

**Alistair Cochrane**

Waihi College Principal

**Sabbatical Report**

**2016**

**Transition Pathways through Secondary School**



# Sabbatical Report

## Transition Pathways through Secondary School

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Principal Waihi College

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### **Acknowledgements:**

I would like to acknowledge the vision of the MOE and PPTA for providing opportunities for school Teachers and Principals to take time to reflect on an area of interest for improvement in their schools and also time for rest and relaxation. In the intensely busy life of schools the opportunity to read, research, reflect, discuss, observe and design is a privilege and greatly appreciated.

I would also like to acknowledge the support and confidence of my Board of Trustees for allowing me to have this time and the foresight to see it as an opportunity not just for myself and the school but also for other staff in the school to experience promoted roles, e.g. Acting Principal, Acting DP, Acting Learning Leaders.

I acknowledge the staff of Waihi College who I rate highly for their commitment to the learning needs of our students. During times of disruption such as the my absence for the term, the staff have continued to not just do a fine job in the classroom but also picked up the pieces of tasks that we hadn't thought about until they didn't happen and kept the momentum and heart of the school always moving forward.

I particularly acknowledge the Waihi College Senior Leadership Team of Justin Harper, Heather Tucker, Brendan Carroll and Dr Leon Ruttersmith for their great work in leading the school in my absence.

I send out a big thank you to all those schools and people who I visited and talked to during the sabbatical. Your thinking and understanding have definitely influenced my thinking and have had a significant impact on the changes and amendments I have made to transition pathways at Waihi College.

Lastly I would like to acknowledge my wife Jennifer for her support physically, cognitively and emotionally as I at times waded through my understanding, discoveries and thinking at different stages of the sabbatical.

**Premise:**

As an experienced Principal (in my 15<sup>th</sup> Year) I have seen many MOE initiatives introduced into schools (Gateways, STAR, Career Education, Vocational Pathways, STP's, ART, Work Experience etc.) and it is my view that most schools have picked up the initiatives and implemented them in the best interests of our students.

However as I reflect on the different programs at Waihi College, they are not always as coordinated as they should be and sometimes standalone within an already busy curriculum. New initiatives always have an impact on other more traditional academic programs as students elect different pathways that better suit their needs.

In amongst the landing of these initiatives and programs in our schools and our tinkering with existing timetables, programs and structures I think we have lost sight of the original intent of the initiatives and only taken the bits that can be fitted into our school systems at the time and at the cost of better opportunities for students.

Over time we have seen an increase in the number of students in the senior school as they have struggled to find employment or the desire to head out into the world of work. Some of this is due to the difficulty finding employment and some of this is due to student maturity and readiness to move into the workforce.

**Purpose:**

- to improve my understandings of the different initiatives, opportunities and pathways that are available for senior students as they transition through Waihi College and on into Tertiary study and work
- to reflect on the current situation at Waihi College
- to make recommendations to the Waihi College Board of Trustees about ways to restructure the courses and support networks in the best interests of our students, staff and community

## **Executive Summary:**

During my 10 weeks I have made a huge improvement to my understanding of the need to create experiential and authentic learning opportunities for our students. Also the need for students to get reliable relevant advice about their pathways both through school and into the future.

Schools need to be much more deliberate and focused on providing opportunities that meet the needs of their students rather than just hoping the existing subject choices are providing the requirements and qualifications that are appropriate.

There is a need to provide not just programs that we/schools feel are appropriate but also to explore the employment and further study providers to ensure the skill/attribute proficiencies of our students is appropriate for the future world they are entering.

