

# KŌKIRIHIA

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# INTRODUCTION



Welcome to our third annual report, what a big year it has been. We held three successful wānanga with our members, produced four new case studies, supported our members with collaborative projects, produced data and facilitated workshops at conferences. Sadly, we also farewelled three key members of our Kōkirihiā whānau: Kaya Staples – the mastermind of our Triple A framework and much loved member of the Tokona te Raki team, Shannon Walsh from NZEI and Alex Bidois from NZQA both of whom were hugely valued and passionate contributors to the Kōkirihiā kaupapa.

We don't stand still, Kōkirihiā is growing and changing and with that our thinking. When we set out, our message was simple – stop streaming. Over time we have learned that it is much more complex than simply removing harmful fixed ability grouping – if you take it away, what do you replace it with? We now know it is as much about how we can support teachers and leaders to build awareness of the alternative approaches that support the achievement of equitable outcomes. But not just that, there is a much broader ecosystem of factors that impact the experience of our tamariki and rangatahi in education that need to be considered. This is the purpose

of our case studies which have become increasingly important, offering inspirational stories of alternative approaches and celebrating classroom teachers who are leading the way. Perhaps our biggest achievement over the past year is simply that we have stayed together and remained standing. We started the year with 24 member organisations and we finished it with the same 24. This is no small feat given the uncertainty and challenges sector organisations are facing.

With another 12 months of funding confirmed, we are looking to the actions we can take that will make the most difference for all those

who intersect with the system. Our priorities are to build on our case studies of those educators taking a different approach, share stories of positive impact, engage in research and data gathering that demonstrates impact, support the development of resources, and broaden our membership including early childhood and disability organisations among others. In addition we are producing a short video featuring a series of interviews with people sharing their experiences in education.

Piripi

**"I FEEL LIKE DEMOCRACY  
NEEDS TO BE A BIG  
THING IN SCHOOLING  
AND EDUCATION AND  
GROWTH FOR ALL."**

**TOBY, 19**



**"NOW WHEN I LOOK  
BACK, IF I HAD HAD THE  
SUPPORT, I COULD HAVE  
BEEN A LAWYER."**

**ANN. 70s**



# KŌKIRIHIA IMPLEMENTATION TEAM

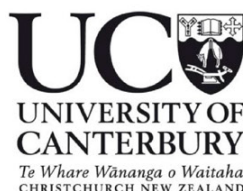


Our strength continues to be our 24 member organisations and their ongoing commitment. As the backbone organisation, it is always a highlight for us to bring everyone together for our regular hui. These hui are usually held over two days in Ōtautahi Christchurch. In the past year, we have hosted three hui including one in Wellington, hosted

by NZEI whilst our offices were being renovated. The hui are not only a valuable networking opportunity for our members but provide an opportunity to discuss the important issues of the day, share the outcomes of collaborative projects they are engaged in and also for the Kōkirihi team to stretch the thinking utilising our own frameworks and

facilitation techniques. Examples of these include a session on addressing polarities, in this case central decision-making versus regional participation. The intention was to build an understanding of working across differences – that it's not an either/or outcome but rather and/and/plus. And, at our last session, we treated the members to the

Mō Āpōpō Future Makers experience. This is a toolkit designed by Tokona te Raki to support capability building for rangatahi where they learn to work collaboratively to imagine better futures of their own making.



# WHAT ARE OUR MEMBERS SAYING?

We meet regularly with each of our member organisations to learn more about their successes, challenges, their learnings in relation to Kōkirihiā and the actions they have underway or are planning to support the kaupapa. As a learning organisation, Developmental Evaluation is a key part of our approach, helping to ensure we are understanding the landscape and adjusting our approach accordingly to ensure the best outcomes for the sector.

Our members value these sessions as a way of staying up-to-date and talking through their thinking on how best they and their organisation can support the goal of empowering equity and excellence for all of our tamariki and rangatahi in the education sector.



