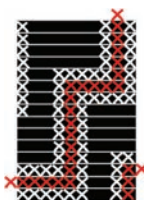


EDUCATIONALLY POWERFUL CONNECTIONS WITH MĀORI



Kia Eke Panuku

building on success

'Cultural capital' is a term used to encapsulate the store of cultural experiences, knowledge and attitudes a child can build their learning from when they go to school. For some families and communities there is already a high degree of cultural continuity and match with schools. The knowledge and activities that are part of the home culture are already relatively well-tuned to the activities at school, or vice versa (McNaughton, 2002). This is often not the case for many indigenous students, including Māori.

Involving whānau, hapū, iwi and Māori organisations can bring in-school and out-of-school learning together to support valued outcomes for rangatahi Māori. If effective connections are to be developed, principals and teachers must respect and value the cultures of their students' home communities, and parents need to be able to access, learn and value the education culture of the school.

In a context where power is shared, the principle of ako – reciprocal learning and teaching – becomes fundamental to developing connections that will work for both groups.

The extent to which the culture of the home and the school align can have a powerful influence on the enjoyment and educational success of rangatahi Māori.



Kia Eke Panuku action plans reflect the following five dimensions that are the levers for accelerated school reform:

- Leadership
- Evidence-based inquiry
- Culturally responsive and relational pedagogy
- *Educationally powerful connections with Māori*
- Literacy, te reo Māori and numeracy.

Schools that activate educationally powerful connections with whānau, hapū and iwi will support the cultural continuity of rangatahi between Māori homes, communities and schools. This can increase coherence and accelerate the closing of the gaps between Māori and their non-Māori peers.

Kia Eke Panuku provides interdependent practices for giving life to Ka Hikitia and supporting Māori students to pursue their potential.

The personal commitment of all, to the dynamic interplay of these dimensions, will effect transformative change for Māori students and their communities. In this document Kia Eke Panuku participants give voice to their emerging understandings of these processes.

CRITICAL QUESTIONS FOR DEVELOPING EDUCATIONALLY POWERFUL CONNECTIONS WITH MĀORI

An unambiguous focus on Māori students enjoying and achieving education success as Māori prompts a number of critical questions that lead us to becoming better conscientised to our own context. For example:

- what assumptions underpin what we currently do?
- what are our priorities for Māori students? Who gets to decide?
- what could Māori enjoying and achieving education success as Māori look like in our school?
- how are our connections with whānau, hapū and iwi educationally powerful? How do we know this?
- what do we need to do to improve our relationships and grow educationally powerful connections with Māori?

In raising these questions, Kia Eke Panuku school leaders, teachers and whānau members can identify what they need to do to foster educationally powerful connections in ways that exemplify greater respect, power-sharing and co-construction.



KEY ELEMENTS OF SUCCESS

When Kia Eke Panuku school leaders, teachers and whānau co-construct ways of engagement based on their own critical questions, learning and self-review, it can lead to more successful connections being forged.

Bull, Brooking, and Campbell (2008) found that successful home-school partnerships:

- are collaborative and mutually respectful (mana enhancing)
- are multi-dimensional and responsive to community needs
- are embedded in school development plans, well resourced, and reviewed regularly
- are goal oriented and focused on learning
- incorporate strategies to help parents support their children's learning at home
- incorporate strategies to enable timely two-way communication between school and parents, and
- take time and commitment.

Educationally powerful connections amongst schools, whānau, hapū and iwi provide students with increased coherency as they move between Māori communities, home and school. What is remarkable about the combined commitment in such relationships is that, when they work, the magnitude of the positive impacts on rangatahi can be substantial.



INITIATING CONNECTIONS WITH WHĀNAU, HAPŪ AND IWI

Schools don't get anything out of a relationship with iwi by constantly asking for something. We benefit most when the school supports the kaupapa of the iwi as much as we want them to support ours.

Steve, principal

Trying to conceptualise what a relationship between school and iwi should look like, I remembered a comment from iwi, 'schools only come to us when they want something', and I thought, 'well that's not much of a relationship.' If we only go when we want something then that's valid criticism. I went to Murihiku Marae with our data and shared what we were doing. I didn't ask for anything. Later I invited them to join us for training, they did, and that felt good.

