

Sabbatical 2015 Bernadette Murfitt:

PRINCIPAL St Francis Xavier School Tawa

My Investigation:

“To investigate successful interventions, practices and strategies that will benefit the achievement of Māori and Pasifika learners”

Process:

- Undertake professional reading with a particular focus on publications from the Ministry of Education
- Meet and talk with Principals/ professionals about practices and strategies for the benefit of Māori and Pasifika learners
- Discuss with schools effective ways of engaging that benefit the achievement of Māori and Pasifika students
- Synthesis key ideas and resources
- Implementation of key ideas and “where to next” for St Francis Xavier School Tawa

Activities undertaken:

Findings:

Pasifika Learners	Māori Learners
The Pasifika Education plan (PEP) is an education strategy aimed at raising the participation, engagement and achievement of Pasifika learners. It is based around the concept that strengthening school learners will help to strengthen communities. Pasifika Learners	He aha te mea nui o te ao? He Tangata! He Tangata! He Tangata! What is the most important thing in the world? It is the people, the people, the people. Maori Learners

<p>The PEP:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • puts Pasifika learners, their parents, families and communities at the centre of education decisions • requires all educational providers to respond to the identities, languages and cultures of each Pasifika group • acknowledges the necessity of involving the wider community in raising achievement • will use student achievement data and information to increase the knowledge and voice of Pasifika learners, parents, families and communities • aims to achieve optimum learning by promoting closer alliance between the learner’s educational environment and his/her home and/or cultural environment 	<p><i>Ka Hikitia – Accelerating Success 2013-2017</i> is the Government's strategy to rapidly change how education is applied to ensure all Māori students may gain the skills, qualifications and knowledge required to enjoy and achieve education success as Māori.</p> <p>When the vision is realised, all Māori students will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • have their identity, language and culture valued and included in teaching and learning in ways that support them to engage and achieve success • know their potential and feel supported to set goals and take action to achieve this success • experience teaching and learning that is relevant, engaging, rewarding and positive • have gained the skills, knowledge and qualifications necessary to achieve success in New Zealand and the wider world.
<p>What lifts achievement for Pasifika learners?</p> <p>It’s about creating environments where Pasifika students have the focus and learning support they need to lift their academic</p>	<p>What lifts achievement for Maori learners?</p> <p>“The first point of contact when a Māori learner starts school has to celebrate a partnership. It is the start of a relationship and needs to</p>

