Leadership: Going beyond personal will and professional skills to give life to Ka Hikitia

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Abstract
This paper investigates the Ka Hikitia Māori education policy and its subsequent influence in effecting system change towards Māori students' achievement. It discusses how a Request for Proposal to the Ministry of Education's Building on Success was conceptualised to support English-medium secondary schools across New Zealand to address this policy. The result, Kia Eke Panuku, is a professional learning and development response that works with Strategic Change Leadership Teams to create culturally responsive and relational contexts for learning, focused on Māori students enjoying and achieving educational success as Māori. It is argued that neither a political mandate for change nor a set of learned strategies by school personnel will truly bring about a changed reality for Māori students. Rather the reform must be led by transformative leaders who are driven by both the moral imperative to change and a keen sense of urgency to see this happen in our schools for Māori students and their home communities.

The major issues raised in this paper, and the solutions that have been reached thus far, can help inform others who are trying to raise the participation, inclusion and achievement of students who may currently be marginalised from formal education settings.

Keywords: *Education policy; reducing disparity; transformative leadership; moral imperative; culturally responsive and relational contexts for learning*

The New Zealand context

Educational achievement disparities between specific groups of students in New Zealand continue over time to be of concern, and of particular concern is the achievement of Māori students. Our national statistics reveal that Māori students do not do as well within our schooling system as Pākehā. In 2014, 26 per cent of Māori who left school had no formal school qualification compared with 10 per cent of New Zealand European school leavers (Ministry of Education, 2016). International measures confirm this picture. The Program for International Student Assessment (PISA) testing across the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) countries continues to show New Zealand's education system as one that, in terms of education outcomes, achieves high levels of achievement for many students but not for all. (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, 2004, 2007, 2010). From the 2012 PISA survey, we saw that overall New Zealand achievement was above the OECD average in reading, mathematics and science, but the achievement of Māori students was below both the New Zealand average and the OECD average (May, Cowles & Lamy, 2013).

PISA describes the New Zealand situation, where some students do well but there is a large gap between high and low achievers, as being one of high quality and low equity. Descriptions of high quality and low equity education systems, driven by deficit-oriented approaches, are familiar to educators across the world (Sleeter, 2011). The learners disproportionately underserved in New Zealand's secondary schools continue to be Māori and sadly the marginalisation of this group of students is neither a recent phenomenon nor is it confined to education (Bishop, Berryman & Wearmouth, 2014). Māori learners do not remain in schooling for as long as other students, nor are they achieving as highly (Auditor-General, 2012, 2013). Consequently Māori students leave school with lower qualifications and fewer life choices for their own futures and for the future well-being of our society as a whole.

Despite these groups of students being clearly identified both nationally and within schools and being the focus and concern of educational leaders, little has effectively disrupted this trend or promoted significant positive change for Māori in education (Auditor-General, 2012; Berryman, 2008).

The New Zealand policy response: Ka Hikitia

A number of government initiatives and policies are focused on reducing the ongoing disparity of outcomes between Māori and non-Māori. Charged with improving Māori student experiences in the education system, the Ministry of Education launched Ka Hikitia - Managing for Success: Māori Education Strategy 2008-2012 (Ministry of Education, 2008). This strategy challenged educators to collaboratively focus on making the difference by ensuring that Māori students, "in their early years and first years of secondary school are present, engaged and achieving, and strong relationships with educators, whānau and iwi are supporting them to excel" (p. 5). The term Ka Hikitia, defined as a means to "'step up', 'lift up', or lengthen one's stride'" (Ministry of Education, 2008, p. 10), was positioned as "a call to action" (p. 11) in order to step up "the performance of the education system to ensure Māori [students] are enjoying education success as Māori" (p. 10). Within this strategy was a challenge to schools, education centres, educators, communities and the education system itself to step up so as to more effectively ensure the potential of its Māori learners. In so doing, the Ministry of Education recognised the need for an extensive change in positioning, expectations and practices across the entire education sector, "[i]t is about a shift in thinking and behaviour, a change in attitudes and expectations" (Ministry of Education, 2008, p. 4).

