

## Sabbatical Report Term 3, 2018

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–  
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### Acknowledgements:

I wish to acknowledge and thank TeachNZ and the Ministry of Education for making Sabbatical Leave available to Principals. In today's challenging educational environment it is important that Principals are able to step away and have uninterrupted time to reflect on their school environment and re energise.

I would like to thank my Board of Trustees for supporting my sabbatical application and the new leadership team who ensured the school continued seamlessly in my absence.

I would also like to acknowledge Rebecca Sweeney (Core Education) and Mark Osborne (Leading Learning) who have worked alongside our teachers during our journey.

### Title:

To investigate what future focussed teaching and learning looks like in a dual medium school, to develop a clear vision for our school as we prepare our students for the 21st century.

### Methodology:

I approached this investigation on 3 levels:

- To continue to grow my own understanding of how to prepare students for the 21st century.
- To participate in a spiral of inquiry to identify next steps to provide future focussed teaching at Forest Lake School.
- To identify the challenges in our journey and how we overcame them.

### Rationale:

Forest Lake school is a member of the Kahui Ako - He Waka Eke Noa (HWEN). Through participation in HWEN professional learning I identified that we needed an in depth inquiry to move our kura towards a greater focus on future focused teaching and learning and to grow our vision that connected both areas of the school - Rumaki (Total Immersion Maori ) and General ( Mainstream).

### Background:

Forest Lake School is a Dual Medium School. We have 120 students learning in Total immersion Maori Level 1 and the balance, 240 students, in mainstream learning at Level 4. There is a high level of participation across the whole school in tikanga Maori.

Sixty percent of our students identify as Maori.

Our school vision, Kawe Ake te Manuka ( Rise to the Challenge) is the foundation of our learning and describes our values.. This is captured visually through our school branding, the poutama representing the steps of learning and a school carving with a vine representing the Maori legend, Tane-nui-a-rangi ascending to the heavens to get the three baskets (kete) of knowledge. Our three values are: Respect, Responsibility, He Ākonga. These values are interwoven through all aspects of school. We expect all members of the school community to model these values to be Tūmeke Taniwha, our school imagery of what a Forest Lake student will graduate as.

### Findings:

#### Part 1 Grow my own knowledge

Future focussed teaching and learning - words that have been bandied around for several years but what did it really mean for our school? I had visited a local school and seen a working model of learners and teachers working together collaboratively, classrooms having walls removed and digital devices being used as a tool for the learner. I saw high levels of engagement and motivation by learners and teachers and acknowledged the years of work the school had achieved to get to where they were.

I had taken staff with me on the visit and they came back highly motivated and looking to introduce change.

Three key words come to the fore - connected, co-constructed and collaborative.

Learning needs to be connected with what the learner already knows as well as with the community and the wider world. It needs to be co-constructed by the teacher and the learner ( developing learner agency) so the learner has power combined with choices about what they will learn and how they will achieve it. Learning needs to be collaborative so skills need to be developed where learners and teachers can work in teams and develop interpersonal skills.

While not new thinking for our school, the challenge was how to pull it together. The HWEN strategic goals provided this framework:

Efficacy - to build teacher/ leader capabilities through collaboration, teaching as inquiry, and effective teaching and learning

Learner Agency - To grow learner agency through identity, partnership, voice and ownership.

Powerful Partnerships - To recognise and strengthen powerful connections and transitions with parents, whaanau, community and other organisations.

Through HWEN we were able to work with Mark Osborne from Leading Learning. Key messages to start our journey were.

- Importance of student, teacher and parent and the connections between them.
- Need to be future focused not focused on the past.
- Strive for innovative practical learning environment.
- The system is robust we just need to move on the make education meet the needs of society.
- Need to anticipate changes think of a 13 year cycle. ( the length of time a child is in our school system).

- Children need foundational literacies to succeed, problem solving, teamwork and communication skills and working on solving problems and challenges together.
- Teacher need to work in creative teams rather than as individuals.

School Organisation changed and 5 teams were formed with a Middle Leader appointed to each team. These leaders were the conduit of information between Senior Leaders and classroom teachers. They were provided with external support to grow their leadership and extend their own knowledge.

### Our Challenges:

- Our school is nearly 100 years old and is single celled with internal corridors. Two collaborative hubs have been formed in the senior Rumaki and Senior General School. The rest of the school is single celled but developing collaborative teams and using their environments innovatively so students are developing the skills required to succeed.
- Property development is constrained by Ministry of Education property guidelines and funding.
- Teachers are finding it difficult to find the time to develop their thinking, building relational trust, how to use the physical space to enhance and develop student's fundamental skills to work collaboratively.

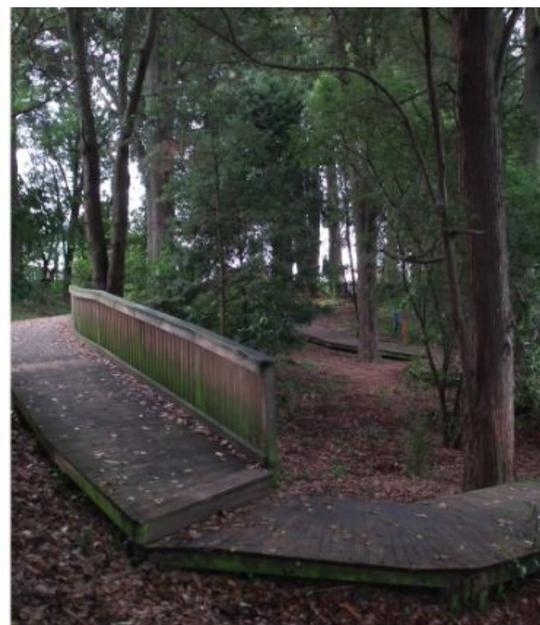
### Part 2 School wide inquiry

Through HWEN we had and accepted to the opportunity to work with Rebecca Sweeney from Core Education. Key to us developing an environment for future focused learning was that teachers inquire into their own practices.

