



Kia Puāwaitia Ngā Tūmanako

Critical Issues for Whānau in Māori Education

Jessica Hutchings, Alex Barnes, Katrina Taupo and
Nicola Bright with Leonie Pihama and Jenny Lee



TE WĀHANGA
HE WHĀNAU MĀTAU HE WHĀNAU ORA

 **NZCER**



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Jessica Hutchings, Alex Barnes, Katrina Taupo and Nicola Bright with
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NEW ZEALAND COUNCIL FOR EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH

TE RŪNANGA O AOTEAROA MŌ TE RANGAHAU I TE MĀTAURANGA

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He whakarāpopoto

Nō te tau 2011 i whakarewaina ai e mātou tētahi kaupapa i takea mai i te pātai ki ngā tini whānau i ngā tōpito e whā o te motu:

He aha ngā momo rangahau mātauranga ka whai hua ki ō tamariki, ki tō whānau, mō te taha mātauranga?

E mōhio ana ko te pūtake o te ora o te tangata Māori ko te toiora o ngā whānau matahuhua. E tino mārā ana a Te Wāhanga me NZCER me mātua whakawātea he tikanga ki ngā whānau matahuhua e whakaatu mai ai rātou i ngā take mātauranga nunui e pā ana ki a rātou, me ngā pātai e tika ana kia wherawherahia i roto i ā mātou mahi, e whai tikanga ai ā mātou rangahau ki te iwi Māori. Inā rā te whakataukī i aronuitia e mātou i ēnei tau *He Whānau Mātau, He Whānau Ora*, ko te whakaaro whānau nei te tūāpapa mō tēnei kaupapa. Mai anō ko ngā rangahau a te ao Pākehā ka tōia tāwhangawhangatia ki roto i te ao Māori, ki waenganui i ngā whānau. Ko tā mātou, he tū ki te wero i ēnei momo tikanga, he tahuri hoki ki te waihanga kaupapa rangahau Māori mai i runga ki raro, kia noho ko te Māori hei kaiārahi, hei kaiwhakatau tikanga. I roto i ngā tau e rua kua tahuri atu mātou ki te whakawhanaunga haere ki te hunga e kaingākau ana ki te mātauranga Māori. E mārā ana mātou e whai take ai ā mātou mahi rangahau kaupapa Māori ki ngā whānau ki te titiro a te whānau, mā te whakamahi i ngā tikanga, i ngā huarahi kaupapa Māori, he mea tēnei e kite ai te whānau i a rātou anō, me te mahi nui kia whai hua ā mātou mahi mō te whakaahuatanga o ngā kaupapa tuku iho.

Hei whakaahua ngā whakaputanga mahi i tēnei pūrongo i te rukuhanga mai a ngā whānau matahuhua ki ngā kaupapa mātauranga Māori, kaupapa Pākehā hoki. Ko tā mātou he whai kia mōhio he pēhea rawa e tautokona ai ō rātou moemoeā, e tēnā tauira, e tēnā tauira, i tēnei rā, ā ngā rā hoki kei mua i te aroaro, he aha hoki ngā mea kia whakapakaritia mō ngā whānau, kia eke ai ō rātou moemoeā. Ko ngā pātai me ngā kaupapa o roto, nā ngā whānau i tāpae ki mua i a mātou, ā, i hangaia e mātou tētahi rārangi kaupapa rangahau Māori hei whakaata i ā rātou whāinga nunui. Ko tā *He Whānau Mātau, He Whānau Ora* he whakaara take puta noa i ngā kura kaupapa Māori, i ngā kura Pākehā, pēnei i te kouniga o te reo, i ngā mahi whakangungu pouako, i pai o ngā rauemi, i te hōhonutanga o te kōrero “te ekenga a te Māori ki ngā taumata”, me te wātea mai o ngā huarahi mātauranga Māori

tino tōtika. Ahakoa te nonoke a te ao mātauranga Māori me te ao mātauranga Pākehā ki ēnei tāpokopokotanga, arā ngā rerekētanga o te urupare a tētahi, a tētahi.

Hei whakaū tēnei kōkiri nui i te tikanga matua, hei ngā rā e tū mai nei me tāwharau katoa ngā rangahau kaupapa Māori ki raro i ngā kaupapa torowhānui o Ngā Moemoeā, o te Rangatiratanga, me Te Reo Rangatira. Ka noho ēnei kaupapa e toru hei tūāpapa mō ā mātou mahi ā ngā tau kei mua i te aroaro, hei tohu pupuri hoki i te ahunga o te waka, kia ū tonu te ihu ki te mana motuhake mō ngā whānau, me te noho tonu iho hoki o aua kaupapa hei punga mō ngā mahi whakarauora i te reo. Ka aratakina te whānuitanga o ā mātou mahi e ngā pūmanawa o tō mātou rōpū—ō mātou kahanga, ō mātou pūmanawa whakahaere hoki. E herea ana a *He Whānau Mātau*, *He Whānau Ora* e ngā pūtea ka whiwhi mātou, hei wāhi o tā mātou kirimana ki te Tāhuhu o Te Mātauranga.

Tā mātou whāinga matua ia kia noho ko ngā rangahau Māori i raro Te Wāhanga hei pou whirinaki mā ngā whānau kia tutuki ō rātou moemoeā mō te mātauranga. Ki a mātou me hāngai ō mātou whakaaro ki ngā āhuatanga taketake o ngā whānau matahuhua, kua ki ngā whāinga takitahi o te ao rangahau. Ka mahi nui mātou i te taha o ngā hāpori Māori matahuhua hei kairangahau kaupapa Māori kia noho kē ko te mana i a rātou. I raro i tēnei kaupapa he tika kia matawhānui te titiro ki ngā huarahi e tautokona ai ā rātou wawata, ahakoa mō te mātauranga, ahakoa mō te akoranga. Ka huia katoatia ēnei kōwae katoa, ā, koia ēnei ngā whenu kei te ringaringa mō ā mātou mahi. Mā te nui mā te iti o ngā taonga kua homai ki a mātou hei whakarite ngā mea ka taea, ngā mea hoki kāore e taea. Ahakoa e whakaae ana mātou he mea ka taea, he mea hoki kāore e taea, e tino whakapono ana a Te Wāhanga mā te kahupapa i poua ki runga i ngā whakaputanga kōrero mai o ngā whānau ka tika ai te kī, he Māori te hunga kei mua, te hunga tohu i te huarahi. I takea mai i ngā kaupapa tuku iho, i te whakapono hoki he kaupapa ēnei e hurihia ai ngā tikanga, ngā mahi.

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Ngā whāinga matua: Executive summary

This report presents the findings of a kaupapa Māori research project that identifies diverse whānau aspirations in Māori education. We asked a variety of whānau the question: *What sorts of educational research would be of benefit to your children and whānau in education?*

The whānau responses to this question have resulted in refining a Māori-led and whānau-informed research agenda for Te Wāhanga, the kaupapa Māori research team within the New Zealand Council for Educational Research (NZCER).

Whanaungatanga as methodology

This research aims to have a positive impact on the lives of those Māori participating in the education system. It is connected to and supportive of the aspirations of whānau and the associated collectives of diverse Māori communities. We have used a kaupapa Māori methodology of whanaungatanga to work directly with whānau in a way that upholds their integrity and authority. This approach has been put into practice through the use of kōrero ā-whānau, which illuminate the everyday realities of whānau in education. These kaupapa Māori approaches plainly locate at the centre of our work voices of whānau and their priorities and aspirations in education. Our research has not attempted to impose an external conceptual framework to make sense of whānau experiences. The voices of whānau appear as they were communicated to us. We have avoided “distilling” and layering our own analysis of whānau experiences of the education system. This has enabled the voices and intended meanings of whānau to remain intact, and has been a distinctive feature of the whanaungatanga methodology and kōrero ā-whānau method.

The kaupapa Māori-driven methodology of whanaungatanga, the process of wānanga, and methods of gathering kōrero ā-whānau have enabled us to identify critical issues for

whānau in te kōhanga reo, wharekura, early childhood education and Pākehā schools.¹ Our decision to focus on whānau is a response to criticisms that research in the field of Māori education is often not determined by whānau or for whānau. This project puts their voices centre-stage. From this we have collectively developed a Māori-led and whānau-informed research agenda in Māori education.

Background to the research

There is a broad consensus by New Zealand educationalists that the experience of British colonialism has had far-reaching and complex implications for the New Zealand education system. The diverse realities of whānau have become simplified and incorrectly positioned as being similar to a “nuclear family”. Whānau have also become disconnected from expressions of kaupapa tuku iho. Māori have employed innovative strategies centred on cultural revitalisation and social justice to maintain their cultural distinctiveness in the face of Eurocentric systems and structures.

The wellbeing of Māori society is based, in large part, on the wellbeing of whānau. Reaffirming diverse kōrero ā-whānau, this report seeks to create a research agenda that is relevant to whānau in Māori education. The experiences presented are based on kōrero ā-whānau in Māori and Pākehā educational settings. Importantly, the project has been guided by our Rōpū Tikanga Rangahau.²

Towards a whānau-informed kaupapa Māori research agenda in education

The Te Wāhanga whakataukī *He Whānau Mātau, He Whānau Ora*³ deliberately anchors this research in the complexities of whānau educational and learning priorities. With our learning from this kaupapa Māori project, Te Wāhanga is adamant that any future Māori educational research we undertake must locate the diverse aspirations of whānau in the centre. This means:

- understanding how the research is conceptualised in relation to whānau
- exploring whānau aspirations and research goals
- defining what research benefits will flow on to whānau
- defining how we share the research findings
- understanding how researchers demonstrate whanaungatanga throughout the process of research with whānau
- addressing criticisms that research in the field of Māori education is often not determined by whānau or for whānau.

¹ We are using the term “Pākehā schools” as the majority of the whānau we worked with used this term or “Pākehā education” when describing English-medium models of education.

² Te Rōpū Tikanga Rangahau is a kaupapa Māori research reference group. It guides the work of Te Wāhanga. Members include Moana Jackson, Ani Mikaere, Lee Cooper and Hazel Philips.

³ This whakataukī can be directly translated as “A knowing family is a healthy family”.

Below are the questions and issues raised by whānau who have experience of kaupapa Māori and Pākehā schooling models. These questions and issues have not been analysed for particular themes, nor have they distilled or categorised for consistency. The issues appear in the way that whānau articulated them to us. Many of the questions or issues overlap. Because of this they must not be read in isolation. Rather, each area informs the other.

Te kōhanga reo

- Exploring Māori pedagogy and how it is practised as positive teaching practice in Māori education.
- Strengthen the kura–kāinga relationship.
- What are the current barriers to whānau having access to immersion Māori education?
- What is underpinning the inequitable resourcing of Māori education?
- What are whānau aspirations for their tamariki and mokopuna, and how do whānau develop pathways towards them?
- How do we achieve increased access to Māori-medium education?
- How are our tamariki successful? What are Māori ways of defining success in an educational context? How do we wish to measure that?
- How do whānau make educational decisions and what do they need so they can do that?
- How do we provide transition and continuity in Māori education?
- What are parents/whānau aspirations for their tamariki?
- How are tamariki with special needs and their whānau being provided for?
- What are the professional development needs of kaiako in kōhanga, kura, wharekura? And how can we achieve those?
- What are the reo Māori needs of whānau?

Wharekura

Kura

- How can small kura offer a greater range of subject options?
- How can small kura with limited staff grow and sustain sport and cultural activities?
- What student leadership activities best benefit kaupapa Māori students?
- How can students attending kaupapa Māori schooling be best prepared to work and study in the non-Māori world?
- What kaupapa Māori Māori-medium curriculum resources are available to wharekura? Where is the most need?
- What—or how much—do Māori whānau really know about NCEA?
- How can tertiary institutions build relationships with wharekura that go beyond marketing and recruitment?

Whānau

- How to increase whānau involvement in wharekura?
- What information do whānau need to further support their tamariki in kura?

Transition

- How well do students transition from wharekura to tertiary pathways, or the outside world, or both?
- How can we better support students in this transition from wharekura to tertiary pathways/outside world?
- What sort of support is needed for wharekura students to succeed in mainstream tertiary institutions?