The Ka Hikitia policy goals were set out for four focus areas: foundation years; young people engaged in learning; Māori language education; and, organisational success. Together with other initiatives aimed at contributing to Ka Hikitia, the intent of this policy was to change the rhetoric and practice of educators across the system – a huge and necessary undertaking. An American scholar on sabbatical with the Ministry of Education drew attention to the difficulty of implementation at a Ministry of Education level and the danger of reducing the intent to a transactional, compliance checklist:

> The challenge in an organisation like the Ministry is to engage in processes that change attitudes, thinking, and behaviours rather than forcing compliance, while adhering to timelines that meet urgent priorities. (Goren, 2009, p.vi)

While there have been some positive changes at the systemic level, including a refocusing of professional standards for teachers (New Zealand Teachers Council, 2009) and the development of resources such as *Tātaiako: Cultural Competencies for Teachers of Māori Learners* (Ministry of Education, 2011), the release of Ka Hikitia did little to prepare schools' Boards of Trustees, principals or teachers to either identify what was required or to implement the policy. While it was important that schools and communities understood why the priorities were established and the importance of engaging with the ideas, there was no real resourcing available or professional development to assist with the implementation. This meant that even though schools might own the priorities for their Māori students (establishing the "will"), the vital next step, knowing how to act in order to achieve the goal (developing the "skill") was not forthcoming. Consequently, while some emerging achievement gains for Māori students had been identified along with 'pockets of success' (Ministry of Education, 2013a*),* the implementation of the strategy from 2008 was slower than anticipated and disparity in achievement between Māori and non-Māori learners persisted at all levels of education.

A new urgency and impetus for the Ka Hikitia vision was underpinned by the confirmation in 2012 of the Government's Better Public Service target: *85% of 18 year olds achieving NCEA level 2 or equivalent, in 2017.* This target presented some challenges given that, in 2011, only 57.1% of Māori students achieved NCEA Level 2. To inform and refresh the Ka Hikitia strategy and its effectiveness, the Ministry of Education

conducted an open consultation process over 2012, with *Ka Hikitia – Accelerating Success 2013–2017* (Ministry of Education, 2013a) being released in 2013. In the same year, to accelerate success for Māori learners by brokering the immediate and sustained change needed across the education sector, the Ministry of Education requested proposals for a school-based professional development programme to raise the performance of our education system across the secondary school level (13 to 18 year olds).

Expectations and responses

Under a working title of *Building on Success*, Ministry of Education's (2013b) Registration of Interest required the successful contractors to provide a professional learning and development model that created a moral, social and economic imperative to ensure priority learners achieved success, and in particular that Māori learners enjoyed and achieved success as Māori. The focus would be on raising achievement both at the individual school level and within and across the system. Through Building on Success, the Ministry sought a response that would generate equity by building in-school leader and teacher capability to embed *what works* for Māori learners within classrooms, leadership, school governance and school-wide practices. Central to the Ministry's expected approach to the procurement and provision of professional learning and development for schools, were the expectations that the contractor would:

1. provide an urgent focus on developing school and teacher capability to respond more effectively to the learning needs of all Māori learners and thus accelerate Māori achievement;
2. be flexible and responsive to the diverse identity, language and culture of learners;
3. be based on evidence of learner strengths and needs within a school;
4. have clear and measureable outcomes for learners;
5. be based on *The New Zealand Curriculum* and *Te Marautanga o Aotearoa;*
6. build sustainable school-wide inquiry and practice within schools in collaboration with learners, parents, whānau, iwi, hapū, Māori organisations, communities and businesses.

Within the contextual landscape of the re-launch of Ka Hikitia and the growing sense of urgency around Māori student achievement, the resulting initiative should also bring together the learnings from over a decade of discrete and varied professional learning and development and research initiatives addressing aspects of school life that impacted on Māori students' school experiences and their achievement (Ministry of Education, 2013b).

While the Registration of Interest provided a number of major challenging expectations including the immensity of the task, a consortium led by the University of Waikato and including Te Whare Wānanga o Awanuiārangi and the University of Auckland, responded with a proposal. The proposed professional learning and development model would build on and strengthen the understandings gained from five previous programmes that, collectively, each of these institutions had been involved with: Te Kotahitanga; He Kākano; the Starpath Project for Tertiary Participation and Success, and the Secondary Literacy and Numeracy Projects. The proposal detailed how the consortium would seek to collaborate with the leadership, teaching and existing professional learning and development communities across each participating secondary school to develop a tailored, change approach that would coherently and unrelentingly focus on valued student outcomes for Māori students. The proposal undertook to use an inquiry, evidence-based approach that would be responsive to each individual school and would aim to accelerate and lift the levels of achievement and education success of Māori students as Māori. It was proposed that the professional learning and development would aim to build leadership, teacher and school-wide capacity and capability with a focus on accelerating results. Furthermore, over the three years of the contract, the professional learning and development would also seek to develop and embed practices, processes, systems and structures to sustain these increased levels of achievement. This would include each school's commitment to matching nationally expected (Māori, non-Māori) distributions for achievement over a range of outcomes including NCEA Level 2. It would also include schools' relational and productive engagement with their Māori communities (whānau, hapū and iwi).

