We began the process with surveys of kura leaders as to what they wanted from being in the Kāhui ako, followed by face-to-face visits by the Lead Principal to individual kura. This process was valuable in establishing connections and enabling the Lead Principal to 'see and feel' the different environments the Kāhui Ako members were working in. It also gave principals and headteachers a voice. From here, the Focus Areas were developed.

**FOCUS AREAS**
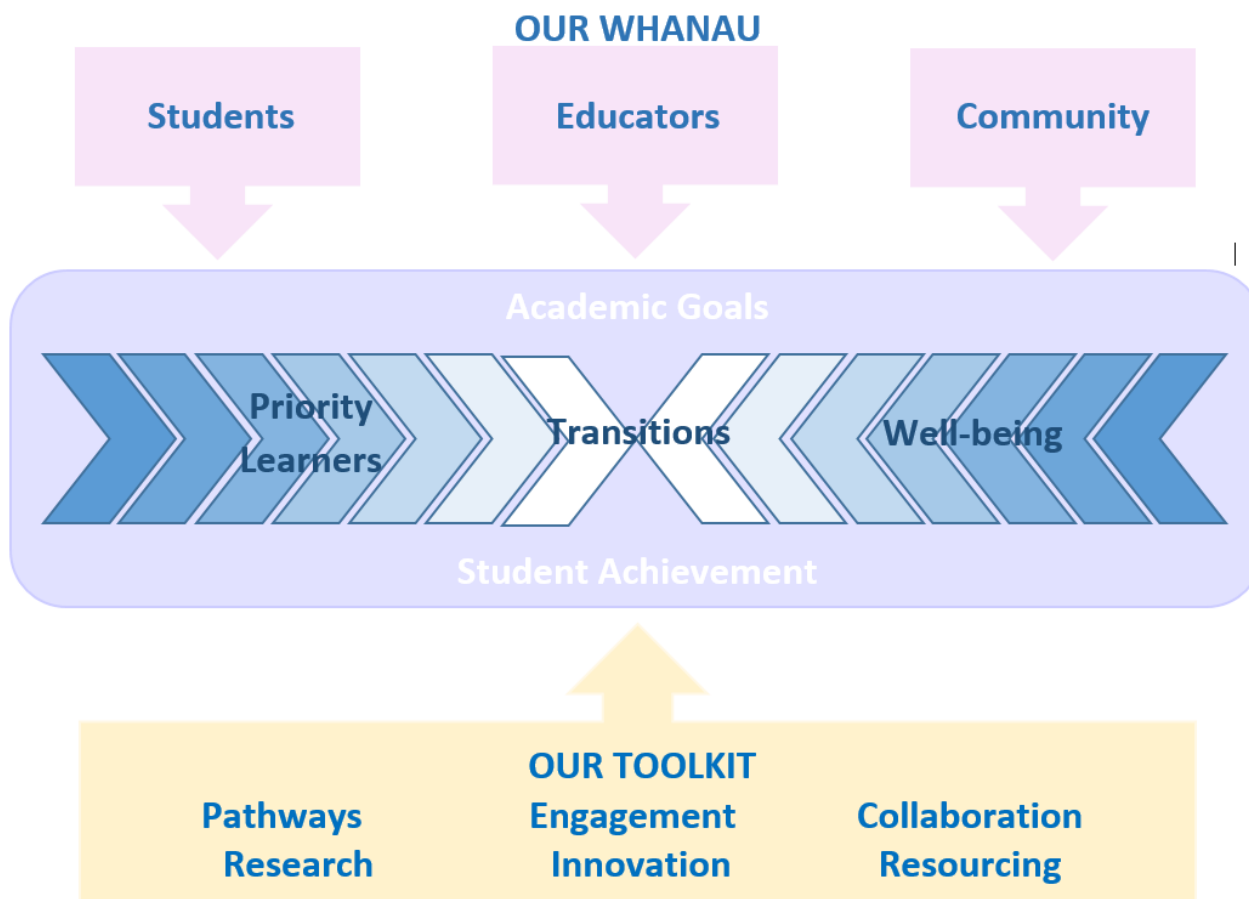
Our focus areas were selected by visiting and learning about every kura in our Kāhui Ako. Leaders shared about what made each of them unique as well as the things they believed would benefit both their own kura and the wider Kāhui Ako by focusing on. Those discussions led to a collective focus on Priority Learners, Transitions and Well-being. On the diagram below, the arrows face inwards to reflect an understanding that each of these foci are interconnected and overlap in many ways.

