

Accelerated Learning in New Zealand Primary Schools September 2015



‘Effective teachers are not satisfied with ‘business as usual’, as they are constantly looking for new and more effective/adaptive ways of accelerating students’ progress’. Education Review Office Report: May 2013

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Part A: Introduction:



The World



New Zealand



Mangere

‘All teachers have an ethical responsibility to help those students that need to catch up to their peers. This is essential if we are to raise the achievement of New Zealand students relative to their international counterparts. The disparity that has existed for decades and continues to exist between the achievement of different groups of students within our schools must be removed to ensure all our students can go on to realise their potential’. ERO May 2013

The New Zealand Government claims that primary schools have a significant role in contributing to the government’s goal of students achieving NCEA Level 2 by ensuring the students leaving their schools are achieving at a level that enables them to succeed at secondary school.

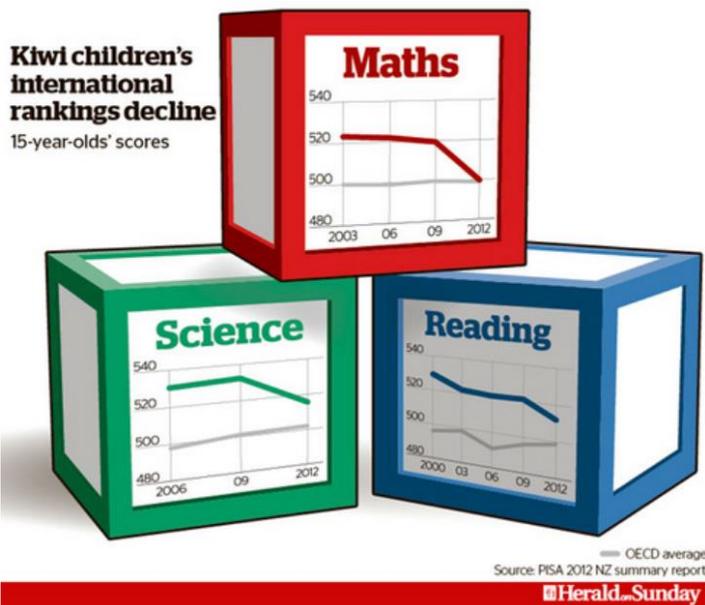
In particular the Ministry of Education has established a goal to increase the proportion of learners achieving at or above national literacy and numeracy standards to 85% by 2017. To achieve this goal outcomes must improve for key priority groups, including; Māori students that are not achieving well, Pasifika students who are not achieving success, special needs students and those from low income families/communities who are below or well below the national standards in literacy and numeracy.

Accelerated learning is the approach that the Ministry of Education believes will have one of the greatest effects on lifting student achievement for priority learners. Progress is considered to be accelerated when the student’s achievement has moved from well below to below, at or above a national standard, or from below to at or above. This means the student has made more than one year’s progress over a year. Progress is also considered to be accelerated when the student’s progress is noticeably faster than might otherwise have been expected, from their own past learning, when using norm-referenced tools that assess the breadth of reading, writing and mathematics.



So what has driven this sudden unrelenting focus on lifting the academic achievement for priority learners in reading, writing and mathematics to meet national standards in Years 1-8? The answer seems to lie in the outcomes of student’s international results based on the testing tools of PISA (15 Year old students) and TIMSS and PIRLS (Year 5 students).

Part B: International Influences that Shape the New Zealand Education Sector (PISA, TIMSS & PIRLS)



The Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) assesses students who have completed around 10 years of compulsory schooling. PISA results are an important source of information in New Zealand, measuring progress toward:

- ✓ building a world-leading education system that equips all New Zealanders with the knowledge, skills and values to be successful citizens in the 21st century;
- ✓ reducing underachievement in education and
- ✓ driving the improvement of educational performance across our education system to improve educational outcomes for all young New Zealanders.

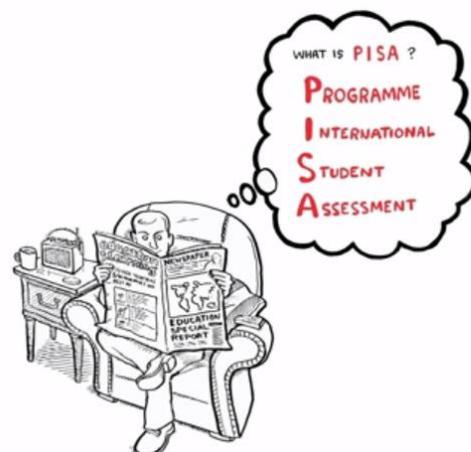
PISA not only provides measurement of New Zealand's progress toward these goals over time, but also New Zealand's performance in equipping students with skills and reducing disparities in achievement relative to other countries. PISA results also help to inform future policy developments and contribute to the sector's understanding of the teaching of reading, mathematics and science.

PISA evolved out of a need recognised by 34 countries that belong to the OECD (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development). Members of the OECD wanted to know how well 15 year olds (who were about to complete their compulsory schooling) were equipped to participate in society. In other words, what 15-year-olds know and what they can do with what they know.

Two hour tests on reading, maths, science were developed and delivered on a three yearly cycle with the underlying goal of assessing how well the students could apply what they had learnt at school to real life problems.

PISA results are presented per country and are also aligned against other countries, in order to show similarities and differences between educational systems, approaches and policies that drive those countries education systems.

The key outcome of the PISA results is to reflect on each countries performance, to learn from other countries approaches and, where necessary, governments can amend policy to drive the new direction they want to see within their education sector. It is also common for governments to set benchmarks based on these PISA results.



Click this link to learn more about the roles and functions of PISA
http://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_embedded&v=q19tuScLUA

The following are the key outcomes of the most recent PISA data (PISA Report to NZ & MOE December 2013) that I believe have influenced policy changes within our education sector:

- 1) The 2012 results for New Zealand show a decline in mathematics, reading, and science ability since 2009. The proportion of students at the lowest levels of achievement has increased. While New Zealand's results are still above the OECD average in mathematics, reading and science, New Zealand is being overtaken by more countries and caught up to by others.
- 2) The system, as it is arranged in New Zealand, does not easily support the spread of good practices between schools, and direct interventions in schools that struggle with student achievement have not always been as effective as expected.
- 3) New Zealand's average scores in mathematics, reading and science have declined since 2009 and New Zealand's performance in these subjects has also declined relative to other countries.
- 4) Compared to earlier cycles of PISA there are larger proportions of New Zealand students with low performance in mathematics and science (below PISA proficiency Level 2). The OECD considers proficiency Level 2 as the baseline level at which students begin to demonstrate the competencies that will enable them to participate actively in life situations.
- 5) The average score in mathematics for Māori students was 452 points in 2012 and 477 points in 2003. The average score in reading for Māori students was 466 points in 2012 and 482 points in 2000. The average score in science for Māori students was 469 points in 2012 and 480 points in 2006.
- 6) The average score in mathematics for Pasifika students was 431 points in 2012 and 455 points in 2003. The average score in reading for Pasifika students was 446 points in 2012 and 459 points in 2000. The average score in science for Pasifika students was 439 points in 2012 and 453 points in 2006.

Figures 6.1 – 6.3 PISA average Mathematics, Reading and Science performance of 15 Year Old Māori Students

Figure 6.1
Mathematics

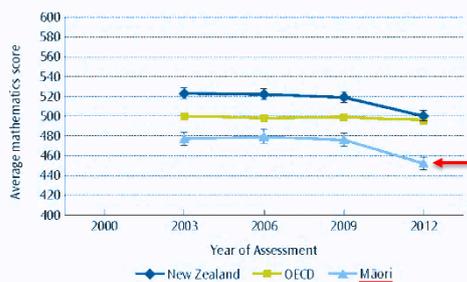


Figure 6.2
Reading

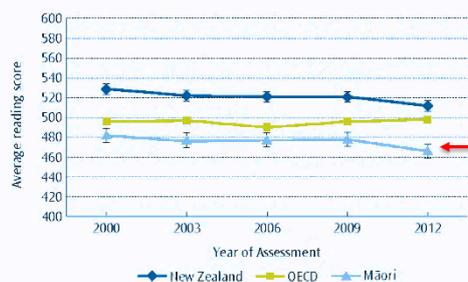
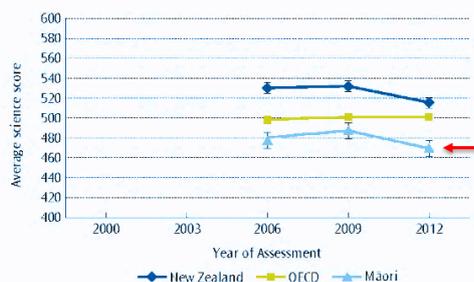


Figure 6.3
Science



Figures 7.1–7.3 PISA average Mathematics, Reading and Science performance of 15 Year Old Pasifika Students

Figure 7.1
Mathematics

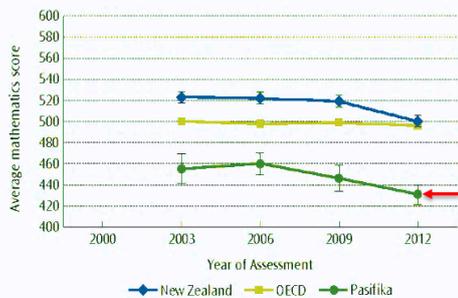


Figure 7.2
Reading

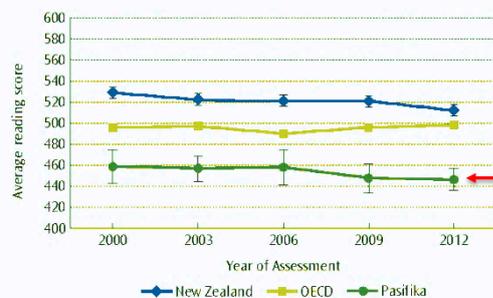
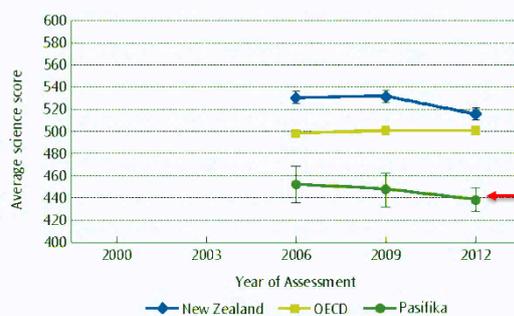
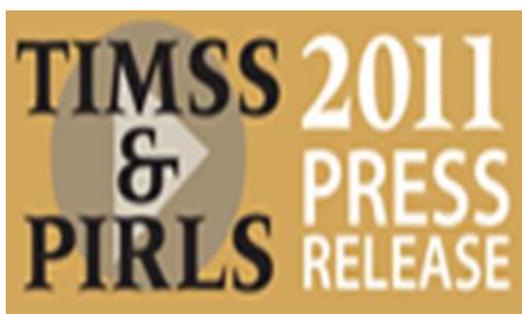


Figure 7.3
Science



TIMSS & PIRLS – Year 5 Students



The Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS) and The Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS) are international research studies that are designed to measure trends in student achievement. They are coordinated by the International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement (IEA). PIRLS looks at reading literacy achievement of middle primary school students. New Zealand's Year 5 students take part in PIRLS. It is administered every five years, with the first cycle in 2001, the second in 2005/06, and then the third in 2010/11.

PIRLS looks at the two main reasons why students at the middle primary level read. They are reading for literary experience and to acquire and use information. As well as looking at the reasons for reading, the study looks at the processes and skills of reading comprehension. For example, when students read they often need to interpret and integrate ideas in order to understand the underlying message of a story; in other situations they are required to locate a specific piece of information from part of a text to answer a question that they bring to a reading task, or to be able to check their understanding of some aspect of the text's meaning.

TIMSS looks at the mathematics and science achievement of both middle primary and lower secondary school students. New Zealand's Year 5 and Year 9 students take part. TIMSS is administered on a regular four-year cycle with the first cycle in 1994/95, and then again in 1998/99, 2002/03, 2006/07, and then the fifth cycle in 2010/11.

TIMSS also provides information on the relative progress of the middle primary school cohort four years later when they are in lower secondary school. For example, although not exactly the same students, the Year 5 student cohort assessed in TIMSS in 2006/07 formed the Year 9 TIMSS cohort in 2010/11.

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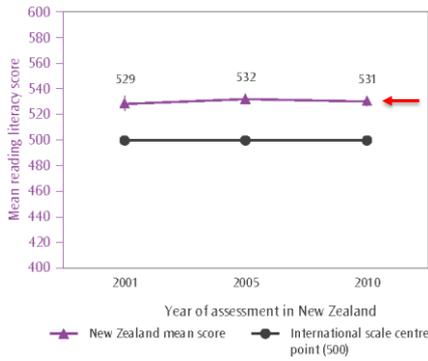
TIMSS is organised around two aspects: content or subject matter within mathematics and science; and the cognitive or thinking processes involved when answering questions. Three cognitive areas are assessed in both mathematics and science and are defined under three broad descriptions, with each encompassing skills and behaviours specific to mathematics or science areas: knowing, applying, and reasoning.