From contract to conceptualisation

A late signing of the contract and a need to begin working in schools before the programme model was fully developed resulted in a relatively fluid contractual arrangement between the Ministry and the consortium. This relationship allowed for the Ministry and the consortium to develop and learn from each other, resulting in both benefits and challenges in fitting the proposed programme model into a contractual framework.

Utilising a collaborative, evidence-based inquiry model, Kia Eke Panuku has focussed on strengthening Māori students' participation and achievement and thus their potential and future as productive citizens at a whānau, hapū and iwi level and at the level of New Zealand and the global community. The model focuses on what schools' leadership, teachers, and in turn Māori students and whānau can do in response to the strengths and/or challenges identified from within the range of contexts and settings in which they each engage and the evidence that has and is emerging. As such, our aim is that schools will become inextricably connected through Māori students to their homes and communities (Alton-Lee, Robinson, Hohepa & Lloyd, 2009). We understand that working more effectively with Māori communities can enable schools to benefit from the funds of cultural knowledge (Moll, Amanti, Neff & Gonzalez, 1992) and expertise that continue to be marginalised and under-utilised by many schools. We also understand that Māori focussed and kaupapa Māori methodologies can provide us with more respectful, culturally responsive and appropriate pathways for undertaking this work (Berryman & Bishop, 2011). While these methodologies have remained important, what has become increasingly important is our use of critical theories to support and accelerate kaupapa Māori theories (Berryman, Nevin, SooHoo & Ford, 2015) if we are to include Māori and other marginalised students more effectively.

This model, now known as Kia Eke Panuku is explicitly linked to Ka Hikitia, the kaupapa of Kia Eke Panuku being *secondary schools giving life to Ka Hikitia and addressing the aspirations of Māori communities by supporting Māori students to pursue their potential*. Alongside the link to kaupapa Māori, links to bicultural partnerships and critical theories are also very important for they allow us to discuss our Kia Eke Panuku response under the mandates of the Treaty of Waitangi and social justice. Positioning ourselves as Treaty Partners calls on us to confront and address the major imbalances of power and privilege that exist as a result of our history and positioning within the Treaty either as Māori, or descendants of the colonisers of Aotearoa, or as economic migrants. It also requires us first to acknowledge and reflect *critically* on the historical and continuingly destructive impact that loss of land, loss of language, loss of *rangatiratanga* (self determination) and loss of *mana* (ascribed personal prestige and power), continues to have on the wellbeing and success of Māori today. We understand that:

> [f]rom the perspective of critical theory this requires those who have traditionally maintained power to both critically examine their own participation and privilege, then seek power-sharing relationships rather than perpetuate the more traditional impositional stance that continues to promote disparities. (Berryman, 2013, p. 9.)

Seeking power-sharing relationships between Treaty partners in the field of educational professional learning and development is therefore essential if we are to avoid imposing yet more inadequate education theories that position Māori epistemologies and world-views at the margins of educational policy and practice rather than at the centre (L. Smith, 1999).

Kia Eke Panuku: Building on success

Both the Ministry and the consortium agreed that Kia Eke Panuku's professional learning and development work in schools should build on previous professional learning and development initiatives, as well as current initiatives and strategic drivers within each school. The work within and across schools, is required to be responsive and relational to Māori students and their home communities. Within this responsive approach, each school engages in a professional learning and development journey that is differentiated and adaptive to

the school's own evidence; builds capacity and expertise within the school; and, invests in local people and their own solutions. A relational approach requires that relationships are developed with the school, within the school, with other schools, with whānau, hapū and iwi and with relevant Ministry of Education personnel so that all can maintain a clear and unrelenting focus on the kaupapa or shared agenda.