This means actively reviewing existing programs, structures and staffing to ensure it is well positioned and provisioned to best assist all of our youngsters. This also means actively working with and preparing all staff with the skills and mindset to be the appropriate mentor for our students. This also means actively working with staff and community partners to ensure courses are appropriate for the needs of students

## **Staffing**

- Pathways/Careers Counsellor
- STP and Gateways coordinator
- Learning Advisors
- Subject Specialist champions
- Professional Development
  - VP
  - Careers
  - Mentoring
- Employment strategies to ensure staff have macro/future/multicultural focused mindset

## **Programs**

- Vocational Pathways
- Career Education
- Curriculum Balance

## Activities Undertaken:

During the 10 weeks I spent the majority of my time working with a Master builder as his 'hammer hand'. This involved learning about many aspects of the building trade but was primarily designed to give me an insight into the skills attitudes and values required for young people to work in this industry.

I spent time reading various documentation around supporting youth into life beyond school and also talked to various experts in this field.

I visited a number of schools and colleagues to gather a variety of views and structural perspectives to hopefully better inform my decisions. Listed below are the various activities I undertook.

- School Visits

- Fairfield College

- 3+2 Programs
- P-M-I
- Community partnerships

Special thanks to Richard Crawford

- Hillcrest High School

- 3+2 Programs
- Tracking students through and beyond school
- Careers Education Structure

Special thanks to Calvin Whiting (Principal) and Ronan Bass (DP)

- Waihi College

- The current situation
- Student Voice
- Teacher Voice

- Interviews

- Jenny Baber and Cameron Frethey (MOE Hamilton)

- Vocational Pathways and Youth Guarantees
- Examples in other schools

- Graham Marshall (MOE Wellington)

- Youth Guarantees
- Vocational Pathways

- Coromandel Cluster of Secondary Principals

- Different Career models in our schools
- Vocational Pathways
- Project based Learning examples

- Tertiary Providers
  - Pacific Coast
  - Wintec
  - BOP Polytechnic
- Industry Training Organization's
  - BCITO (Onsite Apprenticeship mentoring)
- Building Trades (Discussions and observations)
  - Inspectors
  - Foreman
  - Apprentices
  - Hammer hands
- Conference:
  - Educational Leaders forum: Key note speakers discussed the changing workplace our students will be entering over the next 35 years. A decline in employment opportunities in the Agricultural and Manufacturing sector and increases in the Service and Creative sectors means schools will need to prepare students with values skills and attitude that are transferrable. Ian Jukes talked about employees needing to be flexible with the ability to function online as key factors.
- Work Experience
  - During the 10 weeks of the sabbatical I worked as a “Hammer Hand” for a Master Builder on a construction site. This gave me the opportunity to work alongside different Trades people and I took the opportunity to discuss the different employment characteristics and qualities our young people require and skill sets and values they need to become valued employees.

## Findings:

Different schools have different models however all had more than one person working in the area and collaborated on the different opportunities before students were supported with advice and guidance.

The Waihi College Career support network is currently based upon a number of events that occur though out the year and advice given on the request of a parent or student.

- Events include:
  - Careers Roadshows
  - Visits from a variety of Tertiary providers and
  - Visits to Universities

My visit to Wellington to discuss with Graham Marshall the intent of the Youth Guarantees initiative was both informative and enlightening. The intent of the strategy is effectively to lift the minimum achievement standard of all young New Zealanders.

This is based on a number of fundamental beliefs:

- an improved opportunity to gain a level of employment that provides above the minimum wage
- the ability to continue to learn into the future
- with increased employment comes a more skilled, affluent and versatile workforce
- increased employment and a positive outlook improved the overall economy
- increased employment results in less social issues thus a better overall economy