Click this link to learn more about TIMSS & PIRLS International Results 2011:

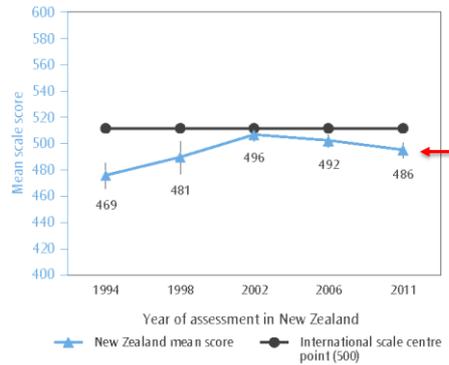
<http://timssandpirls.bc.edu/data-release-2011/index.html>

TIMSS & PIRLS Academic Trends in New Zealand & Against the International Mean

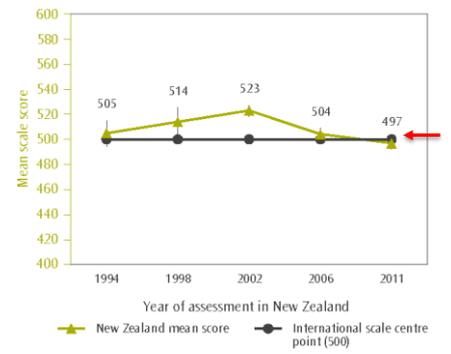
**Year 5
Reading Literacy Achievement
2001–2010/11**



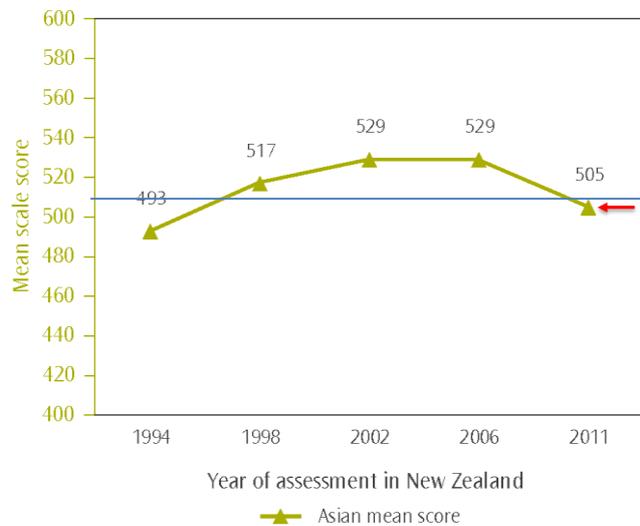
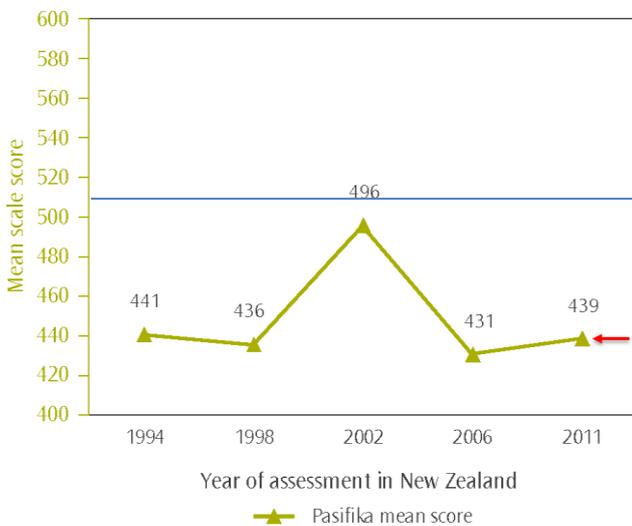
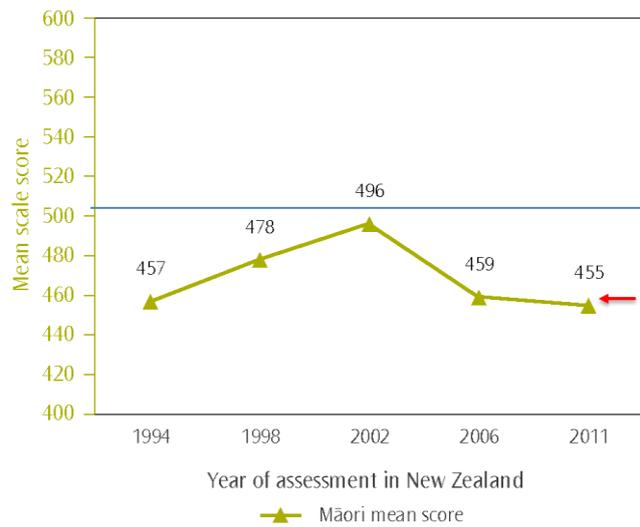
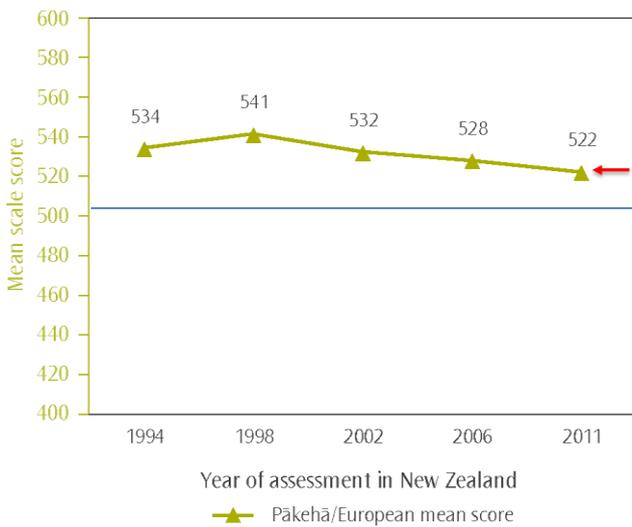
**Year 5
Maths Literacy Achievement
1994 –2010/11**



**Year 5
Science Achievement
1994 -2010/11**

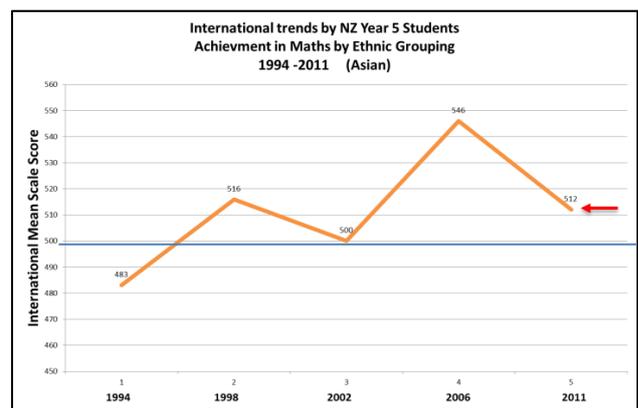
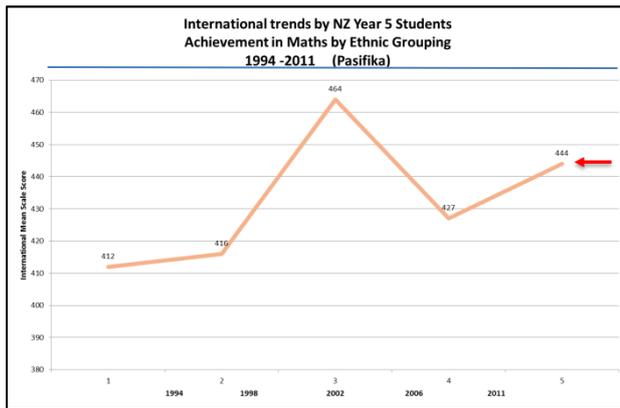
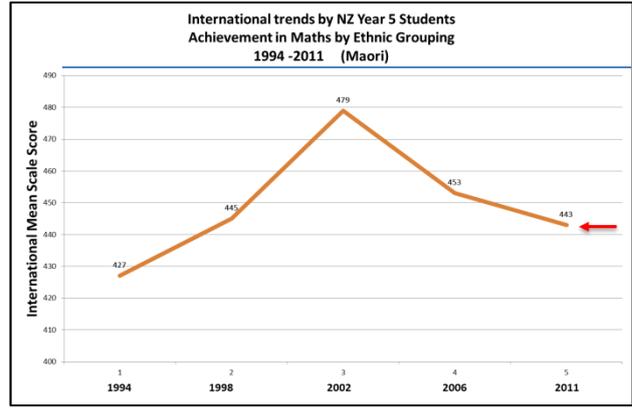
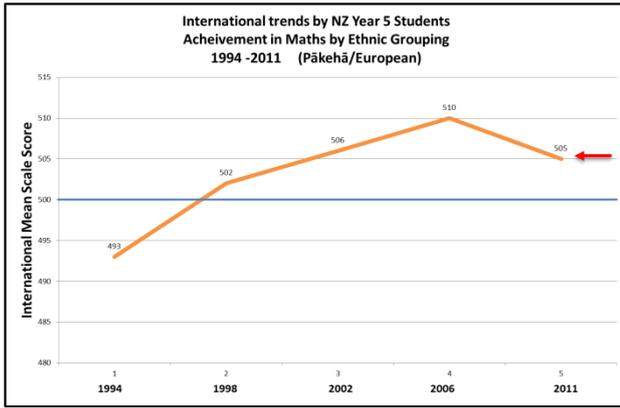


TIMSS - Trends in Year 5 students' Science Achievement by Ethnic Grouping 1994–2011



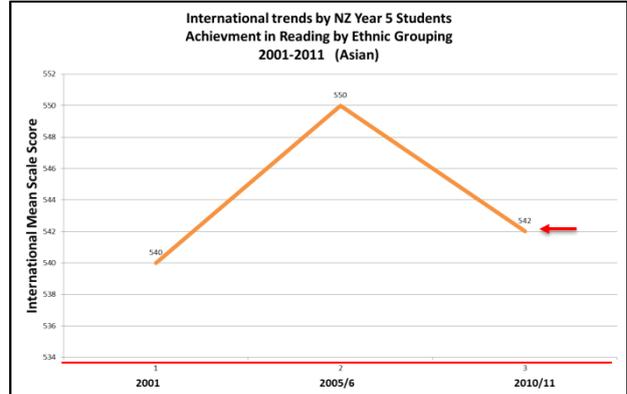
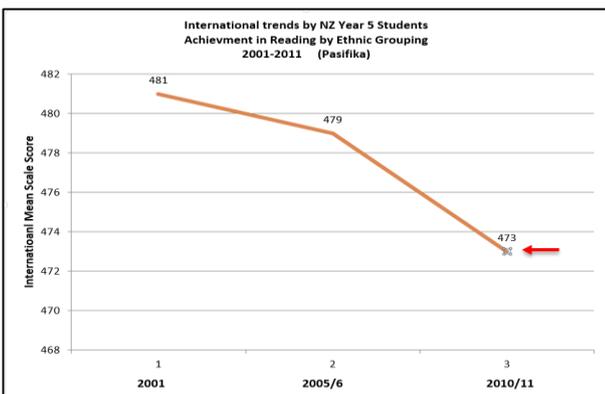
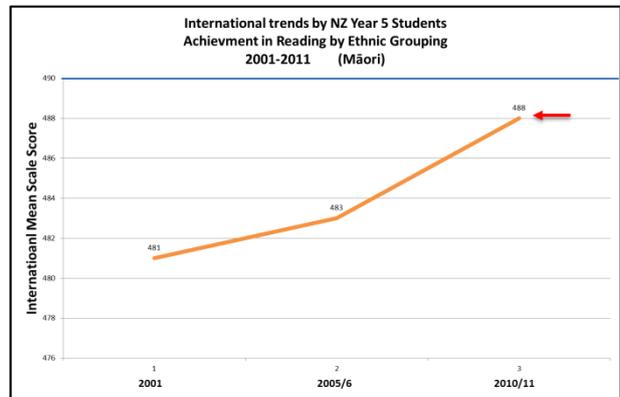
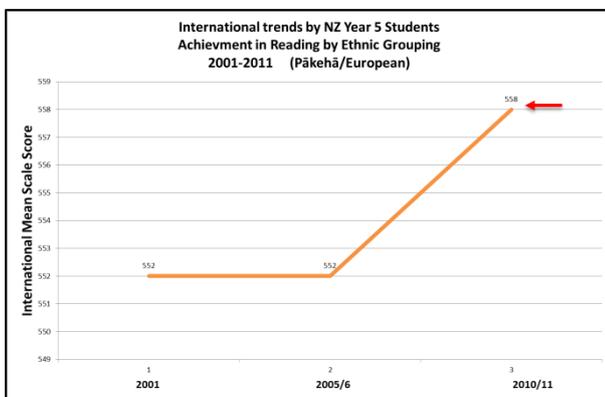
TIMSS - Trends in Year 5 Students' Maths Achievement by Ethnic Grouping 1994–2011

500 scale is the International Mean Score



PIRLS - Trends in Year 5 students' Reading Achievement by Ethnic Grouping 1994–2011

500 scale is the International Mean Score



In summary the PISA, TIMSS and PIRLS results all show there is an urgent need to have an unrelenting focus on raising the academic achievement of priority learners within the New Zealand Education sector. As a result of this and previous year's data, the New Zealand Government has set national standard goals for both the primary and secondary education sectors which they aim to achieve by 2017.

NZ Governments Goal - Secondary Schools

By 2017, 85% of all secondary school students will achieve NCEA Level 2 or equivalent.

Overall NZ Secondary School Students are achieving at 81.2% NCEA Level 2 (PAI 2014)

	2013	2014		2013	2014
Asian	86.9%	89.0%	European/Pākehā	83.4%	85.1%
Pasifika Students	71.4%	75.0%	Māori Students	63.3%	67.7%

NZ Governments Goal - Primary Schools

By 2017, 85% of all students are achieving at or above the National Standards in Reading, Writing and Maths

2013/2014 PAI Student Achievement Rates:

		2013	2014		2013	2014		2013	2014
New Zealand	Reading	77.9%	78%	Writing	70.6%	71.1%	Maths	74.6%	75.2%
European/Pākehā	Reading	84.1%	84.3%	Writing	76.3%	76.8%	Maths	79.8%	80.5%
Asian	Reading	79.0%	79.1%	Writing	74.6%	75.1%	Maths	83.2%	83.2%
Māori	Reading	68.7%	68.6%	Writing	60.9%	61.2%	Maths	64.6%	65.0%
Pasifika	Reading	64.1%	65.1%	Writing	57.6%	59.6%	Maths	60.8%	62.0%

Additional Schools National Standards Data 2013/2014 (Education Counts Website -Territorial Authority Summary)

	Decile 1 in NZ		Mangere/Otahuhu Schools		Auckland Schools	
	2013	2014	2013	2014	2013	2014
Reading	59.7%	60.2%	62.1%	66.1%	76.7%	76.9%
Writing	50.8%	52.1%	51.4%	56.9%	70.6%	71.0%
Maths	56.4%	56.8%	60.0%	64.6%	75.0%	75.8%

In order to be able to achieve these national goals, the Ministry of Education has identified and offers the following programmes to schools:

Accelerated Learning in Maths (ALiM), Accelerated Learning in Literacy (ALL), Reading Together, Leadership & Assessment, Digital Technologies, Mutukaroa, Reading Recovery and Pasifika Success.

The government has also developed the following education strategy plans with the aim of lifting academic achievement for all priority learners: Ka Hikitia- Accelerating Success 2013 -2017, Pasifika Education Plan 2013 - 2017 and Success for All – Every School Every Child 2010 -2014

Following is the latest statistical report on National Standard achievement located on the Education Counts website spanning the Government’s goals for Early Childhood, Primary School and Secondary School 2011-2014. Despite our efforts (Ministry of Education, professional development providers and those working in school and across schools), it is interesting to note that achievement levels in primary schools across New Zealand have only rose between 1.8% and 3.1%.

