

**REPORT ON AN INQUIRY INTO THE
EXPERIENCES OF EARLY ADOPTER
KAHUI AKO**

**Submitted as a Report from a Primary
Principal Sabbatical**

Peter Kaiser

December 2019

Sabbatical Report

Perceived Successes and Challenges in Establishing and Sustaining Communities of Learning / Kahui Ako

“The government introduced its ‘Investing in Educational Success’ policy in 2014 with the aim of raising student achievement by promoting effective collaboration between schools and strengthening the alignment of education pathways. The policy provided for new leadership and teaching roles in and across schools and for the deployment of expert partners, both academic and practitioner ” (Collaboration to Improve Learner Outcomes, Education Review Office, 2017, p.4).

The expectation was that up to 250 Communities of Learning would be in place by 2017, across New Zealand, with each Community identifying collective achievement goals and challenges, based on local data, with a plan to address them, and with an overall aim of raising student achievement. The expectation was that through collaboration and use of local data, groups of schools with a common goal could achieve improved outcomes for priority learners to enhance equity and excellence in schools. A focus on reducing inequities in achievement and delivering success for Maori and for Pasifika students was at the heart of the initiative.

Establishment of early Communities of Learning (CoLs) / Kahui Ako proved to be contentious, slower than expected and more difficult to implement than the IES policy envisaged. Although the big idea of working collaboratively was welcomed, reflecting thinking internationally, the devil lay in the detail and design. Teacher unions and professional organisations were reluctant to endorse a policy which had not been developed in consultation with the sector, and which was likely to consume significant funds from Vote Education, when priority for this had not been universally canvassed and when other more commonly identified priorities (such as Learning Support) were likely to be under-funded.

By April 2017 197 Communities of Learning had been approved and 62 had their Achievement Challenges approved and were operational, although many more were at the early stages of planning and seeking endorsement.

Early Adopter CoLs discovered that much of the detail required for effective implementation was lacking. Regional offices of the Ministry of Education were poorly equipped to support and resource early adopter Communities. Moreover, insufficient consideration and advice was available to support early adopter Communities to understand and address the complexities of redressing decades of autonomous schools operating in isolation and competition with each other, while at the same time seeking to address complex issues such as the under-achievement of Maori and other priority groups within a tight framework for Achievement Challenges.

The design of the policy included significant salary enhancements for leadership roles within and across schools, but with insufficient planning for how these roles might be implemented and, with insufficient resourcing for professional learning to develop understanding of how to most effectively utilise these new roles.

In short early adopter Communities were ‘flying blind’ into the unknown. The Ministry of Education was progressively developing and implementing resources to support Communities of Learning at the same time as those early adopter CoLs were establishing. One principal reported “The MoE seemed to building the plane as we fly it”!

The role of expert partners as envisaged in the IES policy were slow to be appointed and slow to be engaged by CoLs and, were not universally utilised by all Communities. The role of 'Change Managers' with specific areas of focus were added to the mix.

The MOE gradually established Kahui Ako advisers at both national and regional levels, and organised both national and regional hui for Lead Principals and Across School Leaders. Most Kahui Ako attended and feedback from participants was positive.

The task of establishing and sustaining Kahui Ako required a major shift in thinking, from being autonomous to truly collaborative and interdependent. Early adopters under-estimated the complexity of this aim, and of the need to clearly identify a vision and plan for progressively working towards effective collaboration. A history of working together in clusters or networks and in MOE initiatives proved to not be a reliable predictor of effective collaboration in Kahui Ako. Collaboration required more than working together. It was this sense of common understanding about collaboration that proved to be a hurdle to cross for Early Adopters.

In this regard, a quote loosely attributed to Henry Ford is pertinent. "Coming together is a beginning, staying together is progress and working together is success". Getting to this point required clarity of purpose and a shared Theory of Improvement, a Map and Action Plans.

Early Adopters identified a tendency to fall in to 'activity traps' as soon as Within and Across School positions were appointed. Activity Traps occur when pressure is exerted to quickly appoint and identify job tasks before establishing a clear common vision. Linda Bendikson refers to 'activity traps' "where there is a lot happening (eg. meetings, numerous committees, a lot of professional development activities) but little focus on student outcomes."