Each school begins with an initial profiling process, followed by an intensity discussion based on the five inter-related dimensions that have become the hallmark of Kia Eke Panuku. School leaders are also asked to develop a Strategic Change Leadership team. These activities ensure that schools' leaders and the Kia Eke Panuku team can co-construct an entry point that best aligns with the individual school evidence of Māori students' engagement and achievement and other related contextual factors. The five dimensions of Kia Eke Panuku are:

1. Leadership
2. Evidence-based inquiry
3. Culturally responsive and relational contexts for learning
4. Educationally powerful connections amongst schools, whānau, hapū, iwi and Māori organisations
5. Literacy, numeracy and te reo across the curriculum.

It is expected that the simultaneous implementation of these dimensions will provide an accelerated focus and contribute towards closing the gaps between Māori and non-Māori students. These dimensions provide the framework for the individualised action plans developed by the Strategic Change Leadership teams in each school. Kia Eke Panuku *kaitoro* (facilitators) work with Strategic Change Leadership teams to develop these action plans and work across these dimensions to bring about sustainable change within the school. This work is about developing and growing the 'skill and the will' within school personnel, to improve outcomes for Māori students. Ultimately the goal is to provide in-school capability along with tools and resources that are fit for purpose and remove the need for external support and facilitation.

Learning, unlearning, relearning

Through ongoing responsive and relational engagement, school leaders and teachers are supported to explore the theoretical underpinnings of Kia Eke Panuku from within a dynamic and spiralling, *critical* cycle of self-reflection and learning. This cycle was constructed as we have begun to think about what needs to happen within our work, from wherever schools have entered and are now engaging with us through Kia Eke Panuku. We are focussing on what they/we need to do if we are to address the kaupapa of Kia Eke Panuku in these schools.

In the work of the Kia Eke Panuku team with schools, an essential part of the new learning involves us unlearning (Wink, 2011) or disrupting much of what have become the embedded discourses or status quo (Apple, 2013) about Māori students and their home communities in order to relearn more emancipatory discourses of potential and social justice. Teachers and leaders begin to question what it was they are doing and how this might be contributing to or resisting the current hegemony in their schools and then into our nation. This has created contexts where leaders' and teachers' discourses have begun to exemplify the dynamic interplay between the critical principles of conscientisation, resistance and transformative praxis (Freire, 1972; G. Smith, 2003).

Under the mandate of the Treaty of Waitangi and within bi-cultural partnerships, Māori and non-Māori colleagues are invited to take a shared responsibility for leadership. In the activation of this bi-cultural response we hear leaders who have said:

> *It's about critically evaluating how partnership, participation and protection play out for Māori and non-Māori in our schools and in our communities, and then activating our agency to disrupt discourses and practices that perpetuate disparities in education that lead to inequity in our wider society.*

There is a clear understanding from many, that changing what is currently happening within this partnership arrangement can create a better situation for both Māori and non-Māori.

> *We need to dismantle what is not working, and learn new theories, discourses and practices to reform our mainstream schools so that they are places where both Treaty partners can enjoy the benefits that success in education can offer.*
>
> *That means we all need to step up to that responsibility. It's not something that we can abrogate responsibility for and leave to the politicians, or to Māori, or to Pākehā, or to someone else. It's a responsibility we each have as citizens, as adults and as educators. It's urgent, it's important and it's exciting.*

To enable Māori students to enjoy and achieve educational success as Māori in education contexts means taking collective responsibility for upholding the principles inherent in the Treaty of Waitangi. Evidence of outcomes for Māori learners, alongside evidence of current leadership and/or classroom practices, can inform new theorising and practices (*conscientisation*) towards the creation of a more socially just country. Leaders and teachers can then decide what practices may be most effective and therefore need to be sustained; what practices are ineffective and need to be discontinued; and what practices need to change in order to become more effective for Māori learners. These practices are understood within Freire's (1972) concept of *resistance*. Leaders and teachers then implement and reflect on those changes that will lead to accelerating improved outcomes for *Māori learners as Māori* in order to bring about *transformative praxis*.

Success factors

Adrienne Alton-Lee (2015) identified principles that were essential to the success of Māori students in Te Kotahitanga (Bishop, Berryman & Wearmouth, 2014) that we have built on in Kia Eke Panuku. We are working to ensure that Indigenous educational expertise is able to promote a culturally responsive provision for Māori with whanaungatanga relationships driving how these improvements will be understood and implemented. Effective professional development and teaching are both understood as incorporating a culturally responsive pedagogy of relations thus promoting school-based expertise in classrooms and schools. Together with transformative educational leadership and educationally powerful connections with Māori communities these principles are being applied to drive collaborative research and development cycles towards institutionalising deep change and accelerating improvement to scale.

