

Effective leadership practices by school principals within CoL/Kāhui Ako that contribute to effective communication, high levels of relational trust and collaboration on shared achievement challenges.

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Executive Summary

This report identifies five effective leadership practices by school principals within CoL/Kāhui Ako that contribute to effective communication, high levels of relational trust and collaboration on shared achievement challenges.

1. Develop high levels of relational trust

It takes significant time to learn about each school in a CoL/Kāhui Ako and to gain a shared agreement or way of working. Principals need to take time to form a shared understanding and commitment to collaboration together. Visits to other schools and valuing the work they observe will contribute to effective leadership, if principals are willing to share and learn from each other's practice.

2. Access quality resources in the form of expertise, training and staffing

The expert partner is key to providing training around strategic direction, change management and developing a strong action plan with measurable outcomes. Principals also need additional external facilitation to assist and prioritise consultation with all stakeholders and to act as a *critical friend* to the CoL/Kāhui Ako. There needs to be regular facilitated leadership development for AST's and WST's, Deputy and Assistant Principals in CoL/Kāhui Ako.

Principals need to make full use of roles available to the CoL/Kāhui Ako and give them opportunities for leadership. If principals are unable to fill roles within their school or their needs do not match the resource allocated, this needs to be brought to the attention of the CoL/Kāhui Ako leadership, rather than leaving roles unfilled.

3. Engage in a culture of collective responsibility

All principals need to show leadership and not leave all responsibility for the success of the CoL/Kāhui Ako to named leaders. All principals need an area of responsibility to contribute specifically to, as they will be more willing to contribute if they have a clear focus and action plan. Having opportunity to contribute to work aligned with their school priorities may promote engagement and enhance motivation.

4. Have high expectations for effective communication

The CoL/Kāhui Ako leader needs to share communications with all schools and have clear expectations that they will be shared with all BOT's and staff of the CoL/Kāhui Ako. The CoL/Kāhui Ako leader needs to visit schools regularly to share the CoL/Kāhui Ako vision.

It would be helpful for principals to delegate responsibility for networks and actions of the CoL/Kāhui Ako vision to deputy/assistant principals, and talk regularly about AST and WST roles with their staff to increase the profile of the CoL/Kāhui Ako.

Principals would benefit from aligning their parent/whanau engagement strategy with the focus of the CoL/Kāhui Ako. Principals need to collaborate with teachers to capture the teacher and student voice.

5. Establish clear purpose and structured processes

Principals need to commit to attending and participating in all principal meetings, or send a delegate in their absence. All meetings need to have a clear focus and alignment to an agreed action plan with clear commitments and priorities. Agendas need to give sufficient time to discuss important matters in depth.

Having an appointments panel and a clear appointments process for leadership positions is very important. It is essential that AST's have clear, sufficiently detailed and widely agreed job descriptions.

Purpose

The purpose of this research was to identify effective leadership characteristics and practices of principals that make a difference for students within a successful CoL/Kāhui Ako.

The role of a school principal within a CoL/Kāhui Ako will not be a replication of the past. It will require change, flexibility and increased levels of collaboration and relational trust. School principals will have a crucial role to play in developing and implementing the vision and goals of the CoL/Kāhui Ako. Without the support of the individual school principals the work of the CoL/Kāhui Ako will be significantly impeded.

It is not just the new leadership roles created for the CoL/Kāhui Ako that will require attention. Existing leadership structures and practices within schools will also be subject to change.

Background and Rationale

CoL/Kāhui Ako are an initiative to improve teaching and learning through collaboration. Our school system is characterised by increasing diversity and disparity in achievement.

Effective leadership practices and barriers need to be identified to support the emerging success of the North Porirua CoL/Kāhui Ako and other emerging CoL/Kāhui Ako across the country.

The achievement challenge, memorandum of agreement and lead principal appointment for the North Porirua CoL/Kāhui Ako was in place by mid-2017. Most Within School Teachers (WST) and Across School Teachers (AST) were in place at the start of 2018.

Papakowhai School, together with the eight other schools in the North Porirua CoL/Kāhui Ako began work on the achievement challenge in 2018.

The North Porirua Kāhui Ako identified four key achievement challenges. The evidence used to inform achievement challenges and action planning included National Standards data from the end of 2016 for Years 1-8, NCEA data, Year 9 and 10 numeracy data, a teacher survey, and Analysis of Variance data from individual schools.

Whilst overall achievement in Years 1-8 was high, the data analysis indicated that writing and mathematics achievement was not as high as that of reading, and therefore our achievement challenges focussed on those areas.

NCEA results showed that achievement over the past four years had been above the national average at all levels, with a drop in Level 3 in 2016 only. Continuous improvement and achievement in NCEA was a focus for the community, ensuring that students leave secondary school well-prepared for their next step.