**Priority Learners**

Priority Learners refers to 'People of the Pacific' i.e. Māori and Pasifika students, and Students with Special Learning Needs i.e. learning difficulties and gifted students. They are identified as being priority learners by the Ministry of Education and kura are aware of our collective need to address their unique

**OUR WHANAU**

Students  Educators  Community

Academic Goals

Priority Learners  Transitions  Well-being

Student Achievement

**OUR TOOLKIT**

Pathways Research  Engagement Innovation  Collaboration Resourcing

learning needs within each educational context. We have elected to incorporate all priority learner groups as some schools have very few Māori or Pasifika students, and others have few students with Special Learning Needs.

**Transitions**

Transitions refers to the movement both vertically and horizontally amongst kura in our Kāhui Ako. Moving from ECE to Primary, from Primary to Secondary, and from Secondary to Tertiary settings can be an unsettling time for students and their whanau with different expectations from one setting to the next. Research has shown that transitions across settings eg from one primary school to another primary school, also has an effect with some students losing up to 6 months' worth of progress following a move. It is important, as we focus on every child in our town, to make transitions across settings a smooth process. With the competitive nature of schooling, it is also important that kura find ways to honour and respect one another when a parent chooses to move their child(ren).

**Well-being**

Well-being refers to the well-being of everyone involved in the learning process. When our children are well, safe and have their needs met, they are in the best position for learning. When our teachers are well, safe and supported, they are in the best position for teaching our children. When families are well, safe and part of a positive kura community, they are in the best position to work in partnership with teachers to raise student achievement.

**Student Achievement**

Sitting behind our Achievement Challenges, are Student Achievement and Academic Goals. By having a measure of student achievement, tracking specific cohorts over time, we are able to determine the effectiveness of interventions. These are not the driving forces for the actions our Kāhui Ako will undertake but they enable leaders to reflect and set next steps in our collaborative journey.

**Our Whanau**

Our Kāhui Ako whanau is made up of students, educators and community. Community includes mana whenua, board members, the Management team, the Stewardship team, an expert partner, Ministry of Education advisors and other individuals who contribute to our focus areas. Their contributions are vital to the operation and success of our Kāhui Ako.

**Our Toolkit**

The tools that we will use to enable us to address our achievement challenges include the following:

- Pathways within, between and across kura for both students and educators
- Engagement with a wide variety of educational community members to varying degrees throughout our journey
- Collaboration in the way we structure our Kāhui Ako and work towards the achievement challenges
- Research to ensure we are making changes which are based on best practices, including within and across-kura inquiries
- Innovation which encourages and promotes risk-taking to find new ways of doing things
- Resourcing to release, reward and enable educators to work towards achievement challenges.

Data collection originally focused on curriculum levels of students in Years 2,4,6,8 and 10. While data from all curriculum subjects would have delivered a more comprehensive understanding, we settled on Maths and Literacy as the core curriculum subjects are foundational to all subject areas. We also selected every second year as they roughly align to the end of curriculum levels eg aim for end of Level 1 by end of Year 2 etc. Data was collected from other sources eg Education Counts, but was later discounted by the Management team as they felt the data did not give a full, accurate picture of student achievement in our kura.

It was decided by the Management Team that qualitative data would be more relevant as an initial measurement with regards to our focus areas. All kura were invited to provide feedback as to their key concerns in each of the areas, the key groups affected and their sources of evidence. (See data listed below.) Teachers

and kura leaders were invited to contribute to ensure we had a fuller understanding of the situation in our schools. Common themes were highlighted within each focus area to give some direction as to the achievement challenges.

Once Kāhui Facilitators are appointed to their roles, further sources of evidence will be obtained in a way which aligns with the kura leaders' philosophies around the use of data. This data will be collated and used to measure progress in our initiatives.

**How does this relate to the outcomes of the New Zealand Curriculum?**

The Ministry of Education's Statement of Intent 2014-2018 (2014, p.14) identifies their priorities for students. The key outcomes they have identified which we believe our foci will support are 'Education provision of increasing quality and value for all' and 'Every child and student achieves success

| Our strategic intentions | Raise teaching quality and leadership | Use information more effectively to lift achievement | Target resources to address disparity in achievement | Engage children and students, and their families and whānau, to sustain participation and transitions in education | Create a modern learning environment | Develop a more outward-facing tertiary education system |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Our purpose** | Lift aspiration and raise educational achievement for every New Zealander | | | | | |
| Education system outcomes | Education provision of increasing quality and value for all | Every child and student achieves success in education | The education system is a major contributor to economic prosperity and growth | Investment in education provides higher returns | |