16 17 18

SECONDARY/TERTIARY 2014 18 YEAR OLDS WITH NCEA LEVEL 2 OR EQUIVALENT

851,160 5-18 YEAR OLDS

6.9
% points
to 81.2%
50,437 AGED 18
WITH LEVEL 2



GOAL
85%
IN 2017

10.6
% points
67.7%
8,947 AGED 18
WITH LEVEL 2
MĀORI

9.5
% points
75.0%
5,147 AGED 18
WITH LEVEL 2
PASIFIKA

4.4
% points
89.0%
5,744 AGED 18
WITH LEVEL 2
ASIAN

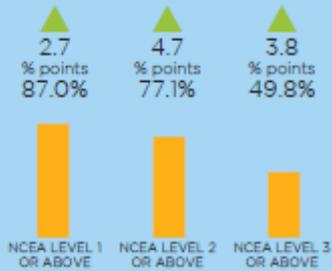
5.8
% points
85.1%
32,451 AGED 18
WITH LEVEL 2
**EUROPEAN/
PĀKEHĀ**

8.1
% points
to 79.0%
25,276 AGED 18
WITH LEVEL 2
MALE

5.5
% points
to 83.4%
25,161 AGED 18
WITH LEVEL 2
FEMALE

13 14 15 16 17 18

SECONDARY 2014 QUALIFIED LEAVERS WITH NCEA QUALIFICATIONS



60,588 TOTAL LEAVERS

542
SCHOOLS WITH
STUDENTS LEAVING
SCHOOLING

SCHOOL LEAVER HIGHEST QUALIFICATION NUMBER OF STUDENTS 2014

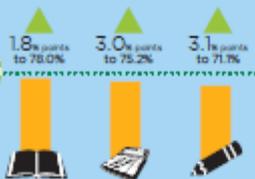
	TOTAL	MĀORI	PASIFIKA	EUROPEAN / PĀKEHĀ	ASIAN	FEMALE	MALE
NCEA LEVEL 3 OR ABOVE	12,754	3,465	2,472	20,246	4,657	16,865	13,297
NCEA LEVEL 2	6,873	4,013	2,254	10,247	4,657	6,902	9,665
NCEA LEVEL 1	37,639	1,917	740	3,441	1,070	2,505	3,472
LESS THAN NCEA LEVEL 1	6,382	3,359	1,107	3,705	313	3,481	4,401

AGES 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13

PRIMARY 2014 ACHIEVEMENT AT OR ABOVE NATIONAL STANDARDS

REPORTED NUMBERS BASED ON 2,018 OUT OF 2,088 SCHOOLS

GOAL 85% IN 2017



422,967 STUDENTS

82.5%
160,864
STUDENTS
206,030 TOTAL GIRLS

73.8%
160,271
STUDENTS
216,937 TOTAL BOYS

2,088
SCHOOLS USING
NATIONAL
STANDARDS

68.6%
65,613
STUDENTS

65.0%
62,346
STUDENTS

61.2%
58,498
STUDENTS

95,641 TOTAL STUDENTS

65.1%
28,319
STUDENTS

62.0%
26,850
STUDENTS

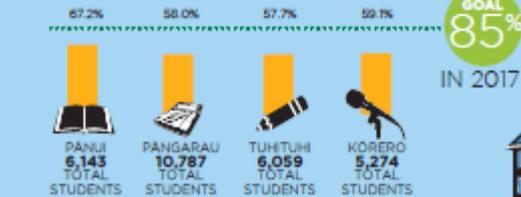
59.6%
25,999
STUDENTS

43,603 TOTAL STUDENTS

KURA AND MĀORI MEDIUM 2014 ACHIEVEMENT NGĀ WHANAKETANGA RUMAKI MĀORI MANAWA ORA AND MANAWA TOA

REPORTED NUMBERS BASED ON 122 OUT OF 196 KURA

GOAL 85% IN 2017



72.5%
2,299
STUDENTS

61.6%
1,830
STUDENTS

59.2%
3,303
STUDENTS

56.7%
2,953
STUDENTS

64.7%
2,024
STUDENTS

50.3%
1,472
STUDENTS

63.7%
1,738
STUDENTS

196
KURA USING NGĀ
WHANAKETANGA
RUMAKI MĀORI

EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION 2015 PARTICIPATION

GOAL 98% IN 2016

3.7
% points
to 93.8%
MĀORI

4.5
% points
to 91.0%
PASIFIKA

1.3
% points
to 97.3%
ASIAN

0.2
% points
to 98.0%
**EUROPEAN/
PĀKEHĀ**

96.1%

1.4% points
2015
**96.1%
TOTAL**

62,386 CHILDREN
STARTED SCHOOL BETWEEN
APRIL 2014 - MARCH 2015

1.3
% points
to 96.3%
FEMALE

1.4
% points
to 95.9%
MALE

Part C: Accelerated Learning:

So what is accelerated learning and what are the principles that underpin effective practice in this area?

Ministry of Educations Definitions of Accelerated Learning:

- ✚ *Accelerated learning is the student's learning progress showing a noticeably faster, upward movement than might otherwise have been expected by the trend of their own past learning.*
- ✚ *Accelerated learning is learning at a rate faster than classmates progressing at expected rates in order to catch them up.*
- ✚ *Accelerated learning is learning at a rapid rate that brings the student achievement level to that consistent with, or beyond, a set of benchmarks or standards (NZ Curriculum Reading and Writing Standards).*
- ✚ *Accelerated learning is an intervention that is in addition to effective classroom teaching in reading, writing and maths.*
- ✚ *Long term, accelerated learning is about "How do we develop effective intervention practices that sustain student acceleration and ensure intervention coherence at a school-wide level?"*

Currently the Ministry of Education provides a 3 year accelerated learning support programme. In the first year of this programme learning is focused on identifying key levers for improved literacy/maths teaching and learning through the development of short and intensive supplementary support programmes that run for 15 weeks, for up to two experienced and effective teachers working with between 4-8 students from their classrooms. At this time the teacher inquires into their own practices with the aim of (a) trialling teaching approaches that more effectively meet/align to the learning needs, strengths and interests of their students, (b) strengthening learning focused relationships with the students and their parents/whānau and (c) participating in regular collaborative reflection sessions that focus on strengthening one's teaching practice.

In the second and third years of this programme, schools focus on continuing cycles of inquiry to build knowledge of acceleration and the strategies and learning conditions that support this in their school. This refocus extends the accelerated learning practices across other student groups and to other teachers.

It is noted that while many schools provide some sort of additional instruction (supplementary programmes) that aim to accelerate students' progress so they can catch-up to their peers and access the school curriculum, research has shown that these additional practices: '.....can neither substitute nor compensate for poor-quality classroom instruction. Supplementary [additional] instruction is a secondary response to learning difficulties. Although supplementary [additional] instruction has demonstrated merit, its impact is insufficient unless it is planned and delivered in ways that makes clear connections to the child's daily experiences and needs during instruction in the classroom' (Snow et al., 1998, pp. 326–327).

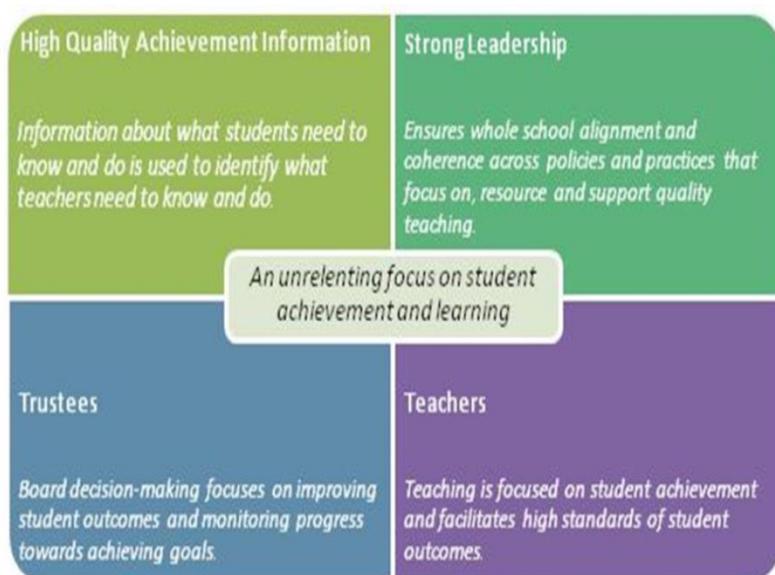
Finally, schools that effectively accelerate students' progress fully use school-wide data to determine the specific extra teaching that individual students need. Leaders in these schools collate teachers' analysed data that identify individual student's specific strengths and next learning steps. Leaders also look for achievement trends over time to establish how well the school systems and programmes are working.

Accelerated Learning Practices/Procedures

(a) The Best Evidence Synthesis (BES) indicates the following key aspects of high quality practices in effective schools. The points below, when implemented effectively, are significant factors in accelerating student achievement.

- 1) The school maintains an 'unrelenting focus on student achievement and learning'.
- 2) Whole school alignment is around evidence-based practices.
- 3) Teaching is responsive to students' learning processes.
- 4) The relevance of the learning is transparent to students with links made to their daily lives.
- 5) Teaching builds on students' prior experiences and knowledge.
- 6) Tasks and classroom interactions help students understand each incremental step they need to make progress.
- 7) Students receive specific, frequent and positive feedback.
- 8) Students have a strong sense of involvement in the process of setting specific learning goals.
- 9) Effective home-school partnership practices focus on student learning.
- 10) Teachers collaboratively reflect on practice to improve teaching.

(b) The roles of the Principal and Leadership team in leading accelerated learning: (ERO May 2013)



The role of the principal & leadership team is vital in schools that are successfully accelerating learning. Leaders in these schools communicate a clear vision that all students are able to succeed and share with trustees and staff a good understanding of what constitutes accelerated progress.

Leaders promote an inquiry-based teaching and learning approach. Leaders also access and facilitate relevant professional learning development designed to focus on teaching practices that are needed to improve for students not succeeding.

An example of specific professional learning is seen when children start school. Each child's literacy and numeracy experiences and knowledge differs. Some will progress quickly and others may need periods of more deliberate and tailored teaching to accelerate their progress. To do this, teachers need to identify the skills and concepts each child needs more practise with, and the contexts they could use to maintain the child's interest while reinforcing the skill or concept.

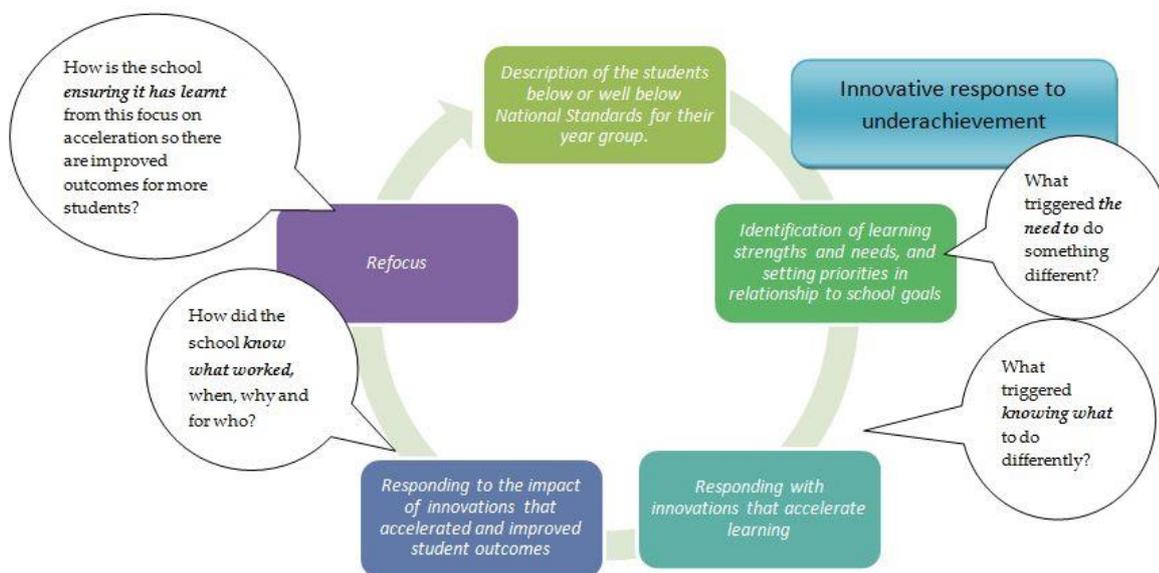
The teacher then inquires into their own teaching practice to see if they have the necessary skills to ensure the student will have success with their learning. When gaps in teaching practice are identified (knowledge, skills and context) then support is co-ordinated through the leadership/school inquiry team to assist in strengthening the teacher's practices.

(c) The role of the teachers in implementing accelerated learning practices in their classrooms:

Teachers need extensive knowledge of each of the curriculum areas in which the student needs to accelerate their progress. Teachers need knowledge of:

- 1) The student's strengths, interests and what they have already learnt.
- 2) The skills and knowledge that students need to acquire, and an understanding of the usual patterns of progress learners make with these aspects or concepts of learning.
- 3) A range of instructional strategies and processes they could use to teach the student.
- 4) Relevant contexts for learning.
- 5) How well their teaching practices are contributing to the student's achievement and progress.

The chart below (ERO May 2013) presents a model of inquiry that encapsulates the intent of points 1-5 above. This model requires the teacher to reflect deeply not only on the student's strengths and learning needs, but also on their own capacity to provide effective daily instructional programmes (that will accelerate the learning) for priority learners. In this model the teacher must know themselves, their curriculum strengths and gaps, and seek ways to strengthen such gaps (individually or as a collective of teachers) in order for the students who are below the national standards to make the required gains.



Research indicates (Accelerating the Progress of Priority Learners in Primary Schools May 2013) that teachers with highly effective practices use assessment data well to identify those students for whom they need to accelerate progress. They have good knowledge of their students' strengths and needs. These teachers develop flexible, responsive learning plans for individuals and groups of students. They are reflective practitioners and follow an inquiry cycle of teaching and learning by using assessment data to review the impact of their teaching, and change their teaching strategies as necessary.