Early Adopter schools struggled to develop clarity and agreement about how these new roles would be implemented. Leaders struggled to see the potential for these new roles as leadership positions. They neglected to clarify how these new roles fit in relationship to existing leadership positions in schools. The task to provide clarity required co-construction of roles with existing leaders.

Kahui Ako positions brought significant salary enhancements which leaders responded to with hasty demands for evidential accountability, clearly defined roles and limiting opportunities for new thinking. This also added pressure to leap into activity traps.

The salary enhancements created a tension in many schools, where Kahui Ako positions could often receive higher salary in total than other senior leadership positions already established in schools. Where Kahui Ako salary enhancements were added to teachers already holding units of pay they distorted salary relativities within schools.

Principals struggled to make sense of disparities between PPTA and NZEI Collective Agreements, where conditions covering appointments differed between Primary and Secondary sectors. This proved to be an unnecessary hurdle that Early Adopter Kahui Ako had to navigate their way through.

Allocation of resourcing to support the Kahui Ako was initially slow to be released, with procedures lacking clarity and consistency. MOE Resourcing and Novopay were developing systems that stakeholders knew little about. Principals shared stories of colleagues within Kahui Ako lacking understanding of procedures and expressing concerns about not receiving resourcing in a timely and clear manner.

Acknowledgments

Thank you to the participants who responded to the survey and who participated in interviews.

Gathering Feedback and data

This report collates data and qualitative feedback from three sources. Firstly, from a Survey Monkey of early adopter Kahui Ako; secondly from interviews with principals; and, thirdly from an interview with an Expert Partner. The information gathered was then collated, seeking common themes. A review of literature about effective collaboration informed outcomes and analysis from the data.

Survey Monkey Feedback Analysis

The survey was sent to principals in 37 Kahui Ako, mostly in the Auckland region, with 15 responding.

42% were established with Achievement Challenges endorsed in 2015/16, 42% in 2017 and 16 % in 2018.

Kahui Ako Lead Role

67% of lead principals responded that the 0.4 FTTE allowance for leadership was sufficient for their purposes as Leader, with 33% reporting this was insufficient. How this FTTE staffing resource was utilised varied from adherence to a weekly locked in 2 days, collating the hours to use in larger blocks, to accepting the resource as compensation for hours required but used across a week as needs required. The principals that viewed the resource as sufficient were more likely to adhere to regular time allocation for Kahui Ako work. Those that reported insufficient were more likely to commit to Kahui Ako work haphazardly as need required and 'banking' the FTTE allowance for their school. All principals reported that Kahui Ako work added significantly to their over-all workload.

When posed with a follow up suggestion that Kahui Ako leadership be a seconded fulltime position for two years away from their own school, 7 out of 8 principals asked viewed this positively, with a belief that this would enable them to fully commit to the Kahui Ako.

70% of the respondees indicated that leadership of their Kahui Ako had changed since establishment, mostly intentionally. 4 changed as an outcome of retirement. This suggests that most Kahui Ako Leaders view their role as for a period of time, with an agreed process of sharing the role rotationally across the Kahui Ako. A minority sought re-appointment. Those who did not seek re-appointment reported either workload as a factor or a Kahui Ako commitment to sharing leadership.

Kokiri Tahi / Te Atatu Kahui Ako is an example of a commitment to sharing leadership every 2 years with that COL now under its third Leader. Kotuitui Kahui Ako is an example of change in leadership due to retirement.

Some Kahui Ako have Leaders other than a principal, usually with a Deputy Principal or Associate Principal. Examples were Te Kahui Ako o Waitemata and Te Kahui Ako o Waitakere, both of which were formed under leadership other than a Principal. Te Kahui Ako o Te Atatu has recently appointed an Associate Principal as Leader as it's third Leader.