## HERE IS A SAMPLE OF THE THOUGHTS THEY HAVE SHARED:

01

There are opportunities for us as member organisations to collaborate and make things happen

04

Just the fact that some of the organisations have made it into the room today is a positive

02

As Kōkirihiā members, our relationships are strong - we share the same values - even if we might be sometimes limited by our own organisations

05

There is concern for how stretched and exhausted teachers are

03

Kōkirihiā is anchoring our kaupapa, providing a safe and trusting space

06

The majority of schools want to give effect to Te Tiriti and that is a strong outcome

# THE UNIQUE POWER OF COLLECTIVE ACTION

Collective Impact is the approach we use with the Kōkirihiā implementation team. It originated at Stanford University and provides a framework for addressing complex social problems by mobilising multiple organisations and stakeholders. A key role is that of the backbone organisation – the team that coordinates and communicates with the wider membership. In Kōkirihiā, that is Tokona te Raki. Late last year we conducted a series of interviews and focus groups with our membership to capture insights to inform analysis of how effective the collective impact has been.

You can read our report [here](#).

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**THE UNIQUE POWER OF  
COLLECTIVE ACTION -  
A COLLABORATIVE  
APPROACH TO CHANGE**

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# CONNECTING WITH THE WORLD

As we have reported previously, we work hard to connect with and establish relationships with many of the world's educational leaders and thinkers. Here's some recent communication we have received.

## Professor Jo Boaler (Stanford University)

It has been inspiring to watch Kōkirihiā continue its important work in the face of significant challenges. Around the world, those of us working for equity in education are encountering resistance, but we are also seeing the extraordinary difference that research-informed, courageous educators can make. Please know that you are not alone. You are part of a global community committed to ensuring that every young person has the opportunity to learn, thrive, and discover their potential. I am honored to stand alongside you in that work. Stay warm!

*Best,  
Jo*

## Professor Becky Taylor (University College London)

We have been delighted to publish the report of the Student Grouping Study, the largest and most robust study comparing the impact of mixed attainment grouping and setting by attainment (as we call streaming in England) in mathematics on the attainment and self-confidence of 11-13 year olds in England. Alongside the quantitative impact evaluation, we visited dozens of mathematics classrooms and it was striking the way that teaching in mathematics in England has changed since our previous study in 2015.

The challenge that now faces me and the rest of the research team is to do justice to the data collected and to analyse and report on it all. We are particularly interested in the outcomes of young people with the lowest and with the highest prior attainment, and we want to understand their experiences in detail.

The report only scratches the surface! I am delighted to support Kōkirihiā, and I look forward to sharing our research findings and reflecting on them, and the similarities and differences between the English and New Zealand contexts, in order to move towards more equitable classrooms in both countries.

*Best wishes,  
Becky*



**Professor Elena Prieto-Rodríguez**  
(University of Newcastle)

In my new role I've been noticing a worrying trend among our initial teacher education students: a real rise in mental health difficulties, anxiety in particular. A few factors seem to be feeding into this: the financial pressure of practicum placements, the compressed timelines many students are juggling alongside work and family commitments, and a general sense of uncertainty about the profession they're entering (workload expectations, public scrutiny of teachers, and so on). It's worth us keeping an eye on, and perhaps worth raising as a discussion point at some stage.

On a more encouraging note, it's been interesting to watch the progress being made in Australia toward equity in education. There's been continued investment tied to needs-based funding models, and some

promising movement in targeted support for students from disadvantaged and remote communities. It's a useful reference point for thinking about equity work here.

*Regards,  
Elena.*

**Ashna Ali**  
(Projects and Events Lead – The Dais Toronto)



I was really interested to read about how your work has evolved from ending streaming and ability grouping toward the broader question of equity, because I think we're arriving at a similar conversation here in Ontario. De-streaming was an important structural change, but five years on, the bigger question is increasingly what it actually takes to make that change successful for students.

*"One of the clearest lessons from Ontario's experience with de-streaming is that policy change is only the beginning. Lasting equity requires us to also examine the expectations, practices and decisions that continue to shape the pathways available to young people — and to equip the adults supporting them to recognize and challenge those barriers."*

*Warmly,  
Ashna*



### Jason To

(Toronto District School Board)  
Coordinator of Secondary  
Mathematics and Academic Pathways

Toronto is seeing some headwinds in terms of equity in education with streaming being reintroduced in mathematics for Grade 10. On the flip side, we are set to execute a district-wide plan to strategically build foundational math skills universally from Kindergarten to Grade 6, which, if all goes well, will directly tackle a root cause of streaming and disproportionate outcomes for marginalised communities.