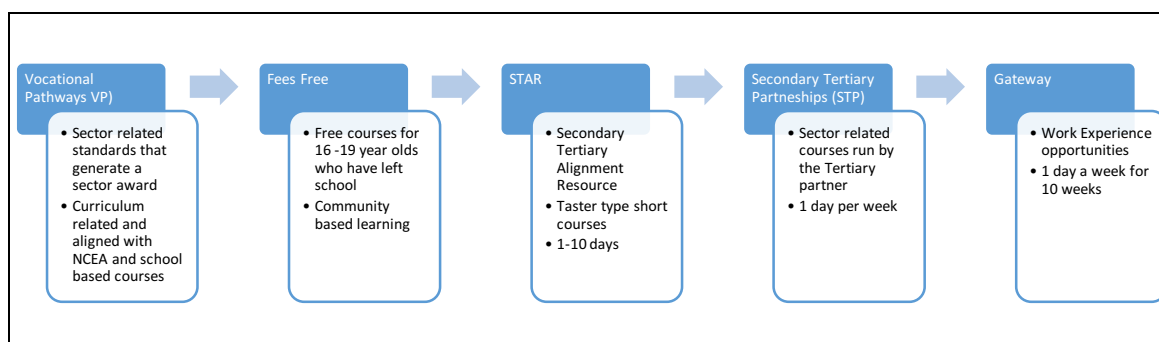
Along with these bigger picture views Graham also spoke of the need for schools to give priority to the group of students who are good thinkers and problem solvers who are studying at NCEA L2 and L3 who do not have an intention to go to university to continue their studies. The view he espoused was that these young people are likely to end up being our trades people, business owners and entrepreneurs. They are good sound thinkers who will continue to be lifelong learners and will play a critical part in the successful functioning of both our local and national economies. He believes that schools need to identify and prioritize these students to ensure that they get supported into their future journey. 3 days at school and 2 days in work related study or practice (3+2 programs) are an ideal model to support these young people to make connections, understand work ethics, attitudes and strategies before they take their place in the workforce and are a means of better preparing them for that time in their lives.

Hence the Youth Guarantees initiative is designed to create opportunities for schools, tertiary providers and communities to work closer together to support the needs of our students.

Youth Guarantees initiative and programs include:

- Gateway
- Trades Academy
- Work Experience
- Secondary Tertiary Partnerships

- Short/Taster Courses
- Authentic Projects
- Learning Academies



## Recommendations

- For all staff to participate in Vocational Pathways professional development to lift the capability for teachers to better advise students about their future pathways through school and into the workforce or further training
- For the Curriculum Leaders (DP and LL's) to explore and develop more 3+2 learning opportunities for more students at Waihi College to support their connection with community and readiness to join the workforce.
  - Work experience
- To develop "Project Based" learning opportunities
  - e.g. Waihi Gold Honey, Railway Carriage restorations, Native Plant Sustainability
- To Restructure the Waihi College Pathways Network under the leadership of a Deputy Principal but into the hands of a number of significant people with specific responsibility
  - Gateway and STP Coordinator
  - Pathways/Careers Advisor
  - Curriculum Leaders
    - VP
    - 3+2
  - Appoint an administrator to manage the paper work
- To rewrite the Job Description of the Pathways Advisor/Careers Advisor to include:
  - Age specific career learning programs across all level of the curriculum
  - Vocational Pathways specific advice for students with those interests
  - Learning Advisors and Subject Specialist would be upskilled and empowered to deliver advice and guidance to students and parents



- Explore local community businesses to ascertain the supply of both work experience, employment and mentoring opportunities
- Tracking the employment/further study of our students beyond school

### **Implications:**

Schools will need to be flexible with their course design and scheduling to ensure both academic and vocational pathways are supported within the school environment to ensure that students can pursue a pathway that suits their individual interest and future employment.

Staffing is a critical aspect of any program regardless of whether it is a traditional academic approach or a more authentic, connected vocational approach to learning. Depending on the way schools manage/timetable these approaches, staffing may need to be used in different ways to support the needs of the learning. For example teams of teachers collaborating with an identified group of students to deliver a program that best suits the needs of those particular students rather than hoping the students will benefit from the broader gambit of traditional subjects.

Professional Development will be a significant determination of the success of alternative ways of learning. Many staff believe that what they are currently doing is the 'best way'. Whilst many are successful at getting students to pass examinations they are not prepared to or have the skills to adjust their courses and mindset to do it differently.

Increasing numbers of students engaged in 3+2 programs has the potential to undermine student numbers engaged in traditional academic subjects, hence the risk of these subjects becoming marginalized and in some cases no longer viable! Thus there is a risk to the potential employment of some staff if they do not adjust their teaching programs to ensure there is continued interest and demand for their subject.