A question posed to 8 Leaders was how sustainable is it for principals to serve as Kahui Ako Leaders with current resourcing? 7 out of 8 viewed this as being sustainable on the basis of rotational leadership. Although some Kahui Ako have had deputy principals in the leadership role there is evidence to suggest that when a vacancy has occurred, as in Te Kahui Ako o Waitakere, a principal has then assumed the Lead role. This suggests interest in leading Kahui Ako is still strong among principals despite workload.

A majority of principals surveyed indicated their primary motivator to serve as Leader has been commitment to collaboration and a willingness to take on the role. A small minority acknowledged that at the end of their careers, Kahui Ako leadership offered a new challenge, with the salary enhancement being an attraction. Most Kahui Ako Leaders assumed their role without a competitive process; selection for Leader tended to be collaboratively decided prior to the formal interview process with principals across the Kahui Ako endorsing a single candidate for the Lead position.

Achievement Challenges

All Kahui Ako Leaders reported frustration with the process of submitting Achievement Challenges and getting endorsement from the Ministry of Education. Early Adopter Kahui Ako leaders expressed frustration over the narrow requirements that MOE pressed on Kahui Ako, with early sets of Achievement Challenges being heavily weighted to similar achievement and curriculum foci. Some respondees expressed disappointment that the narrow model forced upon Early Adopter Kahui Ako stifled creativity and new thinking and, discouraged locally identified differences.

When asked “How effectively has your COL met it’s Achievement Challenges?” 67% reported ‘somewhat’ and 33% ‘extremely well’. This suggests that despite some frustration about narrow Achievement Challenges, Kahui Ako leaders report confidence in working to meet these expectations.

Early Adopter Kahui Ako leaders shared exhaustive debates about assessment for Achievement Challenges, citing the complexity and multiplicity of assessment tools and practices across diverse schools, and the difficulty in seeking agreement across schools. These debates hindered development of plans and limited opportunities to debate other more purposeful issues at an early stage in Kahui Ako development. A focus on measurement and assessment was a direct outcome of early narrow emphasis on Achievement Challenges that focused primarily on academic curriculum improvement.

Commitment to Kahui Ako by principals

Leaders were asked “To what degree have you been able to establish relational trust and commitment from every principal in your COL?”

The literature on collaboration suggests that establishing relational trust and effective commitment to the vision is difficult. It requires explicit determination to collaborate, relinquishing autonomy and embracing collective efficacy. It requires a clear vision, agreed protocols and a sense of where to? Developing a shared Theory of Improvement and a map or plan to achieve goals is essential to focus energies and actions that work towards meeting shared challenges.

To achieve effective collaboration that delivers on a vision and set of challenges. requires certain capabilities in leaders. The then Education Council published a paper “Leadership for Communities of Learning” (Robyn Baker, November 2015) citing papers published by Dr Linda Bendikson, Sir Mason Durie, Professor Jane Gilbert, Dr Jan Robertson and Derek Wenmouth, referencing the capabilities necessary for leaders. Dr Helen Timperley, Professor Viviane Robinson among others have written extensively on capabilities for effective leadership in New Zealand schools and by inference across schools.

Every principal surveyed reported difficulty in keeping every other principal in their Kahui Ako fully engaged and connected. Committing to attending meetings is inconsistent. To quote one principal –

“They (other principals) still talk of the Kahui Ako as they rather than we, and expect the Lead Principal to make the Kahui Ako happen without their positive communication and engagement”.

Capabilities for leadership appeared in documentation provided to Kahui Ako by New Zealand School Trustees Association in a package designed to assist Kahui Ako leaders with appointment processes for leadership roles. Principals reported finding the templates provided by NZSTA useful.

When asked about success in establishing commitment Kahui Ako leaders surveyed indicated high levels of relative success. Although 17% reported difficulty, 58% reported ‘mostly successful’ and 25% reported ‘embedded and flourishing’. The survey did not inquire about capabilities for collaboration per se, but positive responses suggest despite the likely difficulties, Kahui Ako leaders are reporting high commitment from principal colleagues within their Kahui Ako.