Andy, principal

My goal is to visit every marae committee and ask 'what do you want us to do for your tamariki in the college?' For me, it's about co-constructing what we can do better.

Chris, principal

CONNECTING WITH WHĀNAU, HAPŪ AND IWI

We've had teacher-only days at the marae but it was just a venue. It wasn't really an exchange with the local community. It was suggested that we could forge stronger links by going to Poukai and celebrating with Tainui. Our kids and some of our staff are there anyway, but they're there as tangata whenua ... they're doing kapa haka, they're in the kitchen. So it was arranged that we meet with the marae committee and now we are going to the Poukai as a college.

Chris, principal

We had rivalry between some of the kids.

We got six whaea who could whakapapa to each other as ex-school friends, as whānau as well. They began to whakapapa to these kids, and it was amazing to watch the ringleaders realising that the people they had an issue with, they themselves could actually whakapapa to.

That was a real healing process for our kids 'cause straight after that they gelled.

At the end the students did a haka to the whaea. All of them together, it was magical.

Paul, guidance counsellor





RECIPROCAL RELATIONSHIPS LEADING TO EDUCATIONALLY POWERFUL CONNECTIONS

We are looking for solutions for our people and we want rangatahi to be part of that solution, we want them to be contributors to our future, help them recognise the opportunities.

Evelyn, Ngāti Tahu, Ngāti Whaoa

We had several meetings together [iwi and school] where we began to co-construct what this new learning experience might look like. One of the key contexts that emerged was the environment.

Steve, principal

We had been wanting to work with the school for some years to develop the leadership potential of our rangatahi and build the connection between the land, its resources, themselves and our environment.

Evelyn, Ngāti Tahu, Ngāti Whaoa

There were a number of NCEA credits that could be delivered in the context of threats to traditional kai sources and how to ensure sustainability into the future.

Sara, teacher

I enjoy working with Sara, she is very open, and very supportive of new ideas. It's a very reciprocal relationship, I couldn't have asked for a better person to work alongside.

Evelyn, Ngāti Tahu, Ngāti Whaoa

It's very much about being flexible enough to follow the students' interests while keeping it within the framework.

In our most recent session we really started to go in deep, that level of questioning wouldn't have been reached if we didn't take them out and make it personal, make that connection. It's not just about getting the credits, it's about developing a future-focused response to the environmental issues of their immediate environment.

Sara, teacher

It's been a huge learning curve for both the school and ourselves but it's great we are able to support each other and work through the issues together.

Evelyn, Ngāti Tahu, Ngāti Whaoa

My aspiration is that those young people will return from the experience equipped to be able to share their leadership experiences with their peers, add to the kaupapa in the classroom and help others to be successful around them.

Sara, teacher





BUILDING ON EDUCATIONALLY POWERFUL CULTURAL CONNECTIONS

At Matariki we take our staff to the marae so that they can learn where the boys come from. We thought if we showed them te āo Māori from the boys' perspective, they would get a better connection with them.

Going forward we may go back to the marae with our fathers and their sons. Our teaching staff can help host, so they're part of the pōwhiri and they're part of putting the mechanics of the day together.

The boys can ask their fathers questions, about where they came from and how they grew up, how education was for them and what they hope for their sons. Together they can have the hard conversations about how they might better help each other, maybe set a goal for each other; inside of school for the son; outside of school for Dad.

So that might be the next step.

Fred, deputy principal

FUTURE ASPIRATIONS

Māori student achievement last year at NCEA has gone up from 17% to 61%. I put that down to Māori students beginning to recognise that they have a place here and us recognising we're all on the same waka moving in the same direction.

Steve, principal

It's about forging those relationships so that we can support the children more completely, actively support them to be connected to their culture.

Chris, principal

Iwi can and should be leading in design and implementation of programmes for school leaders. Collaboration between school and iwi as equal partners, a sharing of power. This would be authentic cultural learning, led by mana whenua, about mana whenua, for school leaders.

Ngareta, Ngāi te Rangī, Ngāti Ranginui

We want to open the gates – the doors of the college – and say 'we want you to come in and become part of the community of the college', so that my students see that as being normal and natural ... so that learning is something

*that involves everyone,
everywhere ...*

Steve, principal



In Kia Eke Panuku, secondary schools give life to Ka Hikitia
and address the aspirations of Māori
communities by supporting Māori students to
pursue their potential.



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