*Cheers,  
Jason*

What follows is a brief overview of the action plan Jason is referring to above.

# TORONTO DISTRICT PLAN

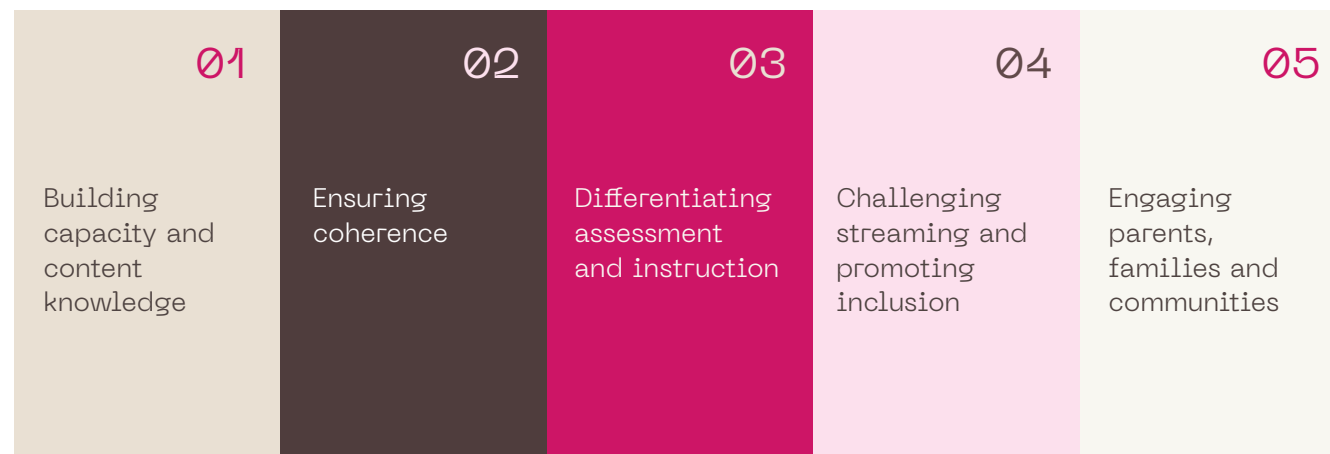
Toronto with a population of 3.3 million is the largest city in Canada. It is one of the most multi-cultural and multi racial cities in the world with 57 percent of the population termed as 'visible minorities'.

The Toronto District School Board (TDSB) Mathematics Action Plan commits to equity, inclusion and anti-oppression. It also commits to identifying and eliminating

systemic barriers. It states that mathematics instruction should reflect the voices, identities, abilities, lived experiences and expertise of students through an Inclusive

Design approach. It is grounded in a set of beliefs that includes all students are capable of high levels of achievement in mathematics.

**The strategy itself has five pillars (key system strategies and actions):**



The importance of professional learning opportunities are a key aspect of the plan.

We found the TDSB Action Plan most interesting, especially as a comparison with our own mathematics initiatives and hope that this is useful for our maths teachers and school leaders.



"GIVING MORE OPPORTUNITIES FOR STUDENTS TO TAKE CHARGE OF THEIR FUTURES. I THINK A LOT OF TIMES IN THE CLASSROOM DECISIONS ARE MADE FOR STUDENTS, NOT BY STUDENTS."

LAYLA, 20



"I THINK AS I GOT TO HIGH SCHOOL I REALISED THAT THERE WERE STEREOTYPES, ESPECIALLY FOR YOUNG MĀORI GIRLS, LIKE YOU ARE JUST GOING TO END UP TO BE ANOTHER STATISTIC... ANOTHER MĀORI MUM ON THE BENEFIT."

KAYA, 34



# CASE STUDIES

## CELEBRATING EDUCATION DONE DIFFERENTLY

It is always a privilege to be invited into schools to experience first-hand the wonderful teaching that takes place every day across our classrooms. And even more so to be able to share their stories across the profession and communities via our Kōkirihiā website. We have been evolving our approach to the case studies to not only provide detail around pedagogy but to also be more inclusive of the leadership, culture and values in the different school settings. Tāmaki Primary School, Darfield High, Riccarton High and St Josephs are case studies we completed over the past year.