Principals identified the need to engage students and teachers in learning that would bring the community members together and extend pedagogy beyond current practice. Through STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, the Arts and Mathematics) the North Porirua CoL/Kāhui Ako intends to foster programmes of learning that encourage inquiry and problem-solving within authentic contexts. In addition to the challenge around mathematics, the North Porirua CoL/Kāhui Ako is also inquiring into the achievement of students in science and see the opportunities for

writing to be developed in these contexts. The North Porirua CoL/Kāhui Ako see this as a long-term project that will unite the community. Over the longer term, the intention is to develop Technology, Engineering and the Arts.

Methodology

Visits were made to seven schools within the North Porirua CoL/Kāhui Ako and four schools in other CoL/Kāhui Ako in the Wellington region to specifically identify:

- Training needs of school principals in CoL/Kāhui Ako;
- Ways principals contribute to effective distributed leadership;
- Ways principals use CoL/Kāhui Ako resources in innovative ways for the benefit of their own school and other schools within the CoL/Kāhui Ako;
- Ways principals share understandings about the work of the CoL/Kāhui Ako within their schools;
- Ways principals feedback aspirations from children, teachers, parents to the wider CoL/Kāhui Ako;
- Ways principals monitor the impact of the work of across CoL/Kāhui Ako teachers;
- Changes made to within school practices as a result of the work of the CoL/Kāhui Ako;
- Ways leadership meetings effectively contribute to progress on the collaborative inquiry.

Findings

Training needs of school principals in the North Porirua CoL/Kāhui Ako

Training received

Two principals had opportunities to attend cross sector forums. These were regarded as helpful in terms of general leadership development. There were good speakers from primary and secondary sectors and other agencies, e.g. Police.

Several principals attended the CoL/ Kāhui Ako expo in 2017. This was rated as of little value to principals.

Principals had some input from Dr Gabrielle Wall in Term 2 2018 on formulating a communication strategy but some members felt this was late in the process.

There has been one across school hui for AST's and WST's, Deputy and Assistant Principals.

There has been facilitated leadership development for AST's.

Principals received some training on using the Curriculum Tool but some felt this training was not useful to their particular school's needs.

The CoL/Kāhui Ako has had the support of an expert partner throughout the formation and the first year of the CoL/Kāhui Ako. Principals identified her input was helpful with forming the founding documents.

MOE advisers have been in attendance at the principal meetings throughout the formation and first year of the CoL/Kāhui Ako.

Barriers to training

Reasons for schools joining the CoL/Kāhui Ako were varied. Some principals were sceptical as to whether it would make a difference for teaching and learning. Some thought it might be a waste of resources and felt the premise that high performing schools could support low performing schools was flawed.

The logistics of making CoL/Kāhui Ako work in practice was identified as a barrier by some principals.

The lack of role clarity and how CoL/Kāhui Ako should function was a barrier to training. A lack of depth in agreement or understanding of the purpose of the North Porirua CoL/Kāhui Ako contributed to this. Some felt the roles of the expert partner and MOE officials were not clear. The feeling was this was an unpopular policy that the MOE has put on schools to work out the details.

The uncertain future of CoL/Kāhui Ako was identified as a barrier. Principals did not want to invest time in training if the CoL/Kāhui Ako initiative was disestablished in the short to medium term.

Principals were not keen on investing time in training if there is no new challenge in the work of the CoL/Kāhui Ako or if there was no benefit for the school.

Some identified concerns about the amount of money spent on training and facilitators involved with CoL/Kāhui Ako as a barrier, when there were greater needs in schools.

Opportunities for training

There was a general belief in the value of meeting together and working collaboratively.

A turnover of CoL/Kāhui Ako leader will upskill several principals over time.

There is more flexibility with leadership from the MOE which could provide more principals with opportunities for training.

A new leadership model is needed for CoL/Kāhui Ako. An opportunity could be to release the CoL/Kāhui Ako leader fulltime for an extended period rather than two days a week.

Principals identified that visiting and learning from other principals was helpful.

Taking a more pragmatic approach and focussing our training on a few specific areas could be more fruitful.

Training needed

Principals considered that further development was needed for WST's and AST's to work effectively in and across schools. These are the people who will actually be doing the work. It would be useful to have clearer guidance around the role and authority of AST's.

Principals identified that training around strategic direction and developing a strong action plan would benefit the CoL/Kāhui Ako. Leadership support to clearly identify and prioritise actions was

needed. Support was needed to develop effective measures for the CoL/Kāhui Ako. There was also a need for a tighter curriculum focus rather than just leadership input.

The MOE needs to give more guidance on the role, purpose and mandate of a stewardship group.

A need to spend more time on team building was identified. It was felt that principals did not have a common understanding of each other's position in the CoL/Kāhui Ako or how each school operates.

Training needs of school principals in other CoL/Kāhui Ako

Training received

One principal identified as a fast follower rather than a front runner. This gave the opportunity to talk with colleagues in Wellington and across the country who were already further down the track with their CoL/Kāhui Ako. Their advice was "don't consult with teachers at your peril". This CoL/Kāhui Ako have taken things slowly, having just appointed a lead principal at this stage and established a stewardship group including ECE and cross BOT participation. Brian Annan's *Collective Advantage* is a key document for the CoL/Kāhui Ako. They want their work to be a ground up model and are really focussed on outcomes for learners.