*Source: http://www.education.govt.nz/assets/Documents/Ministry/Publications/Statements-of-intent/2014SOI.pdf*

in education', ultimately working to fulfil the purpose of 'lift(ing' aspiration and rais(ing) educational achievement for every New Zealander'.
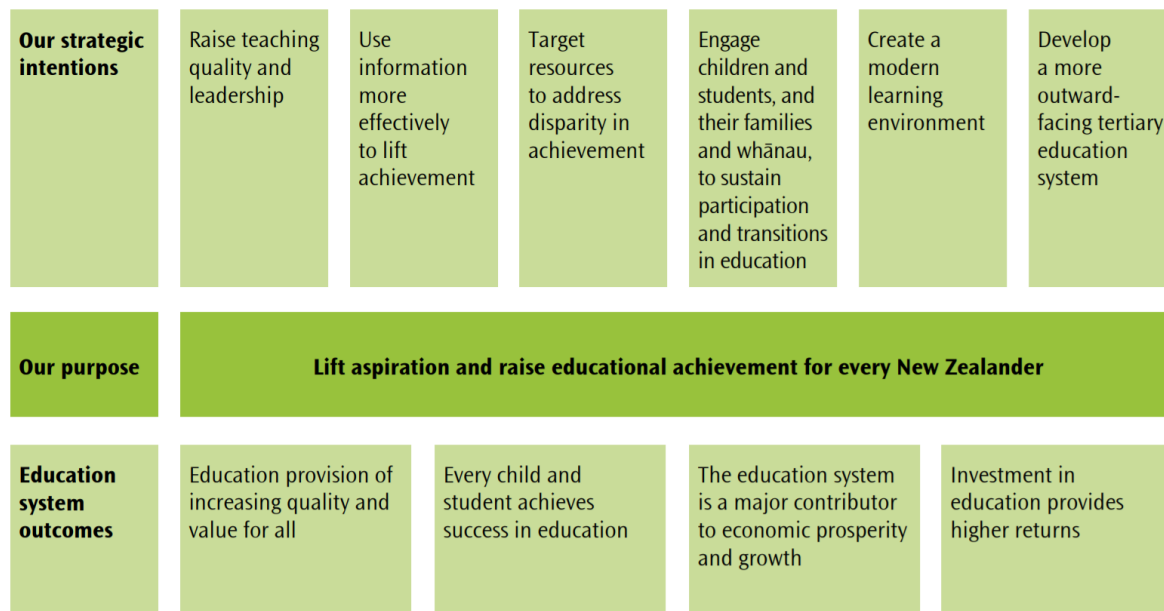
*Priority learners are groups of students who have been identified as historically not experiencing success in the New Zealand schooling system. These include many Māori and Pacific learners, those from low socio-economic backgrounds, and students with special education needs.* ERO (August 2012, retrieved from http://nzcurriculum.tki.org.nz/Priority-learners#collapsible1)

Our focus on Priority Learners will ensure that every child, regardless of culture, socio-economics or learning needs, has access to a 'quality' education based on research and initiatives we will develop as a result of our kura inquiries. This focus will also align with the NZC principles of High Expectations, Treaty of Waitangi, Cultural Diversity and Inclusion.

The Principles of the New Zealand Curriculum are intended to underpin everything we do. They are identified as:

- ➢ High expectations
- ➢ Treaty of Waitangi
- ➢ Cultural Diversity
- ➢ Inclusion
- ➢ Learning to Learn
- ➢ Community Engagement
- ➢ Coherence
- ➢ Future Focus

Coherence is described as being when 'The curriculum offers all students a broad education that makes links within and across learning areas, provides for coherent transitions, and opens up pathways to further learning.' (The New Zealand Curriculum, p.9). Our focus on transitions across and between kura aims to develop those coherent transitions to enable students to follow pathways to further learning. When kura, whanau and students understand the processes and expectations around transitions, our children will be better prepared for the next stage in their learning journey. We are aiming for our kura to have a shared understanding about what the role of each learning community is and how we can work together to lessen the stress, anxiety and misunderstandings around transitional periods.

Te Whariki identifies the importance of Well-being as one of its strands. Its goals express a desire for children to 'experience an environment where: their health is promoted; their emotional wellbeing is nurtured; they are kept safe from harm'. (Te Whariki, p.27). This understanding which takes a holistic approach towards the education of our children is something that all our kura identify with. By meeting the needs of every child, beyond academics, our students will be empowered to achieve in their learning.

**KĀHUI AKO BASELINE DATA**

*Qualitative Data* was obtained from kura by surveying teachers, asking them what their biggest concerns were in each of the focus areas, which cohorts were most affected, and what evidence they had to support their concerns.