# TĀMAKI PRIMARY SCHOOL

## TE PUNA WAIRUA

As well as English medium, Tāmaki Primary School in East Auckland offers Samoan and Tongan language immersion programmes, and a Māori language immersion (rumaki) programme known as Te Puna Wairua. There are 50 plus students from Years 1 to 8 in Te Puna Wairua, and this presents unique challenges; teaching multi-year level classes, and students with varying levels of Māori language proficiency.

What we found was an impressive array of teaching strategies all underpinned by a tuakana teina approach as the leading pedagogy.

[Read more here](#)



Caption: Deputy Principal Lee Tutengaehe and Principal Carol Leota

*“A clear example was when my middle child started school, she’d come from a mainstream daycare and so the transition into a Māori room and world was always going to be quite daunting. What they did when she started school, she was welcomed with a pōwhiri, then she was paired with older girls so she instantly had an older sister, a kaitiaki, a tuakana, who wrapped around her and those tuākana were assigned tēina. When she started she was shy, was super scared, but the second that student wrapped around her, and they were so caring, they were really lovely – like they hugged her, showed her to her chair, helped her put her bag away, showed her the routine of the day and they did it with her every day.”*

Parent.

Pairing students is strategically planned. Curriculum knowledge is more important than age. There could be a teina who is older than the tuakana but that’s because the teina has more knowledge of that particular kaupapa. Tuakana and teina are deliberately changed often so they get to know everyone and don’t become reliant on any particular tuakana. The teacher is trying to build lasting relationships between all of them, not just a select few.

Learning in this way strengthens whanaungatanga, as ākonga learn that they have responsibility for one another’s growth. It also strengthens mana, as each child realises they have knowledge and experience that can support others. In this environment they are not defined by ability levels, but rather within a collective learning community where knowledge is shared.

# DARFIELD HIGH SCHOOL TE KURA TUARUA O TAWERA

For those of you not familiar with Canterbury, Darfield is on the main highway to the West Coast and is nestled under the watchful eyes of the Southern Alps, Ngā Tiritiri o te Moana. It was a quiet rural service village, however these days it is rapidly growing as a commuter town for Christchurch. The current school roll is 840 and it's growing fast.

Principal Andy England has been leading the school through a change process over the past six years. While there were many positive things happening at Darfield, there were around 20 percent of the students who did not feel they belonged and were failing, so the motivation for change was about ensuring all students felt like they belonged and were succeeding. This required a change in culture centred around relationships, with staff striving to

make better connections with students and their families. Restorative justice practices were introduced and a whānau navigator appointed. A space for Māori students had been built in the 1990s but work began on rebuilding and enhancing it, culminating in a reopening with mana whenua in 2026. Integral to this change in culture has been the move away from streaming and ability grouping. Traditionally there had been a top class, two higher attainment classes, and two lower attainment classes. Now all classes are mixed ability.

The case study focuses on the Mathematics department and ways they have adapted how they teach. Underpinning their approach is knowing their students, but they also draw on such things as front loading, whole class teaching and collaborative teaching. **Check out the [case study](#) to learn more.**



# RICCARTON HIGH SCHOOL

Carmen Kenton is an experienced science teacher at Riccarton High School in Christchurch. For the purposes of this case study, we focused solely on her Y11 class – a class with high language and cultural diversity and learning needs. To support all students in the class to contribute, learn, and thrive, Carmen emphasises flexible grouping based on individual strengths.

Carmen recognised that inclusion demanded multiple pathways to access the same learning goals. She introduced flipped learning (students choose topics, pace, and format) alongside teacher-led workshops to provide structure for students needing more guidance. She also identified that content overload was limiting deeper learning for her students, and discovered the set of science capabilities that helped her see she could teach fewer things

more deeply. She began using transdisciplinary topics, teaching investigating, reasoning with evidence, communication, understanding science, rather than emphasising large amounts of content. *“When I discovered the nature of science proper, and the science capabilities... it just became so much easier... I’m teaching investigative skills, not just forces and cells and acids.”* This shift also created space for diverse learners to engage through multiple entry points and contexts.