Timetabling will need to be look at differently to support students who are engaged in programs that are no longer during the regular school day or schedule.

Funding needs to be flexible and schools need to not be constrained by the traditional restrictions of operations funding. If student achievement is our focus then schools need to find the way to make it happen!

### **Conclusions:**

Having completed my sabbatical I have returned to Waihi College with the drive to be much more deliberate in sourcing opportunities and pathways for students to access authentic partnerships with either tertiary providers or work placements.

I will be looking to provide greater clarity and focus on the different roles that directly influence the provision and implementation of programs that support 3+2 style programs

See the attached Job Descriptions

- Learning Leaders

- Gateway/STP coordinator
- Pathways/Careers Advisor

Vocational Pathways alignments need to be infused into every learning program to ensure that students can achieve according to their personal futures.

This work will not be completed quickly or easily and will need deliberate acts of change leadership as the default status quo is an easy outcome for many staff but in my opinion not in the best interests of most students. It is a changing world and many staff have worked themselves into a successful but comfortable position in their careers and do not see the need to work differently in the best interests of our students.

However it is not all 'doom and gloom' and I do need to recognize and acknowledge those staff, who there is an increasing number, who have seen the need and are making many changes to their approaches to try and give our students the best chance of gaining but a qualification and a pathway beyond school into future employment.

### **References**

- Youth Guarantees Initiative
- Vocational Pathways
- ERO Report on Career Education
- Career Benchmarks
- Big Picture Education
- Educational Leadership Forums

### **Appendices:**

1. Learning Leaders Job Description
2. STP/Gateways Coordinator
3. Pathways/Careers Advisor

**Waihi College**  
**LEARNING LEADER APPOINTMENT 2017**  
**X3**

**(Y7, 8 and 9; Y10 and 11; Y12 and 13)**

**Position Overview**

**Underpinning philosophy:**

“All learning should make use of the natural connections that exist between learning areas and that link learning areas to the values and key competencies.” NZ Curriculum Document

**Aim:**

**Learning Leaders** will lead a coordinated and student centered approach to teaching and learning within the year levels they are responsible for. Learning Leaders will provide leadership and drive innovation to encourage authentic learning contexts upon which teachers can base their teaching. This ensures that teaching and learning practices are aligned to our school mission, vision and values and the intent of the New Zealand Curriculum.

**Learning Leadership**

- Provide leadership and assist in the strategic development of school wide teaching and learning with the support of, and under the direction of, the DP - Learning Design and the Leadership Team
- Contribute to the development and implementation of policies and practices which reflect the school’s commitment to high achievement through effective teaching and learning.
- Demonstrate a deep understanding of the NZ secondary school system, including; compliance, quality assurance, NZ Curriculum, NCEA and National Standards.
- **Coordinate and oversee the development of curriculum plans which identify clear targets, time-scales and success criteria.**
- Be the primary source of support to teachers in their efforts to provide quality opportunities for learning.
- Monitor progress and evaluate the effects on teaching and learning by working alongside colleagues, analyzing work and outcomes.
- **Coordinate monthly meetings with all teachers of students in their year level focus.**
  - **Develop rich learning contexts (Term Learnings)**
  - **Enable and support staff in linking subject specific learning and the authentic context (Where possible)**
  - **Provide opportunities for staff to communicate and share cross curricular opportunities, ideas, initiatives concerns and queries.**
- Liaise with Subject Advisers and Tic’s to best align authentic cross curricular tasks and subject specific learning.

## **Staff Management**

Their direct reports include Teachers and Subject Advisers that have the most connection with the year levels the Learning Leaders are responsible for.

- Enable staff to continuously improve teaching and learning through example, support, direction and by professional development opportunities;
- Demonstrate an excellent ability to advise and support other teachers;
- Provide clear feedback, good support and sound advice to others;
- Provide examples, coaching and training to help others become more effective in their teaching;
- Be the appraiser of several staff within the year level.