Highly effective teachers use a range of appropriate teaching strategies. They are deliberate in their teaching choices to ensure students develop the specific literacy and numeracy skills or knowledge that they require to meet the national standards. Effective teaching includes:

- 1) modelling successful approaches, strategies or ways of solving problems that students could apply when working independently and in groups.
- 2) opportunities for students to critically talk about what they are learning and how they are learning.
- 3) prompting students to remind them of strategies or skills they had successfully used before.
- 4) questioning to clarify or expand the students' thinking.
- 5) giving feedback about what has been mastered and what the student should focus on next.
- 6) explaining the specific details about concepts or skills on which the students needed to focus.
- 7) using strategies 1-6 above for both individual and group teaching.



Effective teachers also develop partnerships with parents and whānau to support students' learning.

Parents/family/whānau join with the teacher in planning the students' next learning steps. Teachers support and guide parents and whānau by providing them with strategies to continue their child's learning at home through daily notebooks or parent evenings where aspects of the school's learning programmes or assessment processes are shared.

As mentioned previously, effective teachers are proactive in identifying the

teaching skills that they need to develop and seek out professional learning and development (PLD) to enhance these. They are not satisfied with 'business as usual' and are constantly looking for new and more effective ways of accelerating students' progress. This includes ways of increasing the levels of family/whānau engagement with their children's learning.

Effective schools developed student achievement tracking templates that are completed by teachers as part of the schools self-review process at staff/team/curriculum meetings. These templates record every student's progress compared to expectations in relation to meeting the national standards. These templates record the progress of each learner under the following headings:

- ✓ What is the shift that happened?
- ✓ What intervention/s caused the shift?
- ✓ Where to next?

(D) Ministry of Education guiding principles that underpin Accelerated Learning in Literacy (ALL) & Accelerated Learning in Mathematics (ALiM) in New Zealand Schools:

- 1) Accelerated Learning in Literacy (ALL) and Mathematics (ALiM) focus on using the expertise within the school to successfully undertake a short-term intervention (15 weeks), that focuses on accelerating the progress of these students. This intervention is in addition to effective classroom teaching.
- 2) In developing an Accelerated Learning in Literacy and Mathematics intervention, teaching and learning should be innovative and based on sound evidence of effective teaching practice for acceleration.
- 3) National Standards data is used to identify cohorts of priority learners who are below or well below the national standard in mathematics, reading and writing.
- 4) The role of the Lead Teacher (math/literacy) is to ensure the school has a curriculum and achievement map that clearly identifies the range of interventions for priority learners at risk of underachieving. This includes in-class, out- of class (for example, Reading Recovery and RTLit), and specialist support. The mathematics/literacy leader would also ensure that the supplementary supports chosen are those that are known to be educationally powerful and cost effective, are well implemented, and monitored for impact in both the short term and long term.

- 5) It is suggested that schools set up a supplementary inquiry team, based on the roles described above, during their participation. The key role of this team is to ensure there are adequate conditions for sustaining and embedding effective practices. For example, one of the roles of this group is to support other classroom teachers to inquire into the effectiveness of aspects of their own practice and transfer learning from the supplementary programmes to the classroom.
- 6) Accelerated Learning in Literacy and Mathematics (ALiM and ALL) is designed as a three-year inquiry. Year One Inquiry focuses on "What is acceleration and how do we achieve it?" In the first year of inquiry the focus is on identifying key levers for improved literacy teaching and learning through the development of a short and intensive supplementary support. This is to accelerate the literacy and mathematics learning of identified students and is in addition to an effective classroom teaching programme. In years two and three of the inquiry, the focus shifts to "How do we develop effective intervention practices that sustain student acceleration and ensure intervention coherence at a school-wide level?" In the second and third years of inquiry, schools focus on continuing cycles of inquiry to build knowledge of acceleration and the strategies and learning conditions that support this in their school. This refocus extends the literacy practices across other student groups and to other teachers. A further focus is on developing the school wide coherence of literacy interventions and developing a Curriculum and Achievement Plan (CAAP). In the third year the CAAP will be further developed across other supplementary programmes with a strong focus on critiquing the school's programmes and monitoring their effectiveness.
- 7) Schools with effective teaching and effective leadership have the inherent capability to undertake a supplementary teaching programme to accelerate progress for learners. This means identifying priority learners who are below or well below expectation for their year level, identifying what the most effective next learning steps would be (based on educational need and aspirations of learners, and their families/whānau), designing and implementing a programme that will support the acceleration, is culturally responsive and identifies the support they need to do this. The focus is always on the learner and their progress.
- 8) A school curriculum and achievement action plan would describe what is worthwhile learning, what is achievement and how the school will respond if students are not achieving to ensure there is a period of accelerated progress.
- 9) Teacher competencies required in order to participate in ALL & ALiM are;
 - a) Have strong pedagogical and content knowledge; knowledge of mathematics/literacy at all levels ensuring a deep understanding of progression.
 - b) Be open to learning and confident to try new things.
 - c) Notice and observe practice and refine and reflect on their own practice.
 - d) Be flexible with the ability to employ multiple strategies to work with these students.
 - e) Have high expectations of the students.
 - f) Have ultimate patience.
 - g) Be a permanent member of teaching staff.
 - h) Have credibility – other staff need to find them credible and they need confidence to deliver to other staff and work across the school.
 - i) Be approachable.
 - j) Have the ability to encourage staff, parents and students.
 - k) Be organised.
- 10) 'Mentoring is provided to support and encourage teachers to manage their own learning in order that they may maximise their potential, develop their skills and improve their performance.' The mentors need to carry the theory and ideas into schools and be ready to challenge practices that are not effective, efficient or equitable before they become 'the way we do it around here' Parsloe (2000).

Part D: In Summary: Core principles that underpin accelerated learning.

From my research, the smartchart below identifies some of the critical key factors that make a positive difference to a school's effectiveness in responding to underachievement through providing effective accelerated learning programmes to priority learners.

Of interest, in relation to student achievement, Hattie states; *'great things happen when teachers see learning through the eyes of their students and plan instructional programmes accordingly, and when students see themselves as their own teachers'*.

Effective teachers and leaders are not satisfied with 'business as usual' and are constantly looking for new and more effective/adaptive ways of accelerating students' progress.



Effective teachers / leaders have assessment and evaluative capabilities to understand and use data, and know what works, when and why for different priority students.

Case Study 1.
Decile 1 Primary School U6

Principal's Understanding of Accelerated Learning:

'Accelerated learning is enabling any student who is below or well below the national standards in reading, writing and maths, to catch up and reach the national standard (up to an additional 12 months learning) within the calendar year. This requires teachers to know the needs of these students and explicitly teach to the students learning gaps'.

Examples of Accelerated Practices/Programmes/Strategies this school uses are:

- ✓ Pasifika Maths Programme
- ✓ Reading Recovery
- ✓ Accelerated Learning in Maths (ALiM)
- ✓ Rainbow Reading Programme
- ✓ Oral Language programme based on the work of Dr Jannie van Hees
- ✓ ESOL programmes that have a focus on supporting students with dyslexia
- ✓ English Literacy Learning Assistant (ELLA) and TESOL trained school staff
- ✓ Formative assessment practices especially in the area of:
 - a) **Building Learning Focused Relationships.** The success of teaching and learning is founded on the quality of the relationship built between the teacher and the student. The teacher must know how to manage the motivational climate of the classroom and how to foster and build a learning-focused relationship with students whereby there is a shared ownership and responsibility for learning. This provides students with the maximum opportunity to build their own motivation to learn.
 - b) **Clarity about what is to be learnt.** Teachers and students will be clear about: what students are to learn; how and why they are going to learn it; and how they will know when they have been successful.
 - c) **Assessment Literacy.** Assessment literacy is about the understandings and strategies teachers need in order to gather dependable information about the status of a student's (or group of students') learning; gather and aggregate information dependably, skilfully interpret and evaluate information for individuals and groups of students in order to decide on what to do next to support learning, and contribute evidence to partnerships of learning (parents/whanau, colleagues, boards etc).
 - d) **Active Reflection.** Active reflection requires both teachers and students to evaluate the effectiveness of the learning. It is about monitoring every aspect of the teaching and learning process (planning, learning, teaching, assessing and student achievement) so connections can be made about what has worked well and what has not been so successful, so that programme adjustments can be made.

School practices that focus on effective teaching and learning that lead to accelerated learning for students:

- 1) There is a relentless focus on questioning ones teaching practices – Teacher Inquiry. This is aligned to the school appraisal cycle where teachers are expected to identify gaps in areas of curriculum knowledge that they aim to strengthen during the year.
- 2) There are ongoing school wide practices that aim to strengthen teaching practice. These include: (a) regular teaching observations, (b) giving and receiving feedback (both oral and written), (c) collaborative learning, research (Professional Learning Groups) and (d) evaluation of the effectiveness of one’s teaching practices.
- 3) The schools leadership structure sees the Principal, Deputy Principal, Assistant Principal and Senior teachers all involved in regular classroom observations, specific teaching observations (maths, reading, writing lessons) and a review of all teachers planning and assessment folders. These reviews are completed on a cyclic rotation each term. During these reviews alignment is looked for in teaching actions being implemented from syndicate meeting minutes, implementation of short and long term teaching plans and best teaching practices as expected by the school. Some students in each classroom are selected at random and their learning progress is reviewed.
- 4) There is a shared understanding amongst the teachers/leaders of what is good teaching practice and that these practices are evident all day, every day.
- 5) There are weekly target student review meetings where deliberate acts of teaching that aim to accelerate learning of target (priority) students are discussed. At these review meetings, all teachers are expected to present evidence that back up their claims of academic progress of the target students against the set goals. Teachers not only outline what has been achieved but also share what the next learning steps are for these students. Any teachers at these meetings can ask questions, give suggestions and offer help.
- 6) The school uses their expert teachers to share their curriculum knowledge and effective instructional teaching practices with other staff through general staff/syndicate meetings, coaching and mentoring.

Current Leadership Challenges:

- a) To more closely align the espoused theory of good teaching practice to theory in use. That is, all teachers to implement effective teaching practice all day, every day as outlined in the schools documents and as expressed at teacher meetings.
- b) To strengthen the place of data as evidence of effective teaching practice. In the past (as the stakes were high) it was evident that some data was inaccurate and showed gains in student achievement that, when moderated, were not correct.
- c) Getting the teachers to recognise the need for urgency in providing effective teaching (that is showing accelerated learning for all target students) all day, every day.
- d) For all staff to be on the same bus. That is to fully commit to the vision, aims, goals and targets as outlined in the schools Charter, Strategic and Annual plans.
- e) To keep staff motivated and to remind them that they come to work each day with the sole focus of helping students have success with their learning and not for any other reasons like I just need a job to pay the bills.
- f) To help teachers recognise that there is not one single recipe that tells us what to do to fix the problem of underachievement for priority learners. There are many strategies contained within different programmes (as mentioned above) and the challenge is to help the teachers understand the principles / strategies that underpin these approaches and then assist them to integrate these into their daily teaching practice.



Case Study 2

Decile 1 Contributing Primary School U6

Principal's Understanding of Accelerated Learning:

'It is the natural maturation rate of learning plus added amount of learning that has been missed. For example a student who is below the national standards in reading, writing and maths at December in Year 4 might need to successfully achieve 15 months of learning within a 12 month learning window in Year 5 depending on the learning gaps that were missed at the end of Year 4.'

Examples of accelerated programmes/practices/strategies the school uses:

- ✓ Rainbow Reading Programme
- ✓ ALiM
- ✓ Mutukaroa Programme
- ✓ Reading Recovery Programme
- ✓ Reading Together Programme

School practices that focus on effective teaching and learning that have a positive impact on accelerated learning for students:

- 1) Teachers reflect and act upon student achievement data located in their schools SMS (Student Management System).
- 2) Staff meetings are held that focus on the expected rates of student learning with schoolwide, team and classroom based achievement targets set.
- 3) It is expected that all target (priority) students will receive additional teacher instructional time on top of their normal instructional group time. For example, the teacher might see their normal instructional groups 3 times a week, however if you are a target student, then the teacher will find extra time (2 additional instructional sessions) within the same week.
- 4) The staff collectively agrees to the amount of uninterrupted instructional teaching days they have available each term. For example EOTC and special assemblies would be deducted from the total number of available instructional teaching days. If we take Term 3 as an example, then out of a total of 50 focused instructional days (5 days x 10 weeks) minus EOTC, special assemblies, speech competitions etc (say 5 days) then staff accept that they have a minimum of 45 focused instructional teaching days. It is then expected that all teachers would be able to produce evidence of 45 pieces of work in reading, writing and maths for all students. This could be in the form of work in group modelling books, students work books, student/class blogs, students work on display. It is expected that this work shows learning progressions for all students. The leadership team then chooses students at random per class and audits these pieces of work to look for (a) that target students are making the required learning progress and (b) that the required uninterrupted instructional learning programmes had been delivered.
- 5) The staff collaboratively identifies adult behaviours that would be challenged if noticed at school because these behaviours would undermine the high work standards expected by all staff. These were (a) possible work avoidance behaviours exhibited by staff and (b) unacceptable excuses staff may state as to why work had not been completed. There has been a lot of work and PLD completed on "Learning Conversations" and challenging assumptions/reasons for not being as successful as targeted, and/or barriers to learning and delivering the intended programmes.

- 6) Senior leaders completed classroom observations, specific teaching lesson observations, teachers videoed their own practice and sent the video link to their appraiser after which reflection sessions were held and goals established to strengthen the teachers practice. Through reflection journals located in the schools SMS, or personal appraisal portfolios, teachers are expected to record/upload their evidence as to how they are meeting the professional standards. This evidence needs to prove that the teacher's instructional programme is having a positive effect on student achievement, especially against the national standards. This will be a basis for evidence needed to be presented at appraisal meetings.
- 7) One strategy that has been used is that teachers are placed in professional learning groups (PLG's) of four. In these groups they plan lessons together and three of the teachers watch the delivery of that lesson by the fourth teacher. After the completion of the lesson there is a group reflection on what went well and what needed to be strengthened. Then another member of the group teaches the same lesson (but builds on the feedback given) to their students with the others watching on. This process is repeated four times. The reflection on teacher practice is the focus.
- 8) The implementation of the Mutukaroa programme is having positive effects in engaging parents/whānau with their children's teachers. Through this engagement the students' current learning goals and next steps in learning are discussed with actions agreed to. While this programme is only implemented for Years 1-3, the school is looking at ways of implementing this for Years 1-6 commencing 2015. A fully released Mutukaroa co-ordinator meets with family/whānau and discusses the child's learning and how the family/whānau can help with this at home. The family/whānau are given individual home learning packs to assist with the child's next steps in learning. Students are assessed at 5, 5.5, 6 & 7 years old. This assessment data is fed back to the family/whānau.
- 9) The school provides curriculum evenings for parents/whānau once a term (Terms 1-4) between 6:00pm-7:30pm. At these evenings specific curriculum areas are chosen for discussion with parents/whānau. At these times parents/whānau are given learning packs to take home that include home based resources that will support the learning that is occurring at school. For example curriculum centres/workshops are located around the hall for Year 1/2, 3/4 and 5/6. Sausage sizzles are provided for everyone attending.