Provision for quality Māori-medium teacher education

- How can quality and passionate Māori-medium teachers be produced?

Te reo Māori

- How can students (in particular), teachers and whānau be supported/assisted to achieve the highest level of te reo Māori in wharekura?

Impact of kaupapa Māori education

- What has been the impact of kaupapa Māori education on people's lives (and whānau)?

Rangatahi

- What are the key issues/challenges facing rangatahi? How can they best be supported?

Research

- How can whānau get better access to relevant research?

Pākehā schools

- How can the provision of te reo and tikanga be more successfully implemented in Pākehā schooling?
- What key elements are necessary for the support and affirmation of cultural identity for tamariki Māori within Pākehā schools?
- How can the curriculum be made more relevant to whānau Māori?
- What mechanisms and pedagogical approaches can be employed to ensure that curriculum areas are of interest and relevance to Māori?
- What are successful ways of dealing with bullying within a schooling context?

- What elements are necessary within teacher training and professional development programmes that can engage positive teacher expectations in relation to Māori learners and whānau?
- Why do deficit views continue to be prevalent in educational contexts?
- What are key elements in the definition of success and achievement for Māori?
- What elements and practices are needed within the Pākehā schooling environment to ensure positive engagement with whānau Māori? How can schools/teachers become more approachable?
- How do we increase Māori teacher numbers?

Early childhood education

- Many non-Māori teachers are interested in supporting whānau who are faced with particular challenges. Teachers are asked to support whānau with issues that relate to tikanga, or a particular way of knowing and being, such as bereavement or makutu. Where there are non-Māori teachers supporting Māori pupils and their whānau, what does the ECE centre need to know and how can they support whānau whose needs reside in a te ao Māori way of knowing and being? Who is available to give appropriate advice? What should the ECE centre do?
- How can ECEs build collegial relationships with neighbouring ECEs when there is an element of competitiveness for resources?
- How can ECE practices and philosophies (e.g. *Te Whāriki* curriculum) continue to support whānau and tamariki in each stage of the child's schooling—primary, intermediate and high school?
- How well do tamariki perform in mainstream schools where there is a quality Māori component, or Māoritanga and Te Reo is well integrated across the curriculum, as opposed to Māori achievement in kura kaupapa or mainstream schools where Māoritanga and Te Reo is taken for granted?
- Whānau prefer to send their tamariki to local schools. However, it seems that in the southern South Island funding for Māori programmes and education is a lot less than other places. Is this because there is a perceived sense that there is a lack of Māori numbers?
- How do kaiako/teachers approach whānau who do not know how to access good information because they are whakamā or do not know how to be involved in the centre? ECE centres have good news stories and the negative information that is being conveyed in the media impacts on the way some whānau interact with the centre.
- We want more access to appropriate resources as well as learning from other teachers. It is about being able to share information and knowledge willingly with others. We want this for all our colleagues as well, but how are we going to get it out there?
- There needs to be a continuity of whanaungatanga and building relationships across the sector for the benefit of all our tamariki and whānau.
- How can we get a Māori teacher at our centre?
- How can we best support whānau experiencing tough situations?
- How can we get support for professional development beyond an ECE teaching degree?
- We need more Māori leadership in ECE.

Ngā mahi kei tua: Exploring whānau transition aspirations, autonomy and reo Māori

Through the whanaungatanga approach of kōrero ā-whānau, we have found that Ngā Moemoeā, Rangatiratanga and Te Reo Rangatira provide a distinctive and valuable kaupapa Māori framework for our future work exploring Whānau Transitions within and across Māori and Pākehā learning models. Through these multidimensional kaupapa, possibilities for a holistic and aspirational whānau-led educational agenda is possible. In summary, our work with whānau to identify the critical issues in Māori education has resulted in the following overarching research question: *What aspects of the educational system support whānau aspirations, autonomy and Māori language, and what aspects need to change?*

This general focus creates room to explore:

- the structural obstacles that hinder whānau aspirations, autonomy and reo Māori
- how Māori kids like to learn.

From this, we can explore how can we take these learning models of—or approaches to—how taura like to learn across transitions and between diverse learning environments.

This agenda is ultimately concerned with whānau self-determination and contributing to the revitalisation efforts of reo Māori. Our research will be primarily concerned with whānau educational experiences. These experiences will be underpinned through the kaupapa Māori methodology of whanaungatanga, through using kōrero ā-whānau to illustrate the everyday experiences of whānau in the education system.

Whānau transitions raise important questions about how our education system can best support whānau learning aspirations, particularly as they move between different educational environments. We believe that practical advantages for whānau, different learning environments, schools, kura, Māori educational researchers and policy makers will occur through identifying:

- how taura and rangatahi like to learn
- what supports whānau transitions
- what needs to systemically change.

1. Whanaungatanga: Creating a whānau-informed research agenda

The first component of being brave is to know who we are; to know what it is that makes us the mokopuna of the long and great traditions that developed in this land. It is to know who we are, as our people have always defined who we are, and not to know who we are as defined by others. (Jackson, 2011, p. 74)

This kaupapa Māori research report presents the diverse voices of Māori who responded to being asked: *What sorts of educational research would be of benefit to your children and whānau in education?*

Using the kaupapa Māori methodology of whanaungatanga to privilege kōrero ā-whānau, this report considers the critical issues facing whānau in education now and into the future. This research seeks to build a Māori-led and whānau-informed research agenda for Te Wāhanga, the kaupapa Māori research unit within the New Zealand Council for Educational Research (NZCER).⁴ The research team worked alongside various whānau to identify critical issues for whānau in te kōhanga reo, wharekura, early childhood education, and Pākehā schools.⁵ From this, the team developed a Māori-led and whānau-informed research agenda in Māori education.

Through presenting kōrero ā-whānau this project offers valuable directions for further Māori educational research. As kaupapa Māori researchers, we have been deliberate in using the kaupapa Māori methodology of whanaungatanga. The agenda proposes the research direction for the Māori Education component of NZCER's Purchase Agreement for the period 2012–2017.⁶ The development of a Māori-led and whānau-informed education research agenda is especially important for Te Wāhanga, as we want to make

⁴ See <http://www.nzcer.org.nz/te-wahanga>.

⁵ We are using the term “Pākehā schools” as the majority of the whānau we worked with used this term or “Pākehā education” when describing English-medium models of education.

⁶ This project is funded by NZCER's Purchase Agreement with the Ministry of Education.

the best use of future Purchase Agreement funding, and be better placed to undertake research work that is relevant to the diverse aspirations and needs of whānau.

The Te Wāhanga whakatauki *He Whānau Matau, He Whānau Ora* anchors our work approach and analysis in te ao Māori. Importantly, it ensures research is connected to and supports the aspirations of whānau, hapū, marae, and diverse Māori communities. An overt focus on whānau responds to criticisms that research in the field of Māori education is often not determined by whānau or for whānau. This is particularly the case for those whānau at the “coal face” working in Māori education. This project puts their voices centre-stage. It has been guided by the overarching goal of bringing together the collective wisdom, and aspirations of whānau. For this project we wanted to find answers to the following questions.

- What are whānau aspirations in education?
- What areas need to be strengthened so that whānau can reach their aspirations?
- What will advance whānau educational aspirations?
- How can we illuminate the critical issues in Māori education in need of deeper exploration?

The research team that undertook this project is led by Te Wāhanga manager Dr Jessica Hutchings, with Te Wāhanga researchers Alex Barnes, Katrina Taupo and Nicola Bright. Te Wāhanga also worked in partnership with Dr Leonie Pihama (Māori and Indigenous Analysis Ltd) and Dr Jenny Lee (Rautaki Ltd), who assisted in shaping the direction of the whanaungatanga methodology and the kōrero ā-whānau methods. Drs Pihama and Lee undertook kaupapa Māori research work with whānau involved in Māori-medium and Pākehā education. Moana Jackson, a member of Te Rōpū Tikanga Rangahau, our kaupapa Māori research reference group, acted as a key advisor to the project.

The experiences presented here are based on four accounts of kōrero ā-whānau that include kaupapa Māori and Pākehā educational settings. The research team also organised and facilitated a one-day wānanga with diverse whānau. These two kōrero ā-whānau methods can only speak to the parameters that were constructed for this project. More discussion about whanaungatanga (kaupapa Māori methodology), kōrero ā-whānau (method) and limitations are discussed below.

Whanaungatanga: A kaupapa Māori methodology

The second component of bravery that I think is important as a papa or a foundation for kaupapa Māori theory is the bravery to know where we are at. (Jackson, 2011, p. 75)

The kaupapa Māori methodology of whanaungatanga focuses this research on whānau engagement in education, and it is whānau driven (Bishop, 1995, p. 221). Whanaungatanga creates a research platform that can restore the status and role of whānau that may have been disrupted by colonisation (Bishop, 1995; Hohepa, 1999). There is a broad consensus that the experience of British colonialism has had far-reaching and complex implications for the New Zealand education system (Ministry of Education, 2008; Simon & Smith, 2003; Whitinui, 2011; Bishop and Glynn, 1999; L.T. Smith, 1999). Māori in particular have employed innovative strategies centred on cultural revitalisation and social justice to maintain their cultural distinctiveness in the face of Eurocentric

systems and structures. These strategies have engendered a form of cultural navigation that holds much creative potential (Royal, 2012). Kōhanga reo, kura kaupapa, wharekura and contemporary whare wānanga are examples of initiatives where Māori knowledge can be expressed and flourish (see Smith, G., 1991; Bishop & Glynn, 1999; L.T. Smith, 1999; Marsden, 2003; Pihama, 2001; Mikaere, 2011a, 2011b). These movements have been dependent on a brave critical mass of whānau who originally worked outside the institutional structures of the education system to create another reality and greater educational choices for Māori whānau and communities. While a critical mass of whānau bravely charted new educational maps for their communities, the “mainstream education” system has attempted to positively respond to calls for educational change (Whitinui, 2011; O’Regan, 2011; Hunt & MacFarlane, 2011; Tito, 2011). These attempts and calls for transformation have aimed at benefiting Māori tamariki and their whānau, as Whitinui explains:

The idea of Māori students as culturally connected learners is not new, but the concept does require schools and teachers to consider the wellbeing of Māori students in the schooling context more broadly. Indeed, the increased level of attention given to Māori students and their schooling is encouraging. It has resulted in teachers becoming more reflective on how their own cultural values, attitudes and beliefs impact on the way they work with Māori students. (Whitinui, 2011, p. 8)

Contemporary cross-cultural relationships, such as those between Māori and the Crown, are not static. These complex power relations impact on what educational priorities are acted on and how the education system functions generally. Overt and covert actions of bravery by Māori and non-Māori are testament to a process of educational change concerned with issues of cultural revitalisation, inclusion and a reclamation of cultural space. The initiation of culturally relevant pedagogy is one of many elements that enhances and nurtures Māori educational leadership, success and wellbeing (see Whitinui, 2011).

