

# Communities of Learning Kāhui Ako

How these were influenced by

## Professional Learning Communities (Victoria, Australia) and Multi-Academy Trusts (England)

By

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Te Mara Akoranga Katorika

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## Sabbatical Research

In 2014 The National Government announced their new “Investing in Educational Success” initiative. This involved clusters of schools (Early Childhood, Primary and Secondary) forming “Communities of Learning” or Kāhui Ako, and through this process accessing considerable additional funding for the remuneration of specific roles.

This new initiative was influenced in part by two educational academics. Professor John Hattie in Victoria, Australia, where the Education Department was focused on the *Framework for Improving Student Outcomes*, (FISO) and Professor Toby Greany, in Nottingham, England, where the Department for Education was focussed on *Self improving school-led system* (SISS).

This research was to compare the development of the New Zealand “Communities of Learning” with the Victorian “Professional Learning Communities” and the UK version of “Multi-Academy Trusts”.

My research was to see how these other models of ‘Communities of Learning’ were operating, and what could be applied to the Kāhui Ako I am leading to achieve our goals and improve outcomes.

This research involved visiting Melbourne, and the Melbourne Graduate School of Education where Professor John Hattie is based, and visiting schools that were involved with the creation of Professional Learning Communities. I also attended the National Futures Conference in Melbourne. I visited Nottingham, England, and the University of Nottingham where Professor Toby Greany is based, and some of the schools in the Nottingham Catholic Teaching School Alliance which have formed Multi Academy Trusts.

## Sabbatical Report

Having served as Lead Principal of *Te Mara Akoranga Katorika*, the Christchurch Catholic Kāhui Ako for two years since its formation in 2017, I wanted to see how other models of these 'communities of learning' were operating, to find what structures and systems were critical in leading to real improvements, and to find models of teachers working collaboratively to bring about sustained improved learning outcomes.

For my sabbatical research I studied the work of Professor John Hattie in Melbourne Victoria, and Professor Toby Greany in Nottingham, England. Both these educational academics contributed to the development of the Kāhui Ako - Communities of Learning model implemented by the Ministry of Education in New Zealand.

The starting point for this research should be the purpose of the Kāhui Ako initiative. Why set them up? Why did the National Government devote \$359million to a programme called "Investing in Educational Success". What was (is) the goal? It was described as an initiative to raise the performance of all students, to smooth the transition between sectors and to create career pathways for teachers. Through a process that encourages collaboration and sharing of skills and expertise, all schools and teachers working together in a "community of learning" would benefit.

Behind this is the research evidence that showed wide variance within schools and across communities in New Zealand that meant that sections of our communities were not achieving and making progress as successfully as other sections. Dr Adrinee Alton-Lee in *Quality Teaching for Diverse Students in Schooling: Best Evidence Synthesis Iteration (BES)* notes that:

Quality teaching is identified as a key influence on high quality outcomes for diverse students. The evidence reveals that up to 59% of variance in student performance is attributable to differences between teachers and classes, while up to almost 21%, but generally less, is attributable to school level variables.

The *Investing in Educational Success* initiative aimed to address this variance both within and across schools. Schools that wanted to access the new resourcing needed to form a 'community of learning'. This initially required a Management Group consisting of the Principals of all the schools wanting to form a 'CoL'. They needed to identify common and agreed 'achievement challenges' and a strategy for addressing these. They then applied to the Minister to be approved to form a Kāhui Ako. The next step was to form a Stewardship Group that would recruit a current Principal to be 'lead principal'. The next step was to recruit and appoint a number of Across Community teachers, based on the number of students in the Kāhui Ako as a whole. The final step was to appoint the 'Within-school' teachers who would also have a role to play in building collaboration, skills and expertise within their school. One WST for every ten teachers.

To what extent do the Communities of Learning (Kāhui Ako) in New Zealand resemble those in Victoria, Australia, and Nottingham, England? This was the focus of this research - to see if more progress could be achieved towards the goals of the Kāhui Ako that I was leading.

Both Professors have very clear views on what is required to establish a 'community of learning' and the elements that are required for sustained success. Both had considerable influence in the Ministry's plan for this initiative announced by Minister Hekia Parata. I researched both systems and found significant differences to how we operate in New Zealand.