<p>achievement.</p> <p>It's all about the students. It's about how schools, families and communities find ways to work together to support and encourage their Pasifika students to enjoy school, engage with learning, aim high and achieve academically and socially. It's about how schools help Pasifika students be the best they can possibly be.</p> <p>When students are at the centre of everyone working together with the same focus and purpose of providing the teaching and learning support where it is needed, then Pasifika students will flourish.</p> <p>In a supportive teaching and learning environment, they will gain confidence in themselves and their potential to learn, individually and collectively. As a result, achievement will lift.</p> <p>School leadership is crucial to lifting student performance. <i>"Our primary conclusion is that pedagogically focused leadership has a substantial impact on student outcomes. The more leaders focus their influence, their learning, and their relationships with teachers on the core business of teaching and learning, the greater their influence on student outcomes."</i> School Leadership and Student Outcomes: Identifying What Works and Why: Best Evidence Synthesis Iteration, page 40.</p> <p>Identity, language and culture- different needs for different learners- teachers and programmes must be flexible to address individual needs and make learning meaningful.</p> <p>Leadership- Effective leaders drive Pacific learners achievement by setting clear expectations, building relationships and using</p>	<p>embed a culture of care." Hoana Pearson QSM</p> <p>Identity is critical to Māori succeeding as Māori.</p> <p>Cultural capital has to be strength and a springboard for educational success and achievement for Māori.</p> <p>We all have to realise the potential of each Māori learner.</p> <p>Being part of a caring, inclusive, respectful school culture that values partnerships with parents and whanau.</p> <p>Empowering Māori learners.</p> <p>Gathering Māori student and Whanau voice.</p> <p>Building capability.</p> <p>Involving parents and whanau in conversations about their children and their learning.</p> <p>"Whakawhanaungatanga", the process of building effective relationships is described by Macfarlane (1997, 2004, 2007) a culturally responsive approach to improving outcomes in schools. These along with four concepts are the basis of his educational wheel. Rangatiratanga - self determination Manaakitanga - ethos of care Kotahitanga -unity and bonding Pumanawatanga - a beating heart</p> <p>Macfarlane states that when supported by a school culture of support, caring and understanding based on the concepts of Tika - fairness Pono - integrity</p>
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<p>assessment data to distribute resources.</p> <p>Partnership- When schools work hand in hand with families they will establish a firm foundation for the learner to be supported in the home and succeed.</p> <p>Assessment Information-A strong focus on the needs of individual students will make a difference</p> <p>Responsive curriculum- Delivery of the curriculum has to have meaning for students. Pasifika themes and contexts have to be part of the curriculum. The more relevant the context the more likely Pasifika students will connect, engage and be motivated.</p>	<p>Aroha - love effective community and collective agents of change can be formed.</p> <p>Critical factors for success of the Māori education strategy, Ka Hikitia – Accelerating Success 2013–2017 include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • quality provision – leadership, teaching and learning, supported by effective governance • strong engagement and contribution from parents, families and whānau, iwi, and community. <p>Making change to enable Māori to succeed as Māori involves:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • developing new and expanding current teaching and learning approaches that are engaging, effective and enjoyable for all Māori students. • having high expectations for all Māori students • growing knowledge and evidence of what works to support excellent educational and Māori language outcomes • developing productive partnerships with parents, families and whānau, iwi and community that are responsive and reciprocal, leading to shared action, outcomes and solutions
<p>Home /School Partnership for Pasifika Learners:</p> <p>When partnerships between schools and parents are directly focused on student learning, the links to learning outcomes are much stronger.</p> <p>Parental and family involvement in Pasifika students’ learning is crucial to improving their outcomes. Research indicates that school-</p>	<p>Home/School Partnership for Maori Learners: “Any change that will significantly impact on whanau must come from whanau.” Bright , Barnes and Hutchings, 2013 Face to face - taking the time to form authentic relationships Day to day consultation - both informal and formal leading to the establishment of voice and agency.</p>