While power relationships are a reality in education, they also greatly influence how Māori educational research is designed, undertaken and valued. The last 20 years has seen the evolution of what is now widely known as “kaupapa Māori theory and research”. This has drawn from a base of Māori bravery and innovation: advancing ways of exploring and generating knowledge that is determined by Māori, and that directly benefits unique Māori communities, whānau and Aotearoa New Zealand generally. These movements are embedded in theories that enable a particular type of knowledge advancement, and they are built on a history of Māori knowledge navigation:

As Indigenous People, theory is something that our tūpuna have always done: we’ve explained things; we’ve tried to frame things; and we’ve tried to analyse and interpret things—for generations, for thousands of years—so the whole notion of theory is not a new thing. In the early nineties when we started talking about kaupapa Māori theory, it was grounded in that idea that our people have always been engaged in knowledge, knowledge expression, articulation, interpretation, and analysis. We’re a navigational culture so we had to be able to theorise the world, and how we would get there, in really complex ways. (Pihama, 2001, p. 49)

Whanaungatanga has grounded the approach for this kaupapa Māori research report. This has meant that the methods used in this project entailed a form of navigation. Questions arose of how we, as a research organisation, would practically work with whānau in a

range of educational settings. We are keenly aware of the fatigue that some Māori communities experience in relation to research. For example, the real-life benefits of some research projects involving Māori do not always result in a positive contribution to Māori wellbeing. While there has been change in research orientations, especially in education, there continues to be scepticism both about research processes, and about the potential of research to create tangible benefits. There is a sense that some Māori educationalists and whānau continue to see little practical benefit from research. This is especially the case when Māori have previously given up energy and shared insights regarding pressing Māori educational dilemmas, with little or no action resulting “on the ground”.⁷

We acknowledge and accept these criticisms. The complicated and politicised area of advancing Māori education priorities through research consolidated our approach in creating places where processes of whanaungatanga inherently connected to whakawhitiwhiti whakaaro and whakawhitiwhiti kōrero could unfold and be valued. As such, the research process aligns with core aspects of kaupapa Māori theory and research: it is underpinned by Māori ideas and present realities regarding education in Aotearoa New Zealand. To map out and navigate the critical issues for whānau in Māori education, we have needed to apply an appropriate conceptual framework around methods that ensure our research work is of benefit to whānau. The research agenda presented in this report aims to meet the pressing needs and realities facing our mokopuna, tamariki, whānau and the Māori education community generally. As a result, it has been vital for our research to connect with—and benefit—Māori communities.

Adhering to processes that affirm and recognise whanaungatanga, mana and rangatiratanga, we have taken the kaupapa Māori approach of working directly with whānau to shape our research strategy. We are committed to the idea that spaces must be created where diverse whānau can come together and discuss the critical issues facing their tamariki and Māori communities generally. These kōrero ā-whānau include the current struggles of resourcing, equity of access and quality information on the one hand, and creating spaces for people to articulate a long-term vision for Māori education on the other. At our one-day wānanga for this project, Moana Jackson observed the following:

[It’s] unusual in that people who want to do research are going out to ask our people “what do you think needs to be researched?” Normally it happens, as Leonie [Pihama] said earlier, the other way around. A researcher goes to our people and says, “this is what I am going to do”.⁸

We have valued the contributions and challenges that have collectively contributed to shaping our research agenda. It is patently clear to us that “Māori communities” and “whānau” are not singular and united; they have a host of different and pressing issues that need to be addressed. An explicit focus for the critical issues in Māori research project has been to recognise and affirm diverse Māori cultural institutions, including whānau, who span rural and urban areas. We see the importance of making kaupapa Māori educational research of practical benefit to a variety of Māori communities and whānau.

We have created a research plan that responds to the critical issues facing Māori education over the next five years. As a result, we have endeavoured to work in a way that is reflexive and flexible so that this research—and that which comes after it—maintains

⁷ Māori scepticism regarding research is described in the seminal work of L.T. Smith, 1999.

⁸ See p. 48 of this report.

integrity and meaning for the groups we have worked with. As Māori knowledge navigators, we recognise the value in revising a Māori philosophy in education so that is practical and of benefit to a diverse Māori population.

Kaupapa Māori methods

Two methods of *kōrero ā-whānau* informed the development of the kaupapa Māori research agenda. We facilitated *kōrero ā-whānau* in *kōhanga reo*, early childhood education, *wharekura* and *Pākehā* schools. We also organised and facilitated a one-day *wānanga* that brought together diverse *whānau* together to explore the critical issues facing Māori education. But what do we mean by “*whānau*” in this report?

What we mean by “*whānau*”

“*Whānau*” is used here to mean relational positions that describe how people are connected through *whakapapa* and *kaupapa*—through a shared heritage or a commitment to a particular philosophy. Being part of *whānau* means that people are able to make various links to one another, and hold diverse roles. For example, *whānau* includes kinship relations such as mothers, fathers, *whānau takatāpui*, children and wider family members such as *whaea*, *matua kēkē*, *kuia* and *kaumātua*. *Whānau* is also used to describe a collective of people who may not have a direct *whakapapa* relationship, but who support a particular philosophy. This includes *kaiako* and *tumuaki*, and *whānau* whose *tamariki* attend kaupapa Māori or *Pākehā* schools, or a mixture of both. It also includes Māori educational advocates generally.

For us, *whānau* implies a type of collectivity, where people are interconnected through their unique *whakapapa*, or support of a philosophy, or both. It is common for *whānau* to support a particular educational *kaupapa* because it aligns with their values. *Kōhanga reo* is a good example of this: a *whānau* may become involved in the running of *kōhanga* because they want their children to be confident speakers of *te reo* and begin understanding *tikanga* Māori. As a result of this participation the *whānau* become part of a wider set of relationships with the *kōhanga*. They then become part of the broader “*kōhanga whānau*”. This report illustrates that educational sites—whether they be in *kura kaupapa*, an immersion unit, bilingual unit, early childhood or “mainstream”—are all areas where *whānau* in their diversity intersect. These sites of confluence present the critical issues for *whānau* in education and learning.

“*Whānau*” included an array of people concerned with the history and current state of Māori education. Privileging *kōrero ā-whānau* has meant we have deliberately not gone to the literature to substantiate or validate the findings. This has been an important methodological element of *whanaungatanga*. The use of literature has been limited to discussing the multiple impacts of colonisation on the education system and structure of *whānau*, and to help describe how we have built the kaupapa Māori methodology of *whanaungatanga* into our work through *kōrero ā-whānau*. *Kōrero ā-whānau* represents a counter narrative to research that dislocates *whānau* realities and priorities in education.

Kōrero ā-whānau

Kōrero ā-whānau was the primary method used throughout this kaupapa Māori research project. As a method, kōrero ā-whānau derives from the kaupapa Māori principles theorised by Graham Smith (Smith, G.H. 1997), Leonie Pihama (Pihama, 2001), Rose Pere (Pere, 1982) and Margie Hohepa (Hohepa, 1999). This method has enabled the research team to translate whanaungatanga as a methodology into practice: it holds the potential for illuminating the everyday realities of whānau in education and learning. It plainly locates at the centre of our work the voice of whānau and their priorities and aspirations. We have not attempted to impose an external conceptual framework to make sense of whānau experiences. Rather than using established academic literature or theory to “test” and “validate” whānau experiences, whanaungatanga methodologies have informed us to seek validity from the whānau we have worked with. In this regard, kōrero ā-whānau seeks its authority from whānau participants; it must be an accurate and reliable representation of their voice and experiences.

Kōrero ā-whānau aligns with kaupapa Māori philosophies such as *Te Aho Matua*, in that it repositions whānau as a core element of educational achievement for tamariki in kura kaupapa. This overt recognition demonstrates an attempt to decolonise and restore the integrity of whānau in Māori life. This method supports the notion that the education system must be culturally coherent, so that tamariki are situated within whānau, and not simply isolated individual learners—see *Tātaiako* (Ministry of Education, 2011). Alongside kaupapa Māori philosophies, *Ka Hikitia—Managing for Success: The Māori Education Strategy 2008–2012* (Ministry of Education, 2009) also emphasises that whānau are an important part of the cultural location of Māori in Pākehā schools. This push for the recognition of whānau in educational systems and pedagogy is now a major theme of public and social policy. For example, Whānau Ora is now an official state policy that aspires to recognise:

the many variables that have the potential to bring benefits to whānau and is especially concerned with social, economic, cultural and collective benefits. To live comfortably today, and in the years ahead, whānau will be strengthened by a heritage based around whakapapa, distinctive histories, marae and customary resources, as well as by access to societal institutions and opportunities at home and abroad. (Durie, date unknown, p. 7)

Whānau Ora highlights the various determinants of Māori wellbeing. It challenges systems to account for these while working with the whole whānau to maintain wellbeing. While Whānau Ora draws attention to the multiple elements that impact on whānau possibilities and potential, kōrero ā-whānau critically explores how these determinants are played out in everyday Māori life.

How kōrero ā-whānau for this project were facilitated differed depending on the areas, learning environments and the relationships we held with the centres, or whānau, or both. The research included many individuals but we are not reporting these numbers here; rather we focused on engaging with a diverse number of learning centres and associated whānau in different geographic locations. In this regard, the participants represented whānau collectives who hold existing relationships with the different learning environments or researchers. This has been a deliberate element of the whanaungatanga methodology and the process of whakawhanaungatanga. Our kōrero ā-whānau approach has avoided fragmenting whānau experiences through using conventional “Western”

approaches. For example, we have steered clear of breaking whānau down into socioeconomic categories, and drawing comparisons between whānau members. More accurately we have aimed to keep whānau intact, accepting that they have engaged in the research process from a variety of standpoints. We have been mindful that “whānau consensus” will not always emerge through kōrero ā-whānau. Whānau have a variety of assumptions, aspirations and priorities about Māori education—at times whānau perceptions and experiences will converge, and at other times they will be diffuse. Kōrero ā-whānau has an obligation to reveal points of whānau convergence and departure from a particular issue.

Below is a breakdown of the scale of the kōrero ā-whānau who contributed to the research.

- Te kōhanga reo: We worked with one kōhanga in a major urban city. The participation included the majority of whānau involved in the kōhanga.
- Wharekura: We worked with one wharekura in a major urban city. The participation included the majority of whānau involved in the wharekura and a mix of year groups (Years 9 to 13).
- Early childhood education: We worked with five different centres in the North and South Islands. Each centre invited associated whānau to contribute to the research process.
- Pākehā schooling: We worked with whānau in four different cities across the North Island. Whānau included those involved in primary school and secondary schools.

Overall, kōrero ā-whānau creates space for the complexities of whānau realities in education to come to the fore. Kōrero ā-whānau acts as a circuit-breaker that positions the voice and experiences of everyday whānau at the centre of education. Kōrero ā-whānau takes the romance out of notions of whānau; it questions generalised ideas that whānau is similar to the “nuclear family”, or that it is a basic collective that has a unified outlook regarding educational “achievement”. This approach is concerned with the impacts and intersections of race, gender and class on Māori education.

Kōrero ā-whānau uncovers the ongoing struggles that whānau have when deciding on the educational future for tamariki and mokopuna. It illustrates the complexity of an educational system that attempts, at least in policy, to work with whānau, and vice versa. As a result, we have not analysed these kōrero ā-whānau through conventional Western research processes of triangulation or thematic analysis. We have avoided “distilling” and layering our own analysis of whānau experiences of the education system. This has enabled the voices and intended meanings of whānau to remain intact, and has been a distinctive feature of the whanaungatanga methodology and kōrero ā-whānau method.

Limitations

Our research work did not extend to the fields of tertiary and wānanga education. In addition, the report is not representative of Māori views across the early childhood and compulsory education sectors in Aotearoa New Zealand, and should not be interpreted as such. Te reo Māori and English languages were used in gathering the information for this project, which presented limits and enabling features. It is important to note that the

dominant language used for this report is English. However, te reo me ngā tikanga Māori were used when facilitating kōrero ā-whānau. Direct quotes from participants in te reo Māori have not been translated in this report. Indeed, a number of key Māori educational values and terms that underpin Māori learning processes are used in the report. Examples include “whanaungatanga”, “wairua”, “moemoeā” and “whakapapa”, just to name a few. This presents a critical limitation, as transplanting Māori philosophical elements and terminology into a written English medium can result in Māori knowledge systems becoming isolated from their unique linguistic setting and meaning. When English is used as the written medium, Māori world-views can become restricted and defined within “Western/European” approaches to seeing and making sense of the world.

It is not the aim of this report to constrain and limit complex Māori concepts or world-views regarding education and learning. Readers are encouraged to engage widely—in both te reo Māori and English—to better comprehend the meaning and implications of the Māori values presented here. This involves understanding how such values relate to one another, and their context of use.

The values put forward in this report *are not* exhaustive accounts of the critical issues facing Māori education. Again, a multitude of Māori values and priorities exist in relation to the philosophy and practice of “Māori education”. We believe work must continue to assess and seriously consider how these diverse values and practices can best inform whānau wellbeing, Māori educational research, learning centres, school and teacher practices, and Māori education policy generally.

As a kaupapa Māori research project the research team engaged in the ethical parameters outlined in the NZCER Human Ethics Process (see Appendix).