One principal described having a retreat at the start of the year for two days. This was really helpful for communication, team building and strategic planning. They have worked with Gabrielle Wall on change management for a day.

One principal identified across school leadership days and national focus days as being helpful but largely the CoL/Kāhui Ako leaders have been working things out for themselves. They have had the support of an expert partner since 2013 when it was still a cluster.

Barriers to training

One principal identified that it took a long period of time to appoint a leader because principals were reluctant to take on the role. This created a barrier to training and momentum in the CoL/Kāhui Ako. Another barrier was the disconnection between the strategic direction of the CoL/Kāhui Ako and that of the school.

One principal described working collaboratively as a challenge and related that day to day challenges within schools often took the focus of CoL/Kāhui Ako meetings.

Opportunities for training

One principal said having an excellent leader who is not a school principal has been an advantage. She already had the respect of the community and was well known to the group. Ditching the previous cluster branding and amalgamating all matters, including finance into the work of the CoL/Kāhui Ako has been helpful.

One principal described learning best from each other rather than having MOE training. They identified the Upper Hutt cluster as a model for us to learn from.

Training needed

One principal identified needing training around strategic planning and alignment with school's individual plans could be helpful. It would be most helpful to talk to CoL/Kāhui Ako leaders who are really making a difference and learn what they are doing.

One principal identified a need to build capacity and grow middle leadership within the CoL/Kāhui Ako.

Ways principals contribute to effective distributed leadership in the North Porirua CoL/Kāhui Ako

Most principals identified that their contribution was limited to attending and participating in principal meetings. Some felt their role was to ask questions of the CoL/Kāhui Ako leader and contribute to getting identified actions done.

All schools had appointed WST's to their positions and were giving them opportunities for leadership, including leading staff meetings.

All principals were willing to work with AST's on developing distributed leadership.

Some principals had contributed to the appointment group and worked on the communication strategy. This sub group also looked at mission and vision.

Barriers

Some principals did not feel they were best placed to steward the work of the CoL/Kāhui Ako because of so many competing demands on their time.

The broad focus for our CoL/Kāhui Ako was identified as a barrier which has since been added to by the MOE with a CoL/Kāhui Ako focus on property, special needs and ECE. It is too much. Some felt it was hard to contribute effectively when the focus is so broad. It would be easier to contribute if there was a clear STEAM focus like *Sustainability*.

Additional principal roles have not been fully utilised. Little thought has been given to succession planning for the leadership of the CoL/Kāhui Ako. A leadership model like WRPPA with the next leader and immediate past leader serving as the additional principals could be a helpful succession plan.

Ways principals contribute to effective distributed leadership in other CoL/Kāhui Ako

One principal felt it was still too early to be really contributing effectively. They joined the CoL/Kāhui Ako to show unity with other schools but conceded there had been a lot of "just playing the game" up until now. Now that leaders have been appointed they agreed it was important to show leadership and contribute to the group.

One principal was part of a management group of about four principals that met fortnightly. As the leader of CoL/Kāhui Ako he prepared papers for the management group and communications to BOT's. He has spent the year visiting all the schools and is currently working on establishing the AST

and WST role descriptions and appointments process. The CoL/Kāhui Ako communication plan has been delegated to other leaders within the CoL/Kāhui Ako.

One CoL/Kāhui Ako has active work streams that principals and AST's contribute to. These include: building teacher capability, leadership and whanau engagement.

Barriers

One principal identified the lack of certainty about whether or not CoL/Kāhui Ako are continuing was a barrier to contributing.

Not having a strong purpose that you can commit to is a barrier. If you cannot commit to the purpose you are better off joining a different CoL/Kāhui Ako.

Ways principals use CoL/Kāhui Ako resources in innovative ways for the benefit of their own school and other schools within the North Porirua CoL/Kāhui Ako

All principals are using staffing resources to establish WST roles.

Some schools appointed two people to WST role which they found beneficial in terms of sharing workload and expectation.

Benefits

WST's have engaged in a range of learning opportunities including: meeting with school leaders and staff, surveying staff, attending leadership day with AP/DP's and writing up requests for PLD.

Most principals valued the additional release time generated by CoL/Kāhui Ako positions to release teachers to work within their school. This freed up other staffing entitlement for other professional development or school needs.

One school created a lead teacher role for numeracy and a kaiāwhina position to develop programmes and resources in Te reo Māori me ngā tikanga. This person is making connections with Hongoeka marae and embedding cultural competencies in the school curriculum.

One school appointed three WST's for science, numeracy and student inquiry. This has enabled more flexibility with units from staffing. The CoL/Kāhui Ako allowance has given recognition and energy to the work people are doing. The school uses inquiry time to release people to meet and discuss their student inquiries.

One school used their WST position to support teachers with learning as inquiry. The extra funding is being used to resource what the school was already planning to do.