Kaitoro, school leaders and teachers collaboratively build their capacity and capability in culturally responsive and relational practices. Each school selects a Kia Eke Panuku strategic change leadership team to lead the professional learning and development work in their own school. The notion of strategic selection is important, as this team needs to represent the range of voices and perspectives from across the staff and leadership structures. The cross-role and cross-curriculum composition of the team means the team is more likely to be in a position to critically challenge hierarchical leadership structures and thus may be better placed to accelerate spread and ownership of the kaupapa across the school.

With kaitoro support, strategic change leadership teams develop and implement a potential-focused action plan across the five inter-related dimensions introduced earlier, building on their existing learning, understandings, structures and institutions, and connecting to their individual school context. These five dimensions are the levers for accelerated school reform. The action plan provides a frame for the strategic change leadership team to specify what they are going to do, how they are going to work and with whom they need to work. This ensures that kaitoro support can be explicitly planned for across the schools.

Kaitoro also make available and provide support with a variety of purpose built tools and processes so that school teams can activate their action plans and meet their goals. These include critical conversation frameworks to support the profiling and formative monitoring of the school's leadership practices. Processes also include: classroom

observations to gain evidence of current pedagogical practices linking to shadow coaching support; critical learning conversations, to identify a focus for inquiry focused on accelerated improvement for Māori learners; and shadow-coaching partnerships, to provide ongoing support and challenge for teachers and leaders in this new learning.

Evidence-informed inquiry

A range of evidence from a variety of learning contexts informs the work in schools, including the analysis of strategic plans, education outcomes and perspectives from learners, teachers, leaders and whānau. This evidence can include demographic data from the school's student management system; perception data from different groups active in the learning environment; educational outcome data; and information about school processes and practices. Sometimes the evidence arises out of the use of Kia Eke Panuku tools and processes such as the classroom observation tool, subsequent learning conversations and shadow coaching as mentioned above.

Evidence is used to build a rich profile of the school context and the impact on outcomes for Māori learners. As part of the critical analysis of this evidence and making sense of the interplay between different forms of evidence in this profile a conversation might explore questions such as:

- What does the evidence suggest about our current theorising and practices?
- What has worked and what has not worked for Māori learners?
- What do we need to stop doing or begin to do differently?

As discussed by members of a school's strategic change leadership team, relevant evidence and ongoing critical reflections inform the continuing clarification of the focus and development of the school's strategic action plan:

> It's using evidence as a lens through which people can critically reflect on the influence of their current practice for Māori learners. The important thing about Kia Eke Panuku action plans is that they are iterative documents, and because people are discovering new things as they progress they should be constantly changing. As a new revelation comes up or a new set of data presents itself, there's a part of this action plan that we didn't know about before, and it's not reflected in it, so we need to change it. The action plans are living documents, quite fluid. They're not being completely changed all the time but they are being modified and tweaked as new realisations or new layers of understanding reveal themselves to the strategic change leadership team.

To focus both individual and group reflection on practice as teachers and/or leaders, evidence of practice is always part of the learning conversations. Through the process of making links between evidence of practice (what was observed) and theory (what we understand about this in terms of effective pedagogy) participants are able to deepen their own understandings about culturally responsive and relational pedagogy.

Progress to date

The nature of the Kia Eke Panuku response, and the intensity of the support provided by the facilitators, across the five dimensions is negotiated with each school. The measure of success becomes schools' perceptions that they are developing their own independence and therefore reducing the need for external facilitation. A single measure for each school becomes problematic – each dimension itself is multifaceted and understandings and uptake are likely to vary across a school. An additional complexity comes from the journey of discovery that each school takes – this may result in a 'the more we learn, the more we realise what we don't know' response from schools. Over time in the project – which currently is a maximum of 18 months – we have found that schools' perceptions of how they are rating against each dimension have 'moved' both positively and negatively. Each 'movement' reflects a dynamic and worthwhile journey – and opportunity for a challenging, critical conversation with kaitoro - but makes reporting within the contract difficult.

At the midpoint in the contract, most schools or, in some dimensions, almost all schools, perceived that they required external facilitation in order to bring about sustainable change within their school. The percentages below refer to the proportion of schools within Kia Eke Panuku who rated themselves as 'developing an intensive focus on' or 'requiring an intensive focus' against each dimension:

1. Leadership – 86%
2. Evidence-based inquiry – 86%
3. Culturally responsive and relational contexts for learning – 92%
4. Educationally powerful connections amongst schools, whānau, hapū, iwi and Māori organisations – 88%
5. Literacy, numeracy and te reo – 75%.