Connections to previous NZCER work

For NZCER a specific programme of research into Māori education began in 1934. However, it was not until the early 1970s that a Māori research unit was established in the organisation. The early work of the unit involved research on language-related topics, which included the collection and dissemination of information and ideas to people involved in Māori education. At this time the unit was headed by Dr Richard Benton. In 1973 the unit embarked on an extensive sociolinguistic census of language use in Māori households. The sociolinguistic survey and the extensive analysis dominated the work of the unit for a number of years. In 1979 a report on the declining state of te reo was released by the unit. This sparked much public debate, and concern for the future of te reo, and contributed to a national movement to help revitalise the language through in the education system.

In 1982 University of Waikato senior lecturer in Māori Dr John Moorfield joined NZCER. Dr Moorfield was a consultant on curriculum development for bilingual schools in English-speaking communities. He completed a draft Māori language syllabus for bilingual education programmes. The unit established a network of bilingual schools, and schools interested in developing bilingual programmes. Another important strand of work for the unit was the training of young Māori researchers, a project begun with the recruitment of fieldworkers for the survey and the setting up of research internships. The internship

evolved into a postgraduate level programme, which provided students with aspects of research expertise and experience.

More recently, Te Wāhanga has been in a reconsolidating phase. The team has taken a broad perspective of Māori education, learning and development, which has focused on the processes of intergenerational transfer of Māori knowledge. This includes knowledge content, the method of knowledge transfer, and the ability of Māori to be in a position to determine what is transferred, and how. Te Wāhanga and NZCER believe that a core part of our research and evaluation work is to deepen the use and understandings of kaupapa Māori educational and evaluative research. This approach means being reflexive about the Māori methodologies we apply in order to support the capacity of Māori researchers in education.

Report structure

Three kōrero ā-whānau follow, presented in three sections.

1. Kaupapa Māori: te kōhanga reo and wharekura.
2. Early childhood education and compulsory Pākehā education.
3. Wānanga and kōrero ā-whānau: Determining critical research issues for whānau in Māori education.

Combined, these kōrero ā-whānau contribute to *He Whānau Mātau, He Whānau Ora*, which illustrates the Te Wāhanga research agenda for the next five years. The kōrero ā-whānau approach for this project has meant developing new ways of working that are based on kaupapa tuku iho. For example, whanaungatanga will continue to be a central methodological anchor for Te Wāhanga future work. In this regard we have been guided by the critical thinking of Ani Mikaere, who has questioned Western ways of conducting research with Māori:

Regardless of whether we call ourselves “kaupapa Māori” researchers or not, we have largely been trained to perform the activity of research in a “Western” way ... Beginning all research with a literature review can so easily have the effect of predetermining the direction that subsequent work takes, narrowing the boundaries of what might be possible. In some instances, the seemingly innocuous practice of building on what has gone before can be downright dangerous. (Mikaere, 2011b, p. 30)

Applying whanaungatanga questions—and consciously undoes—non-Māori and Western methodologies which inadvertently inform research practice and critical analysis through researcher training in Western institutions. We encourage researchers to find innovative ways of understanding how whanaungatanga is critically linked to the subtleties and complexities of relational kaupapa tuku iho, such as rangatiratanga, manaakitanga, te reo, whakapapa, pūkengatanga and so on. This research project seeks to affirm Māori rangatiratanga. It informs what whānau knowledge is valued, and what will best contribute to whānau health and wellbeing through educational and learning processes.

2. Findings: Te kōhanga reo, wharekura

This section comprises two kōrero ā-whānau from a kōhanga reo and a wharekura. It concludes with critical questions raised by these diverse whānau about the present state and future potential of kaupapa Māori education that warrant further exploration. We have not analysed these kōrero ā-whānau through conventional Western research processes of triangulation or thematic analysis.

Tikanga and kawa guided our way of working with participants in these two settings. For example, processes of hui and whakawhanaungatanga informed the relationships and methods used in these settings. These included giving expression to kaupapa tuku iho, such as manaaki tangata, rangatiratanga and te reo.⁹

Te kōhanga reo kōrero ā-whānau

Te kōhanga reo has been in existence now for over 30 years. The establishment of the first pilot at Pukeatua, Wainuiomata in 1981, as a part of a wider move for the revitalisation of te reo Māori, saw the beginning of what became a Māori-driven movement across the country. It has been noted that te kōhanga reo was to be “an experiment in preschool education based on total immersion in Māori language and Māori family values” (Ka’ai, 1990, p. 6). The growth was rapid, with 100 kōhanga reo being established in 1982 and reaching a peak of 800 kōhanga reo in 1994 (Te Kōhanga Reo National Trust website). Structurally, te kōhanga reo is located under the guardianship of Te Kōhanga Reo National Trust. There are currently 463 kōhanga reo across the country, with 9,142 tamariki enrolled. There are 2,343 paid kaiako and kaimahi working within kōhanga (Ministry of Education, 2012a).

The Waitangi Tribunal report *Matua Rautia—Report on the Kōhanga Reo Claim* (Waitangi Tribunal, 2012) found that the New Zealand early childhood education system has failed to sustain the explicit needs of kōhanga reo. It suggests that the Crown has

⁹ See the appendix to this report.

breached Treaty principles and been discriminatory towards Te Kōhanga Reo Trust through the use of an inadequate funding formula and regulatory regime, along with inadequate quality measures. The Tribunal found that the Crown has undermined kōhanga settings as a positive environment for increasing the use of the reo Māori among whānau (Waitangi Tribunal, 2012, October 18).

Alongside changes to the funding regime for upholding quality reo Māori transmission, the Tribunal recommended more research into the effectiveness and educational outcomes of the kōhanga reo model, and improved information for whānau about the linguistic and educational benefits of kōhanga (Waitangi Tribunal, 2012, p. xix). This research contributes to these recommendations in that we have deliberately explored the aspirations and needs of whānau in kōhanga reo. The kōrero ā-whānau presented in this section contribute to public knowledge about how kōhanga reo can be a vital element in transmitting and sustaining te reo Māori in local communities.

Whānau that participated in the kōrero ā-whānau are all located within an urban setting. Based near a school, the kōhanga was strongly advocated for by the Māori community which sought to provide a preschool context that would immerse tamariki in te reo Māori. The kōhanga reo caters for 30 tamariki over two years old. There is a commitment from the whānau to ensure that tamariki with special needs are able to participate in all aspects of the kōhanga. Therefore, the kōhanga has developed strong relationships with Māori working in the area of Special Education.

The following kōrero ā-whānau is an overview of what whānau want for their tamariki and mokopuna, what gets in the way of these aspirations, and what facilitates these visions for education. Finally, we consider what whānau need to know more about to facilitate positive outcomes for their tamariki and mokopuna in kōhanga reo.

Whānau aspirations for their tamariki and mokopuna

The commitment of whānau to te kōhanga reo was very evident when discussing their aspirations for their tamariki and mokopuna. Some of the key reasons why whānau chose to be a part of this particular kōhanga reo included:

- te reo and tikanga Māori for tamariki and wider whānau
- location, opportunity
- philosophy of the kōhanga
- empowerment, quality, security
- the people, kaupapa, history, wairua, experience, whānau, whanaungatanga, sense of belonging, welcoming, strategic vision is shared
- ngā moemoeā a ngā tūpuna
- support future generations
- the only place where our tamariki could learn their language.

These influencing factors were explained in more depth when whānau discussed how these elements were given life in relation to their children attending the kōhanga. For example, whānau explained that “the people, kaupapa, history, wairua, experience, whānau, whanaungatanga, sense of belonging, welcoming, strategic vision is shared” are all important elements. Whānau expressed their desire for their tamariki to receive a “strong

foundation for learning”. This means ensuring there is a quality educational programme in place, grounded in learning within te reo and tikanga Māori. For example, whānau highlighted that when selecting a kōhanga reo it is important that there is an “interweaving [of] our philosophies and teaching methods” and a high knowledge of “te reo me ngā tikanga”. Some whānau noted that they had moved in and out of the kōhanga contexts, based on the level of quality, reo and tikanga:

I started in kōhanga because it is Māori and I am Māori. There is no question this is what we do, this is how we are. They were under-resourced and they needed commitment to Māori. I jumped the fence to Barnadoes and then came back as I had heard there were changes and I felt there was a huge shift, there is a huge language issue. I think all these other issues are just as important. I think it is safe here, this kōhanga provides new activities every day.

Foundations for learning included notions of whakapapa and cultural identity, or, as one whānau member explained, “a taken for grantedness of who they [tamariki] are and that is good and OK”. Whānau believe that fostering this type of environment results in tamariki gaining strong self esteem. Developing a sense of “belonging” implied an “appreciation of tangata whenua and tikanga Māori”.

Whānau spoke about the importance of a range of tikanga that enabled tamariki to “be kind and appreciate others”. This was demonstrated when tamariki valued themselves and others, and were able to develop good and positive relationships with their peers. Whānau firmly believed that, when implemented well, tikanga offers tamariki a way of practising important values of respect, love, sympathy and peace. These values are, of course, dependent on the kōhanga providing a “safe, happy, loving environment, conducive to lifelong living”. A strong Māori educational space enables tamariki to have “success in both worlds”, Māori and non-Māori.

Whānau were invited to comment on areas of development that they believed would strengthen the aspirations of te kōhanga reo and Māori education generally. Responses included cultural and structural elements. For example, whānau aspire to see te kōhanga reo and other te reo immersion options accessible and available for all who seek te reo and tikanga Māori for their tamariki and whānau. Whānau explained that access to te kōhanga reo and other early childhood services should be free for all—40 hours funded—to ensure access for all. In practical terms this raised the issue of need, particularly in relation to more high-quality kōhanga reo within the region. Presently, whānau reported that they have limited access to kōhanga reo and immersion education within their region. There is a need to ensure both the involvement of kaumātua within Māori education and the sharing of mātauranga Māori.

A high priority for whānau is strengthening te reo Māori in the home. Improved access to te reo classes for whānau, staff and community is needed. It was suggested that whānau workshops which relate to the kaupapa of kōhanga and kura kaupapa Māori would enhance whānau knowledge and choices regarding Māori-medium education for their tamariki now, and into the future.

Realising whānau educational aspirations in te kōhanga reo

Whānau educational aspirations for tamariki and mokopuna are the flip side of those factors that counter their aspirations. “Success elements” were discussed in relation to the areas of strength within this particular kōhanga.

- Increasing capacity for kaiako Māori, who are passionate, skilled and committed.
- More tāne Māori as kaiako.
- Increasing numbers of te kōhanga reo in the region.
- More Māori providers across the early childhood sector.
- Greater Māori control over our initiatives.
- Te reo Māori me te mita o te reo: greater access for tamariki to educational specialists who can kōrero Māori.
- More resources for inclusiveness for tamariki with special needs.
- Whānau governance, where visions and goals are shared: acknowledgement of each person’s contribution and the uniqueness each person and whānau bring to the kaupapa.
- Further development and resourcing of marautanga Māori.
- Further pedagogical development that enables the interweaving of philosophies and teaching methods that affirm cultural knowledge: guidance of pākeke, whakapapa/identity, whanaungatanga, kotahitanga.

Importance of kaiako

Kaiako are seen as critical to the overall quality of all aspects of the learning environment. All whānau regarded kaiako and their passion for the kaupapa as central to the success of the kōhanga. This includes the level of te reo Māori, their competency in teaching practice, and the ability to provide a strong and open administration process that ensured good management overall. Whānau referred to kaiako as being “the rocks” who provided consistency and positive energy in the kōhanga, and who have a passion for te reo, tikanga and tamariki.

In this kōhanga, kaiako supported one another in their individual and collective development. For example, the kōhanga has an ongoing professional development programme that enhances all areas of kaiako practice. Whānau reported that there are clear structures, routines and expectations for the tamariki. They also explained that there is a diversity of learning and activities that are a part of te kōhanga reo kaupapa.

Importance of whānau and governance

Rangatiratanga is an area that is seen as critical for te kōhanga reo whānau. This includes a need for support to ensure that both whānau and kaimahi have access to management and governance practices that are effective, appropriate and professional. Whānau reported a desire for building stronger relationships between whānau/kāinga and kōhanga/kura, and strengthening connections across te kōhanga reo.