One school was using its WST positions like specialist teacher roles within the school. The Deputy Principal meets with this team of WST's to develop and plan professional learning for the school. The resource gives release time to meet together.

One school appointed four WST's for 2018 (Science, Maths, Arts and Cultural Competencies). WST positions were appointed based on needs identified at the end of 2017. The school leadership team looked at what STEM/STEAM could and should look like in their school. With support from the

CoL/Kāhui Ako, the principal drafted up job specifications on how WST's will lead and support teams with the 'infusion' of STEAM into the school's programmes and inquiry focus. The school leadership sat with them individually and then collectively to give a whole-school picture and a possible direction for their roles. The principal also needed to clarify current in-school unit holders' job descriptions so there was not an overlap. The WST's have the overall aim of engaging students and raising achievement.

CoL/Kāhui Ako resources have been used to facilitate principal meetings and hui for AST, WST and Assistant and Deputy Principals.

Four out of Five AST positions have been appointed. Three of these positions are secondary school teachers. The AST's are forming communities of practice. Two AST (Science and Student Inquiry) were appointed at the start of 2018 and are further ahead. Two more recent appointments (Arts and Cultural Competencies) are still establishing. The COL leader meets with them fortnightly supported by centrally funded facilitators.

One principal felt that better relationships have been built between schools and there was a greater expectation for sharing resources between schools.

Barriers

One principal did not have any expectations of what the WST's would achieve in their school.

Some schools had WST's and an AST resign partway into their fixed term which meant roles and work needed to be restarted.

One principal felt the resources of the CoL/Kāhui Ako needed to be shared more evenly across schools rather than size of the school setting the level of resource.

It is difficult to release teachers who are appointed to AST positions, especially if you have more than one AST position in a school.

Some principals felt it was hard to monitor the effectiveness of how the resources were being used within the school as it was challenging to monitor an additional layer of leaders operating within the school.

Ways principals use CoL/Kāhui Ako resources in innovative ways for the benefit of their own school and other schools in other CoL/Kāhui Ako

One principal described the resources being used only for facilitating meeting together. Some resource was spent on a facilitator prior to the centrally funded expert partner being appointed. The AST and WST appointments will be made for 2019.

Benefits

One principal identified that each school was responsible for WST appointments and could determine the purpose of these roles. At their school they have two WST's who are focussed on staff well-being.

One principal described being able to use an expert partner in the principal meetings as being of benefit to the wider CoL/Kāhui Ako because she is able to listen what they are wanting and then feed it back to them. The CoL/Kāhui Ako leader meets with the expert partner weekly. He also identified being able to fully utilise the MOE adviser advice and guidance as beneficial to the CoL/Kāhui Ako. The AST and WST roles are yet to be appointed.

One School did not have the staffing to generate a WST so one was shared by a larger school.

One school has an AST who is working on Māori engagement. They are gathering data and analysing what it shows. She is helping schools to talk about Te Reo programmes and develop a realistic approach. This is work that has already taken place at their school. She is developing an action plan about how well schools are listening to students. Some WST time was also pooled to create an extra AST position.

Barriers

One CoL/Kāhui Ako had only appointed two out of three possible AST positions due to a lack of applicants. There was also some concern about the appointment of WST positions because not all schools were given a WST of their own because of roll size.

There were five WST's that were not allocated to a school and any school could apply to have one of these. Some did not take that opportunity. Some principals were not happy that each school did not get a WST as of right. Some felt they could not release people as staff were too busy and some felt they had no one suitable to apply. Three have been appointed and two are still to be allocated.

Ways principals share understandings about the work of the North Porirua CoL/Kāhui Ako within their schools

Most principals gave feedback to their BOT's and senior leadership teams following CoL/Kāhui Ako principal meetings. Some principals also shared back with their staff. Many BOT's were interested in the work of the CoL/Kāhui Ako and regularly asked questions. The CoL/Kāhui Ako leader shares communications with all schools and responds regularly to questions when asked.

All principals had talked about AST and WST roles with their staff. The WST and AST roles have increased the profile of the CoL/Kāhui Ako among teachers. AST's have visited most schools to introduce themselves.

One principal described regularly keeping his leadership team and BoT up-to-date and implementing actions agreed upon as a CoL/Kāhui Ako. He described the visit by the CoL/Kāhui Ako leader and the AST's visit as helpful for clarifying the work of the CoL/Kāhui Ako and the leadership roles. He shared that having four WST's increased the profile of the CoL/Kāhui Ako in the school.

Ways principals share understandings about the work of other CoL/Kāhui Ako within their schools

One principal described taking their Deputy Principal with them to the principal meeting or getting them to attend in her absence. Assistant and Deputy Principals have also been involved in the Early Childhood network. She described her staff and community and BOT as disengaged with the work of the CoL/Kāhui Ako.

Two principals described sharing information mostly through emails and briefing papers. The CoL/Kāhui Ako leaders took responsibility for these. It was expected that these were shared with BOTs and staff in all schools.