Successful collaboration requires all staff within and across every school in a Kahui Ako to exercise commitment to the vision. Integral to this must be the participation of other leaders in schools. The survey results suggest while this is happening to some extent, it is still developing and needs to be a core explicit action in schools. 25% reported ‘not much’ participation by other leaders in schools, with 50% reporting ‘somewhat’ and 25% ‘significantly’.

Connecting all teachers to the COL vision is a challenge. The survey results indicate 17% ‘not yet’, 75% ‘somewhat’ and 8% ‘well’.

Establishing Across School Lead and Within School Lead roles

Establishing clarity and a sense of agreed purpose around ASL and WSL positions has been a challenge for many Kahui Ako leaders. 25% report ‘no difficulty’ but 33% report ‘somewhat difficult’ and 42% report that the process has been ‘complex’.

I posed a question to 8 principals, inquiring into the challenge of ASL and WSL roles. Feedback suggests that for many leaders in Kahui Ako, establishing agreement about these leadership roles has been difficult. An early mistake was for many Kahui Ako to fall into the ‘activity trap’ of just getting ASLs and WSLs underway with tasks. Here leaders expressed lack of clarity around the concept of ‘leadership’ in these positions.

Recruiting and completing the process of appointing ASL and WSL positions has not presented significant challenge. Principals report keen interest in applying for the roles within and across schools. The complexity arises when agreeing upon Job Description and connection to the Kahui Ako plan.

Kahui Ako Leaders expressed a view that the number of ASL positions was insufficient to ensure connection of every school to the core. Schools that employed ASLs were seen as having an advantage over those that did not.

WSL leaders are more likely to be involved in task focused activity, whereas ASL leaders are more likely to be successful in their roles if active leadership by the Kahui Ako Lead is given to co-construct their work. One principal shared a view that WSL release time is insufficient for working effectively in the role.

A potential challenge for some Lead Principals has been how they exercise leadership with ASLs. The challenge occurs because employment of ASLs is with their own employing school, not the Lead Principal. This is further exacerbated by the resourcing to support ASLs which lies with the

employing principal and not the Lead Principal. Access to these resources can be difficult unless the Kahui Ako has established clear protocols for use of funds. So too has been use of release time for ASLs. This usually is the responsibility of the employing principal. If the employing principal is restrictive or uncooperative with the use of these hours, then effective use of the ASL teacher is limited.

Has the COL / Kahui Ako journey been worthwhile?

83% of principals surveyed indicated 'really worthwhile', with 17% indicating 'some success'. This suggests from leaders in Early Adopter Kahui Ako, there is a strong positivity about the work to establish effective collaboration across schools.

Quotes from principals include:

"great collaboration, appreciation and understanding of each other's work"

"collaborative Inquiries"

"more transparent and effective transitions"

"growth in leadership"

"Developing relational trust between principals"

"the engagement of secondary schools"

"a focus on collective goals to raise achievement"

So how sustainable are COL / Kahui Ako?

42% of responses indicated 'embedded' commitment to working in a Kahui Ako. Although this is an expression by Lead Principals, it does not reveal how other staff in school within Kahui Ako view the model. 58% reported 'moderate' commitment to sustaining Kahui Ako. This suggests less certainty and acknowledgment of ongoing challenges, but optimism about the future.

Sustainability is reflected in a pattern of renewal of leadership across Kahui Ako and in the challenge of embracing new principals when there are leadership changes in schools. In Te Kahui Ako o Te Atatu leaders will have had to embrace change in 5 out of 9 schools in just 12 months. Connecting new principals to the vision and plan will be a major challenge in Te Atatu.

Principals' Feedback from interviews

Values and Beliefs; Practices

Principals understood the importance of developing agreed shared values and beliefs to underscore a shared vision. They discussed a wide range of understandings about collaboration and goal setting; of Action Plans and of evaluative expertise.

