

Ngāti Kahungunu Iwi Panui on Streaming in Schools

Ngāti Kahungunu stands as a champion and influencer in the movement to end streaming in schools and kura. Streaming - ***grouping students by perceived ability*** - has been shown to disproportionately harm Māori learners, entrench inequities, and limit access to deep, meaningful learning. We advocate for a system that upholds mana ōrite, reflects kaupapa Māori, and empowers all learners to succeed as Māori.

Context: NCEA Changes and Streaming Risk

The proposed NCEA changes - currently out for [consultation](#) - introduce a Foundational Award in 2028, removes NCEA Level 1, and shift to structured subject pathways that lead to two Certificates of Education in 2029 and 2030 for Year 12 and Year 13. While these changes aim to improve consistency and credibility, they may unintentionally increase streaming if not carefully implemented. The key risks include:

- Early ability grouping based on literacy and numeracy performance.
- Reduced flexibility in subject selection.
- Binary tracking into vocational vs academic pathways.

Clarifying Binary Tracking

Binary tracking refers to dividing students into two distinct pathways - academic versus vocational - based on perceived ability. This rigid separation limits access to rich learning and reinforces stereotypes. Ngāti Kahungunu advocates for flexible, inclusive pathways that reflect diverse strengths and aspirations.

Evidence from Tokona Te Raki

Tokona Te Raki's research (He Awa Ara Rau, Ending Streaming in Aotearoa, Kōkirihiā) shows that streaming:

- Reinforces racism, bias, and deficit thinking.
- Leads to low self-esteem and reduced aspirations.
- Disproportionately places Māori and Pacific students in lower streams.
- Is not supported by evidence as an effective pedagogy.

Guiding Framework: Ngāti Kahungunu Outcome Indicators

The Ngāti Kahungunu Outcome Indicators provide a values-based framework for monitoring and guiding education transformation. They include:

- Te Tiriti o Waitangi: Learners understand colonisation and advocate tino rangatiratanga.
- Te Reo Māori: Learners communicate confidently in te reo Māori.
- Te Mātauranga: Learners are grounded in te ao Māori and Ngāti Kahungunu identity.
- Te Whanaungatanga: Learners know their whakapapa and roles within whānau, hapū, iwi.
- Te Rangatiratanga: Whānau exercise agency in education decision-making.
- Tipuria te Aroha: Learners are intellectually stimulated and supported.

Constructive Messaging for the Ministry of Education, and Schools

- *Streaming is an equity risk:* Adopt inclusive, mixed-ability teaching.
- *Foundational skills must empower, not sort:* Use culturally sustaining pedagogy.
- *Curriculum must reflect mātauranga Māori:* Embed iwi knowledge systems.
- *Vocational and academic pathways are equally valuable:* Avoid binary tracking.
- *Achievement is holistic:* Include te reo, tikanga, mātauranga, and whānau engagement.

Messaging for Whānau

- *Your tamariki deserve deep learning, not labels.*
- *Whānau voice shapes education:* Participate in hui and advocate for inclusive and equitable practices.
- *Ngāti Kahungunu is leading change:* Support foundational skills taught in culturally sustaining ways.
- *Streaming is not your child's fault:* It's an education system issue that we're changing together.

Practical Strategies for Implementation

- Co-design local curriculum and implementation plans with whānau, hapū and iwi.
- Provide professional learning development for education leaders, schooling staff, and whānau, on streaming - the risks and implications - and culturally sustaining pedagogy.
- Monitor equity impacts using iwi-informed data frameworks.