**Priority Learners:**
- Most of the data was gathered through observations and starting school data. The data highlighted a lack of school readiness for priority learners who were new entrants. The issue of ongoing support for learners with high needs was also identified, with ECEs finding it difficult to obtain funding and complaining that the process for getting assistance was difficult and long. We will need more targeted data to assist with determining specific focus areas within 'Priority Learners'; this will be collected by the Kāhui Facilitators and Kura Collaborators.

**Well-being:**
- 4 of the 6 schools found resilience of students was of concern. They identified that students across all levels were not willing to take risks in their learning. 3 of the schools also identified that nutrition was an issue for students of all levels. This data was gathered through observations, discussions with whanau, student surveys and student management data records. These areas can be addressed within individual kura through their collaborative inquiry.

**Transitions:**
- 3 out of 6 schools and 1 out of 2 ECEs who responded found that expectations of what students should be able to do, were inconsistent between kura or unknown eg ECE to primary, primary to secondary. The data was sourced from observations, professional learning conversations and surveys. 4 of the 6 schools and both ECEs found that sharing of information across centres was an area of concern. That was based on past experiences. This is something that has been discussed informally by educational professionals across the two Kāhui Ako for a long time. Setting up our structure with Kāhui Facilitators working across ECE to Primary will enable better collaboration across sectors.

*Quantitative Data from schools as at July 2018 indicated that*
**In Reading:**

- 3 out of 5 primary schools have 30% or more Year 2 students are achieving below the middle of Level 1

- 4 out of 6 primary schools have 30% or more Year 8 students are achieving below the middle of Level 4

- 1 out of 2 area/high schools have 30% or more Year 10 students who are achieving below the middle of Level 5

**In Maths:**

- 5 out of 5 primary schools have more than 70% of Year 2 students who are achieving at or above the middle of Level 1

- 4 out of 6 primary schools have 30% or more Year 8 students are achieving below the middle of Level 4
- 1 out of 2 area/high schools have 30% or more Year 10 students who are achieving below the middle of Level 5

**In Writing:**
- 2 out of 5 primary schools have 30% or more Year 2 students are achieving below the middle of Level 1
- 5 out of 6 primary schools have 30% or more Year 8 students are achieving below the middle of Level 4

This data was obtained by teachers identifying the level of the New Zealand Curriculum each child was working at. It was based on testing, student work samples, observations and teacher judgement. These 'checkpoints' represent the period following significant transitions for students (i.e. from ECE to primary, from primary to Year 7-13 schools, and from contributing to high schools). It highlights the importance of focusing on points of transition, having shared expectations and a transparency around the sharing of knowledge across sectors. By tracking these aspects over time, we expect an improvement in the percentages of students achieving at their expected levels due to the interventions we put in place which relate to our focus areas.

*Additional Quantitative Data Related to the South Timaru Kāhui Ako*

*NCEA July 2016*
- 85% of Māori students achieved NCEA Level 1 or above, compared to 92.7% of European students
- 50% of Māori students achieved NCEA Level 2 or above, compared to 85.8% of European students
- 20% of Māori students achieved NCEA Level 3 or above, compared to 56.7% of European students

(Data was unavailable for Pasifika students)

*School Leavers 2016*

The age that students left school was tracked in 2016. The average age for a student completing their upper secondary qualifications is one year after compulsory education finishes i.e. aged 17. The results for South Timaru Kāhui Ako showed:

- 35% of Māori students left before aged 17 compared with 19.1% of European students.

(Data was unavailable for Pasifika students)

*Stand-downs 2017*

- Data shows that, in 2017, there were 17 stand-downs per 1000 Māori students compared to 11.3 stand-downs per 1000 European students.

The NCEA, School Leaver and Stand-down data shows an obvious cohort of concern for our Kāhui Ako is Māori students. They will need to be a focus group within our Priority Learner focus. The work that will be done around well-being and transitions will also support these students. More specific data will be obtained by Kāhui Facilitators and Kura Collaborators to determine if a gender or year level is affected more than others, for our Māori learners.