One principal had made considerable effort to make strong links to the CoL/Kāhui Ako vision. She felt it is important that there is a clear vision that is understood and people know how to apply it in their schools and classrooms. Principals have shared charters and looked at how to weave the CoL/Kāhui Ako vision into their school charters.

Ways principals feedback aspirations from children, teachers, parents to the North Porirua CoL/Kāhui Ako

There was a general consensus that there had been little or no feedback. There had mostly been sharing information rather than gathering feedback. The CoL/Kāhui Ako had undertaken one teacher survey on the STEAM context for the achievement challenge.

One school had aligned its parent/whanau engagement strategy with the STEAM focus. Term 1 was focussed on Maths achievement and engagement, Term 2 Matariki (Cultural Competencies) Term 3 science (simple machines) and there is an Arts Festival planned for Term 4.

Ways principals feedback aspirations from children, teachers, parents to other CoL/Kāhui Ako

One CoL/Kāhui Ako began their work with a survey of parents in each school to gather information about parent aspirations. There were joint meetings with the BOTs, whanau and fono groups. It was difficult merging the diverse cultures (ways of working/values/ priorities) of each school. These meetings contributed to documents that they have all had input into. However it now feels like the school has two visions, rather than one aligning with the other.

One CoL/Kāhui Ako is about to have a super staff meeting where teachers will vote, using Mentimeter (Interactive presentation software), on “What’s important at your place?” and “What are your priorities?” The principal felt they really need to collaborate with teachers and capture the teacher voice. Then this will be extended to parents. He felt that schools should drive the work of the CoL/Kāhui Ako not the CoL/Kāhui Ako driving the work of the schools.

One CoL/Kāhui Ako has completed a number of teacher surveys by the AST’s. There are optional CoL/Kāhui Ako meetings on a Thursday afternoon that staff can attend with AST’s on areas of interest. This is enabled by the school having no afternoon syndicate or staff meetings.

Recently the CoL/Kāhui Ako leaders met with principals to conduct a SWOT analysis on the work of one CoL/Kāhui Ako. The leaders listened to the aspirations of teachers who are really wanting reinvention not more interventions. This principal believes it is the teachers that make the difference. If they own the work then it will make a real difference. Working with parents is a big challenge because the curriculum is very different to when they went to school. They have been able to connect with parents through the Chromebook leasing scheme and Maths project. The maths work is focussing on listening to children's voice through problem solving.

Ways principals monitor the impact of the work of across school teachers in the North Porirua CoL/Kāhui Ako

The CoL/Kāhui Ako leader is keen for AST's to report back to him so he can capture the AST voice. This can be used to celebrate and highlight successes within the CoL/Kāhui Ako. He thought the AST's could use the NZCER survey into teacher practices. As yet there have been no metrics set to evaluate the work of AST's. Individual BOTs will appraise their own AST staff members.

Barriers

Almost all principals felt they could not monitor the effectiveness of the AST's as they had not worked in their schools despite two of the AST's having been in their roles for two terms.

One principal described dissatisfaction with the appointments process as not all the positions were filled despite having more than enough applicants.

One principal was concerned with the role descriptions. It took NZSTA a year to generate job descriptions which he felt were not overly useful and lacked sufficient detail. In his opinion, the AST's did not have a clear focus to work to and therefore could not be effectively monitored.

There was concern expressed by some principals that the work of the AST's was not being adequately monitored. They had not seen any evidence of work, any record of schools they had visited and they were not clear on how to access their support. They wanted to see an AST action plan, updates on how this was being implemented and clarity around appraisal.

Some principals felt it would be beneficial to have AST's appointed to a narrower brief, such as science and cultural competencies. They felt there was a need to have a management group overseeing the work of AST's who could then update the wider principal group.

Ways principals monitor the impact of the work of across school teachers in other CoL/Kāhui Ako

Two CoL/Kāhui Ako were yet to appoint their AST positions.

One principal felt it was too early to measure effectiveness. He was not sure what measures would be used now that the National Standards in the achievement challenge were gone.

One principal did not monitor the effectiveness of their work but did meet with them weekly to gain a knowledge of what they are working on and where they are working.

Barriers

One principal was concerned that these positions could be hard to fill. They felt it would be difficult for them to have the expertise and the willingness to carry out the role. She could see benefit in having other CoL/Kāhui Ako helping them to identify the barriers.

Changes made to within school practices as a result of the work of the North Porirua CoL/Kāhui Ako

Almost all principals described there being no change other than applying release time and allowances for CoL/Kāhui Ako roles. Principals described using the resources to support the work of their own school and not the work of the CoL/Kāhui Ako specifically.

Some principals described STEAM as a bigger part of staff discussions. More resourcing had been allocated for science and cultural responsive pedagogies. All schools had appointed WST's in relation to the STEAM focus.

Principals had made links in their 2018 annual plan. One school also made connections to, syndicate long term plans and term inquiry focuses. He described the work of the CoL/Kāhui Ako as setting and clarifying expectations across the school, however he saw the CoL/Kāhui Ako work as linking to what was already in place.