## **Teaching and Learning**

- Ensure high quality teaching and learning by choosing the appropriate teaching and learning methods and setting clear objectives
- Collaboratively plan learning strategies, activities and outcomes in line with the school-wide approach to teaching and learning
- Support, observe, track and record the progress of students and advise on strategies to improve performance, particularly priority learners.
- Keep up to date with developments, new resources and methods through liaising and networking with other professionals, parents and whanau.
- Along with the DP Learning Design help to coordinate and organise:
  - Xplore
  - Junior Rotations/Options
  - Senior Options
- To coordinate class change requests after full consultation with the Year level Dean.

## **Financial and Asset Management**

- Effectively and efficiently use available financial resources and assets, within delegated areas of authority, to support improved learning outcomes for students.
- Make recommendations to SLT on how best to resource student learning.

## **Structural Aspects of these positions**

- The role is a Fixed Term Position for 2 Years
- The role has remuneration of 3 FTSU's
- The role has a time allowance of 7.5 hours per 10 day cycle.

## Teacher in charge Gateway/STP

### Rationale

To organize and maintain in the all aspects of the Gateway Program, STP's (Trades Academy and other Tertiary Courses).

### Responsible to:

Deputy Principal Learning Relationships and Pathways

### Functional Relationships

Deputy Principal – Learning Design, Deans, Learning Leaders, Pathways Administrator and all teaching staff

### Key Areas

Gateway

### Performance Indicators

Responsible for and the management of the Gateway Program

Trades Academy

Responsible for and the management of the Trades Academy Program

Other Tertiary Courses

Responsible for and the management of other Tertiary Courses (SIT, Wintec, Telford etc)

Pathways Classroom

Responsible for and the management of the Pathways Learning Space

Teaching

One Line of Overseeing Pathways Learning Space

### Remuneration:

1 Fixed Term Management Unit (\$4000/annum) and a minimum of 3.5 hours of non-contact/isolation room time per week. (You will have a Learning Advisory)

# Pathways/Careers Advisor - Job Description

## Position Description:

To provide effective Career education and advice to students and staff

This includes the management and implementation of career education programs and the provision of career information and good advice to students and staff.

**Job Title:** Pathways/Careers Advisor

**Responsible to:** Principal, Deputy Principal Learning Relationships and Pathways

**Functional Relationships:** DP Curriculum Design, Teaching staff and students

## Demonstrable Knowledge/Experience

- Experienced in providing career counselling
- Able to use a range of career assessment tools
- Can deliver age appropriate career education programs
- Awareness of career development theory and expected standards of delivery in NZ schools
- Awareness of employment opportunities and employer requirements
- Knowledge of qualifications pathways and University requirements
- Understanding of NCEA qualifications
- Familiar with overseas University application requirements
- Excellent interpersonal skills
- Able to build professional networks
- Ability to be a self-directed employee

**Purpose:** To support careers development services through career leadership, education programs and access to and provision of information. The end goal is to enable each student to realize their full potential as individuals, and to develop the values, knowledge and skills needed to become full member of New Zealand society and to complete successfully in a modern, ever changing world.

## Core Competencies for Staff

**Participating and contributing** – demonstrating the ability to respond and to make connections to others

- Supports and models the school's values at all times
- Complies with and actively supports the school's policies and procedures
- Displays integrity and takes responsibility for own actions
- Understands the concept of work/life balance
- Identifies and participates in learning opportunities as appropriate for personal development
- Accepts and manages personal responses to change in a positive manner
- Strives for excellence and perseveres in the face of difficulties
- Works collaboratively as a team member

**Thinking and Communicating** – using creative, critical and reflective processes to make sense of and question information, experiences and ideas

- Conveys information clearly, logically and accurately
- Assertive about compliance
- Listens and asks questions to maximize understanding
- Understands the differing communication styles required when dealing with businesses
- Actively listens to what other have to say
- Uses relevant verbal and non-verbal clues to check for understanding
- Writes in an appropriate manner so material is easily understood
- Written work is accurate
- Work is checked before distribution
- Collects data relevant to the issue
- Completes analysis of data
- Applies judgement when making a decision or committing to an action by considering all implications
- Consults, seeks assistance when necessary
- Keeps appropriate people informed during the decision making process