<p>home partnerships are dependent upon the actions of educators and their willingness to initiate links, respond to and recognise strengths within the diverse families of their Pasifika students. Schools need to take the lead in making parents feel welcome and find ways to encourage, scaffold and enable teacher-student-parent dialogue around school learning.</p> <p><i>“Research evidence shows that particularly strong and sustained gains in student achievement have been made when schools and families develop partnerships to support students' achievement at school... However, as is also apparent in the available New Zealand research, unless the focus on student learning is central to the partnership, positive impacts on student achievement are smaller or do not occur.”</i> Quality Teaching for Diverse Students in Schooling: Best Evidence Synthesis, pages 38–39</p> <p>Home/School Partnerships for Pasifika Learners</p> <p>Partnerships that share and align school and home practices and enable parents to actively support their children's in-school learning have shown some of the strongest impacts on student outcomes.</p> <p>Pasifika parents are not alone in wanting the best for their children to learn and achieve. Connections and partnership-building can be initiated by teachers ‘reaching out’ to Pasifika parents. It can result in teachers learning as much from families as families learn from</p>	<p>Identifying issues as opportunities to find solutions and then doing something about it.</p> <p>“Bringing the powerful influences of the Principal to the task of whanau engagement as a means to bridging the divide and raising achievement for Māori students - this requires courage.” Hoana Pearson QSM</p> <p>Partnerships with whanau Share the power Allow for opportunities to be culturally responsive Allow for a reciprocal interaction Allow for the implementation of a common vision</p> <p>“Whanau expectations are crucial in shaping pathways for success. Success meaning that a learner is well prepared for life beyond school, civic responsibility, balancing work and recreation and positive interactions with whanau and friends.” Mason Durie http://www.edtalks.org/video/culturally-responsive-pedagogy-relations</p> <p>This is a superb Ed talk that confronts the disparities in our education system and clearly outlines what needs to happen on a daily basis for our Māori learners.</p> <p>Key ideas from presentation</p> <p>Teachers make a difference; first of all they need to understand how they can weave together all the necessary ideas that will create learning contexts for Māori to have powerful learning connections.</p>
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<p>teachers and teachers gain deeper awareness of Pasifika children's experiences and competencies.</p> <p>Such partnerships also increase Pasifika parents' ability to be more actively involved in supporting their children's in-school learning. Teachers who take the time to share with Pasifika parents their children's learning goals and achievement levels and detail the kind of support that would directly help their learning can increase the impact on Pasifika student outcomes.</p> <p><i>"Incorporating school-like activities into family activities, through providing parents with access to both additional pedagogical knowledge and information about finding and using local educational resources, can have dramatic and positive impacts on children's achievement".</i></p> <p>The Complexity of Community and Family Influences on Children's Achievement in New Zealand: Best Evidence Synthesis, pages v–vi</p>	<p>There has to be a high level of engagement which will then impact directly on attendance and achievement</p> <p>There also has to be a wraparound system from the school which includes high quality systems and professional development based on current educational thinking. The school has to be committed to providing the appropriate financial resources to facilitate ongoing changes.</p> <p>A supportive teacher for Māori learners - what does this look like???</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rejects deficit thinking • Will challenge deficit thinkers • Works collaboratively and cooperatively • Cares for Māori students as Māori • Has high expectations for Māori students to achieve • Creates learning contexts for Māori to draw upon prior experiences • Provides quality feedback to improve future learning • Use a range of strategies that will effectively engage Māori in learning • Use evidence of student performance to guide future learning • For the teacher to be a learner among learners • Providing learning contexts that are culturally responsive and showing genuine care through relationships.

<p>Reflecting on Pasifika engagement- Key questions</p> <p>Ideas gained from school visits</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collecting student voice from current and ex students • Giving parents ideas of questions that they can ask teachers about their child’s progress. • Explicit professional development for staff on the teaching of Pasifika values. Use every Professional Development opportunity to build on strategies that work for Pasifika students. Regular review i.e. how is this Professional development impacting on our Pasifika students. • Parents teaching staff about Pasifika culture. • On entry sharing sessions with parents of new students in order to gain a greater in depth knowledge of the learner. • “Heritage time” each term for 8 weeks one afternoon per week opportunity to enhance language, culture and identity of students. 	<p>Reflecting on engagement with Māori - Key questions</p> <p>Ideas gained from school visits</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Involving whanau. • Commitment to learning more te reo. • Careful analysing of student data – teachers reflecting on what they are teaching and the impact this teaching is having on Māori achievement. • Building a warm positive relationship with Māori learners.
	<p>Working with Treaty Principles at School – Ngā Tikanga o Te Tiriti hei Mahi i te Kura.</p> <p>This important resource is the sequel book to The Treaty in Action – Ngā Mahi Tiriti. Written in partnership by Māori educator Edith Chaney and Pākeha educator Susan Battye.</p> <p>This second book supports schools in looking at how they can enact the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi at a governance and leadership level and at a whole school and classroom level. It uses examples from New Zealand schools to demonstrate how this might be achieved. The ideas and activities in this resource will enable leaders, teachers and students to build in- depth understanding of how the Treaty's three principles of partnership, protection and participation</p>