Schools' understandings of the kinds of sustainable change required across these dimensions can be seen in the voices of three Kia Eke Panuku principals who are reflecting upon their own agency to bring about the reform in their own school. Principal 1 understands the reform needs to reach across these dimensions:

> *To manage a change like this you actually need both elements; you need the structural element, which is the way the school conceives its goals and its priorities and its leadership and how it does things, but you also need what happens inside the classrooms.*

Principal 2 talked about how this involves learning and helping others to be learners on this journey as well:

> *If you think that you've got no room to grow, then it's time to quit. There's always room for improvement and fine-tuning. Shadow coaching will provide a really good opportunity for people to extend themselves.*

Principal 3 talked about the need to challenge deficit theorising and focus on one's own professional agency to bring about the reform:

> *I certainly was very upfront about challenging deficit theorising, and repositioning ourselves over time; in our heads and in our hearts… to be agentic as professionals.*

This was in line with the first principal who suggested:

> ***We*** *have to ensure that the sense of direction of the organisation is very clear and the leader's job is to define it and articulate it. Repeatedly.*
>
> *I would expect if this approach to changing teaching practice has got integrity and we apply it sincerely, it will speak for itself and the teachers who experience it will experience and see changes themselves and will tell other teachers about it and others will be drawn into this mahi … as time goes by we expect more and more people to get involved in it.*

His belief in the integrity of this work to draw others in was very humbling. However, there is increasing evidence to suggest that other school leaders are beginning to share similar sentiments.

Impact on student achievement

As with other Ministry of Education initiatives, one of the measures Kia Eke Panuku uses is its impact on student achievement within schools. At this point in time, only one year's NCEA achievement data is available to the team. However, analysis of the 2014 national data set for the 42 schools that had been in the programme for a year (known as Tranche 1) shows some encouraging indications of the impact of Kia Eke Panuku through 2014 – the first year of the programme implementation. However, within Kia Eke Panuku the data is treated with caution as it is only one year's return. Results are therefore presented in a context of discovery rather than of confirmation. These results are shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Comparison of NCEA Level 2 achievement of 16 year old Māori students in Kia Eke Panuku Tranche 1 schools and non Kia Eke Panuku schools, by decile.

	Schools(n)	2011	2012	2013	2014	1 year % shift	2 year % shift
Kia Eke Panuku							
Tranche 1 Decile 1-3	21	53.1	51.3	54.3	56.6	2.3	5.4
Tranche 1 Decile 4-7	18	56.1	57.6	63.1	67.0	4.8	9.4
Tranche 1 Decile 7-10	3	56.3	53.4	60.5	52.5	-8.0	-0.9
Non Kia Eke Panuku							
Decile 1 – 3	128	51.6	54.7	56.6	59.0	3.2	4.3
Decile 4-6	165	53.0	58.4	61.9	64.2	2.3	5.8
Decile 7-10	113	69.6	73.8	74.1	76.4	2.3	2.6

As Table 1 shows, the proportion of Māori students achieving NCEA Level 2 in the 39 low and mid decile Kia Eke Panuku schools increased in 2014 at a greater rate than in non-Kia Eke Panuku schools. Compared with 2012 results, the proportion of Māori students in Kia Eke Panuku low decile schools increased by 5.4%, while those in non-Kia Eke Panuku schools increased by 4.3%. For mid-decile schools, the difference for Kia Eke Panuku schools between 2012 and 2014 was 9.2% compared to non Kia Eke Panuku schools of 5.8%. This was not observed in the three high decile schools although the very small numbers of Māori students in these schools does not allow for a reliable comparison.

Equally encouraging is the progress demonstrated in schools where Kia Eke Panuku builds on the previous programmes within the school - specifically Te Kotahitanga, Starpath or He Kākano. Analysis of the 2014 NCEA achievement data for all Kia Eke Panuku Tranche 1 schools showed a two year shift of 6.71% for the 42 schools (compared to 4.94% of schools not in Kia Eke Panuku). For the 33 schools in one of these previous programmes, the two year shift in Māori student achievement of NCEA Level 2 was 7.31%.

Is will and skill enough to see sustained reform in schools?