**To learn more about Carmen’s approach, [click here](#).**



# ST JOSEPH'S CATHEDRAL SCHOOL

All of our case studies are unique – both in terms of context and in the stories they have to share. For Dunedin's St Joseph's Cathedral School, it was the work of Professor Christine Rubie-Davies that inspired change for principal Jo Stanley when she began to think more deeply about grouping practices. She invited Christine to visit and to lead PLD in high expectation teaching and flexible grouping. "Staff wanted to learn and wanted to move," says Jo. The school uses an inquiry approach that is based on the work of Michael Fullen – New Pedagogies for Deeper Learning. Currently, their inquiry is based on 'The Harbour.' This approach allows students of all abilities to shine. They work in pairs or groups of their choice and take action on aspects of the learning.

As part of the change, the previous practice of students leaving their classroom to go to learning support has been replaced by learning support teachers now coming into the classroom and working across the class.

Cultural responsiveness goes hand-in-hand with high expectation teaching, and this is something the school not only works hard at, but is proud of. The case study also looks at how the teachers are grouping students, including setting tasks for Year 6 mathematics and writing and Years 1 and 2 reading. What does success look like?

*"In the past, you would see students whose confidence and engagement had been knocked by reports saying they were 'below'. Now that confidence and engagement is improving. It's great to see kids helping each other out, and to see those who may have been in a bottom group previously now grow in confidence sitting alongside others in their heterogeneous groups, and contributing."*

To learn more, [click here](#).



# TE PŌHĀ MĀTAURAKA O MURIHIKU



Earlier in 2026 the Kōkirihiā team visited Te Pōhā Mātauraka o Murihiku (Te Pōhā) in Invercargill. The purpose of the visit was to learn about the mahi they are doing in Southland schools and to explore potential opportunities for collaboration. On arrival we were treated to a warm welcome into the whare of Awarua Whānau Services by Dr Hana O'Regan. A beautiful way to start the day of connection and sharing.

Te Pōhā is a centralised education hub where schools can access support to learn, value, promote and preserve localised mātauraka and pūrākau from Waihōpai, Awarua and Ōraka Aparima rūnaka. The focus is on building strong connections between kura and mana whenua so they can collectively provide rich localised education for all tamariki and rakatahi living in the Murihiku takiwā. Kicking off in mid 2024 the small Te Pōhā team has done a fantastic job with 29 registered kura – 45 percent of the total number of kura in Murihiku and 61 percent of the total student population. That equates to 8456 ākoka receiving quality and authentic knowledge about the place and space

they call home. Forty-five percent of Māori ākoka are Kāi Tahu – accessing knowledge and wisdom from their own iwi through their local kura. The most heart-warming statistics – 96 percent of kaiako using Te Pōhā for a second year, report strengthened identity and sense of belonging in every ākoka in their classroom; and 90 percent of kura report a stronger connection and relationship with their local rūnaka. The Te Pōhā approach is perhaps the most authentic and thoughtful we have ever seen. It embodies both rūnaka and kura values that enrich the depth of their connection, while strengthening and understanding the role they each play in providing culturally nuanced education for kura, tamariki, rakatahi, whānau and the wider community.

The real magic of Te Pōhā is the kaimahi – a small, sharp rōpū of wāhine who embody the values of manaakitaka, whanaukataka and rakatirataka naturally in their day-to-day living. These wāhine really are the rika raupā of education in Murihiku. They inherently understand the balancing act of honouring the wisdom and mana of kā rūnaka and at the same time valuing the

professionalism of principals and kaiāko in kura. Raiha Johnson and Wiki Burdon are the wāhine who bring the kaupapa to life. Both are registered kaiako working part-time in local schools, have long-standing relationships in the local community and have their fingers on the pulse on all things education. Their dedication and commitment to the kaupapa is self-evident and is reinforced through the quality of their website design, video content, and the mana they hold within their community. Antonia Notoa (Kairuruku Kaupapa) works quietly and tirelessly behind the scenes supporting Raiha and Wiki to work their magic, co-ordinating calendars and creating the warm and inviting atmosphere for manuhiri and kaimahi alike – the mysterious fairy that makes the impossible, possible!

Working within the education ecosystem in Aotearoa New Zealand is not for the faint hearted. It is a complex web of multiple systems and structures imported from the Western world and international context. Ultimately it is down to kaiwhakahaere, Dr Keri Milne-Ihimaera's sage leadership and ability to navigate these complexities

that it is all possible. It is no mean feat to implement a localised rūnaka-led process that transforms education by connecting kura with mana whenua, mātauraka and guiding values to foster identity, belonging and connection for all learners, especially given their short timeframe and limited resources. However, Keri is upfront and real when discussing the realities of how their three-year journey will go as they continue to work with rūnaka leaders, kaumātua and principals.