**Managing self** – being responsible for the delivery of the work requirements and maintaining ethical standards

- Accepts ownership for finishing work started and delivering to commitments
- Uses time productively • Has a 'can do' attitude • Establishes systems and methods for organizing resources
- Plans and organizes tasks on a day to day basis to achieve results
- Pays attention to budgets and makes savings where possible
- Checks for agreement and approval before acting and seeks assistance when required
- Is aware of the effects their words and attitudes have on others
- Maintains own well-being

**Relating to others** – achieves objectives through working as part of a team, freely sharing knowledge and using others strengths

- Actively builds positive and productive working relationships
- Builds personal credibility
- Is approachable, open and non-defensive and transparent in dealings with others
- Shares relevant knowledge with others
- Accepts constructive criticism and learns from it
- Shares credit with others

## **Service Delivery**

### **Tasks**

Development of student career management competencies

### **Performance Criteria:**

- Philosophies for the development of student career management competencies are followed as set out in the procedure for Careers Development Service
- Career support is provided school wide and for classroom activities that contribute to the development of student career management competencies
- Senior College support includes the provision of: → Resources for Year 7 & 8 staff and students → Running Year 10 career awareness sessions → Administering SDS assessment at Year 11 → Implementing Transition program for Year 12 & 13 students (Your Career Management Guide or similar) → Organization of work experience day for all Year 12 students
- Provision of career counselling for individual students and families
- Supporting students with subject choice decisions and awareness of the entry requirements for their projected future pathways
- Interviewing Year 12 & 13 students to establish their individual career management needs

### **Provision of programs and services**

- Organization of information visits to Waihi College from relevant tertiary providers
- Organization of career information events for parents and students like Career Expo's, University information evenings etc
- Arrange the attendance of students at community based career events relevant to their interests
- Facilitate community contacts for students with specific career information needs
- Ensure planning support visits from Universities occur for those students enrolling at specific Universities
- Provide support for students with making applications for study, accommodation and/or scholarships
- Work with students applying to overseas Universities to ensure the specific requirements for entry and timelines for applications of those institutions are met
- Provide support to students who are seeking employment including help with CV writing, interview skills and job hunting avenues

### **Provision of Information**

- Provide an up-to-date collection of career resources and information for students, parents and staff to access.

### **Career Leadership**

- Ensure relevant career events are published in daily notices and the school newsletter
- Keep all career information up-dated on KAMAR including list of Upcoming Events
- Participate in subject choice evenings to provide current career information that may affect student decisions



## **Financial Monitoring**

- Formulate a budget for the career area
- Follow correct school procedures for budget management

## **Career Leadership**

- Waihi College careers policy is reviewed and up-dated for the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) as required
- Career activities are regularly reported to SLT
- SLT are kept informed of any University changes that may impact on student success
- Provide input for curriculum decisions affecting student career pathways
- Maintain a professional careers service by keeping up to date with educational and employment changes affecting the careers area
- Ensures professional practice through membership of CDANZ and (A)CATE and undertaking supervision if relevant
- Facilitate contacts between teaching staff and outside agencies to provide learning experiences for students, guest speakers etc

## **Community Liaison**

- Attends relevant university up-date days to ensure knowledge is current
- Attends any other information days that are considered relevant to current student interests
- Forms and maintains contacts with ITO's, modern apprentice coordinators and other relevant organizations
- Builds contacts with employers willing to provide work experience and part-time employment for students
- Maintains contact with Waihi College parents willing to support the careers area

## **Communications**

- Information is provided in an appropriate manner
- Confidentiality and privacy is maintained

## **Health & Safety**

- Possible hazards in the work place are notified and eliminated or minimized if possible.
- Workload issues are reviewed and work is prioritized.