*Resource Teacher for Learning and Behaviour (RTLB) data for Timaru*



The number of requests per year level – 31/01/2018 – 06/07/2018
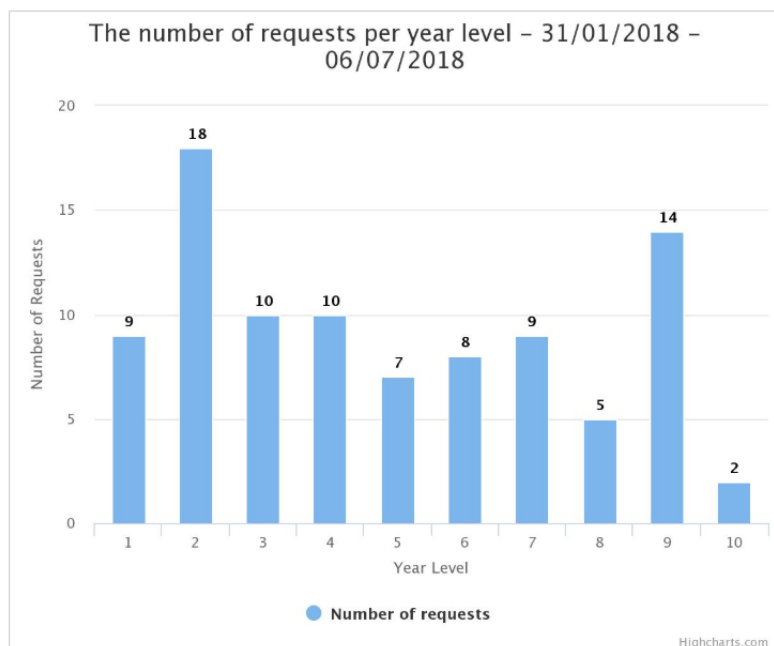
"The Requests for Service in Yr. 1 are representative of the work that is done by RTLB when transitioning students into the school setting . This is a similar pattern when students are transitioning into Yr. 9 . The large number of Requests for Service in Yr. 2 supports the notion that the earlier teacher support is provided in a student's schooling, the more effective it is to establish positive pathways for learning…. Māori are over represented in requests for service. Māori students represent 13% of the student population in the Aoraki Cluster. Requests for support for male students (76%) continue to far outweigh the number of requests for female students (24%). " *Source: Aoraki Cluster Report Terms 1&2 2018*

This data speaks to the focus areas of Transitions and Priority Learners. By focusing on ensuring smooth transitions with shared expectations of student achievement etc, particularly (but not exclusively) for our Māori students, we would expect these data to change over time.

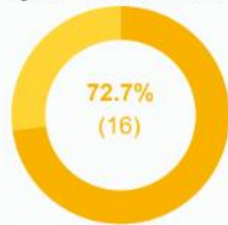South Timaru Community of Learning Education Profile

2015-2016

Custom profile: 8 Schools Included

Wednesday, 15 August 2018 11:19:09 a.m.
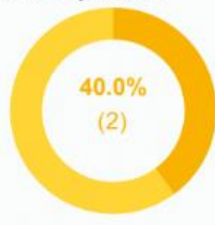
SECONDARY/TERTIARY (AGES 16-18)
**Qualifications**
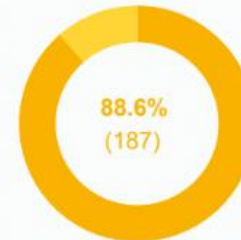**18-year-olds with NCEA Level 2 or equivalent**

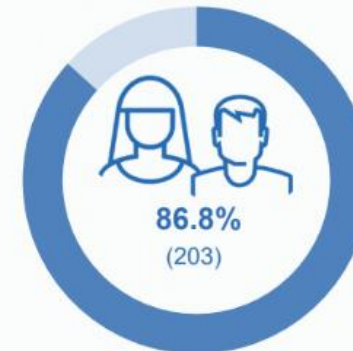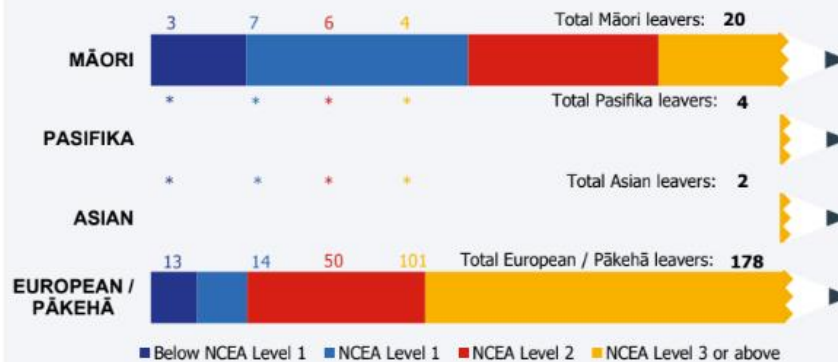| | MĀORI | PASIFIKA | ASIAN | EUROPEAN/PĀKEHĀ | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| % | 72.7% (16) | 40.0% (2) | * (*) | 88.6% (187) | 86.8% (203) |
| Change | ▼ 1.4 percentage points | ▼ 60.0 percentage points | * | ▲ 5.1 percentage points | |