Current Leadership Challenges:

- a) To strengthen the quality of work output by the students. This means to continue to deliver and refine the student work output levels, but to also have a future focus on the quality of the work being delivered and presented by teachers. This challenge also requires processes to be in place to ensure that the work will be of sufficient to high quality.
- b) To strengthen the quality of instructional curriculum delivery that has a clear alignment to the learning goals of the students. This will see differentiated instructional programmes being delivered that build on prior learning of all students leading to alignment of the national standards criteria for achievement.
- c) To strengthen middle school leadership so that they can coach, mentor their teachers in ways that continually raise the bar of excellence in relation to instructional programme delivery.
- d) To continue to build the confidence of the parent community to a level where they become equal partners in the learning outcomes/achievement of their children.
- e) To strengthen a shared understanding/responsibility that says; 'when any student enters our school grounds and/or learning environments, let them experience levels of excellence and deliver this level of excellence all day, every day'.



To offer opinions even though they might be contrary to views held by others

Bring a solution based focus to life/school. Have personal drive and sets high personal standards in all that they do.

Is an innovative teacher and uses mixed media technologies when deliveriing teaching and learning programmes like I-Pads and Interactive whiteboards

Case Study 2
Decile 1 U6
Contributing Priamry School

Qualities of an effecitve teacher who has the ability to acclerate students learning at this school

While displaying positive attitudes to colleagues and to work requirements, will not be very tolerant of unacceptable excuses from others when tasks / responsibilities have not been completed on time.

Displays depth of current curriculum knoweldge and effective teaching pedagogy

Is able to work successfully in diverse teams and will have a great drive for self and the team to succeed

Case Study 3
Decile 1 State Integrated Primary School U5

Principal's Understanding of Accelerated Learning:

'Children making progress beyond the normal years learning, that is, students making greater than expected learning rates. Through accelerated programmes all students are expected to be at national standards in reading, writing and maths by the time of their anniversary (Years 1-3) or by December each year (Years 4-8)'.

Examples of accelerated programmes/practices/strategies the school uses:

- ✓ Pasifika Maths Programme (Mathematical Inquiry Community)
- ✓ Reciprocal Reading Programmes
- ✓ Employment of an additional literacy teacher to accelerate learning of priority students (over staffing entitlement)
- ✓ Mutukaroa Programme

School practices that focus on effective teaching and learning that have a positive impact on accelerated learning for students:

- 1) Teachers use the following sources of information to gather a picture at the start of the year of what students have achieved and what their learning goals are. They then plan their instructional programmes accordingly. These sources of information are: e-asTTle, student portfolios, STAR, GLoSS/JAM, PROBE, Running Records, end of year OTJ's and report comments.
- 2) At team meetings teachers' share strategies that are having a positive impact on priority student achievement with the aim that other teachers will also try these same strategies.
- 3) At full staff/team meetings, teachers unpack the principles that underpin specific programmes and apply them to teaching throughout the day. For example, co-operative learning underpins the approach of the Pasifika Maths programme.
- 4) Aligning teacher practice to what research says. For example, linking the teacher's practice to what is identified in the Best Evidence Synthesis (BES).
- 5) In some classrooms the teachers run integrated programmes. In these rooms the teacher allows the student's to design their weekly learning timetable, there is shared understandings of the achievement levels students need to reach. The teachers also spend a lot of time at the start of the year establishing social norms around learning which then forms the base of the ongoing learning focused relationships (one of the key formative assessment principles). In these classrooms students have lots of exemplars which they use to moderate and assess their own work against.
- 6) Additional literacy support is provided by a specialist teacher. Both the specialist teacher and classroom teacher agree on the learning goals for the student and both teachers work on these goals during the week. For example the same student will be working on the agreed goals with the specialist teacher (withdrawal sessions) as well as with the class teachers in their normal instructional group time.

- 7) Student led conferences are held in Terms 1-3. Here the student, parents/whānau and the class teachers celebrate learning goals that have been met as well as identifying next learning goals. At this goal setting time, the student, teacher and parents/whānau will all make commitments as to what they will do to make sure the learning goals can be met.
- 8) Professional Learning Groups (PLG's) are established of around four colleagues. When these groups meet they share/discuss their reactions to professional readings, they trial new approaches to their instructional teaching practice and share how these went and they are also encouraged to use some of their classroom release time (CRT) to observe their colleagues teaching.
- 9) There is an expectation that all teachers have 'Teaching as Inquiry' goals in reading, writing and maths and this is linked within the school's appraisal process. Appraisal folders /portfolios are online which enables teachers to add entries (evidence of practice) at any time. Team leaders and the senior leadership team can also go on-line and correspond with teachers about the evidence that has been posted (on going learning conversations). Within the inquiry focus teachers reflect on what went well and what they need to do differently in order for the students (especially the priority students) to have success with their learning. When setting these goals, teachers will also seek alignment to the schools overall goals and MOE targets.
- 10) Some teachers are trained in the coaching/mentoring of other teachers with the main focus on strengthening formative assessment practices and assessment literacy, that is, how to use the information from assessment tools to inform teacher's planning.

Current Leadership Challenges:

- 1) To encourage teachers to share with each other the learning strengths and goals of students when they move from one class to another class.
- 2) To develop ways/practices where teachers are able to respond successfully to the multiple learning challenges of priority students.
- 3) To find ways of balancing the requirements of delivering curriculum programmes that enable all students to have success against the national standards and the requirements of the integrated special character programmes as there are only 25 hours of instructional time per week.
- 4) To help more teachers understand (a) what accelerated learning is and (b) what it might look like when students and teachers are having success with this approach.
- 5) To shift teachers thinking who, at times, are stuck in a deficit model of thinking, therefore leading to low expectations for the achievement of priority students.
- 6) To strengthen the schools moderation processes in order to help teachers make stronger/more reliable overall teacher judgements (OTJ's).
- 7) To assist teachers in Year 5-8 in the understanding of the rates of progress needed in order for priority learners to reach the national standards by December of each year.



Case Study 4
Decile 1 Contributing Primary School U4

Principal's Understanding of Accelerated Learning:

'Ensuring that priority students are working on a trajectory that enables them to meet and/or achieve beyond the national standard'.

Examples of accelerated programmes/practices/strategies the school uses:

- ✓ Reading Recovery
- ✓ Accelerated Literacy (ALL) programme
- ✓ Accelerated Maths (ALiM) programme
- ✓ PB4L – Positive behaviour for learning
- ✓ Schools Learner Profile (Educating the whole child) Te Whare Tapa Wha



School practices that focus on effective teaching and learning that have a positive impact on accelerated learning for students:

- 1) The school focus is on educating the whole child. They have high expectations for respectful relationships (social & learning), they expect their students to do their best each day, they provide safe learning and social environments and have developed a matrix that shows the students/parents/whanau the expected progression of these standards to be achieved from Years 1-Year 6.
- 2) The school has developed the role of a 'critical friend'. This friend provides advice/guidance within trusting relationships through (a) giving advice as to how to strengthen one's teaching practice within identified appraisal goals (instructional teaching skills) (b) sharing curriculum knowledge with each other and (c) generally supporting the colleague to have success in raising student achievement for all students in their classroom. The key principle that underpins the role of the critical friend is for them to be an advocate for the success of the work of that teacher. It is noted that the teacher will align their appraisal goals with those that are identified in the school's annual plan/strategic plan. The teacher and their critical friend also keep reflective journals via google docs. All staff receive professional development training on the role and responsibilities of being a critical friend.
- 3) The school is one of four that belongs to a community of schools that meet once a term to moderate students work. These meetings are held between 9:00am-12:00noon with teachers in Years 1-3 and in Years 4-6 bringing samples of students work for moderation. During this time references are made to the NZ Curriculum, learning progressions and expectations aligning to the relevant national standards. These meetings are collaborative, with all teachers making constructive contributions to discussions. At these meetings two external representatives attend to facilitate the meeting focus. At the conclusion of the meeting, staff go back to their schools and share the process and outcomes of these meetings.

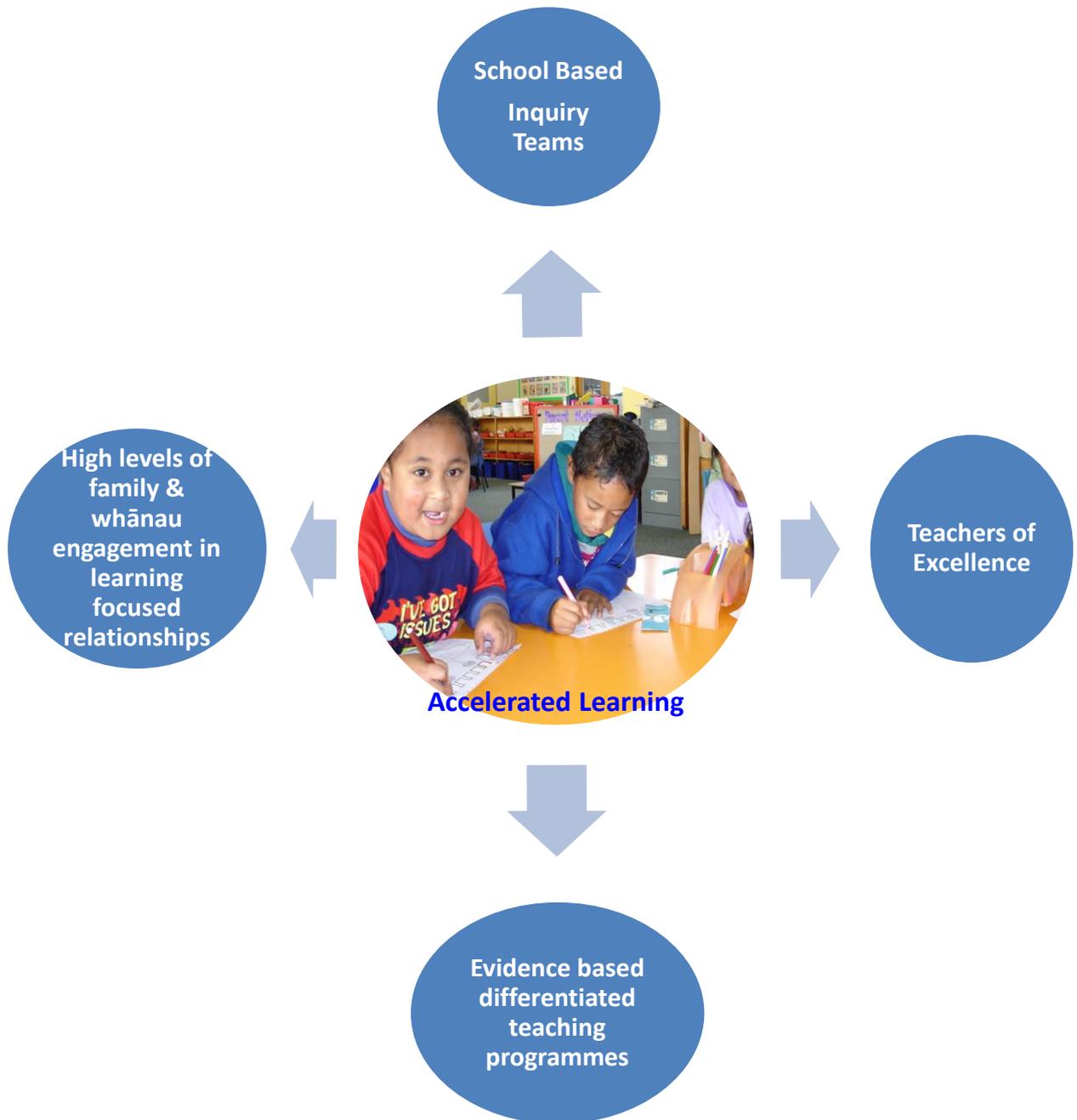
- 4) The school plans and reviews the learning goals for all priority students. Once a student's learning goals have been identified, the school sets markers which they expect the students to reach. These markers (specific learning objectives/goals) when met, enable the student to successfully progress towards the overall end goal, that is, meeting the national standard. These goals are reviewed at agreed checkpoints and are either celebrated or reset due to barriers encountered. At this time additional professional support is offered to the teacher, student and/or parent/whānau as deemed appropriate.
- 5) Student progress is aligned to the school's appraisal cycle. Teachers are expected to clearly identify deliberate acts of teaching (DATs) that will add to the acceleration of the students' progress. Teachers are also expected to identify the levels of support they require in order to successfully deliver the deliberate acts of teaching (DATs).
- 6) The Board of Trustees and an external corporation provide additional funds that enable the school to employ a teacher above its Ministry of Education staffing entitlement. This teacher is respected by their colleagues as being a teacher of excellence. This teacher leads the ALL and ALiM programmes both in class and in withdrawal lessons for priority students in Years 3-6. This teacher also models best practice in class settings and will observe teachers practice and provide specific feedback on that focus area.

Current Leadership Challenges

- a) Building more in-depth and regular learning focused relationships with parents/whanau.
- b) Accessing greater levels of support via: SWiS workers and health teams from the District Health Board.
- c) Finding workable approaches that sees students who are below the national standards in reading, writing and maths receive accelerated learning programmes each day.
- d) How to provide multiple effective teaching and learning interventions (with urgency to priority learners) without burning out the staff who are providing these programmes.
- e) How to find ways of sustaining the current effective accelerated learning programmes that are currently being funded through finite funding sources.
- f) How to build the capacity of all staff to provide effective accelerated learning programmes in the event that the current specialist staff leave the school, get sick, leave the profession etc.