Principals shared the following comments:

- A need to hold existing ideas lightly
- Not to rush into solving problems
- Take time to understand the complexity of the task
- Be curious and open to new ideas
- Encourage critical thinking
- Be inquiring – commit robust inquiry; collaborative inquiries – use of Spirals of Inquiry
- Focus on process not just outcomes

- Fit or align context to all schools in the Kahui Ako
- Fit with the wider culture and expectations of the community around schools
- It is a journey; there is no end point
- Meet the needs of all students while also identifying priority students or priority sub-populations in our schools
- Be learner responsive
- Relate to current literature and research for effective practice
- Inspire teachers to reflect, share, inquire into and create change
- All decisions be influenced by student and teacher voice
- Strengthen transitions through shared knowledge of students with whanau/parents/teachers
- Teachers to develop capabilities in being adaptive – the concept of Adaptive Expertise
- Commit to growing teacher efficacy
- Be culturally responsive
- Address inequity in schools
- Participate in collaborative inquiries
- Connected teachers
- Building evaluative capabilities in teachers and in senior leaders, including principals

Principals shared the importance of connecting COL / Kahui Ako vision and challenges to every school's strategic planning.

Principals struggled with effective means of communicating across their Kahui Ako. Some Leads shared evidence of websites and online forum for sharing beliefs, actions, personnel and findings. Not all Leads in Kahui Ako had achieved this.

Some principals referred to inconsistent commitment from principals in attending Kahui Ako Principal meetings – arriving late, leaving early, not attending. When this happens, principals are less likely to connect to Kahui Ako decision making, and coherence across the Kahui Ako is patchy.

Principals discussed the idea of what they could do better together than as individual schools? This idea was a core belief about the purpose of collaboration in a Kahui Ako. Aligned to this was the need for clarity within a Kahui Ako and in which areas school might cooperate, and in which areas to collaborate? They shared their views on the Three Cs – collaborate, coordinate and cooperate. If goals were agreed to and set around each of these, then progress in being a more effective community that works together to achieve common goals is more likely to be successful. Principals shared their understanding that collaboration is not an outcome but a process, but acknowledged it is too easy to see collaboration as an end point goal rather than a process that leads to achievement of more specific goals.

Here principal Leaders were able to talk about goals that impact on all schools in the Kahui Ako, and those that only impact on some schools.

Principals shared the importance of regularly stopping for a check and re-connecting to the why and the vision to enable alignment and coherence in their Kahui Ako plan.

This discussion suggested to me that Lead Principals have a broad understanding of key principles in building collaborative networks. They shared that these understandings were acquired from co-constructing their views with colleagues, from professional reading in the literature available and from participation in Ministry of Education fora and hui, and from advice shared by Expert Partners.

Interview with Expert Partner

As part of this sabbatical inquiry I met with and interviewed a colleague who was working as an Expert Partner with several quite different Kahui Ako, in Auckland and elsewhere.

Achievement Challenges

In her experience, Early Adopters were narrowly channelled into common Achievement Challenges but that later Kahui Ako were more able to think outside the initial design. Early Adopter Kahui Ako were more likely to have experienced the narrow Achievement Challenges as a barrier than as a meaningful construct. Initial formation of Achievement Challenges often focused on the what when a more effective approach may have been a focus on the why and the how.

Relational Trust

Her involvement with Kahui Ako revealed that at Kahui Ako meetings many principals had difficulty in talking past each other than in open, constructive conversation and inquiry. Often agendas on the table were not adhered to as participants often brought diverse, personalised agenda to the table.

A challenge for principals in Kahui Ako is to leave ego out of the discussion and to regularly re-connect with the moral purpose.

In order to breakdown competition and silo practice, principals within Kahui Ako needed to focus more time on building relational trust and collaborative capabilities. Trust in each other's data was often a barrier; yet principals could talk comfortably about distrust of data by teachers within their schools.

Sometimes potentially tense conversations around being professionally vulnerable and accepting that leaders may, often, contribute to the problem could be a very healthy belief in negotiating pathways through a logjam of ideas and agreements on moving forward.

Connecting all teachers to the Kahui Ako vision

In the experience of the Expert Partner, newer Kahui Ako were more likely to have stronger uptake and connection to the development of a collaborative network. The hunch here is that Early Adopter Kahui Ako established in a climate of distrust and resistance promoted by the teacher unions, NZEI and PPTA and professional associations. Later Kahui Ako had better access to models for collaborative networks in the literature and to emerging social network theories.