**Total 18 year-olds with NCEA Level 2**
▲ 3.6 percentage points

Parenthesised values indicate the number of students attaining
▲▼ All comparisons are to the previous year
Values marked * are suppressed to protect confidentiality

SECONDARY (AGES 13-18)
**School Leavers**
**By highest qualification**

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| MĀORI | 3 | 7 | 6 | 4 | Total Māori leavers: 20 |
| PASIFIKA | * | * | * | * | Total Pasifika leavers: 4 |
| ASIAN | * | * | * | * | Total Asian leavers: 2 |
| EUROPEAN / PĀKEHĀ | 13 | 14 | 50 | 101 | Total European / Pākehā leavers: 178 |

■ Below NCEA Level 1  ■ NCEA Level 1  ■ NCEA Level 2  ■ NCEA Level 3 or above

**TOTAL FEMALE LEAVERS**
**81**
56 NCEA Level 3 or above
15 NCEA Level 2
5 NCEA Level 1
5 Below Level 1

**TOTAL MALE LEAVERS**
**121**
52 NCEA Level 3 or above
42 NCEA Level 2
17 NCEA Level 1
10 Below Level 1

Proportion of leavers with NCEA level 2 or above:
**81.7%** ▲ 0.1 percentage points

Proportion of leavers with NCEA level 3 or above:
**53.5%** ▲ 8.4 percentage points

## PRIMARY (AGES 5-13)
**Achievement**
**Students at or above National Standards**
Reported numbers based on 6 out of 6 Schools

**READING:**
**81.7%**
(913 students)
▲ 1.2 percentage points

**WRITING:**
**76.7%**
(857 students)
▲ 1.5 percentage points

**MATHEMATICS:**
**81.8%**
(915 students)
▲ 1.8 percentage points

**MĀORI**
Reading: 71.3% (107 students)
Writing: 67.3% (101 students)
Mathematics: 76.3% (116 students)

**PASIFIKA**
Reading: 81.8% (36 students)
Writing: 81.8% (36 students)
Mathematics: 79.5% (35 students)

**ASIAN**
Reading: 83.3% (20 students)
Writing: 83.3% (20 students)
Mathematics: 83.3% (20 students)

**EUROPEAN / PĀKEHĀ**
Reading: 83.1% (736 students)
Writing: 77.5% (687 students)
Mathematics: 82.8% (732 students)

## KURA AND MĀORI MEDIUM (AGES 5-13)
**Achievement**
**Students at or above Ngā Whanaketanga Rumaki**

**KŌRERO:**
*
*

**PĀNGARAU:**
*
*

**TUHITUHI:**
*
*

**PĀNUI:**
*
*

**FEMALES**
Kōrero: **
Pānui: **
Tuhituhi: **
Pāngarau: **

**MALES**
Kōrero: **
Pānui: **
Tuhituhi: **
Pāngarau: **

GOAL: 80% BY 2021
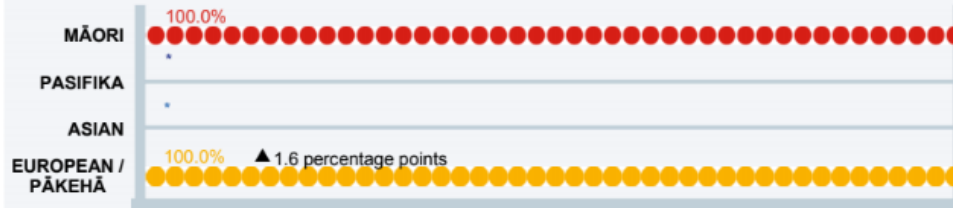**Proportion of year 8 students at or above for Writing / Tuhituhi**
**74.4%**

**Proportion of year 8 students at or above for Mathematics / Pāngarau**
GOAL: 80% BY 2021
**80.2%**

## EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION (AGES 0-6)

**Prior Participation**

MĀORI — 100.0%
PASIFIKA — *
ASIAN — *
EUROPEAN / PĀKEHĀ — 100.0% ▲ 1.6 percentage points

**Total participation in ECE:**
▲ 1.4 percentage points to 100.0%

**141**
Children started school between January and December 2016

**SOUTH TIMARU KĀHUI AKO ACHIEVEMENT CHALLENGES:**

*Drivers for change:*
These are the focus areas that our Kāhui Ako has identified as the key areas we wish to focus on, based on our data, observations, discussions and 'nigglings'. They are very complex areas with a wide variety of opportunities to make a difference in our students' lives. Having relatively 'global' foci enables kura to focus on the aspects that are most important to them while having a common overarching theme. These three drivers are our Achievement Challenges.

