



He Kākano Communiqué 24 – October 26, 2012

'E hara taku toa i te toa takitahi, engari he toa takitini.'

- My success is not through individual endeavour but rather through collective effort

*'Until all of us have made it, none of us have made it' Rosemary Brown
(Black Canadian professor and politician 1930-2003)*

Kia ora koutou,

It's hard to believe we are fast approaching the end of the school year and preparing to say goodbye to another generation of senior students as they move out and extend their contribution to the type of biculturally competent, multiculturally cognisant society we all want to be a part of and want to be able to add value to. As always, we write in appreciation of the work you do and the clear focus everyone has on realising personal, professional and institutional goals focused on Māori student achievement.

We have decided to keep the communiqués shorter but do more of them over the next few weeks. In this communiqué we cover:

1. Wānanga 5 - Key Messages from Participants

2. Taking an Ethical Approach to Student Voice

3. School Milestone 5 - these have been sent out . Please respond asap.

1. In our last Communiqué (23) we identified three key issues emerging out of the School Milestone 4 reports. They included:
 - Schools thinking about ways to profitably engage in strategic long term relationships with **whānau, hapū and iwi** ;
 - Ways to support senior leaders as they work to introduce and sustain 'spread' and 'ownership' of the He Kākano learnings among their middle school leaders; and
 - Ways to sustain and normalise the current focus on Māori student achievement when the current He Kākano programme comes to a close in December 2012
2. In response to the first issue, Communiqué 23 provided a number of case studies and ideas that leadership teams can refer to in order to help their own thinking and planning in this area. As a way of responding to the second issue, this Communiqué provides some useful advice that actually comes from you, as participants at Wānanga 5. AND in answer to the third question, you will be aware by now that the **He Kākano project is being 'rolled over' until the end of 2013**. We have yet

to clarify the details of the agreement with the Ministry, but will be in a better position by the end of November to let you know all the details.

3. However, the two first challenges identified above remain, along with a number of others that you have shared as you continue to progress your goals. The Communiqué, along with the wānanga, Manutaki visits, professional development opportunities and web site, will remain the key ways we will continue to grow school community knowledge and understanding.

Wānanga 5 - 'Key Messages'

4. Overall, the numbers of regional Wānanga 5 participants increased by 52 (from 275 to 327), in spite of four small schools not being able to attend because of illness and other extenuating circumstances. The increase in attendance reflected the larger numbers of middle leaders being involved and the increased awareness that leadership teams (senior and middle) have of focussing not only on changing school systems, processes and practices but also developing pedagogical leadership that improves success by and as Māori students at the middle leadership level. In other words, Wānanga 5 was about moving leadership teams closer to classroom practice.
5. The following key ideas/questions were explored in this round of wānanga:
 - *What does culturally responsive leadership look like from the middle and what will improve their capacity to deliver in culturally responsive ways as faculty leaders?*
 - *How are those 'leading from the middle' using data/information to position or re-position themselves as middle leaders?*
 - *How are they applying the principle of cultural responsiveness to their focus on Māori achievement within their faculties/departments?*
 - *How can school middle leaders reposition their focus from 'Who is to blame for Māori student underachievement?' to the more agentic, potential focus of identifying 'What can we do, as school middle leaders, to raise Māori student achievement?'*
6. Some of the key questions and themes raised in Wānanga 4 were reinforced but not explored in depth in Wānanga 5. Recurrent questions and themes included:
 - The use of AREA quantitative data at a middle leaders' level, and what the implications might be at a departmental level for gathering, analysing and monitoring data within and across faculties/departments.
 - Further exploration of the use of 'creative' data in these wānanga, such as re-introducing Wordle as a means of showing participant responses in a visually effective way; showing how student voice can be a powerful tool; showing the YouTube clip of 'Brown Brother'; introducing the creator of Tangatawhenua.com (Potaua Basily-Tule) at three of the wānanga; and continuing to use the skills of cartoonist Wayne Logue to encapsulate key He Kākano messages in the data shows.
 - A number of the wānanga professional development exercises were able to model good creative practice in the use of data. An example was the development of 'bumper stickers' by small groups, based on their understanding of key documents and concepts.
 - Given the wide range of Ministry of Education documentation published over the past two years that contains cultural responsiveness imperatives – including the use of many more Māori concepts and values in te reo Māori – the wānanga tried to address how senior and middle leaders might together best utilise those documents and enable a shared view of the concepts and values (including those expressed in whakatauki).

7. *The key messages you took away from the series of wānanga 5 and the implications for you in your He Kākano leadership role and your role with, or as, middle leaders include d the following:*