### **Victoria, Australia**

Professor John Hattie is based at the Melbourne Graduate School of Education. His model is to establish *Professional Learning Communities*. Through his work with the Victorian Government the aim is to create a culture of teachers working collaboratively to continuously improve teaching and learning. This is at the heart of the *Framework for Improving Student Outcomes*, FISO. The FISO Framework is used by all Victorian government schools to focus their efforts on key areas known to have the greatest impact on school improvement.

The key difference in Victoria is that the Professional Learning Communities are established *within* schools. This model is focused on teachers within one school collaborating, reflecting, sharing expertise, refining and developing their skills to raise outcomes for students within that school.

Professional learning community (PLC) schools start from the premise that *students learn more when their teachers work together*.

Schools in Victoria that join the scheme receive intensive implementation support including a comprehensive programme of professional learning and expert advice delivered and supported by regionally based teams. These teams, made up of experienced educators including a dedicated PLC regional manager, advise, coach and train school and instructional leaders in all aspects of PLC implementation, including:

- budget and resource prioritisation
- meeting facilitation
- inquiry-based improvement
- curriculum and assessment
- data interpretation and analysis.

Each school that is involved in this school improvement programme is allocated a team of 'experts', led by a Regional Manager, who support the school and its leaders and teachers on this journey. This is in contrast to the New Zealand Kāhui Ako model which has a lead principal, currently employed in one of the schools, released for two days a week to lead a number of 'across community teachers' to work across, in my situation, 15 diverse schools.

Professional learning communities (PLCs) are an approach to school improvement where groups of teachers work collaboratively at the school level to improve student outcomes. (PLC) schools start from a simple idea: students learn more when their teachers work together. Building a PLC is a proven way for schools to increase student learning by creating a culture that is: focussed on continuous improvement by linking the learning needs of students with the professional learning and practice of teachers, committed to professionalism, and fuelled by collaborative expertise.

## Nottingham, England

Professor Toby Greany is a Director of the *Transform Multi-Academy Trust* based in Nottingham, a member of Ofsted's Advisory Group for Research into Multi-Academy Trusts, a member of the Ambition School Leadership Research and Evaluation Advisory Group, and a member of the Foundation for Education Leadership Research Advisory Group. He advised the New Zealand Ministry of Education on its review of Tomorrow's Schools and the Kāhui Ako/Communities of Learning programme.

The British Government has developed a policy: 'self improving school-led system' (SISS) which consists of a range of reforms including the creation of: Academies, Multi-academy Trusts, and Teaching School Alliances.

Margaret Thatcher's Conservative Government in the 1980's created *City Technology Colleges*, which were sponsored by business. From 2003 the Government encouraged these schools to become 'Academies'. These have been compared to the 'Charter Schools' in the United States.

Academies are publicly-funded independent schools. Academies do not have to follow the national curriculum and can set their own term times. They still have to follow the same rules on admissions, special educational needs and exclusions as other state schools. Academies get money direct from the government, not the local council. They are run by an academy trust which employs the staff. Some academies have sponsors such as businesses, universities, other schools, faith groups or voluntary groups. Sponsors are responsible for improving the performance of their schools.

<https://www.gov.uk/types-of-school/academies>

Most academies are secondary schools (and most secondary schools are academies). However, slightly more than 25% of primary schools are now Academies. They do not have to follow the National Curriculum, but do have to ensure that their curriculum is broad and balanced and that it includes the core subjects of mathematics and English. They are subject to inspection by Ofsted.

After several years of operation, the Academy school system in the UK is controversial and is not popular with teachers, teachers' unions, some politicians and parents. In 2016 the UK government introduced the Progress 8 Benchmark to measure the effectiveness of secondary schools. The measure is taken between the range of scores students receive in Key Stage 2 (the end of Primary school) and then compared to the GCSE results. The Progress 8 score a school receives places it in a band ranging between: *well above average, above average, average, below average and well below average*. It was found in league tables produced in 2018 that many MATs were not performing well when compared using the Progress 8 benchmarks.