Accelerated Learning Conclusions



Conclusions:

- 1) It is clear to me that international results from PISA, TIMSS and PIRLS have had a direct correlation to the current direction in the New Zealand education sector, that being the unrelenting focus to lift student achievements, especially the achievement of all priority learners. Currently the Government has set a standard that by the end of 2017 all primary school students will be achieving at 85% percent in reading, writing and maths.

In the recent results released by the Ministry of Education through the Public Achievement Information (PAI) 2014, achievement rates in NZ primary schools are 78.0% in reading (an 0.5% increase in student achievement between 2012-2014), 74.6% in maths (an 1.0% increase in student achievement between 2012-2014) and 71.1% in writing (an 0.9% increase in student achievement between 2012-2014).

In all decile 1 schools across New Zealand student achievement rates are: 59.7% in reading, 56.4% in maths and 50.8% in writing and in decile 1 schools in Mangere/Otahuhu (which is the area my school is clustered in) students achievement rates are: 66.1% in reading, 64.6% in maths and 56.9% in writing.

Bearing in mind that across New Zealand the rate of achievement is tracking at less than 3% over the past three years, the challenge for decile 1 schools is how to make over 25% gains in student achievements in the next 36 months? The conclusions contained in the following pages indicate approaches that need to be embedded in school practices in order to shift student achievement to the 85% success rate the Government is aiming for. In order to achieve this goal (or even get close to it), I believe the Ministry of Education professional development programmes need to be provided on an evidenced based approach. That is, build on from where the school needs are, rather than a current model that tends to say, here is the package of professional development with its key performance indicators (KPI's) which the school may only need a certain part of that professional development package.

- 2) Four key school based approaches emerged that I believe linked very clearly to accelerated learning. These are (a) school based inquiry teams (b) teachers of excellence (c) evidence based differentiated teaching programmes and (d) high levels of family/whānau engagement in learning focused relationships. I have addressed each of these four themes in executive summaries that are located in the following pages. Where schools were embedding these four themes effectively, they put a lot of effort into the professional development for their teachers as well as strengthening school based systems/processes that enabled ongoing sustainability of these four key areas.
- 3) The concept of schools collaborating around the moderation of student work was another powerful model that I believe had a direct correlation to lifting student achievement. When teachers from the various schools met, they brought examples of students learning that was then presented for discussion in terms of unpacking the features of that work and aligning it to the appropriate curriculum level. Instructional teaching approaches were also discussed along with unpacking specific curriculum documents. This model was powerful in the fact that a community of teachers were working across schools to strengthen a shared understanding of what was effective teaching, what student achievement looks like (despite a school's decile rating) and, through discussions, strengthened curriculum understandings.
- 4) Encasing a school's success in accelerating learning for all students are four teachers/leaders attitudinal/behavioural values that emerged in this study; (a) effective teachers and leaders are not satisfied with business as usual and are constantly looking for new and more effective /adaptive ways of accelerating students' progress (b) effective teachers/leaders demonstrate in their actions a passion and belief that all students will have success with their learning while maintaining a relentless focus of questioning their effectiveness of their teaching programmes and rates of student learning (c) effective teachers/leaders have assessment and evaluative capabilities to understand and use data, and know what works, when and why for different priority students and (d) there is a shared understanding between all teachers and leaders of what effective teaching practice looks like and that these practices are evident in all classrooms all day, every day.
- 5) The roles of coaching, mentoring and the place of a critical friend within the schools operation appeared to have significant impact in strengthening teacher practice leading to increased levels of student achievement. Schools who had put people in these roles all said they were significant in (a) leading change (b) challenging poor teaching practices and (c) aligning teaching practice with the school's appraisal processes.

Teachers of Excellence / ACET Teachers

‘Great teaching is as much about passion as it is about reason. It’s about not only motivating students to learn, but teaching them how to learn, and doing so in a manner that is relevant, meaningful, and memorable. It’s about caring for your craft, having a passion for it, and conveying that passion to everyone, most importantly to your students’. Richard Leblanc 1998.



Throughout this study the notion of priority students requiring excellent teaching in order to help them achieve their goals is a reoccurring theme. NZEI and TeachNZ have created very clear statements that signal what teachers of excellence need to be demonstrating in their teaching practice each day.



Teachers of
Excellence

In the NZ Primary Schools Collective Agreement for Teachers, it defines the standards for experienced teachers. It states: ‘Experienced teachers are highly skilled practitioners and classroom managers. Their teaching methods are well developed and they employ an advanced range of strategies for motivating students and engaging them in learning. In environments where it is possible, they support and provide assistance to colleagues’.

On top of this is the ‘Advanced Classroom Expertise Teacher’ (ACET) is a classroom teacher whose practice has been formally recognised as being demonstrably higher than the Experienced Teacher Professional Standards.

The goal for school leaders is to assist in the development of all their experienced teachers so that they are not only delivering programmes at a highly skilled practitioner level (experienced teacher) but are also able to reach noticeably higher (exemplary) levels of the ACET teacher criteria below:

(a) Exemplary use of evidence and research to inform practice. This requires the teachers to provide multiple sources of evidence and research referenced that informs and develops their practice. A clear link between theory and its application to practice must be apparent. This should include evidence of the way it has developed the teacher’s practice.

(b) Leadership in developing practice amongst peers. This requires teachers to provide evidence of their strong professional relationships with colleagues that demonstrate leadership in teaching practice.

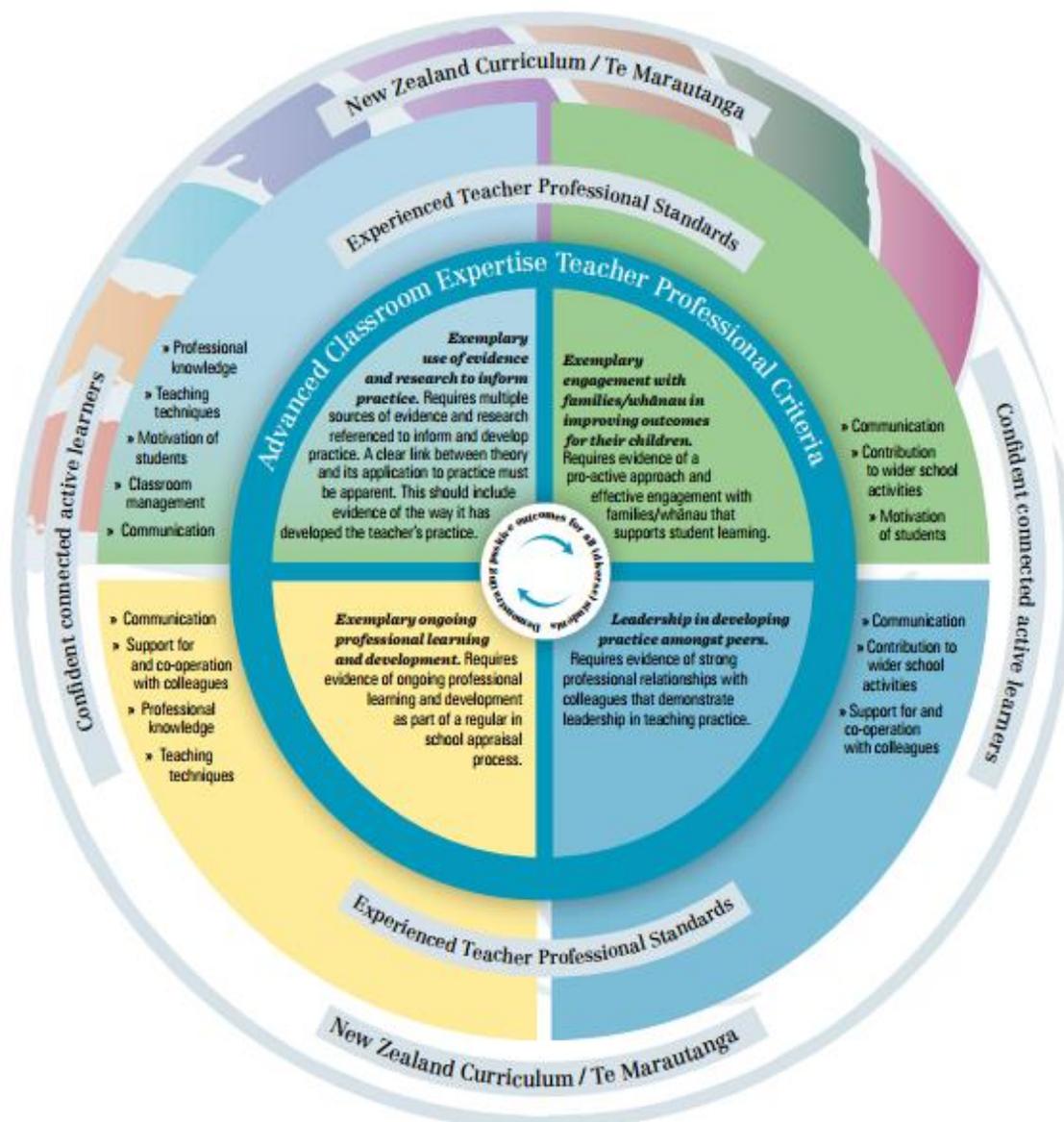
(c) Exemplary engagement with families/whānau in improving outcomes for their children. This requires teachers to provide evidence of the pro-active approaches and effective engagement they have had with families/whānau that supports student learning.

(d) Exemplary ongoing professional learning and development. This requires teachers to provide evidence of their ongoing professional learning and development as part of a regular, in school, appraisal process.

Reflective Question – For the Reader of this Report:

What school based or external provider based professional development is planned for, that builds teacher capacity from one of being an experienced teacher who is meeting the professional standards, to one that is acknowledged as performing within the ACET teacher criteria?

Advanced Classroom Expertise Teacher' (ACET) Framework



BES Four key levers for educational improvement

- 
Professional practice
 Effective pedagogy for valued outcomes for diverse (all) learners.
- 
Engagement
 Activation of educationally powerful connections.
- 
Peer leadership
 Leadership of conditions for continuous improvement.
- 
Professional Learning and Development
 Productive inquiry and knowledge building for professional and policy learning.

Self-Sustaining School Inquiry Teams:

‘The fundamental purpose of the ‘Teaching as Inquiry’ cycle is to achieve improved outcomes for all students. Less obviously, but very importantly, the cycle is an organising framework that teachers can use to help them learn from their practice and build greater knowledge’. Ministry of Education, 2007



Another reoccurring theme in my study was that of teacher inquiry. Where a school’s inquiry model was working effectively, the teachers reflected deeply not only on the student’s strengths and learning needs but also on their own capacity to provide effective daily instructional programmes that would accelerate the learning for priority learners.

School
Inquiry
Teams

In effective school based inquiry models, the teachers knew themselves, their curriculum strengths and gaps and sought ways to strengthen such gaps (individually or as a collective of teachers) in order for the students, who were below the national standards, to make the required gains.

In the focusing inquiry, teachers identified the outcomes they wanted their students to achieve. They considered how their students were doing in relation to those outcomes, and they asked what their students needed to learn next in order to achieve them

In the teaching inquiry model, teachers select strategies that will support their students to achieve these outcomes. This involves asking questions about how well current strategies are working and whether other strategies might be more successful. Teachers search their own and their colleagues’ past practice for strategies that may be more effective, and they also look in the research literature to see what has worked in other contexts. They seek evidence that their selected strategies really have worked for other students, and they set up processes for capturing evidence about whether the strategies are working for their own students.

In schools that had developed effective inquiry models, professional development had taken place in upskilling staff in the areas of coaching, mentoring and in the role of being a critical friend. These staff provided key school based support to others in both formal and informal settings. For example some schools had schoolwide inquiry team meetings where individual teachers presented evidence of priority students’ progress on a three/five weekly cycle. At these meetings the teacher shared approaches they had tried that were very effective and sought assistance with any barriers they were still coming across in terms of (a) student underachievement and/or (b) gaps in the teachers’ curriculum knowledge or instructional teaching skills.

Another aspect of the school based inquiry model encourages teachers to video their own practice in Week 3 and Week 7 of each term and then share this video with the inquiry team for analysis, discussion and possible next steps to strengthen teacher practices. In this way the teacher is not working in isolation but they are part of a team that has much expertise to share with each other in building teachers capacity.

Reflective Question – For the Reader of this Report:

What evidence does your school have that shows your teacher/school inquiry model is strengthening teacher practices and that this has had a direct correlation to raising the achievement of your schools priority learners?

Differentiated Learning Programmes

‘Differentiated instruction is the way in which a teacher anticipates and responds to a variety of student needs in the classroom. To meet student needs, teachers differentiate by modifying the content (what is being taught), the process (how it is taught) and the product (how students demonstrate their learning)’. Nicholas Meier, 2013.



In successful schools where differentiated learning programmes are embedded, there is an unrelenting focus on raising student achievement, especially for all priority learners. In such schools, effective teachers and leaders were not satisfied with ‘business as usual’ and they were constantly looking for new and more effective/adaptive ways of accelerating students’ progress.

Evidence based
differentiated
teaching
programmes

In a differentiated classroom, the teacher sees everything a student says or creates as useful information both in understanding that particular learner and in crafting instruction to be effective for that learner, rather than the more typical pattern of teaching the class as though all individuals in it were basically alike. These teachers also have assessment and evaluative capabilities that enable them to understand and use data, and to know what works, when and why for different priority students and planned instructional teaching programmes accordingly.

In differentiated classrooms, the teacher's main goal is to ensure that each child feels challenged most of the time. Differentiation does not presume different tasks for each learner, but rather have just enough flexibility in task complexity and working arrangements so that the students find learning a good fit most of the time.

Consideration can also be given to students learning styles when planning differentiated programmes. Research tells us that each person prefers different ways to learn and, that within us, we all have a mix of learning styles. While we may find many of us have a dominant style of learning, others may find that they use different styles in different circumstances. Research tells us that there is no right mix nor are one’s learning styles fixed. People can develop an ability in their less dominant styles, as well as further developing styles that they already use well. If a teacher has an understanding of their student’s learning styles and applies this to the learning opportunities during the day, then this can only enhance the chances of their students having success with their learning goals.

The seven recognised learning styles are: (1) Visual (spatial): You prefer using pictures, images, and spatial understanding (2) Aural (auditory-musical): You prefer using sound and music (3) Verbal (linguistic): You prefer using words, both in speech and writing (4) Physical (kinesthetic): You prefer using your body, hands and sense of touch (5) Logical (mathematical): You prefer using logic, reasoning and systems (6) Social (interpersonal): You prefer to learn in groups or with other people and (7) Solitary (intrapersonal): You prefer to work alone and use self-study.