Te Pōhā is not an entitled gateway to mātauraka Māori, it is a taoka of Kāi Tahu specific pūrākau, mātauraka and localised knowledge naturally embedded in the natural world. It teaches intergenerationally from the wisdom of Kāi Tahu tūpuna and kaumātua to the current generation of tamariki and mokopuna, while strategically planning for the health and wellness of future generations and mokopuna. Mō tātou, ā, mō ka uri ā muri ake nei!

We left our visit to Murihiku in awe of these wāhine and their tireless dedication to their community and whānau whānui.

# THE FRUITS OF COLLABORATION

There have been some stunning examples of collaboration among our membership that have produced great results. Often these emerge from chats over lunch during our group hui where ideas flow and excitement builds at what might be possible. These moments have been one of the most rewarding outcomes. The role of the Kōkirihiā team is one of support in bringing the resources to life and enhancing opportunities for delivering improved equitable outcomes for students. The National Streaming Survey of Teachers is one example; Tātou Tātou: Grouping for Equitable Outcomes in Aotearoa, a resource for the initial teacher education (ITE) sector is another.

## TĀTOU TĀTOU: GROUPING FOR EQUITABLE OUTCOMES IN AOTEAROA

This was a collaboration between Waikato, Otago, Canterbury, Massey and Auckland universities to develop a resource on equitable grouping practices for Teacher Education organisations (ITE's.) While it is primarily targeted at teacher training organisations, it will likely prove useful to principals and senior leaders running staff Professional Learning Development (PLD). Tātou Tātou: Grouping for Equitable Outcomes in Aotearoa is now available to download on our Kōkirihiā website.

## CONFRONTING BIAS THROUGH VIRTUAL REALITY

Hāpaitia te ngākau aroha – Elevate empathy is stunning. It uses virtual reality to allow participants to experience a day in the life of an 11-year-old Māori boy. For participants, you really feel like you are him in the classroom or at the bus stop. It challenges teachers to recognise the biases and racism that many students face. Developed within the University of Auckland by Dr Hana O'Regan, Professor Christine Rubie-Davies, Dr Pam O'Connell and colleagues, the Virtual Reality (VR) experience sits within a research project. Before donning the headsets, there is a kōrero to prepare you for the experience and a debrief session afterwards as people explore their responses and reactions.



The implementation team were in awe of how powerful the experience was which sparked conversation about what other VR experiences could be useful eg: high expectation teaching.

# LATEST RESEARCH

In April of this year Professor Becky Taylor from University College London (UCL) published the findings of her latest research study comparing Years 7 & 8 maths students in mixed attainment settings, with those in schools using attainment grouping. Ninety-seven schools were involved: 28 mixed attainment and 69 attainment grouping (setting) classes.

## The key findings were as follows:

- Students in higher ability classes made around two months extra progress a year than their counterparts in mixed attainment classes.
- Overall, students in mixed attainment classes made one month less progress than their counterparts who were ability grouped.

- For lower prior attaining students and students from low socio-economic backgrounds, the type of setting made little difference in academic progress.
- Students in mixed attainment classes reported lower confidence.
- Lesson observations from mixed attainment schools tended to show teachers pitching lessons towards the lower end of the class, especially in terms of pace.

It is important to note that while the results may lean towards arguing for attainment grouping, they are not entirely convincing. The other important factor is the context of the English education system which is very different from that in Aotearoa.

Professor Becky Francis (chief executive officer of the Education Endowment Foundation) wrote the following in the Times Educational Supplement: 'It is not about finding a single study that confirms what we

already believe, nor about searching for definitive answers to complex questions...New evidence rarely closes debates. More often it helps us to ask better questions, see more clearly the trade offs involved and make more informed, thoughtful decisions in practice'.

Research suggests that we are asking our teachers to shift away from harmful fixed ability grouping to mixed attainment teaching, but with minimal support and professional learning development to do so.

Unsurprisingly teachers are struggling to extend the higher attaining students and may be teaching more towards the lower attaining students.