As a dual medium school we are implementing 2 statements of national curriculum: The New Zealand Curriculum and Te Marautanga o Aotearoa. We have written our school curriculum



New Zealand Curriculum (English Medium)  
+  
Te Marautanga O Aotearoa (Māori Medium)  
=  
Forest Lake School Curriculum



*“Central to Te Marautanga o Aotearoa is the Treaty of Waitangi. Arising from the Treaty are the ... overarching principles to guide school-based curricula.”*

These overarching principles were aligned to The 7 Principles of Learning as identified in work completed on innovative learning environments led by Hanna Dumont, David Istance and Francisco Benavides and published in the OECD report *The Nature of Learning*.

As a staff we developed questions relevant to our school context under each principle from the perspective documents. Through this process we developed our scanning questions to form the basis of our inquiry.

Principle/ TMoA	New Question
<p><b>Learners are the centre</b> Learners are the centre of teaching and learning</p>	<p>Do learners know what they are learning? Do learners think they have a choice in their learning?</p>
<p><b>The social nature of learning.</b> The learner is the centre of teaching and learning</p>	<p>Are children given the opportunity to take part in an organised and structured learning environment that allows collaboration as well as opportunities for autonomous learning?</p>
<p><b>Emotions are integral to learning</b> Environmental health is personal health. The learner has a high level of personal awareness</p>	<p>What are the emotional triggers for our learners? What calms them?</p>
<p><b>Recognising individual differences.</b> The learner has a high level of personal awareness.</p>	<p>Do learners see that their own cultural background is used in learning to build their on their knowledge / learning?</p>
<p><b>Stretching all students.</b> The learner achieves their potential</p>	<p>Do learners find learning easy or hard? Why? How?</p>

<b>Assessment for learning</b>	What helps learners connect to their learning?
<b>Building horizontal connections School, whanau, Hapuu, Iwi and Community</b>	Are learners and staff aware of the knowledge and strengths available in whanau and community? Can learners see the point of what they're learning?

Teachers were asked to identify no more than 5 target students. Criteria for selection of these students was that the students were operating below their curriculum level, they were behavioral students but did not have external supports in place.



As teachers we completed our scanning in 4 teams - one Rumaki (year 1 - 8) General Junior( year 1 -2), General Middle (year 3-4) and General

Senior (year 5 - 6). However at the end of each stage we came back as a whole to work collaboratively on challenges and to share stories.

Themes that have emerged are:

General Senior school - Lack of student choice over what and how they are learning

General Junior School - Students had limited ability to discuss what they were learning

General Middle school- Lack of student choice

Tuakana- Students having ownership of themselves and their mahi

Teina- Students articulating their learning and why they are learning it

Kaiako were asked to change the themes around to something that they are doing that was contributing to this hunch

For example:.

General Senior school - Lack of student choice over what and how they are learning

Didn't give students a choice of what was being taught and why some teacher decisions are important It was more about sharing the 'why' with tamariki: why we are doing the choice activities, why the classroom is set up how it is etc.

Challenges:

- 2018 saw change in leadership with two senior leaders awarded year long sabbaticals.
- As a staff, teams only got to the developing hunch stage.
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Implications:

To date we have maintained an inclusive school vision. Our curriculum is reflective of that vision and both statements of national curriculum.

While we deliver the curriculum in two language mediums, our teaching and learning philosophies are being guided by the overarching principles of Te Marautanga o Aotearoa and the 7 principles of learning.

However moving forward we need to grow professional knowledge so Maori learners are achieving educational success as Maori across the school. When we are discussing student achievement using a Maori lens to interpret it. Key questions to reflect on, when reviewing student achievement are ‘Who are we teaching and what are we teaching?’

### Conclusions:

We were told from the outset not to rush through the different stages of the spiral of inquiry. Due to a range of factors the school is only now moving into the ‘new learning’ phase.

In reflection, pace of the inquiry has been a challenge to balance between teachers developing their knowledge of each stage of Spirals of Inquiry and actually completing the stage to identify and prepare for the next stage. There have also been challenges with establishing new teaching spaces focussed on future focused learning. Working in 4 teams has made it difficult to move forward together as the structure was disjointed. In my view the most effective team was the Rumaki as they worked across all year levels (year 0 - 8). They are a smaller team that allows them to work this way. As well the Rumaki had an ‘in-school leader’ who attended the professional development days held by HWEN. In the Rumaki using concepts of whanaungatanga come intrinsically. They do not have deficit thinking but look at the students holistically. The challenge is how do we build this thinking across the school?

### Next Steps:

- A need to pick up the momentum in 2019. In 2019 each team will have a member working with Rebecca Sweeney. This will include the within school leaders.
- Establish this working group to bring connectedness.
- To review the first 3 stages, rescan and review our hunches -(what is leading to this situation?) in each team.
- Participate in virtual hui with the facilitator and attend HWEN workshop days.

- Be committed to the process by time framing steps and not being distracted by other professional development.
- To use the Tataiako competencies in our planning and assessment practices.

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