	can be embedded into everyday school life.
When planning for student needs teachers need to take into account: How effective and meaningful will this be for Pasifika learners? Is this responsive to Pasifika culture? Is this culturally appropriate? Is it inclusive of cultural traditions and Pasifika protocols?	When planning for student needs, teachers need to take into account: How effective and meaningful will this be for Māori learners? Is this responsive to Māori culture? Is this culturally appropriate? Is it inclusive of cultural traditions and Māori protocols?
Ed Talk- Manu Fa'aea- Semeatu shares ideas on how to nurture the desire for success with Pasifika students.	ED Talk – Phoebe Davis talks about raising Māori Achievement through forming positive relationships and being culturally located.
As educators we have to acknowledge that Pasifika students are from a wide range of Pacific Islands with unique cultural identities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reflect and analyse own practice regarding Pasifika students • Let others know what support you may need so as to work more effectively with Pasifika students • Find out about culture and family • Personalise the learning for Pasifika students with specific learning goals • Understand and accept the ways in which Pasifika students learn and do things • Incorporate new knowledge into daily classroom programmes • Participate in professional development that support being culturally inclusive • Build positive relationships with families • Go the extra mile for Pasifika students • Teach Pasifika values - love, service, leadership, respect spirituality, family and inclusion. 	Māori tanga and te reo Māori have to be at the heart of the school, ensuring a holistic enterprise. <p>“Learning is more likely to occur when there is a positive relationship between teacher and learner; where aspirations overlap and where teachers can engage with learners at a personal level.” Mason Durie</p>
Strategies that I observed across a range of New Zealand schools that are accelerating the achievement of Māori and Pasifika students <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quality teaching and learning that is consistent across the entire school • Use of GATE effectively which created collaborative opportunities for students • Enoho marae stay • Use of myths and legends to engage and motivate learners 	

- Creatively getting families involved in learning
- Using whanau to teach about culture and heritage
- Commitment to 100% attendance at school
- Teachers going the extra mile
- High performing teachers committed to meeting learning needs
- Principals who are prepared to lead so that is advantageous for Māori and Pasifika learners.

Conclusions:

Every child has a right to be well grounded in their own language, culture and identity. We call it a “culturally responsive” practice. There has to be a relationship between teacher and student that encompasses personal interest, clear communication, mutual trust, respect and a sense of equality.

As educators we have to be explicit in the ways we extract the potential of our Māori and Pasifika learners.

- We have to tailor education to meet the needs of the learner
- School leaders and teachers have to have a shared understanding, consistent with current educational research and literature, of what constitutes high quality teaching for students
- Create excitement about learning
- Embrace culture
- Build cultural competence
- Collaborate and co – construct
- Emphasis ako, identity, language and culture

- Promote productive partnerships
- Ensure intervention programmes meet the needs of the learner
- Create a close alignment of cultural values within the classroom and across schools.

As leaders we need to be growing a leadership disposition that explores the depth and richness of our cultural heritages to ensure our leadership actions focus best on achievement.

Acknowledgements:

I would like to express my sincere thanks for the opportunities this Sabbatical has provided. I have had time to read, reflect, talk and visit schools, principals, teachers and families to investigate a topic which impacts significantly on school wide improvement, student learning and achievement, well-being, identity and culture.

In particular I would like to thank:

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Mrs Donna Mc Donald who acted as Principal and carried out the day-to-day running of the school to a very high standard.

Schools that I visited in Wellington, Tauranga, Hamilton and Auckland. Thank you for sharing your knowledge, wisdom, ideas and experiences.

The Ministry of Education for their ongoing commitment in providing Principals with the opportunity to learn, reflect, review and re-generate.

My family who have always been so supportive of my passion for educating the future generation of New Zealand students.

I look forward to implementing further ideas and practices that will strengthen the teaching and learning at St Francis Xavier School.

Throughout my sabbatical I have kept a blog which can be accessed at bernsabbatical2015.blogspot.com

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