Changes made to within school practices as a result of the work of other CoL/Kāhui Ako

One principal explained that the schools had become more collaborative and there was a greater understanding of what is happening in different schools. One example was during a visit to another school he had seen a great senior Maths programme and this was shared back with his own school. He was looking forward to having experts from secondary schools working alongside primary schools. The CoL/Kāhui Ako have started writing moderation across all schools. They are thinking about schools sending a digital copy of writing to the child's next school to show what level their writing is at.

Two principals felt there had been no change.

One CoL/Kāhui Ako was revisiting collaboration together and schools were being asked to match what they are doing with the CoL/Kāhui Ako direction. Schools are working on a shared graduate profile and there is shared work on the digital curriculum. There is shared leadership coaching and an emerging shared whanau engagement strategy. Schools are able to work on collaborative inquiries across schools. There is some shared property resourcing, for example procurement of cleaners.

Ways leadership meetings are effectively contributing to progress on the collaborative inquiry in the North Porirua CoL/Kāhui Ako

Most principals expressed a willingness to participate and a commitment to the North Porirua CoL/Kāhui Ako. The CoL/Kāhui Ako leader thought they were moderately effective because of the commitment from those present at meetings.

There has been some opportunity to make useful connections with each other, for example the ECE network and on topics such as learning through play.

Barriers

Almost all principals described the leadership meetings as not effective. The overall feeling was that there was a lot of meetings with little benefit

Most principals described a lack of focus because there was not a clear action plan focus. Despite meeting for two years they could not identify any clear outcomes from the meetings that resulted in changes to teaching and learning in their schools. Many felt the CoL/Kāhui Ako was still in a scoping or establishment phase despite two years of work.

It took a long time to document the achievement challenge and there was some frustration that this was now irrelevant with the abolition of National Standards. Examination of student data had started to happen but more recently there was no discussion about data because there was no clarity about which data to consider.

Agendas were very full with little time to discuss matters in depth. There was little social time or sharing about what was happening in schools.

Many were frustrated that it was very rare to get all schools present at a meeting.

Many felt that we are not doing a collaborative inquiry we are not just reviewing actions identified at previous meetings. There is not a clear focus to our work because we have a task list rather than an action plan.

One principal identified that our meetings currently lacked challenge, excitement and a common focus.

One principal identified that having MOE representatives present at every meeting was not helpful. She felt this shut down discussion and they rarely contributed. She felt we needed to have a shared understanding of *Teaching as Inquiry* but we didn't all need to do it the same way. She felt we are not unified because people didn't always turn up. She felt that we did not know each other well enough to trust each other with high stakes data and information.

One principal identified that the meetings could be more effective if we had clearer commitments and then prioritised them. For example, we could just focus on science and transitions in the short term. She felt we had done the MOE tasks and now we needed to focus on what actions we want to take. She also felt that having a smaller stewardship group of 3-4 principals could be important for advancing the work.

One principal felt it was hard to follow what people were talking about in a large group. There was such a range of ideas that you just latch on to the parts that relate to your school and lose focus on what does not apply. He felt that it would be better to break into sub groups of 3 or 4 and work on the parts of the CoL/Kāhui Ako work that best fit with your school. He wanted there to be more freedom to focus on areas of interest.

Ways leadership meetings are effectively contributing to progress on the collaborative inquiry in other CoL/Kāhui Ako

One principal described their meetings as effective because there was a clear purpose for each meeting. It is expected that everyone attends or sends a delegate. Meetings are twice a term and the venue is rotated around all schools. The meeting begins with a 9:30 -10:30 visit and walk around each school. Anyone not in attendance must accept the decision of the meeting. A management group of 3-4 principals meets fortnightly to help progress the work of the CoL/Kāhui Ako in between wider leadership meetings.

One principal described meeting twice a term for 2-3 hours. He also explained there is a group of about 4 principals that form the governance group who meet to progress work more frequently. This group will soon be relabelled the stewardship group.

One CoL/Kāhui Ako met twice a term as a leadership group and were currently working on shaping a plan for 2019. The co-leaders met once a week.

Barriers

One principal described their meetings as less effective because the CoL/Kāhui Ako leaders were newly appointed, principals were not always consulted on CoL/Kāhui Ako actions, meeting agendas were often side tracked by school business and there was a lack of time to check in that principals were going OK and to find out who needs support.

One principal said it was a challenge to get everyone to attend or send a delegate. The stewardship group was working well but got frustrated with the leadership appointments process and have largely disbanded. The stewardship group really needs someone to take charge but this is hard when they have no authority or mandate to lead.

Implications and Benefits

Five practices of school principals within CoL/Kāhui Ako that contribute to effective leadership:

1. Develop high levels of relational trust.

Principals working in CoL/Kāhui Ako need to spend time on team building so they can develop a common understanding of each other's position in the CoL/Kāhui Ako and learn about how each school operates. Significant time needs to be spent on gaining a shared agreement or understanding of the purpose of the CoL/Kāhui Ako. Having a significant period of time together, such as a two day retreat at the start of the year would really benefit communication, team building and strategic planning in the CoL/Kāhui Ako.