Teaching School Alliances (TSAs) are led by a 'teaching school' which has been recognised by the Department for Education as an 'outstanding school' that works with others to provide high-quality training and development to teachers in the schools. The alliance will have the

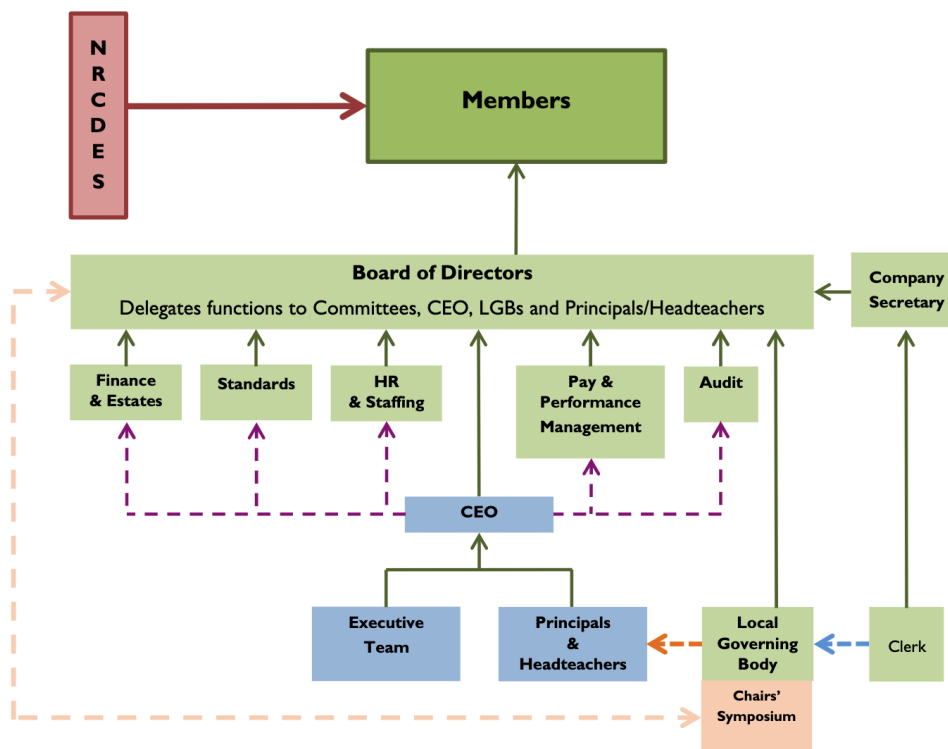
'teaching school' working with others that are getting support to improve. The TSAs have six core areas of responsibility - known as the 'big six'. These are:

1. School-led initial teacher training.
2. Continuing Professional Development.
3. Supporting other schools.
4. Identifying and developing leadership potential.
5. Specialist Leaders of Education (SLEs).
6. Research and development.

This particular model bears some resemblance to the Kāhui Ako initiative, with access to centrally funded professional learning and development, collaboration between schools, the creation of the Across Community teacher roles, the Within School roles, and the focus on the spiral of inquiry model to seek improvement. Whilst there is an element of school based initial teacher training in Auckland, it is not common in the South Island.

There is a clear distinction between the majority of state and state integrated schools in New Zealand, controlled by the Ministry of Education, and the Academy schools in the UK. Professor Greany's work on school improvement has focused on the formation of "Multi Academy Trusts" where groups of these schools have come together - similar to the Kāhui Ako in New Zealand. The key concept with forming a Multi Academy Trust (MAT) is that high performing schools in each Trust will help the struggling ones to improve.

In a significant contrast to the Kāhui Ako model in New Zealand, the MATs have a significant structure to operate its schools. I looked at one of these MATs in Nottingham - the Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Multi Academy Trust, which consists of 17 Catholic Primary schools and four secondary schools.



The Catholic Multi-Academy Trust Company is governed by the board of directors which is responsible for and oversees the management and administration of the Catholic Multi-Academy Trust Company and the academies within it. The Directors have overall responsibility and ultimate decision-making authority for all the work of the Catholic Multi-Academy Trust Company. These responsibilities are largely carried out through strategic planning and the setting of policy.

The seven 'Members' include the Bishop of Nottingham and his representatives who appoint (and remove) the Directors. The Members are guardians of the governance of the Trust, and have a different role to that of the Directors.