Over time she observed senior leaders in schools becoming more connected to Kahui Ako vision and plans.

Sustainability of Kahui Ako

Based on her experience, this differs between COL. Some in her opinion were more likely to self-sustain than others; some would never go back to operating as competitive silo schools. When leaders can feel more comfortable about working organically, then there is a greater chance a Kahui Ako may be sustainable. When the 'light comes on' and when leaders shift from knowing what's best to accepting we can learn together when we are open to new thinking, then Kahui Ako are more likely to be sustainable.

Kahui Ako that work to engage all principals are more effective.

Early Adopter Kahui Ako were more likely to have experienced barriers and challenges in addressing structural matters around formation than later Kahui Ako. This is because Ministry of Education requirements became more flexible and responsive to local views, and because structural components in the system became embedded in Ministry systems.

In her experience none of the Kahui Ako re-appointed the Lead Principal which therefore meant that it became harder to ensure ongoing coherence. In her view a 2 year term is insufficient for both Lead Principals and for Across School Leaders.

For Kahui Ako to be more successful and sustainable there needs to be a more explicit expectation that working collaboratively in a network requires change, new thinking and new learning. Without these Kahui Ako will not be sustainable.

Deeper thinking around how to most effectively utilise Across School Leaders will be fundamental to the sustainability of Kahui Ako. The ASLs are the most potentially valuable resource that Kahui Ako have. Effective utilisation of their time with explicit leadership roles that enable the building of collaborative expertise across and between schools will have enhance Kahui Ako practice.

Findings

This inquiry as a Principal's Sabbatical Report to the Ministry of Education was conducted in 2019.

Feedback from principals and leaders in established Kahui Ako reveals optimism and positive gains as experienced by a random self-selection of Early Adopter Kahui Ako.

Initial designs for Kahui Ako contributed to early experiences of uncertainty, exacerbated by a climate of distrust at inception from teacher unions.

Initial designs contributed to relative conformity in developing Achievement Challenges which may have stymied creative thinking and closer connection to local priorities. Early Adopter Kahui Ako are now reviewing their Achievement Challenges and are more positive about adapting them to local priorities.

Early Adopter Kahui Ako spent energy and time clarifying structural elements when forming Kahui Ako which may have contributed to a task focused approach rather than blue sky thinking about new ideas for change. Barriers with structural elements limited opportunities for Early Adopter Kahui Ako to identify and address significant issues around relational trust building, clarity of purpose and vision, and development of clear pathways in Action Plans that could build on collectively agreed theories of improvement.

Structural and procedural uncertainties were an outcome of a rushed implementation at National level, without sufficient time to more effectively share processes regionally and to schools. Later Kahui Ako benefitted from the mistakes and unforeseen glitches. For the Kahui Ako model to be sustainable, National and Regional Ministry of Education teams needed to be fully prepared for operational implementation.

Despite this, Early Adopter Kahui Ako remain optimistic about the principle and practice of building collaborative local networks to reduce competition, address silo thinking by autonomous schools and rebuild communities of schools that work collaboratively to improve schooling success for all students, akonga, and their whanau.

For many Kahui Ako, there is no turning back on collaboration despite any potential change in resourcing or policy.

For most principals enabling Lead Principals to access Kahui Ako funding more easily would improve sustainability of the model. Good practice would be to ensure every Kahui Ako developed clear protocols around distribution and use of funds granted to employer schools.

For most principals providing more flexibility in how resources, including salaries, funding grants and hours worked would enhance sustainability. This would demonstrate confidence in local decision-making to meet locally identified priorities.

For most there have been real gains achieved from participation in Kahui Ako. A commonly spoken of gain is the sense of collaboration across and between schools that existed only at surface levels in clusters prior to forming Kahui Ako. Principals are now more likely to engage in meaningful discussions about learning and collaborative expertise in their meetings. Primary principals spoke of more respectful and meaningful relationships between primary and secondary principals in Kahui Ako.