Te kōhanga reo is grounded in the participation and contribution of whānau. For example, whānau new to the kaupapa and non-Māori whānau are all committed to te reo Māori. This means resourcing in te reo Māori is essential, including te reo resources for the home and community. Professional and cultural development opportunities for kaiako and whānau are key factors in facilitating educational aspirations. This means kaiako steeped in te reo and tikanga Māori are important in supporting their colleagues in order to develop a language-rich environment that nurtures and stimulates tamariki. One whānau member referred to this as being a part of developing effective and responsive teaching practices. This includes acknowledging tamaiti interests and whānau aspirations.

Location and access

Location and accessibility is a key factor for many whānau when supporting kōhanga. In some instances whānau travelled some distance to attend kōhanga. Whānau explained that attendance at this kōhanga meant there was primary school continuity, as they could then have tamariki placed in the rumaki unit of the neighbouring school:

Location was important. I could be here with my son before he started so that he settled in and he had good interactions with the tamariki here.

*

We came to this kōhanga after my older son changed to the school here. The school was going really well. To get into the school it helped if your tamariki had been in the kōhanga.

Whānau highlighted the lack of access to a range of opportunities when they were seeking education in te reo Māori. A monocultural and monolingual approach was clearly identified as being dominant within the education system. Whānau looked forward to a time when a greater range of te reo options and an equivalent access to Pākehā resources in te reo will be made available. Overall, increased access to kōhanga meant more kōhanga in the area that whānau could easily access, and therefore have greater educational choice. As one whānau member explained, “there are long waiting lists, so we need more kōhanga, kura and wharekura”. Similarly, another whānau member exclaimed that “there’s not enough choice to fit everyone’s needs in types or range of reo Māori education”.

Areas that need to be strengthened for whānau to reach their aspirations in te kōhanga reo

For whānau there was “not enough” of the following in the education system:

- wānanga to support parents and whānau who want to learn Māori
- choice, options and information for whānau (i.e. types or range of reo Māori education; access to information so they can make informed educational decisions)
- te kōhanga reo in the region and “quality” kura kaupapa Māori

- te reo Māori resources for all ages.

Quality information and whānau choice

These issues raise critical points about the marginalised positioning of te kōhanga reo within the educational sector. Whānau continue to struggle within kōhanga to get access to the range of opportunities and resources that are provided in Pākehā early childhood centres. These limited options are a structural issue that needs to be addressed urgently. Many raised the issue of decision making and educational choices. Whānau want to have access to knowledge and information when making decisions about the education of their tamariki and mokopuna, but gathering information was difficult owing to limited resources. One suggestion was that a website or database could be developed. This database could inform and guide whānau through Māori-medium educational options. Currently, whānau rely on formal and informal networks to find out information about the availability and quality of te kōhanga reo and immersion education options within their area.

Transitions and Māori-medium settings

Whānau reported long waiting lists for Māori immersion education options and concerns about transitions from and across Māori-medium settings. There needs to be a greater continuity of provision and quality from kōhanga to whare wānanga. Without quality information about the transition options for their tamariki in Māori medium, then tamariki and mokopuna will “continue into a Pākehā controlled system and curriculum”. Whānau explained that a lack of continuity was an example of an educational system that “is fundamentally flawed”.

Supporting whānau and tamariki with special education needs

A key issue is the limited access for whānau to Māori-speaking specialists for tamariki who have special needs. Whānau stated that they “need to be supported with reo speaking experts in their field, [so that] whānau with disabilities are able to participate and be a part of Māori education”. This included the need for “increased numbers of Māori-speaking specialists, quality specialised teachers who are Māori”. This raises critical issues of funding, training, access, knowledge, information, professional development and quality te reo Māori for educationalists working with Māori with special needs.

Wharekura kōrero ā-whānau

Wharekura is a kaupapa Māori secondary schooling option that followed the establishment of kura kaupapa Māori. The first kura kaupapa Māori was initiated at Hoani Waititi Marae in 1985. Incidentally, the first wharekura was also set up at Hoani Waititi

Marae in 1994, to specifically cater for the children graduating from their primary education. Like kura kaupapa Māori, wharekura are guided by kaupapa Māori philosophies and aim to teach through te reo and tikanga Māori. Currently there are 49 wharekura located throughout the country that cater for 1,918 children from Years 9 to 13 (Ministry of Education, 2012b). Each wharekura, like mainstream schools, is different, with its unique characteristics reflective of its whānau, hapū, iwi and communities, and specific history.

This kōrero ā-whānau is based on one wharekura that services graduates from several kura kaupapa and Māori-medium primary schools in its region. It is less than 10 years old and has a roll of approximately 240 students from Years 9 to 13. The tumuaki recounts the beginning of the wharekura, a short history that is based on a collective whānau struggle to assert kaupapa Māori education for their secondary-school-aged children.

Nō ngā mātua te whakaaro te whakatū i tētahi kura mō a rātou tamariki kura kaupapa Māori kei ngā kura tuatahi o te takiwā nei ... te tau 2002, Hepetema, ūpoko maro te whānau nei ... e whakahoki mahara ana ki a rātou, kare he mea i tū atu i te mihi ki ēra whānau. Nā rātou te whakaaro. Nā tērā, nā te ngākau titikaha, nā te ūpoko maro, ūpoko pakaru, whakahekewerawera, whakaponono ki te kaupapa ka whakaae ana te Kawanatanga te whakaatu i tētahi kura tuarua kaupapa Māori 2002.

Nā reira, ka tino pukumahi tērā o ngā whānau ki te whakarite i ngā āhuatanga kia pai ai te whakatū i te kura ... Ko te whānau nei 2003 ka whakapao i te tūranga tumuaki. Ko au tētahi o ngā kaitono. Waimarie au ka riro i au te tūranga. Pukumahi te poari. Ka uru mai e au ki te awhi Hōngōngoi 2003. He repo tēnei wāhi. Ehara i te whenua pakari. Kuhu mai tētahi project manager te whakatū ngā whare. Ka mahi te mahi. Kimi ngā kaiako Tihema kia rite te whakatū, kia tuwhera ngā kuaha hei te Hanuere 2004. Ko te huarahi i whaia e mātou, a, i oma hihiko mātou ki tērā whaingā. Tere pau te hau.

Nā reira, Hanuere 27, 2004, ka tuwhera te kura. Āhua 55 ngā akonga hou. Tau 9, tau Ngahuru. Koirā te timatatanga o te kura.

Since opening in January 2004 the wharekura has grown considerably, with five times as many students today. The staff number 25 (with an even split between men and women), 24 of whom are Māori, and 21 speak Māori.

Despite the enormous challenge, workload and personal commitment required by whānau, combined with the short time to get the wharekura organised and operational, the dream of a wharekura became a reality.

Whānau aspirations for their tamariki and mokopuna

The aspirations of whānau for their children to participate in kaupapa Māori education was one of the key reasons whānau chose to enrol their children in this wharekura. For many of the whānau, it was a long commitment to advancing kaupapa Māori educational initiatives that led them to this particular wharekura. One parent explains:

Okay, so the involvement in this wharekura basically for us, probably started about twenty years ago with te kōhanga reo. The parents ... once they established [name of kōhanga reo] they started working out how they could get a kura kaupapa so that the kids would go from kōhanga on to kura kaupapa, so those same lot of parents worked on getting [name of kura kaupapa Māori] established. They got [name of kura kaupapa Māori] established and put a gate up in between so that the kids could go from one side to the other. Once that was established and strong, that same group of parents—even though some of their kids had moved on—started working on wharekura. So this didn't just taka i te rangi, right from the start with Mātua [name] was the one who went and banged on the door of the Ministry year after year until they agreed to what the whānau wanted, and that was to establish the school. So the thought for the wharekura came right at the time when the kids were babies, and that was the vision of the parents at that time that they knew that they couldn't just do one and leave it, they had to have a whole plan. My mother was one of those people, so we just became those people by default. But a good default that's just who we are and how our lives roll I suppose.

Students echoed these aspirations for kaupapa Māori education, but focused on learning about, as well as through, te reo and mātauranga Māori. The junior students most clearly articulated that the reason they were attending wharekura was based on a whānau decision and aspiration to learn and value te reo Māori:

I pīrangī tōku māmā kia mau au ki to mātou reo rangatira.

*

Ko te tino hiahia o tōku whānau kia haere tonu au ki roto i ngā kura Māori ako ai, nā te mea ki tōku whānau he mea nui ngā wharekura Māori me ngā kura Māori ... nā runga i te mea he rērēkētanga ki ngā kura auraki, nā ngā momo tikanga me ēra momo.

*

My mum wanted me to come here because she wanted me to learn about my ancestors, and I wanted to come here.

*

Ko tāku, he eke ki ngā taumata mō te reo, koirā te mea tino nui ki au nei. Engari kia eke ki ngā taumata o te NCEA hoki, āe.

*

Ki au nei, kia pakari tōku reo ka kōrerotia ki aku teina hoki. Nā te mea ki ahau nei he mea nui te reo, me whakaako ki aku teina kia mōhio pai ai rātou.

The senior students were much more likely to talk about their aspirations in relation to their pathways after school. All of the senior students who participated were clear about they wanted to do after wharekura. Most students intended on furthering their education at various tertiary institutions, in particular, whare wānanga. Two students hoped to attain

doctorates. Their aspirations were not only individual, but to also be of benefit to their whānau and communities:

He hiahia nōku te whai i te ara o te mātauranga Māori, nō reira ka tahuri te kei o tōku waka ki Raukawa, ko tāku whaingā kia riro i au tāku tākutatanga i te mātauranga Māori. Nā te mea kia hoki au ki te kāinga ko ngā kaumātua—torutoru noa o rātou—ko ngā kaumātua noa e mōhio ana ki te kōrero Māori. Tuatahi, ko ngā kaumātua anō tērā e mōhio ana ki ngā tikanga o te wā kāinga. Kia mate mai rātou, mā wai rā e taurima? No reira ko tāku, he aru i tērā ara, kia whakahoungia i ngā tikanga i te wā kāinga.

*

Ka whakawhiti atu au ki Awanuiārangi kia whiwhi tōku tākutatanga.

Like most educational leaders, the tumuaki articulates the goal of the wharekura to be concerned with “students succeeding”. However, as the tumuaki says, what success means here aligns with the educational aspirations of whānau and students:

Our focus is for students to tū Māori, tū pakari, kia hūmarie te tū me ōna āhuatanga engari kia tū i roto i te ao Māori i roto i te ao [whānui] ... kia puāwaitia ngā tūmanako.

The aspirations of the wharekura for their students are best captured in their “graduate profile.” This profile is conceptualised and grounded in the name of the wharekura, which is associated with the hapū and iwi in which the kura is located. The profile has been developed through comprehensive engagement with students, whānau and staff, including hui and a survey. The survey included 90 parents, 180 students and 21 staff members who helped determine the further meaning of “success”. This graduate profile is linked to the implementation of the kura strategic plan. The findings of the survey resulted in the following five key components of the graduate profile:

- te reo
- tinana
- wairua
- whānau
- tuku ihotanga.

It is hoped that thinking about the graduate profile in this way not only prepares students for tertiary education, if that is the pathway they select, but beyond—as parents and contributing citizens to their whānau, hapū, iwi, community and society. The tumuaki clarifies:

It is five years down the track, ten years down the track—what kind of fathers will we have? What kind of husbands will we have? What kind of iwi leaders do we want? And so our biggest focus has been on us being clear of the next phase of the graduate. That these students are fully prepared to follow their passions and have a deep real-world knowledge and experience for when they leave us and go out into the real world. Hinengaro, tinana, wairua, whānau, tuku ihotanga. And for them also to have a commitment to the growth and preservation of reo. It is not good enough for them to know the reo—āe moumou—but to be politicised and the biggest advocates to hāpai te reo.