The Board of Directors appoint the CEO and hold him or her to account for the educational performance of the Academies, and they are responsible for the financial performance of the MAT.

The CEO line manages other senior executives and the principals/headteachers, setting their targets and performance managing them. Executives are responsible for Finance, Standards, Human Resources, Pay and Performance Management and Auditing.

The CEO and the Executive Team are all full time and salaried and this is a layer that does not exist in the Kāhui Ako model in New Zealand. The Ministry does have additional funding available for Kāhui Ako to apply for support in areas such as HR management on a short, fixed-term basis. But the school (Academy) Principals in England only look after their own school, and the Executive Team and CEO have oversight of other operational matters that pertain to the MAT and its targets and objectives.

To what extent is this model successful at generating sustained improvements in teaching and learning in the UK? Professor Toby Greany was involved in a research paper:

Multi-academy Trusts - Do they make a difference to pupil outcomes?

Supplementary statistical analysis for the report: *Hierarchy, Markets and Networks: Analysing the 'self-improving school-led system' agenda in England and the implications for schools.*

Daniele Bernardinelli and Simon Rutt (NFER) Toby Greany and Rob Higham (UCL IOE) May 2018

The findings of this research concluded:

*Overall, there is no significant impact from MAT status for pupils in either primary or secondary academies when compared to pupils in similar standalone academies. When compared to pupils in maintained schools, pupils in primary academies in MATs tended to perform better than pupils in comparable maintained primaries, while the difference for pupils in secondary academies was not statistically significant.*

Both Labour and Conservative governments in England have promoted the formation of Academies. The largest increase in these happened under Michael Gove, the incoming Conservative Education Secretary from 2010. This is despite the Department for Education's evidence that there was hardly any difference between outcomes for the Academies and the local authority schools.

<https://www.theguardian.com/education/2018/jul/22/academy-schools-scandal-failing-trusts>

Supporters of the initiative claim that leaders of successful schools can be moved to struggling schools within the MAT and things can be turned around. Whilst the theory sounds positive, it does not often happen in practice. In my research I did not see evidence that the creation of Academies, and Multi-academy trusts, run by companies with CEOs and Executive Management Teams led to sustained improvement in teaching and learning. The focus on the Progress 8 score and the subsequent labelling of schools into categories 'below average' and 'well-below average' must be damaging and demoralising to the teachers, students, principals and the communities they serve.

Another initiative evident as part of the "Self-improving school led system (SISS) is something Professor Toby Greany mentioned on a visit to Christchurch in 2018. This is a different approach to Professional Development which he called "Joint Practice Development" (JPD). This is a process in which individuals, schools, or other organisations learn from one another. It does bear some similarities to the Professional Learning Communities in that it involves new ways of working with other teachers (or in the case of JPD - students could be involved) to open up and share practice with others. JPD is a joint activity in which two or more teachers interact and learn from each other. Teachers work together to share and reflect on practice, leading to change which is monitored to ensure it leads to improved outcomes.

It appears that much of this focus on 'self-improving school systems' relies on the identification of 'successful' schools which are then tasked with supporting and working with 'struggling' schools. This is an interesting concept but placing an educational leader who has worked in a 'successful' school into a school that is struggling for a range of reasons has not often led to the gains that some would expect.

### **Reflections on the Kāhui Ako model in New Zealand**

The potential for the Kāhui Ako model to work effectively certainly exists. The concept of schools joining to collaborate and to strengthen the pathways and connections between early childhood, primary and secondary sectors should lead to improved transitions for students. The opportunity for teachers in different schools to work together on joint inquiries and to share best practice could lead to positive outcomes for learners. The focus on the family moving through the school sectors builds on this important relationship.

There remain issues with the appointment of teachers to the specific roles, and how these are used across the schools in each Kāhui Ako. Whilst the PPTA saw this as an opportunity for career advancement for those not currently in middle leadership, the restrictions placed around the recruitment and appointment of ACTs and WSTs have limited the pool of suitable candidates. The remuneration of the ACT roles has created division in schools where the ACT now earns more than most HoDs.

In 2018 the PPTA released a paper: *Communities of Learning - Improving the community of schools model* (2018 PPTA Conference Paper).

