Ko te reo o nga akonga:
Creative leadership of Maori student partnerships

Our context
- Secondary – rural, decile 8, 601 students, 6% Maori
- Primary – urban, decile 4, 300 students, 20% Maori
- South Canterbury, Ngai Tahu, small numbers of Maori students, achieving above national rates, few Maori teachers and resources, over-represented in truancy/discipline
- Ka Hikitia
- Te Kete o Aoraki ki Arowhenua
- Kaihautu Matauranga Maori ki Arowhenua
All adds up to high expectations and a demand for leaders to deliver

Student voice

1. Being heard

We used a specific model for gathering student voice - outlined in the paper

A hui that was relevant to the age, cultural norms and school context

Requires a lot of preparation and resourcing to get it right

Consider the sensitivity of taking this step in your own context

Key questions

How do you learn best – what is happening in a successful and positive lesson for you?
- What is the best thing about being Maori at school
- What are the challenges about being Maori at school
- What are your ideas for making things great for Maori at school
- Who do you look up to (at school or beyond) and why?

What they told us: our observations

- The students don't know what they don't know – it is a big mindshift to bring their culture to school if they have always had to leave it at the gate
- Some students, given the context we described, are not familiar with their Maori heritage and culture
- Once they got started the ideas were surprising, challenging, inspiring and moving
- They could articulate what they wanted from their education but no so clearly with regards their culture
Follow up
2. Collaborating with adults
- Whanau were given the opportunity to discuss the feedback with their tamariki and the school
- Staff discussed the feedback and developed an action plan
- Students helped to plan the next hui
- Key themes from the feedback were the focus of the next hui

3. Building capacity for leadership
- Distributed leadership includes students
- Give them the tools, resources, support & mana they need to be able to take action
- Both primary and secondary settings provide multiple opportunities for leadership given adequate guidance, structure and mentoring

Outcomes from SV process
- Increase in numbers identifying as Maori (6% to 13% and 20% to 25% in 2 years)
- Better engagement in school – ie; reduction in truancy at secondary
- Improved targets and tracking of academic outcomes for Maori in national standards and NCEA
- Greater engagement by whanau in information meetings and events – student-led events attract families
- Teacher professional learning – ie; Te Manawa Pou, Mauri Ora
- Greater Maori presence in school life – powhiri, art programmes, kapa haka, guest speakers, environment
- Kaupapa Maori strategy for Boards, adoption of Ko Hikitia
- Strengthened links with wider community & resources
- Understanding of democratic processes for students to use in other contexts

Creative leadership
Caring communities
- Our next steps…

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