Principals need to prioritise time to visit schools within the CoL/Kāhui Ako to learn how to best identify needs and prioritise actions. Visits to other CoL/Kāhui Ako will provide insights into effective leadership and management practices.

CoL/Kāhui Ako need to take time to form a shared understanding and commitment to collaboration together. Changes in school practice will happen as principals and teachers gain greater understanding of what is happening in other schools. Visits to other schools and valuing their practice will result in change in their own practice. The CoL/Kāhui Ako will start to see change in school practice if they are willing to share and learn from each other's practice in areas such as: assessment, graduate profiles, appraisal, teaching as inquiry, and the digital curriculum.

2. Access quality resources in the form of expertise, training and staffing

The expert partner needs to provide training around strategic direction and developing a strong action plan with measurable outcomes. The expert partner needs to support the CoL/Kāhui Ako to refine the action plan to a small number of specific, widely accepted and learning focussed actions. They also a need to provide support with aligning individual school charters with the work of the CoL/Kāhui Ako.

Principals also need additional facilitator support to assist and prioritise consultation with all stakeholders. The facilitator also needs to work with principals on change management as the leadership and oversight structures of a CoL/Kāhui Ako are different and more complex than that of a single school and its community. This facilitator needs to act as a *critical friend* to the CoL/Kāhui Ako. Someone who is encouraging and supportive, but who also provides honest and often candid feedback.

There needs to be regular facilitated leadership development for AST's and WST's, Deputy and Assistant Principals in CoL/Kāhui Ako. They need clear role descriptions and capacity building to work with teachers effectively in and across schools. All leaders need to have clear expectations for how the work of the CoL/Kāhui Ako will benefit their school and other schools in the CoL/Kāhui Ako.

The MOE needs to give clearer guidance on the role, purpose and mandate of a stewardship group.

Principals need to make every effort to fill all WST, AST and additional principal roles available to the CoL/Kāhui Ako and give them opportunities for leadership. If principals are unable to fill roles within their school or their needs do not match the resource allocated, this needs to be brought to the attention of the CoL/Kāhui Ako leadership, rather than leaving roles unfilled.

Principals need to value the additional release time generated by CoL/Kāhui Ako positions to release teachers to work within their school. This frees up other staffing entitlement and management units for other professional development or school needs. Giving more people recognition in their leadership gives recognition and energy to the work people are doing.

CoL/Kāhui Ako may find benefit in sharing leadership roles (including lead principal, AST and WST positions) between two people to manage workload and expectation. Some CoL/Kāhui Ako may find it helpful to share WST positions with other schools or pool WST time to create an additional AST position.

All schools need at least one WST position. These positions can be used as lead/specialist teacher roles within the school. Principals may see advantage in including these people in senior leadership discussions about professional learning for teachers. WST's and AST's need time individually and then collectively to gain an individual school and wider CoL/Kāhui Ako perspective so their work has a clear purpose. WST's and AST's need specific job descriptions on how to lead within and across schools and support teachers with infusing the work of the CoL/Kāhui Ako into the school's programmes and inquiry focus.

Principals will also need to clarify current in-school unit holders' job descriptions so there is not a role overlap or role confusion.

An effective use of inquiry time could be to release teachers to meet and discuss their teaching as inquiry. Some schools may want to create a WST position to support teachers with this.

CoL/Kāhui Ako funds should be used to regularly facilitate principal, AST, WST and assistant and deputy principal meetings.

CoL/Kāhui Ako will be well placed to use their resources effectively if succession plans are in place for lead principals, WST's and AST's. Some schools will need additional support to appoint and release AST's and WST's. The wider CoL/Kāhui Ako needs to take collective responsibility for this.

Principals need to value the work of the expert partners and facilitators working with the CoL/Kāhui Ako. If their work is not meeting the needs of the CoL/Kāhui Ako feedback needs to be given and a new way of working developed.

There may be some advantage in schools sharing procurement practices.

3. Engage in a culture of collective responsibility

It is important that all principals show leadership and contribute to the group and not leave all responsibility for the success of the CoL/Kāhui Ako to named leaders.

All principals need an area of responsibility to contribute specifically to; e.g. an appointment panel, communication group, working groups to look at consultation and strategic planning or an AST/WST oversight group. A clear succession plan and role for the immediate past leader of a CoL/Kāhui Ako may also support a more distributed leadership model.

Principals are more willing to contribute if they have a clear focus and action plan. The action plan needs to have wide acceptance and principals need to see the clear benefits for their own school and community.

Subgroups of 3-4 principals working on specific CoL/Kāhui Ako projects could accelerate the work and enhance motivation. Giving principals opportunities to form subgroups aligned to work that best fits with their school priorities may promote engagement and participation. These groups can and then report back to the wider leadership group.

Principals can make small changes to school practices by weaving the CoL/Kāhui Ako priorities into their school charters. From this connections can be made to professional development and classroom practice. There needs to be some challenge brought to principals to show how their school's priorities align with the CoL/Kāhui Ako direction.