This outlines what the PPTA sees as problems with the implementation and management of the employment related aspects of the Kāhui Ako. The PPTA support what they see as the purpose of the initiative - to build collaborative practices within and between schools, and the development of classroom based career options.



The PPTA highlights the friction identified in schools with teachers who were appointed to the ACT role, and those in the WST roles. In some schools difficulty with back-filling positions in areas such as Maths, Physics and Te Reo Māori meant that these teachers could not take these roles. Their recommendation is the number of WST roles be halved and the resourcing saved be used to pay more to all teachers is questionable. It is not clear how this may lead to more collaboration and sharing of best practice.

The role of the Lead Principal is challenging with only .4 release (two days a week) allocated to this, whilst they still retain so many of the key responsibilities of running their own school. Because each of the ACTs is employed by their own school, and appraised by their own school Board, it is a strange employment relationship. The Lead Principal has limited influence over the ACTs, and much less influence over the WSTs. Each school appoints their own WSTs and monitors their performance. Some schools have used these roles to reward a teacher or to enable a teacher to work on an initiative that may not be connected to the agreed achievement challenges of the Kāhui Ako.

The significant difference with the Multi-academy trusts in England is that they are managed by a company that employs full-time professional executives to monitor progress and expected outcomes against the targets.

The significant difference with the Victorian model of the Professional Learning Communities is that these are designed as *within* school initiatives, with the goal that the teaching and learning within that school is strengthened.

In undertaking this research I believe that the Kāhui Ako model could be strengthened by incorporating the PLC model as defined by Professor John Hattie.

### **Professional Learning Communities.**

John Hattie concludes that the best way to improve schools is to organise teachers into collaborative teams that clarify what each student must learn and the indicators of learning the team will track, to gather evidence of that learning on an ongoing basis, and to analyse the results together so that they can learn which instructional strategies are working and which are not. In other words, he urges schools to function as *Professional Learning Communities*.

<https://www.advanc-ed.org/source/professional-learning-communities-key-improved-teaching-and-learning>

Hattie, J. (2009). Visible Learning: A synthesis of over 800 meta-analyses relating to student achievement. New York: Routledge.

Hattie believes Professional Learning Communities are most effective when:

- the focus is on subject knowledge, curriculum and student learning
- members have a shared vision and sense of purpose
- data on student performance informs improvements in teaching and learning
- members take collective responsibility for student learning, which helps to sustain commitment and accountability
- there is mutual trust, respect and support among all staff members

- members look beyond the school for sources of learning, ideas, networks and partnerships ( this is where the Kāhui Ako model is most relevant)
- teachers are supported in working towards their goals, including access to high-quality professional learning.

“I love the move to collaborative teams, professional learning communities, those kinds of things provided they get beyond building teams. One of my major arguments in this work I’m doing at the moment is how we can get teachers more involved as they plan lessons to work together to do it. One of the beauties of our profession is that we’re the best critics of each other in the world. So how do we optimise that power so that we criticise before we teach?.”

<https://visible-learning.org/2013/02/john-hattie-presentation-maximising-the-impact-video-transcript/>

In a reference to the Kāhui Ako model, Hattie states: “I think that there’s a tremendous amount we can learn by mixing up kids and mixing up teachers. And I look at that number four there about mixing teachers across high and primary schools and you see that’s when you get major impacts, to me it’s that they’re bringing different world views together and they’re not assuming anymore”.

So Hattie sees potential value in mixing students in primary and secondary schools, but to what extent does our Kāhui Ako enable that to happen? The Across Community teachers work with teachers in both sectors, guiding them in collaborative inquiry, but there is limited interaction with students in both sectors. Where this is happening in our context, it is more about senior students working in Primary schools for an hour of ‘community service’ to form connections which may aid in the transition of the primary students who choose to enrol at that secondary school.

Michael Fullan notes the spread of PLCs and stresses the importance of careful and persistent attention in thorough learning by reflective doing and problem solving. He believes that "Transforming the culture of schools and the systems within which they operate is the main point. It is not an innovation to be implemented, but rather a new culture to be developed."

