



FAHS - Feilding High School

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SABBATICAL REPORT

Roger Menzies, FAHS – Feilding High School

Purpose

To research a number of issues that could positively impact on the achievement of students at FAHS – Feilding High School.

- 1. We are a decile 5 school and our NCEA pass rates are above the national means for all measures apart from Merit and Excellence endorsements. Looking at systems and initiatives in successful schools to improve these results will be invaluable.*
- 2. The standards realignment exercise that is presently happening with NCEA poses significant curriculum challenges, especially at Level 1. Establishing suitable courses for less able students is proving problematic. I want to see how other schools are meeting this challenge.*
- 3. We presently run a successful Maori mentoring programme which underpins our NCEA data. I want to find ways that could enhance what we are already doing.*
- 4. UFB is yet to arrive at FAHS – Feilding High School. I want to see how schools that already have this technology are using it to make gains in student engagement and achievement. I also want to see what the pitfalls are.*

Action

I visited the following schools to complete this research:

Whangarei Boys' High School, Whangarei

St John's College, Hamilton

Hillcrest High School, Hamilton

Cambridge High School, Cambridge

Otumoetai College, Tauranga

Tauranga Boys' College, Tauranga

Te Puke College, Te Puke

Taupo-nui-a-Tia College, Taupo

A summary of my findings follows:

1. *We are a decile 5 school and our NCEA pass rates are above the national means for all measures apart from Merit and Excellence endorsements. Looking at systems and initiatives in successful schools to improve these results will be invaluable.*

- *Hold specific excellence assemblies.*
- *During the time between final internal exams and the end of the school year programme one week of trial exams (2 hours per subject) for those students likely of failing.*
- *Instead of holding the traditional report evening dedicate one day to three-way conferencing involving group teacher, student and parent. This promotes a holistic focus. Major gains in parent attendance.*
- *Staff predict credits that a student will gain by the end of Term 2. This highlights those students that need support.*
- *Regular academic counselling of exam students. Two teachers are assigned to each group to achieve this.*
- *Badges are awarded for Merit and Excellence endorsement.*
- *Assembly focus on academic achievement.*
- *A big focus on 16+ the number of credits to ensure success. Those students at risk of not gaining 16+ join the 'pass programme' – individual programmes established to ensure success.*
- *Teacher expectation promoted – 'you are my Merit / Excellence student'.*
- *Merit / Excellence assessment work displayed.*
- *Get students familiar with terminology – interpret, analyse ...*
- *52% nationally gain Merit / Excellence at Year 11. Identify 52% of the cohort and raise expectations.*
- *Centurions Club – for those students who gain all credits enrolled for.*

2. *The standards realignment exercise that is presently happening with NCEA poses significant curriculum challenges, especially at Level 1. Establishing suitable courses for less able students is proving problematic. I want to see how other schools are meeting this challenge.*

- *All are finding this a challenge. Most schools are offering employment skills courses.*
- *Enquiry class at Year 9 and Year 10.*
- *Sports thematic class at Year 9.*
- *Courses with work experience component.*

3. *We presently run a successful Maori mentoring programme which underpins our NCEA data. I want to find ways that could enhance what we are already doing.*
- *Present waaka to all Year 13 students who satisfactorily complete their five years.*
 - *Graduation ceremony for Level 1, 2 and 3 on Marae.*
4. *UFB is yet to arrive at FAHS – Feilding High School. I want to see how schools that already have this technology are using it to make gains in student engagement and achievement. I also want to see what the pitfalls are.*

Most of the schools I visited were about to get UFB so I have little to report on this issue.

- *Having two technicians for a school roll of 1500 was sufficient to handle the demands of 1400 users of the internet.*
- *Limiting the variety of 'bring your own' devices that students bring to school.*
- *Having a plug-in USB stick that enables access to the school network was an initiative being considered by one school.*
- *Allowing the introduction of 'bring your own devices' to happen gradually without mandating the use was happening in most schools.*

It was a privilege to visit these particular schools and I thank the Principals and Deputy Principal who shared their successful initiatives with me. FAHS – Feilding High School will be richer as a result.



*R.S. MENZIES
Principal*

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