

# Principal Sabbatical Report

Investigate effective approaches and use of innovation for accelerating student achievement for Māori learners who are English as a Second Language.

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## **Acknowledgements**

I would like to express my gratitude for the support offered to me by the Board of Trustees of Glenholme School, and Teach NZ, which enabled me to take the appropriate time required – time for investigation, time for reflection and refreshment. Thanks for enabling me to be able to take a breath, and a moment from the responsibilities of being principal. My sincere thanks to my colleagues for taking the time to share with me their experiences, knowledge and expertise in this particular area. Special thanks to the Glenholme School leadership team Sarah Thompson and Molly Norton for their leadership in my absence.

## **Executive Summary**

This report shares experiences gained in visiting schools and talking with colleagues. It is not a clinically designed research approach and project. The format of this investigation has been relatively informal. It is a collection of ideas and impressions resulting from visits and conversations with various colleagues. Investigation was explored in three particular ways:

- Readings and reflections
- Visits to schools
- Professional conversations

## **Purpose of the Sabbatical**

To investigate effective approaches and use of innovation for accelerating student achievement for Maori learners who are English as a Second Language (ESOL). Maori learners who transitioned to Glenholme School from Kura Kaupapa Maori, moving from full immersion in Te Reo Maori to a mainstream schooling environment. How can we provide effective learning support for these students in their transition into the English language?

## **Background and Rationale**

Over recent years we have observed that there is increasing number of students enrolling at Glenholme School from Maori-Medium educational settings. Students enrolling have been in Maori-Medium instruction since they have started school as new entrants and for various reasons parents have moved them into our mainstream educational setting. This observation also highlighted that students had already received 2-3 years instruction in a Maori-Medium prior to their enrolment in mainstream. Therefore students entered the mainstream classroom setting with limited English literacy skills, and it was apparent via the formative and summative information gathered that these students could not and would not meet national expectations.

It was apparent that we needed a sense of urgency for our newly enrolled takariki. We needed to accelerate the learning to help provide programmes where students were able to read and write English at age-appropriate levels.

This investigation involved working with our students, staff, whānau and other kura throughout the Rotorua area. It involved reviewing our current programmes, practices and strategies and investigation to further develop our programmes to ensure our learners experience high quality consistent English learning experiences at Glenholme School. It was also agreed and determined that our pedagogical shifts in thinking and practice was to identify these students as ESOL learners (English for Speakers of Other Languages).

### **Methodology**

During the ten weeks I travelled to various schools to investigate how they have developed strategies to promote and maintain high quality delivery of literacy skills for ESOL Maori students throughout the curriculum.

I talked to some researchers regarding Maori student achievement and Special needs as well as the Ministry of Education to highlight the growing predicament. Significant time was allocated to looking at available resources, adaptable resources, professional readings and reflections and engaging conversations with colleagues. This allowed the time to reflect on our own school programmes, and the delivery of our literacy programmes at Glenholme School.

### **Findings**

During the course of this investigation it became increasingly apparent that Glenholme School was significantly different to many mainstream schools of whom could and would offer Rumaki or bi-lingual classroom learning to students and parents of those transitioning from full immersion Te Reo Maori. Majority of schools visited and principals and senior leaders spoken with had available to parents and whanau the option of Rumaki, bi-lingual and mainstream classes, encouraging parents to transition students into bi-lingual classes. This presented a successful transition and pathway for students to access more exposure to the English language in a Te Reo Maori setting. Unfortunately Glenholme School does not have these facilities to offer parents and whanau; therefore we needed to consider how we cater for the new enrolments with specific learning needs. This highlighted to me how different we were from many other schools in this position. The sabbatical created opportunity to discuss with principals and senior leaders innovation, these discussions highlighted the diverse leadership challenges and school environments. It demonstrated the need for principals and leaders to be resourceful, to be flexible and to utilize skills expertise and available programmes.

Discussions with parents who had chosen to transition their children from kaupapa Maori schools to Glenholme School the consensus was that they now wanted their child/ren to learn to read and write English. Many parents felt that they could maintain the level of Te Reo at home and now that their child/ren had a solid grounding in Te Reo Maori it was time for them to learn to read and write English. This was clearly evident in the 2014 parent and whanau feedback to the Education Review Office.

It was also evident in the investigation, looking closely at our learners and their achievement that many of the students identified had global learning areas of concern regarding student achievement or were not fluent or confident in either English or Maori.

### **Implications**

At Glenholme School we needed to address our capacity for accelerating student achievement for Māori learners who are English as a Second Language by reviewing what interventions and literacy programmes we are operating in our school. We need to consider the following approaches to accelerate learning for Maori students who are English as Second Language learners.

#### **Enrolment**

- Enrolment of student – gather information about the learner
- Contact previous kura
- Develop relationships with parents and whanau
- Gather iwi, hapu information about the learner and whanau

#### **Special Needs Register**

- Students identified need on the Special Needs Register

#### **Reading Recovery**

- Application for tamariki to this service as soon as the assessment information has been gathered on the learner

#### **Resource Teacher of Literacy Service**

- Application for tamariki to this service as soon as the assessment information has been gathered on the learner
- Direct and Indirect learning support

#### **Resource Teacher of Learning and Behaviour**

- Application for tamariki to this service as soon as the assessment information has been gathered on the learner
- In Class Support – High Learning Needs application

### Reading Together Workshops

- Parent and whanau of students invited to be part of the programme

### English as Second Language programme

- Ministry of Education financial resourcing cannot be applied for but the programme can cater for the needs of these students
- Students to be part of the ESOL programme and parents informed
- ESOL teacher to do a complete English Language Learning Progressions assessment on the tamariki and provide information for the classroom teacher that will complement the teaching and learning programme/s
- Students to work with the ESOL teacher on a daily basis in a small group or individual instruction
- Students curriculum focus whilst on the programme to concentrate on reading and writing

### Classroom Teacher Aides

- Financial resourcing to be able to meet the needs of individual students and classrooms
- Teacher aides with the knowledge of how to work with students learning to read and write
- Teachers utilize the teacher aide in the classroom effectively

### Classroom Placement

- Placement with teachers that are speakers of Te Reo Maori or have confidence and knowledge of Te Reo Maori
- Placement with teachers that demonstrate strong culturally responsive practices

### Classroom Programmes

- High frequency words
- Phonics
- Spelling rules and conventions
- Literacy programmes – shared, guided and independent reading and writing
- Experience and effective classroom teacher/s

### Literacy Intervention Programmes

- HPP/PPP
- Toe by Toe
- Talk to Learn programmes
- Rainbow Reading programme

- Lexile Reading programme

## **Conclusion**

These students need to be recognized as English as Second Language Learners. To implement effective approaches and use of innovation for accelerating student achievement for Maori learners who are English as a Second Language (ESOL) needs to be acted upon as soon as possible. Recognizing on enrolment, that these students have specific learning needs that require immediate action and intervention to ensure students' successful transition and achievement. Recognising on enrolment that the tamariki will require immediate literacy intervention programmes. Intervention programmes that we have utilized in the past and some that we were made aware of as a direct result of this investigation.

## **References**

TKI ESOL Online

- Student's Needs – Maori Learners
- Pedagogy – ESOL Teaching Strategies Sections

The English Language Intensive Programme (ELIP) Primary Resource is designed to support ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages) programmes.

Education Review Office – Accelerating the Progress of Priority Learning in Primary Schools

English for Speakers for other Languages: Information for schools

From Literacy in Māori to Bi-literacy in Māori and English: A Community and School Transition Programme

English Language Learning Progressions