4. Have high expectations for effective communication

The CoL/Kāhui Ako leader needs to share communications with all schools and respond regularly to questions when asked. Having a clear expectation that emails and briefing papers will be shared with all BOT's and staff would benefit the work of the CoL/Kāhui Ako. The CoL/Kāhui Ako leader needs to visit schools regularly to share the CoL/Kāhui Ako vision, making sure it is understood and that teachers know how to apply it in their classrooms.

Giving feedback to senior leadership teams following CoL/Kāhui Ako principal meetings would enhance the distributed leadership of the CoL/Kāhui Ako. It would be helpful to give deputy/assistant principals delegated responsibility for networks and actions of the CoL/Kāhui Ako.

Principals should regularly talk about AST and WST roles with their staff to increase the profile of the CoL/Kāhui Ako among teachers. It is essential to have AST's visiting schools regularly.

BOT's need to take an interest in and be supportive of the work of the CoL/Kāhui Ako. They have a responsibility to seek feedback on the work of the CoL/Kāhui Ako.

Principals would benefit from aligning their parent/whanau engagement strategy with the focus of the CoL/Kāhui Ako. It is important that CoL/Kāhui Ako begin their work with a survey of parents in each school to gather information about parent aspirations.

Despite the challenges of merging the diverse cultures (ways of working/values/ priorities) of each school it is important to give opportunity for joint meetings with BOTs, whānau and fono groups to

hear the wider aspirations of the community. However it is important that there is a clear alignment between the vision of the CoL/Kāhui Ako and schools' individual vision statements.

Asking teachers key questions like: "What's important at your place?" and "What are your priorities?" is important. Principals need to collaborate with teachers to capture the teacher and student voice. School priorities should drive the work of the CoL/Kāhui Ako not the CoL/Kāhui Ako priorities driving the work in the schools. CoL/Kāhui Ako leaders need to listen to the aspirations of teachers who want reinvention rather than more interventions. CoL/Kāhui Ako may want to capture student and teacher voice through the work of AST's.

CoL/Kāhui Ako may benefit from giving teachers access to across school professional development meetings. To enable this principals will need to reduce the number of school based professional development sessions. There may also be benefit from having the facility for teachers to work on collaborative inquiries across schools.

5. Establish clear purpose and structured processes

Principals need to commit to attending and participating in all principal meetings, or send a delegate in their absence. It would be helpful to have MOE representatives present only if needed. Meetings twice a term as a leadership group works well for keeping momentum and connection in the CoL/Kāhui Ako. CoL/Kāhui Ako may benefit from a management group that meet fortnightly or in between the wider leadership meetings.

Having the venue rotated around all schools may suit some CoL/Kāhui Ako. Beginning the meeting with a 9:30 -10:30 tour of the school would support understanding more about how each school fits within the CoL/Kāhui Ako.

All meetings need to have a clear focus and alignment to an agreed action plan with clear commitments and priorities. Agendas need to give sufficient time to discuss important matters in depth. There also needs to be some provision for social time or sharing about what was happening in schools. Agendas need to have a combination of items that challenge, excite, bring a unified focus and have mutual benefit.

Having an appointments panel and a clear appointments process for leadership positions is very important. CoL/Kāhui Ako need clear policies to deal with any dissatisfaction with the appointments process.

Individual BOT's need to appraise their own AST staff members so it is important that there are shared understandings about ways of working and expected outcomes. It is essential that AST's have clear, sufficiently detailed and widely agreed job descriptions. It is unfair to monitor the work of AST's if they have not been given a clear brief to work to. AST's need an action plan and give updates on how this is being implemented. It would be helpful if there was more guidance from NZSTA and the MOE on AST appraisal.

AST's need to report regularly to the CoL/Kāhui Ako leader so completed actions and successes can be shared with the CoL/Kāhui Ako. CoL/Kāhui Ako may benefit from having an AST oversight group

that could look at evidence of AST work, records of schools they had visited and prioritise where support is needed.

It may be easier to monitor the work of AST's if there are multiple AST positions with the same focus rather than each AST having an individual focus.

Conclusion

Principals who develop high levels of relational trust in the CoL/Kāhui Ako and gain a shared agreement or way of working in the CoL/Kāhui Ako will be most effective. Principals who are willing to share and learn from each other's practice will contribute effectively to the leadership of the CoL/Kāhui Ako.

Principals who access quality resources in the form of expertise, training and staffing show effective leadership. This can be achieved through optimising the support of the expert partner and external facilitation and maximising their CoL/Kāhui Ako staffing resources.

Principals who engage in a culture of collective responsibility by contributing to the work CoL/Kāhui Ako aligned with their school priorities demonstrate CoL/Kāhui Ako leadership.

Principals who have high expectations for effective communication for themselves and others in the CoL/Kāhui Ako contribute to effective leadership.

Principals who establish clear purpose and structured processes through focussed meetings, clear action plans, and sufficiently detailed and widely agreed job descriptions, will successfully lead CoL/Kāhui Ako.

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