- **It is important to build and maintain positive relationships among staff, with students and with whānau.** The relationships need to be both positive and purposeful, nurtured in a planned way, with small incremental steps a key to making progress. Being potential focused, it is important not to deficit theorise either students or colleagues.
- **Build a shared understanding of key Māori values (as used in key Ministry documents).** These include values and concepts like *āwhi*, *ako*, *manaaki(tanga)*, *pono*, *āwhina(tanga)*, *whanaunga(tanga)* and the *tuakana/teina* concept. Change starts from within, so discussing these concepts provides an important professional development opportunity to grow understandings.
- **Build middle leaders capacity to effect substantive change in the school.** Create opportunities for inclusive discussions on values, what best and potential practice looks like for the middle leaders, and what they might get from examining key documents such as Tātaiako, Leading from the Middle, the Māori Gains framework and so on.
- **Maintain the momentum and keep a relentless focus on Māori achievement and success, by building it in stages and in small planned steps and by not 'rushing it'.** Create your own *poutama* for change by using data in a consistent way to help plan and strategise 'next steps'. Include regular surveys to ascertain student voice and teacher voice.
- **Keep spreading current good practice through increasing staff cultural competency levels within culturally responsive environments and pedagogies.** Build on staff and student cultural capital by continuing to collaborate on developing a culturally inclusive curriculum. Consider how the appraisal system might fit your developing model.
- **Get leaders and teachers to focus on Māori students as a lever for achievement in general.** Be positive and agentic about our belief that what works for Māori students, works for all. Provide the diverse range of Māori students in your school with the belief that they can achieve at all levels and that they also have a role in helping teachers become more involved
- **Provide supportive specific and authentic professional development opportunities.** These might be focussed on cultural matters, unpacking key documents, discussing He Kākano ideas and ways of thinking and presenting ideas, and providing staff with cultural experiences to equal your own opportunities to date (such as undertaking pd on a local marae)
- **Remain positive, agentic and inclusive of middle leaders in ongoing discussions about Māori student achievement.** Ensure that your core support group is well informed and motivated, that they help develop the strategies for change based on faculty data, and that you have built in celebratory steps along the way.
- **Introduce both personal and professional challenges to help 'spread' occur.** Middle leaders will want to see senior leaders modelling what they need to do. This suggests the latter group should be prepared to share their own personal and professional goals, as well as including middle leaders in planning discussions through the schools' own professional learning groups' processes and programmes.

8. In sum, the answer to the key question: *'What does culturally responsive leadership look like from the middle and what will improve their capacity to deliver in culturally responsive ways as faculty leaders?'*, wānanga participants have responded that they (middle leaders) need to be provided with professional development opportunities. They need opportunities to discuss what *culturally responsive leadership* means for them, to discuss core values, to analyse key documents like Tātaiako, to discuss with their faculties what a culturally responsive curriculum looks like and to set high expectations and specific targets, teacher by teacher, student by student.
9. In answer to the question: *'How are those leading from the middle using data/information to position or re-position themselves as middle leaders?'*, wānanga participants have responded that they need more opportunities to understand how to analyse data/information and present it to others (staff, students, whānau) in ways that have meaning for those groups.
10. In answer to the question: *'How are they applying the principle of cultural responsiveness to their focus on Māori achievement within their faculties/departments?'* wānanga participants have responded that they are still developing ways to get staff 'on board', still thinking about what to do with 'fence sitters' and 'fence setters', including some of their colleagues, but that their senior staff still have an important role in modelling and driving change.
11. In answer to the question: *'How can school middle leaders reposition their focus from 'Who is to blame for Māori student underachievement?' to 'What can we, as school middle leaders, do to raise Māori student achievement?'*, wānanga participants seem to agree that it's about building their own capacity to focus on Māori student achievement, remaining positive and agentic, planning and taking small but consistent steps, and setting personal and professional goals related to cultural competence that can help also their faculties to grow.

Taking an Ethical Approach to Student Voice

12. It is heart warming to see the increased reference by schools to the use of student voice (via surveys and other means) as a form of evidence that can lead to discussions about the need to change current practices or policies. However, we want to make sure that collecting and representing the 'student voice' does not have unintended consequences.
13. You will recall that at the wānanga we have asked for every participant's permission to photograph or film or photograph you, by first asking you for permission via a standard consent form that CWA has provided us. Getting your agreement to be filmed safeguards wānanga participants from unethical use of your images, a process which is standard procedure in tertiary institutions.
14. However, we want to remind everyone, as discussed in the wananga, that while the intention to collect and use student voice is based on genuinely positive motivations, sometimes the risks to students can be overlooked.
15. For example, if a school leader films interviews with students, what happens if a particular student is critical of a particular teacher or subject? What if the student being interviewed is a recalcitrant underachiever that a number of staff do not 'like' because they have already had negative experiences with that student? What is likely to happen if these kinds of students are used as

‘evidence’ to confront teachers of their lack of capacity to deal with them, or to show teachers that they need to do more?

16. The answer is, of course, that the reverse of what was intended (to get staff supporting the need to change or ‘reposition’ their stance) can happen instead. They will inevitably blame the students being interviewed rather than thinking more dynamically about their need to change. The point is not to *stop* collecting and using student (or for that matter teacher) voice, but rather to do it in ways where people remain open to thinking about the issue raised, rather than the personalities raising them.
17. On a similar but related matter, the University of Victoria evaluation team has pointed out that in a number of instances where student performance has been publicly announced (e.g. in school assemblies), with tables showing the difference between Māori and Non-Māori students’ achievement (without qualifying why there are differences), the message that Māori students might get is that they are being publicly singled out as not achieving as well as non Māori, when in fact we might be wanting to show how schools are stepping up and better serving Maori students. This is not an easy distinction to make in an assembly, but it is an important one if we are to remain agentic.
18. Both scenarios point to the inevitable unintended consequences of the ‘hidden curriculum’ (the messages we don’t intentionally intend to teach – but which students nevertheless learn). ‘Ethically’ and professionally, of course, we would err on the side of safeguarding students’ interests. Getting their permission is an important first step in that process. The most important part is making sure that their (student) voice does not inadvertently have the potential to leave them feeling exposed and less safe than before we worked to tell them how much they matter to us.

Thank you everyone. We know you are all in the very busy time of the year. Take heart in the knowledge that the journey taken is shared with many.

Mauri ora,
Paora and Hine