1. Transitions across kura (both vertical and horizontal) will be coherent and seamless with kura sharing relevant, useful information.

2. Priority learners will receive the support they need within kura to enable them to achieve at their expected level at the end of ECE, Primary School and Secondary School.

3. Well-being of our kura communities will be enhanced by addressing issues of resilience and basic human needs eg nutrition and clothing etc, so that an increased number of students will identify (and be identified) as being confident, competent, connected, actively involved lifelong learners and communicators, healthy in mind, body and spirit. (A combination of the visions of Te Whariki, p.5, and the New Zealand Curriculum, p.8).

*The following actions may be taken to achieve our challenges:*
- Appointing Kāhui Facilitators and Kura Collaborators who will lead inquiries across kura

- Implement WEAP (Whanau Education Action Plans) for Māori and Pasifika students

- Work with mana whenua and Pasifika communities to develop a better understanding of culturally responsive curriculum and whanau engagement

- Work with WAVE team (South Canterbury District Health)

- Investigate Te Whariki / NZC links (particular focus on dispositions and key competencies)

- Investigate current practice re: expectations of ECE-Year 1 learners, Year 6-7 learners, Year 8-9 learners

- Share best practice across kura

- Develop graduate profiles for age 5, end Year 6, end Year 8, end Year 13

- Liaise with MOE PB4L, Restorative Practice, RTLB and Learning Support services

*Note: this list is not exhaustive. As part of the inquiry and action research process, we will determine a fuller range of actions to be undertaken within and across kura.*

**WHAT WILL HAPPEN TO MAKE PROGRESS AGAINST EACH CHALLENGE?**

Once our Achievement Challenge has been approved, our Kāhui Facilitators and Kura Collaborators will undertake a term of training with our Expert Partner. She will upskill them in the areas of Managing Change and Developing Relationships.

At the start of 2019, all kura from our Combined North and South Timaru Kāhui Ako will join together for a day of professional development. The aim is to ensure everyone has an understanding of what will be happening, who will be involved and how we will operate.

From there, Kura Collaborators will work with their own kura to determine which focus area(s) they will work on. They may choose to focus on one for a set period of time, or have several projects going at once. They will work through the Collaborative Inquiry process, using the Action Research/Kaupapa Māori model within their schools, gathering data, determining trends/themes, planning action, implementing changes, monitoring and evaluating those changes.

Kāhui Facilitators will meet with Kura Collaborators every week or fortnight to share stories and ideas, to seek advice and support in their roles. Kāhui Facilitators will be the connection across kura, able to make links between what different kura are doing, disseminating information etc. Kāhui Facilitators will also lead their own inquiries at the same time and several of them will be the link between the schools and ECEs.

Lead Principals will meet regularly with the Kura Collaborators and Kāhui Facilitators to provide feedback, offer support and guidance. Theirs is an oversight role, ensuring we are focusing on the areas and challenges we have agreed to.

The Management Team will undertake professional development as part of their monthly Management meetings and Senior Leaders within kura will be given the role of overseeing the work of both the Kura Collaborators and the Kāhui Facilitators within their own kura. This is to ensure they do not feel disenfranchised or disempowered by the work around them.

Because we are aiming for a true collaborative approach and do not wish to limit the innovations, talents or initiatives of the educators within our kura, we can only predict what will be done. (See list of actions above.) While we have a clear idea of how we wish to work together and the groups that might assist us in our endeavours, the actual sequence of actions cannot be identified before we collate our baseline data and get our educators involved.

*Measures in progress – how will we know progress has been made in each challenge?:*

By focusing on the drivers for change, we anticipate it will result in students being ready to access and achieve in all curriculum areas…

1. at the beginning of NZC Level 1 in Year 1.
2. at the end of NZC Level 4 in Year 8.
3. at the end of NZC Level 5 in Year 10.
4. at NCEA Level 1 in Year 11.
5. Māori /Pasifika students will achieve at the same rate as NZ European students.
6. Process target: We will develop ways of sharing best practice across kura.

These outcomes are based on the New Zealand Curriculum Years/Levels.