From our case studies, we know there are many teachers in our education system who have mastered mixed attainment teaching. We also know that we have excellent locally developed programmes, for example: high expectation teaching, RT3T and DMIC designed for mixed attainment classes with accompanying resources

to ensure their successful implementation.

Note: In the United Kingdom, setting is where students are put in ability classes for each subject. Streaming or tracking is where students are placed in classes based on perceived ability for all or most subjects.



# PUBLICATIONS

## HE AU NUI, HE AU ORA

## REPORT

Powering the future through  
culturally-enriched learning environments

2025

This report produced by Tokona te Raki with support from Dr Hana O'Regan, is a follow up to *He Awa Ara Rau* (2019). Like its predecessor the report utilised BERL data to track over 700,000 New Zealanders from early childhood through to adulthood. While *He Awa Ara Rau* identified streaming as a key barrier to the success of rangatahi Māori through education and into employment, *He au nui, he au ora* tells a compelling story of the power of culturally enriched learning

environments in supporting rangatahi to thrive in education. It provides convincing data regarding the success of Māori-medium education and the opportunities this presents. It also suggests that the education system as a whole has a responsibility to provide culturally enriched learning environments for all learners, regardless of setting as a way of lifting achievement and attendance rates.

To read the report [click here](#).

## TEACHER SURVEY SNAP INSIGHTS REPORT MARCH 2026

The national teachers survey was conducted for a second time in 2024. The survey is a collaboration between: NZEI, PPTA, Auckland University, University of Canterbury and Tokona te Raki to ascertain awareness of and attitudes towards ability grouping and how teachers and school leaders group students. An analysis of the qualitative data has been completed.

In brief the key findings were:

In the secondary sector there is a belief that ability grouping, including prerequisites are necessary for academic achievement, particularly at senior level.

In the primary sector, the moral and equity arguments for flexible grouping practices are widely accepted, however class size, a shortage of teacher aids and limited PLD are seen as barriers to the implementation of flexible grouping.

To read the report, [click here](#).



# EMPOWERING EQUITY AND EXCELLENCE WORKSHOPS

Over the past year we have been invited to run workshops at both the SPANZ (Secondary Principals Association New Zealand) conference in Queenstown and the School Trustees Association conference in Tāmaki Makaurau.

Events like these not only provide us with a wonderful opportunity to build the awareness of our kaupapa and network with sector professionals, but also for us to gain greater understanding and insight into the everyday realities in education.

The focus of both these workshops was on empowering equity and excellence within the school environment and how equity is demonstrated in regards to grouping practices and the culture within schools. The attendees for

both conferences came from a wide range of schools, all with their own unique approach and set of challenges – suffice to say the education landscape is complex and there is no one size fits all solution.



## SOME THEMES THAT EMERGED

01

### The importance of leadership:

Accountability and Health and Safety (including psychological safety) is of high importance. Strong leadership is required at both governance and operational levels within schools and for setting the vision and culture that leads to equity and excellence.

02

### Culture, Belonging, Identity, Inclusion and Relationships:

“No one is left behind, not one size fits all, whose voices are being heard and whose are missing?”, “Student voice, whānau engagement, identity, place-based and localised approaches, diversity and inclusion.”

03

### Data use and understanding:

A challenge was laid to all of us (participants and facilitators) to capture and use data more effectively. High expectation of data and insights coming from principals. Better and more purposeful evidence is required.

04

### Equity through access, choice and opportunities:

Every student has the right to access opportunities no matter what their starting point is. There is a need to cater to diverse student needs.

05

### Responsive Teaching (including culturally) and diversity of learning needs:

One size doesn't fit all – the need to understand the diverse needs of all learners – success is different for everyone and needs to be recognised. This is becoming increasingly complex and challenging and teachers are feeling the pressure. Catching the kids at the tail.

"IN YEAR 11 I TOOK AN EXTENDED SCIENCE COURSE AS A WAY TO TAKE A STEP TOWARDS MY CAREER. TO DO THIS I HAD TO DROP EITHER TE REO MĀORI OR MĀORI PERFORMING ARTS. I WAS NO LONGER WITH MY FRIEND GROUP AND FELT LIKE I HAD LOST PART OF MY PASSION SOMETHING THAT KEPT ME GOING...A DISCONNECT."

MANAAKI. 21