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Professional\\_learning\\_community#cite\\_note-Fullan-12](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Professional_learning_community#cite_note-Fullan-12)

This new culture should include the following critical elements:

Reflective dialogue, de-privitisation of practice, a collective focus on student learning, collaboration, and shared norms and values. This bears a strong resemblance to the *Joint practice development* that Professor Toby Greany describes.

Richard DuFour and Robert E Eaker reinforce this point:

If schools are to be significantly more effective, they must break from the industrial model upon which they were created and embrace a new model that enables them to function as learning organisations. We prefer characterizing learning organisations as "professional learning communities" for several vital reasons. While the term "organisation" suggests a partnership enhanced by efficiency, expediency, and mutual interests, "community" places greater emphasis on relationships, shared ideals, and a strong culture—all factors that are critical to school improvement. The challenge for educators is to create a community of commitment—a professional learning community. [...] It sounds simple enough, but as the old adage warns, "the devil is in the details."

Educators willing to embrace the concept of the school as a professional learning community will be given ambiguous, oftentimes conflicting advice on how they should proceed.

— Richard DuFour and Robert E. Eaker, *Professional Learning Communities at Work*

The Principal of a Secondary College in Melbourne spoke of the challenges faced in creating a PLC at his school. The key aspect was to create a culture of trust - student-teacher relationships require trust and respect, but for teachers to work together there needs to be a level of professional trust that they identified was missing. This was identified through a staff survey. The first step in getting teachers to work together within a school is to create a culture of trust, to open learning spaces for other teachers to be able to visit and observe their colleagues teach. This has to be non-threatening, removed from any appraisal process, in order to achieve its objectives.

The Principal of a primary school reflected on her experience in creating a PLC. The process required her teachers looking at Richard DuFour's four questions:

1. What do we expect our students to learn? (Goals/Expectations)
2. How will we know they are learning? (Assessment)
3. How will we respond when they don't learn? – (Intervention)
4. How will we respond if they already know it? (gifted)

In secondary schools where subjects are traditionally taught in separate silos, it is a new exercise for many teachers to agree on answers to the first question, but by operating in a proper learning community this can lead to a better understanding of the curriculum and how various departments within the school contribute to this.

## Findings

The key elements to create *sustained improved outcomes for learners* are for teachers to focus on learning. This requires a reflective approach and a willingness to share through dialogue and inquiry. It requires professional trust for teachers to work together, to collaborate and it is important that teachers share the values and norms of the school.

This also requires teachers to work with others that they know, where they have built trust. This is why the Victorian model is based within a school, not across a number of schools. If a school could successfully and effectively operate as a professional learning community over a number of years, the school would have developed a culture where new teachers are inducted into this process of sharing and collaborating, within that school. It could happen between schools, but only once the culture has been well established in both schools.

<http://www.ascd.org/publications/educational-leadership/apr13/vol70/num07/How-Do-Principals-Really-Improve-Schools%C2%A2.aspx>

If we want to improve student achievement in our schools, we must focus on the collective analysis of evidence of student learning. Of course, teaching and learning are not separate from each other. The key to improved student learning is to ensure more good teaching in more classrooms more of the time. The most powerful strategy for improving both teaching and

learning, however, is not by micromanaging instruction but by creating the collaborative culture and collective responsibility of a professional learning community (PLC).

In a professional learning community, principals and teachers engage in collective inquiry to decide on the work that will most benefit their students. To help more students learn at higher levels, teachers in a PLC ask themselves:

- What knowledge, skills, and dispositions should all students acquire as a result of the unit we're about to teach?
- How much time will we devote to this unit?
- How will we gather evidence of student learning throughout the unit in our classrooms and at its conclusion as a team?
- How can we use this evidence of learning to improve our individual practice and our team's collective capacity to help students learn, to intervene for students unable to demonstrate proficiency, and to enrich the learning for students who have demonstrated proficiency?

To foster school cultures in which PLCs flourish, principals need to focus on five key steps (see "Five Steps to Success on the PLC Journey").