Reflective Question – For the Reader of this Report:

- (a) What evidence does your school have that shows instructional teaching programmes are being differentiated?
- (b) Do you have any evidence that all students (especially priority students) learning styles have been considered and acted upon?
- (c) Are teachers’ differentiated instructional programmes designed from current assessment data and do such programmes show alignment to the students learning progressions?

Engagement of Family & Whānau in Authentic Learning Focused Relationships

‘Children learn best when the significant adults in their lives, for example their parents, teachers, and other family/whānau and community members work together to encourage and support them to achieve’.

James P. Comer 1997.



Core documents from the Ministry of Education stress the importance of knowing the child (learner) and engaging the family & whānau in authentic learning focused relationships.

High levels of student family & whānau engagement

In an Education Review Office (ERO) report 2008, they defined a framework for community engagement as; Community engagement is one of the principles of New Zealand Curriculum. The school community is a term used to include staff, students, parents/whānau, other people connected with the school, people living in the area, or any combination of these. In many New Zealand schools, it would be appropriate to talk specifically about their Māori or Pasifika community. Similarly, engagement can mean anything from giving information, through consultation to full collaboration.

An ERO evaluation of schools' engagement with parents, whānau and communities defined engagement as 'a meaningful, respectful partnership between schools and their parents, whānau, and communities that focused on improving the educational experiences and successes for each child.'

Many schools have developed Student Led Conferences with associated portfolios as a powerful way of engaging parents/whānau in the learning of their children. If we compare the traditional parent teacher conference with the student led conference we can see immediately the benefits of the latter; (a) teacher driven versus student driven (b) short time frame conversations versus longer time frame conversations (c) more focus on social and emotional versus focus on academic (d) low student accountability versus high student accountability (e) lack of real goal setting versus wider opportunity for personal goal setting and (f) auditorium/hall type venue versus classroom environment.

In research completed by Ascher, 1988; Comer, 1991; Gorinski, 2005; Hamilton-Lee, 1988; Martinez & Velazquez, 2000; Peterson, 1989, they identified a number of effective strategies for enhancing parent community-school partnerships:

- (a) The provision of a regular schedule of activities and programmes that are stimulating, informative and enjoyable, for example, science fairs, young enterprise projects, fairs, concerts and celebration dinners.
- (b) Bilingual community liaisons that helps bridge language and cultural differences between home and school.
- (c) Childcare, transportation and weekend activities that increase the likelihood of minority parent involvement.
- (d) Curriculum that reflects the culture, values, interests, experiences, and concerns of families.
- (e) Social and health efforts co-ordinated within local school communities.
- (f) Workshops for parents to help them develop a repertoire of home-based support strategies, and co-constructing with parents, learning activities that parents and children can do together.
- (g) Career education promoting higher aspirations amongst families.
- (h) Thinking "family" rather than "parent" when planning activities.
- (i) Getting parents involved in special activities for example as Teacher Aides, Parent Teacher Association, Board of Trustees, and incorporating them on planning and management teams.

Reflective Question – For the reader of this report:

What approaches does your school use to build learning focused relationships with families and whānau through giving information, through consultation and through full collaboration.

Final Thoughts:

After reflecting on literature relating to accelerated learning in the New Zealand education sector, considering the wisdom shared by four colleagues which is reflected in their schools case studies and considering the context where my own school sits, the following have emerged for me as focus areas that I will be discussing with my school staff and Board of Trustee members in relation to embedding effective practice across our school. These five work streams are:

- (a) Establishing/embedding schoolwide the practice of 'Teacher as Inquirer'.
- (b) Establishing/embedding the skills required so that our staff can coach, mentor and be a critical friend with each other.
- (c) Work with a cluster of schools across decile ratings to strengthen school moderation, shared curriculum understandings and share what effective teaching practices are being used within maths and literacy programmes.
- (d) Embed differentiated learning programmes in all classrooms where teachers' will meet student needs by modifying the content (what is being taught), the process (how it is taught) and the product (how students demonstrate their learning).
- (e) Alignment of student progress and achievement to teachers' appraisal goals and accountabilities against the registered teacher criteria (especially the expectations of experienced teachers/ACET teachers).

Finally, many thanks to TeachNZ/Ministry of Education/NZEI/Mangere East School Board of Trustees for providing me with the opportunity to complete my sabbatical, as it provided me with valuable thinking/research time on a key impact in our current education landscape, being Accelerated Learning in Primary Schools, and how this approach needs to be further embedded in the teaching practices in all classrooms at my current school.

Anthony Noble-Campbell
Principal – Mangere East Primary School
September 2015

Appendix A

The Big Picture – The National Standards Overview 2012-2014 & Reading by Decile Rating 2013-2014

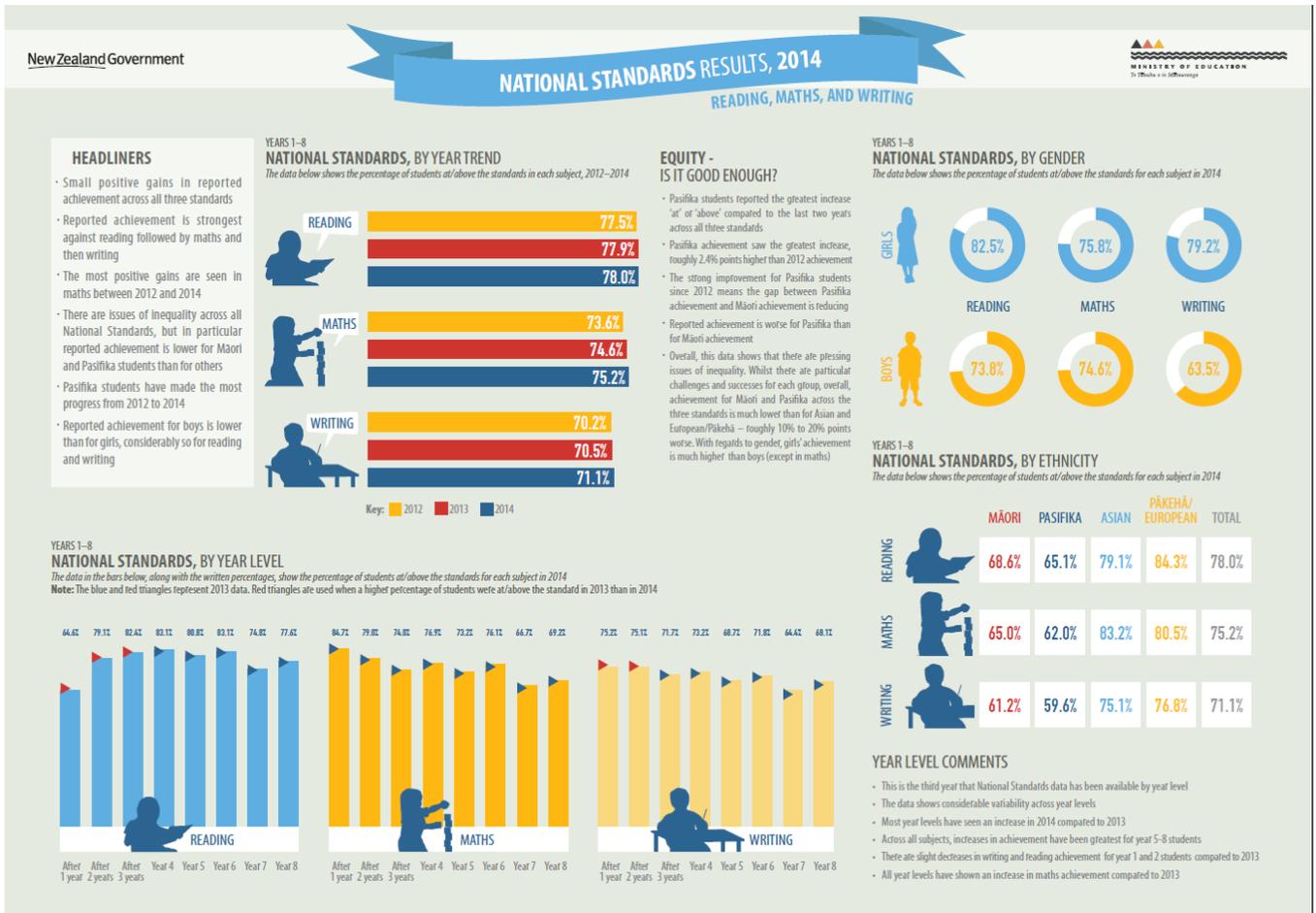
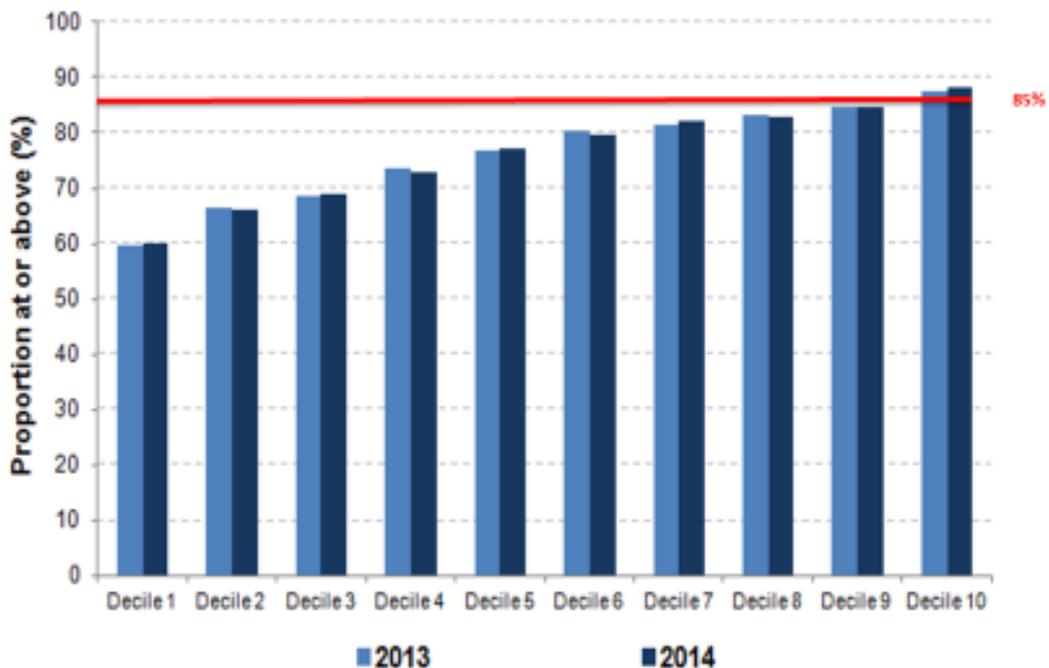


Figure 4: Proportion of students achieving at or above the National Standard for reading, by decile (2013-2014)



Appendix B

The Big Picture – The National Standards Achievement Overview by Decile Rating in Writing & Maths 2013-2014

Figure 4: Proportion of students achieving at or above the National Standards for mathematics, by decile (2013-2014)