**Years and Curriculum Levels**
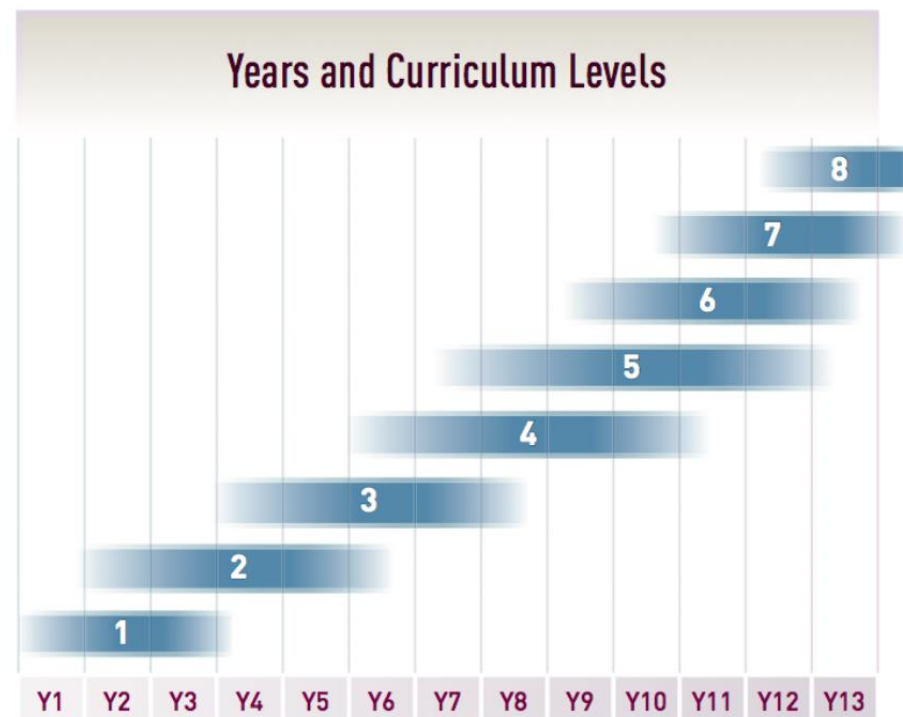
We have initial data regarding student achievement in Reading, Writing and Maths for all children in Years 2, 4, 6, 8 and 10. These year levels were selected as three of them follow significant transition periods eg end ECE, end primary school. They also generally fall at the end of each curriculum level eg end level one at approximately Year 2 etc. Disengagement of students as they progressed through the education system has been noted and so by looking at data over a shorter time period (i.e. over 2 years), we may be able to better pinpoint where negative changes begin occurring. This data will be expanded upon and we will use a range of assessment tools to ensure we have moderated results upon which to track our students. We will be further dissecting data to consider our Maori cohort due to the underachievement identified through our data. We will also be tracking our 2019 4 year olds and 11 year olds over time to see the longitudinal effects of our efforts with them.

Due to the large number of kura within our combined Kāhui Ako, we will be able to continue to track those same students if they move kura within most Timaru ECEs and schools. This will be done by the Kāhui Facilitators and Kura Collaborators, starting in the first 2 terms of next year. Our kura leaders want

to ensure additional data is obtained beyond purely academic results eg well-being surveys, student voice. It will be important to ensure themes are identified in a simple way which can be repeated from year to year, showing progress across levels.

In line with best practice, individual kura (under the leadership of Kura Collaborators) will maintain ongoing formative assessment records which will inform actions within their kura, as part of the collaborative inquiry process. They will share and discuss their data with Kāhui Facilitators and Lead Principals as part of a regular cycle of review and reporting to measure progress and to ensure any significant trends or areas of concerns are highlighted, addressed and shared with the wider Kāhui Ako. Results will be stored in a central location and will be accessible to Kura Leaders.

Lead Principals will be responsible for reporting to the Stewardship Team, Management Team, Boards of Trustees and the Ministry of Education through annual reporting which will be based on the ongoing data collection and comparison. It will also include a review against the Kāhui Ako Development Map domains to identify progress towards collaborative practice across the Kāhui Ako. This will be done in Term 4 of each year, as per the Strategic Plan (see above). The Management Team will review our Drivers for Change on an annual basis. Once 85% of students are achieving at the levels above (see Measures in Progress Numbers 1-6) across all kura, they will be considered 'achieved'.

**FINAL THOUGHT**

Our Kāhui Ako is at the beginning of a very exciting journey. We know that by collaborating on issues and foci that matter to our children, whanau and wider community, we will be able to make a significant improvement to the way things are done in each of our kura. Ultimately student achievement cannot help but be improved through our commitment to ensuring our children's needs are catered for, effective processes are put in place and the 'pockets of knowledge' that are currently hidden throughout our Kāhui Ako are imparted to our colleagues across all education sectors.