Principals shared that developing more effective transitions has been a significant gain across Kahui Ako. Building effective transitions at key points in educational pathways will lead to more coherent and sustainable Kahui Ako practices.

Kahui Ako are more likely to be sustainable when they are entrusted with the opportunity to genuinely engage in shared understandings, common goals and encouragement to allow new thinking for change. Narrow commitment to Achievement Challenges set in a framework created remotely does not enhance sustainable practice.

Further progress in building clarity and coherence for Across School Leaders will enhance the sustainability of Kahui Ako into the future. Principals shared that increasing the number of ASL positions in Kahui Ako would be beneficial in connecting all schools to core priorities. Schools without an ASL on their staff report lower levels of connection and confidence in Kahui Ako. A review of how ASL and WSL positions are allocated across Kahui Ako could benefit longer term sustainability of the model.

All principals shared that connecting all staff and whanau to Kahui Ako remains an aspirational goal that is not yet well achieved. For Kahui Ako to be sustained, Leaders and principals will need to apply more time and resourcing to engage all staff in Kahui Ako decision-making and actions that support improvements in teaching and learning outcomes. Sustaining Kahui Ako will be possible when Achievement Challenges and Action Plans impact on every teacher and every student. This needs to be an explicit call to action for principals. When Kahui Ako work is seen as integral to all work in schools, then the model will be more sustainable. When the mahi is seen as relevant to all, then all will contribute.

Salary relativities between Kahui Ako leaders and other leaders in schools will over time re-balance as core funding for leadership salaries improves and if base rates for Kahui Ako positions remain unchanged. Current salary packages have undermined existing relativities and have created distortions that are not sustainable. Some principals responded with a view that for Kahui Ako to be more sustainable there needs to be either an adjustment to the salary differentials, or for Lead Principals to have more flexibility in how the total resourcing can be utilised to fit local priorities. More flexibility was a common recommendation.

Uncertainty about the future sustainability of Kahui Ako remains across the sector due to inconsistent messages from the Minister and from National Office of the Ministry of Education. A temporary hold on endorsing any new Kahui Ako has added to the uncertainty. The implication felt by principals is that the model may not be sustained in its current form without any explicit changes being mooted.

Bibliography

“Community of Learning: Guide for Schools and Kura” . New Zealand Ministry of Education, July 2016.

“Communities of Learning / Kahui Ako – Working Towards Collaborative Practice”. Education Review Office, 2017.

“Communities of Learning: Collaboration To Improve Learner Outcomes. What does the evidence tell us about what works?”. Education Review Office, 2017.

Collaborative Professionalism – When Working Together Means Learning for All. Hargreaves, A. Corwin Impact Leadership Series. 2017

Essential Features of Effective Networks in Education. Rincon-Gallardo, S. et al. (University of Toronto, Toronto, Canada) Journal of Professional Capital and Community, Vol 1, 1. 2015

“Inside-Out and Downside -Up: How Leading From the Middle Has The Power To Transform Education Systems”. Fullan, Michael and Munby, Steve.

Leadership for Communities of Learning. Baker, R. (Education Council of New Zealand, 2015).
Networked Leadership in Educational Collaborative Networks. Diaz-Gibson, J; Civis, M; Daly, Alan J.; Longas, J; Riera, J (Educational Management Administration and Leadership 1-20, July 2016)

Networked Systems: Learning, Leading, and Leveraging Social Networks for Educational Change. Daly, Alan J. University of California, San Diego. Harvard Education Press.

Partnerships: Accomplishing Important Work Together. Timperley, H.; Robinson, V. School of Education, The University of Auckland. Set 3; 2002

Towards an Optimal Model for Building Better Schools. Timperley, H.; McNaughton, S.; Lai, M.; Hohepa, M.; Parr, J. and Dingle, R.

What Research Says About Collaborative Inquiry. David, Jane L. (Educational Leadership. Dec 2018/Jan 2019; Vol 66, 4).

Why Collaboration Really Matters. Klaasen, R. and Durksen, T. (Teachers Working Together, June 4, 2012).