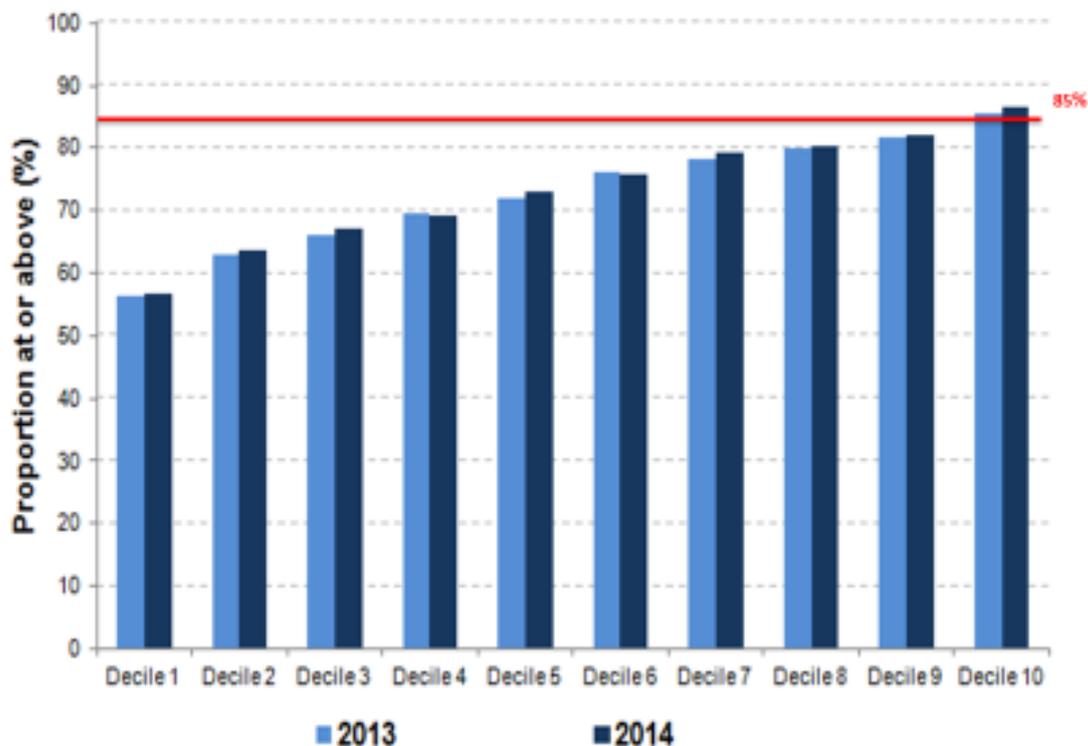
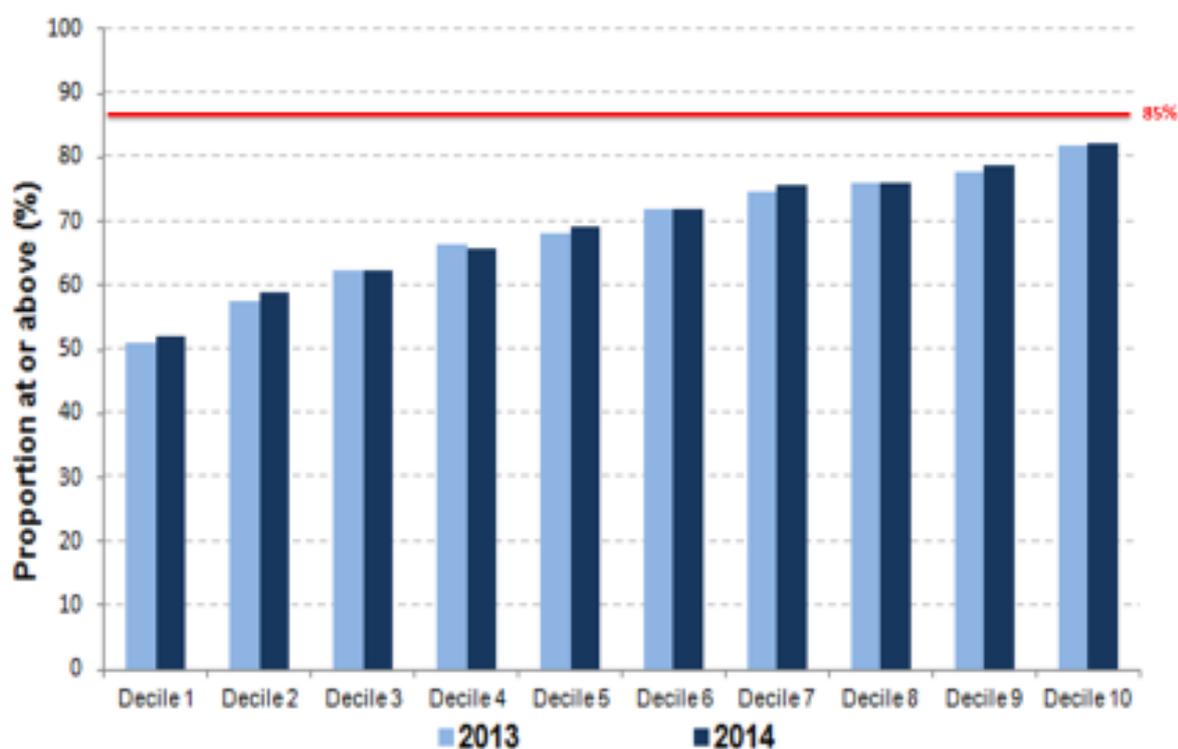
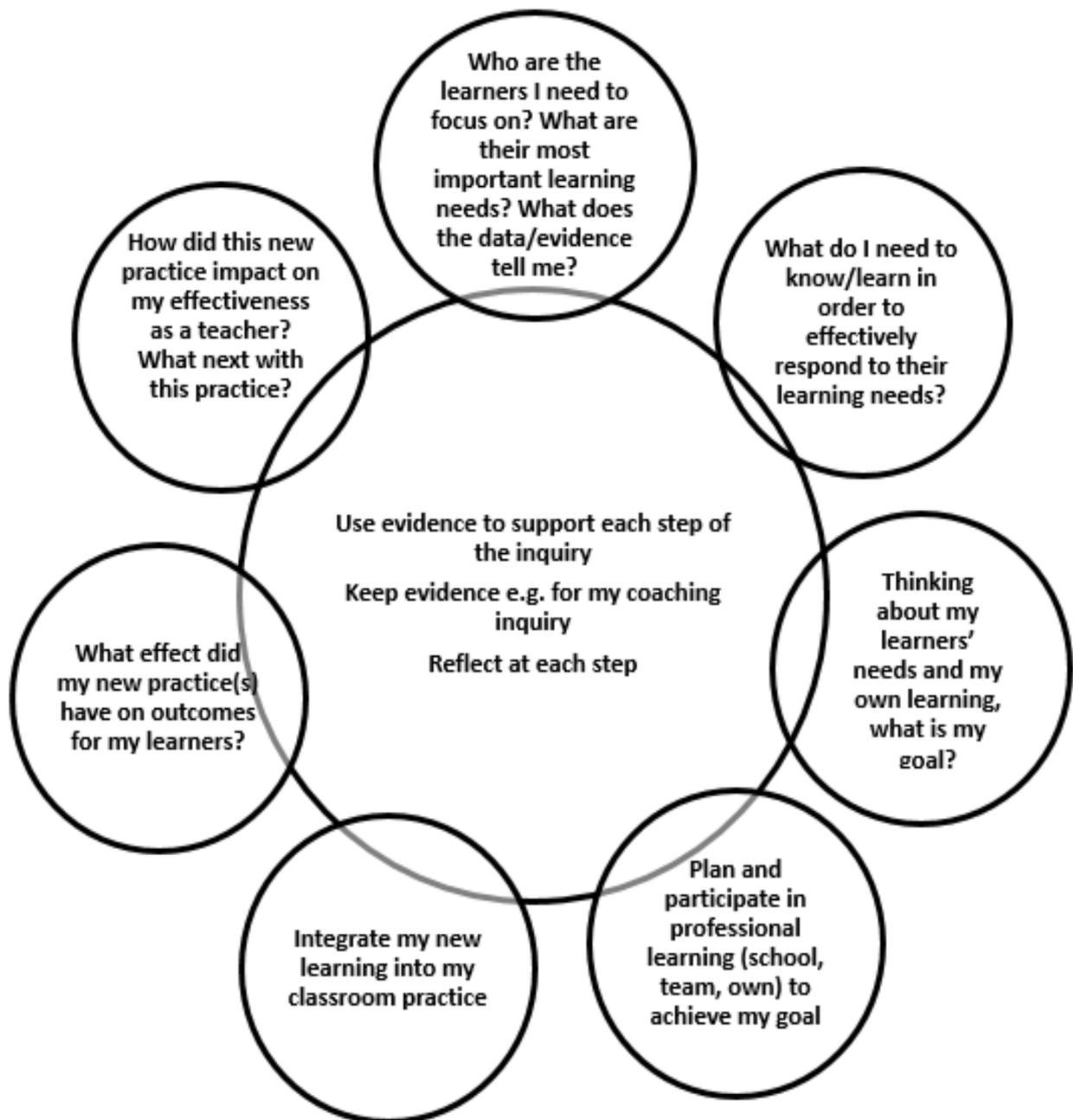


Figure 4: Proportion of students achieving at or above the National Standards for writing, by decile (2013-2014)



Westmere Teacher Inquiry 2014



Appendix D

Westmere School Reflective Questions 2014

Components of the process	Some key questions to ask
<p>Who are the learners I need to focus on? What are their most important learning needs? What does the data/evidence tell me?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Have I worked through the data in a deliberate and ordered way? (line by line and column by column) ▪ Who achieved to expectations? Who didn't? How much value was added for each student? ▪ What concepts did they understand or not understand? What gaps do the data show? ▪ What does the data tell me about why my students might be misunderstanding/not getting these concepts? ▪ Do I need to collect more information? ▪ Were there any other factors within my control that might have contributed to the results? ▪ Are there competing explanations?
<p>What do I need to know/learn in order to effectively respond to their learning needs?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Based on what I have discovered, how should I address the gaps/needs identified? ▪ How is my teaching linked to this result? ▪ What am I going to do differently? Content? Strategies? Organisation? ▪ What craft knowledge do I already have? ▪ What has worked for other teachers? In other contexts? ▪ What intervention/strategies are going to give me the best results for these students? What evidence is there that these are best practice strategies?
<p>Thinking about my learners' needs and my own learning, what is my goal?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Does my goal have a timeframe? (By....) ▪ Do I identify the intervention/practice(s) I am going to put into place? (I am/have....) ▪ Is there an outcome for the students? Is it linked to their achievement? Is there an outcome for me? (So that....)
<p>Integrate my new learning into my classroom practice</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Thinking about the learning I have done, what intervention/strategy will address my students' needs/next steps? ▪ What steps can I take to integrate this intervention/strategy into my practice? ▪ Will this intervention/strategy create problems elsewhere and how can I resolve them? ▪ How can I scaffold this for my students/ for me? ▪ What are the best methods to monitor and record student change/achievement and how often? When and how will know if the intervention/strategy is working/has worked?
<p>What effect did my new practice(s) have on outcomes for my learners?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ What progress did the students make? What did they achieve? Were there any discrepancies? Outliers? ▪ What aspects of the intervention/strategy worked and what didn't? How do I know? ▪ What conclusions can I draw? ▪ What are the next steps for each of the students?
<p>How did this new practice impact on my effectiveness as a teacher? What next with this practice?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ What have I learned about my practice from this inquiry? ▪ What will I continue to do (make a habit)? ▪ How can I extend this practice with these students? Or other students? Or other learning areas? ▪ Do I need to learn more about this intervention/strategy? ▪ How will I share what I have learned with my colleagues? Who? When?

Appendix E

PISA RESULTS 2009/2012

PISA 2009 Ranking by Mean Score for Reading, Mathematics and Science

No	Country	Reading	No	Country	Mathematics	No	Country	Science
1	Shanghai-China	556	1	Shanghai-China	600	1	Shanghai-China	575
2	Korea	539	2	Singapore	562	2	Finland	554
3	Finland	536	3	Hong Kong-China	555	3	Hong Kong-China	549
4	Hong Kong-China	533	4	Korea	546	4	Singapore	542
5	Singapore	526	5	Chinese Taipei	543	5	Japan	539
6	Canada	524	6	Finland	541	6	Korea	538
7	New Zealand	521	7	Liechtenstein	536	7	New Zealand	532
8	Japan	520	8	Switzerland	534	8	Canada	529
9	Australia	515	9	Japan	529	9	Estonia	528
10	Netherlands	508	10	Canada	527	10	Australia	527
11	Belgium	506	11	Netherlands	526	11	Netherlands	522
12	Norway	503	12	Macao-China	525	12	Chinese Taipei	520
13	Estonia	501	13	New Zealand	519	13	Germany	520
14	Switzerland	501	14	Belgium	515	14	Liechtenstein	520

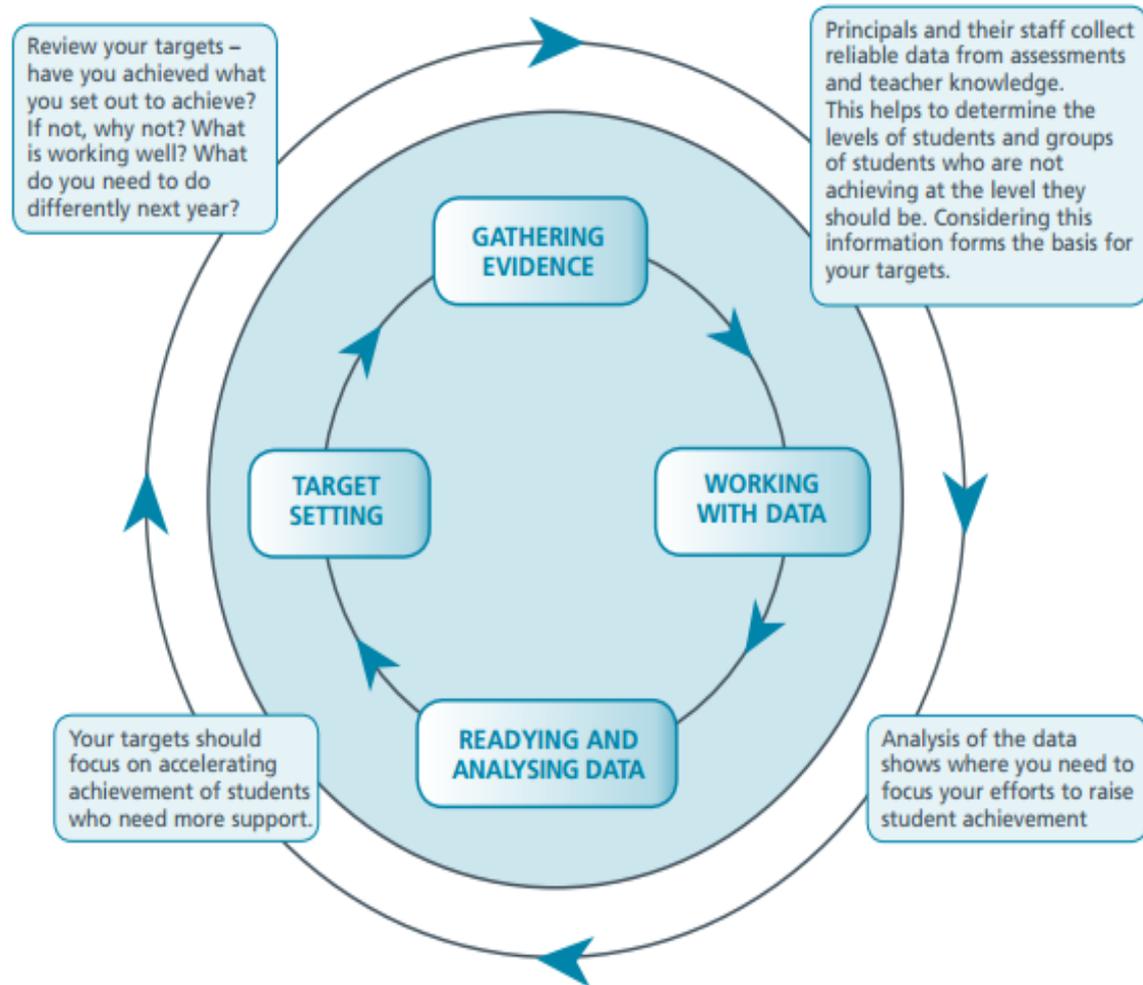
Pisa results 2012

Ranking	Country name	Maths, mean score PISA 2012	Reading, mean score PISA 2012	Science, mean score in PISA 2012
0	OECD average	494	496	501
1	Shanghai-China	613	570	580
2	Singapore	573	542	551
3	Hong Kong-China	561	545	555
4	Taiwan	560	523	523
5	S. Korea	554	536	538
6	Macao-China	538	509	521
7	Japan	536	538	547
8	Liechtenstein	535	516	525
9	Switzerland	531	509	515
10	Netherlands	523	511	522
11	Estonia	521	516	541
12	Finland	519	524	545
13	Canada	518	523	525
14	Poland	518	518	526
15	Belgium	515	509	505
16	Germany	514	508	524
17	Vietnam	511	508	528
18	Austria	506	490	506
19	Australia	504	512	521
20	Ireland	501	523	522
21	Slovenia	501	481	514
22	Denmark	500	496	498
23	New Zealand	500	512	516

Appendix F

BES Exemplar 3 Ngā Kete Raukura – He Tauria 3 Teacher and student use of learning goals

Figure 1: Board of trustees cycle of target setting and review⁵



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