This paper began by showing that, while the good intentions of policy-makers, school leaders and teachers, and a number of discrete interventions aimed at *fixing the Māori student problem*, may be necessary conditions for change, they are not in themselves sufficient. Indeed, there has been little truly celebratable progress in terms of system change since Ka Hikitia was introduced.   This may not be too surprising, for in the words of Cummins (1986):

> … a major reason previous attempts at educational reform have been unsuccessful is that the relationships between students and teachers and between schools and communities have remained essentially unchanged. The required changes involve personal redefinitions of the way classroom teachers interact with the children and communities they serve. In other words, legislative and policy reforms may be necessary conditions for effective change, but they are not sufficient. Implementation of change is dependent upon the extent to which educators, both collectively and individually, redefine their roles with respect to minority students and communities (pp. 18-19).

We would argue that a desire and a mandate for there to be a change (the *will* of reform) is an essential prerequisite for change but is not sufficient on its own. We would also argue that effective professional learning and development programmes in schools that support leaders and teachers to improve their practices around Māori student experiences (the *skill* of reform) are also essential but insufficient. Combined, these will make a difference for students lucky enough to be in those schools and in the classrooms of teachers who are committed to the kaupapa of Kia Eke Panuku.

However, for sustained systemic change, we believe a further factor is required – widespread ownership of the personal and the public responsibility to use power, privilege, and position within schools to promote social justice and enlightenment for the benefit, not only of individuals and the organisation, but of society as a whole (Quantz, Rogers & Dantley, 1991; Shields, 2010). Fullan (2003, 2007) refers to leadership for sustainability as public service with a moral purpose. Deep, sustainable change that truly leads to Māori students enjoying and achieving educational success as Māori requires *will* (school leaders deliberate engagement with the policy mandate), and *skill* (school leaders and teachers learning from the research and professional learning and development about what works for Māori) underpinned by a relentless *moral imperative* for change.

Leadership practice that is underpinned by a moral imperative is cognisant of the differing power relations within which we all live. This has been called transformative leadership and seeks to engage with deliberate change and an explicit challenge of the status quo. Shields (2010, 2013) identifies eight key principles of transformative leadership:

- the mandate to effect deep and equitable change
- the need to deconstruct and reconstruct knowledge frameworks that perpetuate inequity and injustice
- a focus on emancipation, democracy, equity, and justice
- the need to address the inequitable distribution of power
- an emphasis on both individual and collective good
- an emphasis on interdependence, interconnectedness, and global awareness
- the necessity of balancing critique with promise
- the call to exhibit moral courage.

To demonstrate these eight principles, while leading the blooming, buzzing confusion (to misuse a quote from William James) that is the daily life in busy New Zealand secondary schools, requires the moral drive and character that goes beyond will and skill. These leaders must also possess the following qualities (see Walter, 2014) that endure beyond the application of will and skill. These are:

- the courage to persist with a vision for Māori students enjoying and achieving educational success as Māori despite what society and history would portray as the 'norm'
- the ability to reframe the situation in order to see new realities and possibilities – that is to learn, unlearn and relearn all aspects of practices and beliefs within a school
- a sense of urgency – the belief that things must change for the students we have in front of us today, tomorrow and into the future.

Conclusion

We began this paper by investigating the introduction, by the Ministry of Education, in 2008 of *Ka Hikitia – Managing for Success: Māori Education Strategy.* This strategy was a deliberate call to educators across the New Zealand system to step up their efforts to ensure more Māori students were *enjoying and achieving educational success as Māori*. Despite the best intentions of the policy makers and the desire of principals and teachers to see the best for their Māori students, the introduction of the policy alone was not sufficient to disrupt the ongoing patterns of traditional pedagogy that perpetuated Māori student underachievement.

Through the introduction of Kia Eke Panuku in 94 secondary schools, we have seen some very pleasing early results. However, the results cannot be attributed to either the policy mandate to bring about the change, or to a new set of skills or strategies provided to school personnel. Instead, we see that beyond the will (the mandate to change) and the skills of school personnel, the driver for reform rests with leaders who embrace the moral imperative to be the agents for change and who underpin their leadership with a refusal to tolerate a status quo that includes disparity for Māori students within their school. This ensures that the work is led with a real sense of urgency and with courage to persist with the kaupapa by reframing the situation so that new emancipatory possibilities can be revealed. We contend that in some Kia Eke Panuku schools, transformative leadership such as this has already begun to give life to Ka Hikitia.

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