<http://www.ascd.org/publications/educational-leadership/apr13/vol70/num07/How-Do-Principals-Really-Improve-Schools%2%A2.aspx#fivesteps>

1. Embrace the premise that the fundamental purpose of the school is to ensure that all students learn at high levels and enlist the staff in examining every existing practice, program, and procedure to ensure it aligns with that purpose.
2. Organise staff into meaningful collaborative teams that take collective responsibility for student learning and work interdependently to achieve shared goals for which members hold themselves mutually accountable.
3. Call on teams to establish a guaranteed and viable curriculum for each unit that clarifies the essential learning for all students, agree on pacing guidelines, and develop and administer common formative assessments to monitor each student's learning at the end of each unit.
4. Use the evidence of student learning to identify
  - Students who need additional time and support to become proficient.
  - Students who need enrichment and extension of their learning because they're already highly proficient.
  - Teachers who help students achieve at high levels so team members can examine those teachers' practices.
  - Teachers who struggle to help students become proficient so team members can assist in addressing the problem.
  - Skills or concepts that none of the teachers were able to help students achieve at the intended level so the team can expand its learning beyond its members to become more effective in teaching those skills or concepts. The team can seek help from members of other teams in the

building with expertise in that area, specialists from the central office, other teachers of the same content in the district, or networks of teachers throughout the United States that they interact with online.

5. Create a coordinated intervention plan that ensures that students who struggle receive additional time and support for learning in a way that is timely, directive, diagnostic, precise, and most important, systematic.

<http://www.ascd.org/publications/educational-leadership/apr13/vol70/num07/How-Do-Principals-Really-Improve-Schools%C2%A2.aspx#fivesteps>

They can start by forming teams in which members share responsibility to help all students learn essential content and skills, providing teams with time to collaborate, helping to clarify the work that teams need to do, and ensuring that teams have access to the resources and support they need to accomplish their objectives.

### **So how can the New Zealand Kāhui Ako model work more effectively?**

The size of the Kāhui Ako is critical. There needs to be existing avenues of transition for learners, so that interactions between teachers in the Primary and Secondary sector have a purpose to meet and discuss approaches. There needs to be real and genuine connections between the sectors to make this work.

The Christchurch Catholic Kāhui Ako consists of five secondary schools and ten primary schools. My recommendation is that we form three 'hubs' in order to operate more effectively. Each 'hub' would have one secondary option - (one boys and one girls, or one co-ed) and three to five primary schools that traditionally feed into that secondary option.

I believe the model of the Professional Learning Communities developed in Victoria is key to building a culture of engaged learning, where teachers know that by working together they can create an environment where all learners "will grow into active and engaged citizens who demonstrate a strong sense of personal and social responsibility. Dignity, purpose, options, curiosity and social responsibility for each young person - these are the hallmarks of a transformed school"

A framework for transforming learning in schools: Innovation and the spiral of inquiry. Helen Timperley, Lindaa Kaser and Judy Halbert - Centre for Strategic Education, April 2014

First we must establish the 'professional learning communities' in each school, creating teams of teachers who will follow the spiral of inquiry model. This will need to be led by each school leader. Once this is working, after at least one year, the Across Community Teachers can build links between the teams in each school and support the teams in their inquiry focus. This would require that each ACT has the skills, confidence and experience to show this leadership and mentoring. The current restrictions on the recruitment of ACTs work against this. It may be that

some current HoDs or senior leaders with responsibility for teaching and learning are the best people for these roles.

The WST roles would be more effective if they are supporting the PLCs in their own school. Currently they have been given a task or focus by their principal and have to manage this on top of their own busy and demanding duties as a classroom teacher. When all teachers in a school are expected to fully engage in a PLC and collaborate and share best practice, the remuneration that the WST receives works against the model of collaboration that is aimed for.

The PPTA in 2018 recommended reducing the number of WSTs by half, and utilising the money saved to pay teachers in each school.

If the Lead Principal is looking after a smaller number of schools it would be more manageable to maintain direction and to support these schools in their own focus areas and achievement challenges.

The Kāhui Ako model in New Zealand could lead to sustained improved outcomes for students, but currently this is restricted by the funding and remuneration model as outlined above.

Tony Shaw

2019 Sabbatical Report

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Quality Teaching for Diverse Students in Schooling: *Best Evidence Synthesis Iteration (BES)*

Dr Adrinee Alton-Lee June, 2003

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