One of the ways they meet the ideal graduate profile and achieve the kaupapa of the school is through “developing the heart and then the head”. The vision that graduates of this wharekura will be confident, caring and contributing members of their whānau is, in part, facilitated through the focus on values. As the tumuaki explains in the interview, values are not something that have to be led by teachers, but lived:

Tumuaki: We’re living and we’re learning as a school. So we developed a vision ... so with regards to the students here, the last five years has been about heart then the head. Heart then head—about nurturing, supporting and uplifting the heart first. School isn’t about curriculum, about literacy and numeracy. School is about the person and their journey and all those people behind them. So our school has been very much about values, relationships, responsibility, respect, reciprocity and integrity ... The priority is the heart of the student, because that will impact, that will drive their actions, that will drive how they uplift their families and their communities and what they will value and how they will operate.

Interviewer: We know that’s not normal in terms of any secondary school. How do you come to know how to do that and what else do you need to know in order to do that successfully? How can you achieve that in this context which is defined by curriculum, defined by timetables, defined by schooling options?

Tumuaki: First, I think you have to live that. You can’t learn it from the book ... Like me as the tumuaki, how do I operate? Do I do what I say? Or do I say one thing and do the other and for me taking on the responsibility of being the example. You hear about values but values is how you live not really about what you say. Kids would say don’t tell me, show me.

You’ll see when our students interact out there. You’ll see boys hugging, girls hugging, staff hugging and staff and kids hugging. It’s alright to give aroha, to give respect. So we emphasise the importance of the heart. We emphasise the importance of responsibility. I’m not saying you’ll come here see utopia but that’s a work in progress. There’s no mistake when the people who take responsibility are the people who succeed. People who hide from responsibility, they might succeed for a while, but sooner or later you drop. We think that by focusing on values, a person will be a successful person. They’ll be responsible; they’ll have integrity, [be] respectful to others. They’ll value their relationships and they’ll also give back. It’s not about taking, it’s about giving. Most important to us is that not only do we say but we be it.

The survey conducted by the school also showed that there was strong support for a focus on values. There was 100 percent support from staff and 98 percent support from parents.

Realising whānau educational aspirations in wharekura

Despite the wharekura achieving above national averages for Māori students at Levels 1, 2 and 3 NCEA, no participants discussed this at length. The four most common interconnected success elements identified were:

- fostering a whānau environment
- care for the whole person
- quality teachers
- strong leadership.

Fostering a whānau environment

In discussing what elements facilitate whānau aspirations in education, the students stressed the importance of feeling welcome, comfortable and supported at school. These feelings of connection were not restricted to their kaiako, but also their peers:

I think it's the environment, yeah the atmosphere ... It is family orientated and all the students, like, manaaki each other. You don't really want to go to a school where you don't feel welcomed.

*

This school is like a big family, so it's like they're willing to go the extra mile for us and help us, they help us more 'cause we're that extra close.

*

This school is like a whānau, and if we're feeling down they're [kaiako] always there to help us.

Fostering a “whānau environment” of inclusion is a key characteristic of the wharekura. Manaakitanga, whanaungatanga and kotahitanga are critical to a positive learning setting for the students and their whānau.

Care for the “whole person”

Reflecting the emphasis on the graduate profile and role of values in the school, all the participants expressed an appreciation of the educational development of “the whole person”. This meant that, rather than applying a view of educational achievement, students, staff and whānau talked about valuing “te tangata”—the whole person, and that person's potential:

Me te mea nei ko tētahi atu rerekētanga o te kura nei ki ngā kura auraki ... ehara i te mea ka aro noa iho ki te hinengaro o te tangata, engari ka aro ki te ngākau. Ka aro ki ngā mahi o waho o te kura, me ana wheako i roto i ngā mahi o te kura.

*

Basically I want them [students] to be good people, not just academic people or sporty people, but to have a good heart ... If the heart is right then you know everything else will follow, if they know what's right and wrong.

*

Sometimes it feels like you're not even coming to a school, it's just like you're coming to the pā, like you're just going to someone's [whānau] ... That's what it feels like for us. And so no one gives up ... No one gives up on the kids, whether it's a behaviour issue, or whether it's an academic issue, they just keep on and keep on.

*

Kids talk about the heart-to-hearts that he [the tumuaki] has with them and with the kura, and he'll do what he has to do as a tumuaki; he'll growl them but he never lets them walk out of here without giving them a hug. Now I don't know how many male tumuakis who do that these days, certainly none of them that I went to school with, they only hugs they'd give you was with a long big stick. He's not scared to do that [hugging] ... Especially for our young males. I think that's the beauty of this school, there are a lot of really good male role models ... But it's just the knowledge that they know that they're loved, it's not cool to do some things, but no one is ... People aren't gonna hammer you forever on it ... It's about being able to give the kids second chances; knowing that they're gonna make mistakes, don't cut them off straightaway at the pass.

These quotes reinforce the need for a schooling approach that cares for the whole person. This includes recognising the mana of the student. Tumuaki and kaiako are important in leading the process of mana enhancement for students and whānau in the kura.

Quality teachers

Success elements at this wharekura include appropriate teacher support, and high expectations of their students. The quotes from whānau below indicate the multiple layers needed in order to create quality teachers. The tumuaki reiterated the notion that quality staff are critical to the school's success:

I think the key to success to any school is their staff. You can have the whānau with the biggest intentions, the most awesome students, but if the people who are actually doing the work are detrimental to the kaupapa ... the kaupapa will flounder. So I am thankful to the staff and the work they do. Our results are extraordinary because of the staff, because of their commitment and hard work. We have all sorts of classes here on Friday night, all through Saturday and Sunday. Staff give up their time with their families to serve our kids and their families. I think one of the biggest issues is getting quality staff to do the work and the biggest responsibility for the schools is to value and look after their staff.

*

She [teacher] pushes you to achieve your dreams and goals, and she's always correcting you when you're wrong ... But it's good for me. She's cool.

*

Rawe te kura nei, ko ngā uaratanga i tino whakawhirinaki e au, engari me mihi ki ngā kaiako. He tino hiahia no rātou ma mātou te eke ki ngā taumata e tāea e mātou te eke.

*

You can see the passion in that staff. You can see it. Even standing from a distance you can see how passionate they are. It's like what we said when we walked in ... Like the first time I walked in there I was blown away, the āhua of the place. Man. This is wicked this place.

Described as “passion”, the teachers’ enthusiasm, dedication and commitment to the kaupapa, students, and whānau generally, was frequently highlighted as a key success factor at the wharekura. These elements of passion help to facilitate a positive learning environment for all.

Strong leadership

Whānau believe tumuaki leadership is critical. In this wharekura there is a high level of respect for the vision of the tumuaki, his collaborative leadership style, humble demeanour, strong values and genuine caring for students and their whānau:

[The tumuaki] is very humble in—well his whole demeanour is, and I think even in his actions, and I see that ... Well, I've been involved in a few schools and the tumuaki's always taken the lead and the tuku taonga today and ngahau nights. I don't see him taking that lead and he shares all of that with his staff. I think this school is great for that and he's a good example for that.

Some whānau recognised that the leadership style of the tumuaki also challenged a popular and stereotypical view of Māori males as staunch and unwilling to show emotions. Students and parents appreciated the tumuaki's strong leadership through quiet support and awahi, as well as his dedication to service. A teacher explained that the work of collaboration, led by the tumuaki, has been a huge advantage for the wharekura. It has helped the whānau work collectively in strategic ways:

When we decide to do something there's a – It's collaboratively done ... It's not dictated so that we all get a buy in, and so that we do ... Ka hui tahi, ka mahi tahi, and I think that's a strength. So there's strong leadership. There's a strength you know, then there's ability to work together from the Board down to the tumuaki, and you can't go past the tumuaki. He's at the hub of everything; so that's a strength, yeah. Like things happen because he makes them happen you know? ... There's strong leadership specifically from the tumuaki supported on a number of different levels ... It is that kei te whakaaro kotahi te whānau nei ... So whatever the strategy or goal, it makes it a whole lot easier.

Areas that need to be strengthened for whānau to reach their aspirations in wharekura

The participants identified several areas that could strengthen whānau educational aspirations in the wharekura. These included:

- extending the range of subjects
- strengthening careers programmes
- boosting relationships with tertiary institutions
- including te ao Māori in all aspects of the curriculum
- increasing the usage and quality of te reo
- extending sports and cultural activities
- providing opportunities for leadership development, preparation and transition.

Participants recognised resourcing and financial constraints and said addressing these would strengthen the educational possibilities at the wharekura.

Extend the range of subjects, strengthen careers programmes, boost relationships with tertiary institutions

Students expressed a desire to learn lots of different subjects, including different languages. The tumuaki supported the need to increase the subject options offered. In his opinion, one of the ways to do this is to develop stronger links with tertiary institutions to access their courses and optimise educational online opportunities. Not only do students need information and encouragement to consider career options, they also need opportunities to explore their “passion”, think about how that might relate to their chosen career, and work out how to achieve it. The wharekura is currently implementing a range of activities to support students in understanding and planning for their career. Assisting whānau and students to better understand NCEA is an important part of this process. The tumuaki explained that whānau wanted more information about how NCEA works so that they could help their children to make more informed educational choices and so that they could support them in their studies.

Whānau believe stronger links with tertiary institutions may provide more subject option opportunities for students. However, they also suggested that tertiary institutions must take more interest in building relationships with the wharekura. This is so relationships are not just based on the marketing and recruitment of students:

I'd like more interaction with the kura and the university, like a transition for the students to come through. I know that there is some interaction there ... They have recruitment days, but I think more of a whānau interaction with the university and the kura [would be good].

Another idea promulgated during the interview, was that the wharekura establish its own whare wānanga to enable the continuity of kaupapa Māori education and ensure that the students are cared for at the tertiary level.

Include te ao Māori in all aspects of the curriculum, increase the usage and quality of te reo, extend sports and cultural activities

At the heart of Māori education is te reo Māori. While students had all acquired varying levels of te reo, it was a common aspiration of students, whānau and staff to keep improving and reach the highest levels of competency. A senior student and a kaiako explained this aspiration in the following ways:

Ka rawe mehemea ka whakatū te kura i tētahi kura reo, pera i whakahaerehia ēra momo kura i ngā tau, i oku tuahine e kuraina ana, engari te āhua nei kua mimiti haere te kaha o tērā kaupapa, engari ki te whakaorangia te kaha o tērā kaupapa ka rawe tērā. (Senior student)

*

We've been talking about a new reo strategy. I think we need to implement that across the wharekura, not to just have average reo, but we need to aim for that Panekiretanga. (Kaiako)

Access to experts in te reo Māori with other wharekura students was viewed as a preferable learning setting for improving te reo Māori. While te reo and tikanga are a core focus in the curriculum, there is still room for further development of te ao Māori in all curriculum areas. More Māori-medium/kaupapa Māori resources are needed in all areas of the curriculum, especially for wharekura.

Given the students' enthusiasm to move out of their comfort zone and try new things, with kaiako support, increasing the opportunities to participate in sports and cultural activities was believed to enable more students to enjoy kura and excel there. For example, whānau suggested that extending the small gymnasium would greatly assist in achieving this goal.

Provide opportunities for leadership development, preparation and transition

Students who acted as tuakana in the wharekura considered this role as significant and holding much responsibility. Many students aspired to be tuakana and fulfil leadership roles in the wharekura, but they felt they needed more opportunities and support to develop leadership skills. One senior student said, "I think the tuakana need more support in preparation in becoming a tuakana." Students also discussed the strong influence of their friends and peer group in their lives. Leadership development opportunities would further assist student relationships with one another, and add to their capacity to deal with issues as Māori students.

While students greatly appreciated the whānau environment of the wharekura, they also were aware that life in the wider world may be different:

I think the kura should give us an opportunity to get out there a bit more. Just 'cause it's such a supportive environment here, but I think it would be beneficial if we actually went out there

and had a look at things and actually get a taste of reality ... Yeah it's just different out there and ... We just need to get used to the fact that it's different outside.

*

Coming from a wharekura I'm kind of nervous about the transition into the outside world, because we are so used to learning in a Māori environment with Māori students that we've been with for years and just a small number of students. I think we might like drown next year, I'm a little bit nervous about that, going to university and being with other cultures, I'm nervous I'm probably gonna be the only Māori in my [class].

Students discussed how transition planning would be beneficial in terms of understanding how to study at tertiary level, and become more independent. For example, one student explained that at university there is generally a greater emphasis on individualised approaches to learning. In contrast, their wharekura—and potentially other wānanga settings—are more collectively orientated, and students work with groups. The staff understood the need for students to transition successfully from the wharekura into the wider world. In taking heed of some of the anxieties some students felt about the transition, this wharekura is currently developing ways to improve transition into tertiary study.

Critical questions for te kōhanga reo and wharekura

This section presents critical questions that emerged from the kōrero ā-whānau associated with te kōhanga reo and wharekura. We posed the following question to all whānau: *What sorts of educational research would be of benefit to your children and whānau in education?*

The following questions are based on whānau responses. They address important areas of future development for kaupapa Māori educational initiatives in Aotearoa New Zealand. These questions seek to provide fertile areas for research, with the ultimate aim of enhancing kaupapa Māori educational initiatives for whānau. These questions and issues have not been analysed for particular themes, nor have they distilled or categorised for consistency. The issues appear in the way that whānau articulated them to us. Many of the questions or issues overlap. Because of this they must not be read in isolation. Rather, each area informs the other.

Te kōhanga reo

- How is Māori pedagogy practised as positive teaching practice in Māori education?
- How can kura-kāinga relationships be strengthened?
- What are the current barriers to whānau having access to immersion Māori education?
- What is underpinning the inequitable resourcing of Māori education?

- What are whānau aspirations for their tamariki and mokopuna, and how do we develop pathways towards those?
- How do we achieve increased access to Māori-medium education?
- How are our tamariki successful? What are Māori ways of defining success in an educational context? How do we wish to measure that?
- How do whānau make educational decisions and what do they need so they can do that?
- How do we provide transition and continuity in Māori education?
- What are parent/whānau aspirations for their tamariki?
- How are tamariki with special needs and their whānau being provided for?
- What are the professional development needs of kaiako in kōhanga, kura, wharekura? And how can we achieve those?
- What are the reo Māori needs of whānau?

Wharekura

- How can small kura offer a greater range of subject options?
- How can small kura with limited staff grow and sustain sport and cultural activities?
- What student leadership activities best benefit kaupapa Māori students?
- How can students attending kaupapa Māori schooling be best prepared to work and study in the non-Māori world?
- What kaupapa Māori Māori-medium curriculum resources are available to wharekura—and where is the most need?
- What—and how much—do Māori whānau really know about NCEA?
- How can tertiary institutions build relationships with wharekura that go beyond marketing and recruitment?

Whānau

- How to increase whānau involvement in wharekura?
- What information do whānau need to further support their tamariki in kura?

Transition

- How well do students transition from wharekura to tertiary pathways, or the outside world, or both?
- How can we better support students in this transition from wharekura to tertiary pathways, or the outside world, or both?
- What sort of support is needed for wharekura students to succeed in mainstream tertiary institution

Provision for quality Māori-medium teacher education

- How can quality and passionate Māori-medium teachers be produced?

Te reo Māori

- How can students (in particular), teachers and whānau be supported/assisted to achieve the highest level of te reo Māori in wharekura?

Impact of kaupapa Māori education

- What has been the impact of kaupapa Māori education on people's lives (and whānau)?

Rangatahi

- What are the key issues/challenges facing rangatahi, and how can they best be supported?

Research

- How can whānau get better access to relevant research?

3. Findings: Early childhood education and Pākehā education

Two kōrero ā-whānau make up this section. They include kōrero from diverse whānau participating in five early childhood education centres and four Pākehā schools. The kōrero is inclusive of whānau. This section concludes with critical questions raised by these whānau about the future potential of kaupapa Māori research in early childhood and Pākehā education. We have not analysed these kōrero ā-whānau through conventional Western research processes of triangulation or thematic analysis.

Tikanga and kawa guided our way of working with participants in these two settings. For example, processes of hui and whakawhanaungatanga informed the relationships and methods used in these settings. These included giving expression to kaupapa tuku iho, such as manaaki tangata, rangatiratanga and te reo.¹⁰

Early childhood education kōrero ā-whānau

Early childhood education (ECE) services in Aotearoa New Zealand cater to the needs of children from 3 months to school entry age, 5 years (MoE ECE Educate: www.educate.ece.govt.nz/learning/curriculumandlearning/TeWhariki/PartA/E). While ECE services are not compulsory, most centres are partly publicly funded by the education sector and most children attend ECE centres. There is a diverse range of ECE services including:

- Playcentre and kindergarten services that provide sessional educational experiences for children
- education and care services provide a mix of full- and part -places for children
- home-based education

¹⁰ See the appendix to this report.

The five ECE service providers are a mix of private- and community-based education and care services. Two ECE services identified themselves as “bicultural providers”, and the remaining centres were classed as “mainstream providers”. The majority of the ECE teachers identified as Pākehā/European, while the majority of whānau accessing ECE identified as Māori.

The kōrero ā-whānau illustrate that whānau aimed to develop positive relationships by creating a warm and welcoming environment. This goal included encouraging parent involvement in decision making; making learning fun; giving expression to whanaungatanga and manaakitanga; providing quality education in the areas of numeracy, literacy, expressive arts, music, tikanga Māori and te reo; providing an inclusive cultural perspective that affirms the identities of diverse whānau; and providing holistic development of children. Most of these goals were achieved by bicultural and bilingual environments that honour Te Tiriti o Waitangi. Some of the goals and aims that differed between whānau included supporting multicultural partnerships.

Whānau aspirations for their tamariki and mokopuna

I want children to understand where they fit in the community (over generations) and to have a strong sense of self identity... [For example] as Kai Tahu from Otakou, as well as having competency in te reo. ECE is important for preparing my child and children for school and providing links to the community and supporting her reo and Kai Tahutaka.¹¹

This quote is representative of the three aspirations identified by all whānau, which included creating a positive sense of belonging and identity; trusting and feeling confident in kaiako; and supporting strong ECE relationships with Māori communities.

Creating a positive sense of belonging and identity

Whanaungatanga is fostered at most ECE service providers by acknowledging and respecting whānau whakapapa and instilling a sense of connection between tamariki, whānau and the ECE:

Overall I want my boys to come out of school knowing what they want, where they want to go, knowing what their strengths are and having passion for something ... ECE is where you start to see the care for the children and that bridge between parents, home and school.

Watching tamariki draw on their own strengths and talents through “play activities such as drawing, letter writing, songs and stories” helped to grow tamariki confidence and an awareness of their identity, culture and reo. Whānau aspire for their children to have strong self-identity and take pride in themselves:

¹¹ Kai Tahu are an iwi located in Te Waipounamu, the South Island. Kai Tahutaka relates to the tikanga (values and principles) associated with people of Kai Tahu.

I'd like [our boys] to know te reo as well as tauiwi [English]. Having had te reo in my life it will help them feel a sense of identity and belonging. Even though we live so far away from home I think it's very important for them to have an idea of who they are. I would love my kids to learn basic te reo, I feel strongly that Aotearoa only embraces Māori culture when it suits, for instance the All Black haka is probably at the top ... Every New Zealander recognises Māori culture through that haka. For me it's more than that, it's having a sense of identity and knowing your background and history.

Some whānau stated that their children's learning should extend beyond ECE environments:

I think it's important for children to know the basics about Māori history and tikanga so that they have an understanding of Māori culture being unique to them as New Zealanders. Therefore it is crucial to have good quality teachers who know the history, reo and culture.

Whānau were clear that, in order for a strong Māori identity to emerge, tamariki must have access to quality te reo and Māori teachers. Whānau discussed about the importance of "normalising te reo and Māori culture" so that "it becomes a part of everyday life to use Māori words". As a result, whānau desire a well-supported transition from ECE into primary, intermediate and high school. Some participants discussed the challenges their children faced as they entered into the schooling system after attending ECE. For example, some children transitioned to primary schools that did not continue teaching te reo, nor did the schools recognise Māori culture. Parents and teachers noticed their own children becoming less tolerant of difference and diversity of cultures. One whānau member discussed how tamariki at their ECE learnt pepeha, mihi, karakia, hīme and waiata, but are now asking questions at primary about why they are not learning te reo or Māori culture.

It's this generation of early childhood centres that has to change the mindset of the generations before them. The kids are so good at it. Our children are amazing about what they can say and which karakia they learn. Everyone is eager to lead it and they take a lot of pride in it and breaking down barriers and making it more accepting. Even the younger ones will count to five, tahi, rua, toru ... and might have it in English and they just know what it is.

Ka Hikitia (Ministry of Education, 2009) seeks to support an environment whereby "Māori are enjoying success as Māori". For many this means that ECE centres must grow a successful Māori environment. Kaiako identified that this type of environment is dependent on "mātua awhina, kaumātua, ngā whānau whānui o tamariki ... as well as building support from other Māori organisations". Other ECE centres talked about openly appreciating and supporting Māori children and whānau through accepting the culture and belief systems, and encouraging "a Māori way of knowing and being".

Trust and confidence in kaiako

The role of the ECE service is important as it maintains strong links between the centre and home providing confidence for the child.

Whānau talked openly about staff being actively interested in the child's home and community life. For them this increases the child's self-awareness and confidence. Other parents expressed their desires for staff to "treat tamariki as if they were their own". It was important to have a sense of trust in kaiako, to make sure their tamariki were safe and secure:

As a grandparent, the trust to handover guardianship for a space and time dominates or overrides all decisions ... So personally I feel strongly that my mokopuna has a Māori influence, has safety and has security. I trust that will help me with making decisions about how to help them with their literacy, numeracy and te reo.

Whānau visions for the educational development of tamariki are largely dependent on the competency and capability of the kaiako in their ECE centres. All whānau want to have healthy happy children, who gain an understanding of the wider world and are receiving high-quality education in two worlds, te ao Pākehā and te ao Māori. Kaiako are a key element in this process:

We need more qualified Māori teachers so there is a presence about what converts children to tikanga ... It's not just a hobby because they've been taught in the corner of a classroom. Rather, it's [te reo and tikanga] a lived experience ... Instead of having a doll house in the play ground you could have a marae so the children become familiar with all the different areas of significance; so they become more aware.

As a result of the Christchurch earthquakes, the theme of trust and confidence in kaiako has special significance for ECE centres in this area. Knowing that their tamariki were being cared for was of high priority. One kaiako reflected on the impact of the earthquakes and subsequent aftershocks:

Kaiako were focused on the care and wellbeing of the tamariki and that is what our whānau saw. When they came to the centre they said "this place is like an earthquake didn't even happen", because they saw children at rest, sleeping, playing with puzzles and they saw kaiako focused on the tamariki.

Whānau talked about the positive changes they saw in their tamariki when they were exposed to expressive activities such as arts, play and a variety of social interactions. They saw the need to continue this learning at home:

It's a lot easier to get the boys to learn what they need to learn with confidence and the influence of teachers and parents. There is no point going to childcare and learning one thing and going home and doing something different or vice versa. There is a need for continuity.

The learning benefits of a strong Māori community

Whānau aspire for their tamariki to be in a "safe environment and involved in a Māori community". This is so "they don't carry on their years feeling like they don't fit into primary school". Whānau highly value relationships between ECE centres and local Māori communities. For them these relationships can positively impact on children's learning and development. One member of a board of trustees commented that children should

“feel cared for and have positive manaaki, aroha, nurturing and experiences”. This board member explained that the local ECE centre practiced a whānau-centred approach, which enabled the aspirations of manaaki and aroha to flourish:

What I love about this place is it is like a whānau and I like to talk to kaiako who help me see a unique perspective and a different way of looking at tamariki that is strength based, educational development focused and supportive.

Another whānau member shared her hope “that tamariki are being loved by their immediate family, and valued by other organisations including education programmes”. This was important because she wanted her children to have educational choice, and not be “mono-educated”. Other whānau expressed the importance of their tamariki learning in a multicultural community. They believe that a multicultural learning environment gives rise to children learning diverse ways of knowing, which in the long term will help them to learn tolerance and acceptance.

Realising whānau educational aspirations in early childhood education

Success does not have to be academic ... Success is about parents enjoying their tamariki ... Celebrating positive things about their children.

Whānau highlighted two major themes that affirm their educational aspirations: supportive learning environments where whānau and local communities connect, and valuing tangata whenua.

Supportive learning environments where whānau and local communities connect

Whānau enjoy supportive learning environments, where local communities and centres work together in caring for tamariki. Whānau talked about successful extracurricular activities and events, such as celebrating Matariki, digging a hāngi, holding waiata sessions and weaving harakeke as a way of bringing neighbouring ECE centres and community groups together to share mātauranga Māori and support one another. These events demonstrate to the whānau and community what tamariki are learning, and can promote greater community awareness of mātauranga Māori. As one kaiako explained, “Our whānau have a lot to offer ... We have certain skills, but whānau have experience too, and they can share some of their skills with us.” In one centre, a whānau member recalls watching their tamariki recite karakia and mihimihi. This prompted the mother to seek learning opportunities for herself. As a result, this mother began training as an ECE teacher, who now aspires to become a kaiako in te kōhanga reo.

When transitioning from ECE to primary, intermediate and high school, whānau can often have limited contact with their ECE centre. Centres talked about the potential distress transition can cause for parents and tamariki, because at ECE there is a strong focus on

nurturing the child and involving the community. As a result some centres actively work with whānau to maintain a sense of support once their child is ready for transition into primary.

Valuing tangata whenua

Some whānau discussed how large sections of Aotearoa New Zealand's population have not been exposed to te ao Māori in any way:

There is a large section of our country that haven't seen te ao Māori for themselves and that is the dimension this community brings as kaitiaki and as mana whenua. It's for people to recognise the value of ECE being offered in this type of way and it's beneficial for all children to have an openness of valuing and engaging in ... other ways of knowing and being and I think the children will be enriched for that diversity ...

Areas that need to be strengthened for whānau to reach their aspirations in early childhood education

Four factors counter educational aspirations for whānau in ECE.

1. A shortage of quality and well-supported kaiako.
2. An uneven spread of Māori-based learning material and low use of te reo me ngā tikanga Māori.
3. Low levels of ECE cooperation and poor physical learning environments.
4. Financial cost associated with ECE.

Increase numbers of quality and well-supported kaiako

Whānau are concerned about the unequal ratio of unqualified Māori to qualified non-Māori kaiako in their local ECE centres. Most of the ECE centre's revealed a lower number of qualified Māori ECE teachers. Within this cohort there was a particular shortage of Māori men.

I'd like an equal ratio of qualified teachers Māori and non-Māori. I'd like to see more males involved because if we want Māori influence we need Māori males not just digging hāngi and leading the haka. We need them in a nurturing role as well.

Kaiako expressed concerns about spending "long hours on the floor". It was not uncommon for staff to work from 7.45 a.m. to 5.45 p.m. This resulted in centres experiencing difficulty supporting staff to undertake peer mentoring and professional development, as they were simply "too tired". In some cases, the heavy workload resulted in some whānau volunteering as relief kaiako.

Spread Māori-based learning material evenly, and increase use of te reo me ngā tikanga Māori

Some kaiako were concerned about the lack of learning-story content that is Māori based. Learning stories integrate learning dispositions into a story framework and include an analysis of the learning. For example, a whānau member shared how kaiako can take an interest in a child's fascination with worms. This curiosity is fostered and linked to cultural knowledge, such as Māori creation stories that include Papat ūānuku and Tāne Mahuta. Most ECE centres explained that their learning stories were predominantly based on te ao Pākehā dispositions and content knowledge. This "resource gap" posed a serious problem for some centres. For example, one of the South Island centres talked about a recent visit from a North Island kaiako who showcased some of the resources that had been developed to cater for tamariki. For the kaiako at this South Island ECE centre, the extent to which support for Māori resources and support can be regionally limited was recognised in the following way:

We actually have to fly to the North Island to get the support we need ... For example we send a kaiako for six weeks to do more training, and have one of the kaiako from the North to come work [here].

Whānau discussed how they could play an important role in supporting a learning programme that supports te ao Māori. Again, whānau generally demanded a higher level of competent and capable te reo teachers for their tamariki and mokopuna. The need for leadership that embeds te reo in the everyday practices of ECEs is paramount:

The vision from the top needs to be more open to changing times, and be open to what is available through different mediums and different information ... Especially when it comes to using te reo in the centre.

Improve ECE cooperation and physical learning environments

Whānau explained that some centres were not networked with other centres across the community because of the competitive ECE environment that exists. This presented barriers to sharing resources, and enhancing collegiality and centre innovation. In some of the localities, particularly in urban areas, centres operated out of physically condensed inward focused classrooms. In one case, the majority of the site had prefab buildings that kaiako believed did not provide the whānau environment they prefer for tamariki. The physical space is an important factor in supporting a welcoming whānau environment. As an alternative, whānau expressed an interest in having local centres that served as an interactive learning centre with animals, grass, mini-gardens and paddocks. Whānau believe that these spaces of interactive learning would enhance a child's play and interaction with the natural world. ECE centres believe more needs to be done to build a community of practice that empowers and supports all ECE centres in the region. This strengthened network would enable greater sharing of resources.

Decrease financial cost

Whānau and kaiako talked about the financial burden placed on whānau in accessing ECE. The price of care and affordability are a major factor in some whānau making choices about whether they send their tamariki to ECE. While there is currently a 20-hour free childcare subsidy for children aged 3, 4 and 5, two whānau remarked that the current early childhood education subsidies are too low:

We also need recognition from different funding levels, the Ministry of Education, and the community about the delivery of our unique programme. At the same time we need reduced fees for whānau as well as encouraging whānau input into the programme to ensure their tamariki have relevant learning opportunities. Building support from other Māori organisations including resources and people is also a key driver.

Pākehā schools kōrero ā-whānau

We want our children to be the best that they can be, to have a safe experience in education, from both their teachers and their peers. That the information that they're learning is used for good, the information isn't used "to hold over somebody". [We want them] to actually use information and knowledge to benefit us as a whānau, and themselves as they grow older ...

The origins of Pākehā schooling for Māori in Aotearoa New Zealand lie in the establishment of mission schools in 1816 in Rangihoua. This was followed by schooling under the settler colonial government through the 1867 Native Schools Act. Colonial legislation determined the role of early colonial schooling for Māori as being fundamentally located within broad ideologies of Christianising, civilising, assimilating, integrating and depriving (Simon & Smith, 2001). For Māori, such schooling has served the intentions of successive governments. It has provided an institutional vehicle through which a range of ideological assumptions and philosophies have been carried and operationalised among the Māori population.

There are 56,520 Māori students in the Pākehā schooling population (Ministry of Education, 2012b). Notions of "underachievement" and the over-representation of Māori students leaving schooling with no or little qualifications have consistently been the experience of many Māori whānau. Deficit theories and notions of "whānau and Māori deprivation" have been the dominant way in which Māori "underachievement" have been explained. Such explanations fail to engage with the underlying colonial assumptions on which the education system is grounded.

The whānau that participated in this kōrero ā-whānau have experience in 15 different Pākehā schooling contexts.

Whānau aspirations for their tamariki and mokopuna in Pākehā education

All whānau held clear aspirations for success for their tamariki and mokopuna. Success, for these whānau, encompassed academic, cultural and general life-skills. Whānau aspired for their tamariki and mokopuna to receive high-quality schooling, and have high-quality outcomes. They spoke passionately about their views of education:

[We aspire for our tamariki and mokopuna] to be safe, to be able to express himself freely, to have confidence built in him. I understand the importance of academic achievement, but what I really want is my child to have the ability to adapt, and adapt their thinking ... I would rather them be able to problem solve as opposed to recite, so they are actually able to use and analyse information ... So that they have a mind, and the education system supports the use of it. [For example] you know what the formula for a triangle is, but what is more relevant for me and what I want for my son, is to be able to adapt to any situation and to be able to think through a problem, and to use information and data as and when necessary. On another level there's the social aspects, social things that I want to him to be able to do. Peer relationships etc. It's a significant period of time that they'll be in the system, so want my son to be able to interact well with others, to know what is right and wrong ... A lot of that is taught and experienced with their peers, which brings in the whole other factor of other kids' influences on my child as well.

All whānau believed schools should meet whānau aspirations. Sadly, very few whānau felt as though their aspirations were being realised. Only a small number of whānau members were positive about their experiences, and the outcomes for their whānau. Of those whānau members, it is important to note that one was a teacher at the school attended by their tamariki. Two other whānau had chosen integrated private schools. These schools are based upon a clear educational philosophy that the whānau believe in. In this case the school choice reflected their aspirations for a holistic educational experience:

I chose [that school] because I love their emphasis on harmony with nature ... And the very spiritual aspects of the [school] principles ... You know, consciously recognising the need to harmonise our minds with our hearts, our physical, mental and spiritual [dimensions]. And, mainly because of their environment ... They don't introduce reading and writing till they're 7 [years old]. The whole philosophy of the education is common sense, that the education is designed to work with the development of the human being ... I really like that ... Having said that, I have to just trust that I made the best decision.

Realising whānau educational aspirations in Pākehā schools

As with the other kōrero ā-whānau, many of the factors that contribute to whānau educational aspirations are, in most cases, the opposite to those elements that counter the aspirations. Aspects that enhanced whānau learning and education in Pākehā schools included:

- the importance of perceiving “success” as holistic
- developing values-based education
- increasing Māori teacher numbers
- encouraging greater whānau–school engagement.

Success as holistic

Whānau want to see success defined in a way that includes cultural, spiritual and academic possibilities. Many of the whānau believed that the current notions of “success” are solely based on reaching the appropriate levels of academic success, i.e., NCEA credits. They wanted schools to focus more the “whole” person, as well as establishing peer-mentoring based on Māori notions of “tuakana–teina”. Whānau participants believe it is important for Māori students to be part of a strong collective:

Success for me [is a] well rounded people [that] can fit in any culture, doesn't matter where they are ... What I really notice most was those two [kids that] went to [that school], where everything they did [was] in terms [of] Māori [culture] ... They knew how to manaaki, they knew how to awhi, they knew what whānau was, and what that actually meant ... They knew tuakana–teina. The elder two went to a convent that talked about love, caring, sharing, [and] it was only because they had my mum, our whānau and the marae that they were able to demonstrate that ... They could talk about all of that stuff, but what did that actually mean ... The balance was being able to be part of [a] Māori [community].

Again, the understandings of “success” were perceived by whānau as limited by dominant non-Māori definitions, which are grounded solely on notions of academic achievement. As this whānau member said:

That's where I see education as unsupportive in a way, that lack of recognition of simply already being successful, whether we meet their criteria or not ... [A] huge emphasis on meeting a particular criteria.

One whānau member, who is also a teacher, highlighted some ways that more holistic notions of success could be realised by actively using te reo and tikanga Māori in the classroom:

Maybe success is within the class I'm with at the moment, with the children [that are] so-called ratbags ... They were looking at suspension and expulsion and they happened to be Māori kids ... I went into the senior room, because that's where the problems were, and just [got] back to basics, like we spoke of before, the whole trust and the relationship with the teacher ... Being able to teach those Māori kids in ways in which they can respond to ... [It] can be basic things like instead of saying “OK everyone stand up”, just say “e tū” ... It doesn't have to be a Māori lesson, but you can put Māori aspects into everyday teaching... That's been a success in our class because we've had lots of Māori kids that are needing that, that are craving that ... It's good to see how successful those kids are now, because before I felt they were being written off ... Instead of complaining about it, do something about it ... I'm really lucky that I've got a really supportive staff that also saw the need for that too.

Developing values-based education

Whānau believe that developing “values-based education” within Pākehā schools is a way that can ensure tamariki and mokopuna are able to have positive schooling experiences. Participants explained that any discussion of values must be inclusive not only of students and how students interact with one another, but also of how teachers and the schooling process impact on tamariki generally:

I think that comes back to the values, if you don't have a real honest set of values, that just shows me you are actually not valuing these minds you're meant to be growing. By leaving them to their own devices, by shutting them out in the cold, by making them run around in bare feet in the middle of winter ...

For whānau, a strong values base for students includes respect and safety. Including these values throughout the curriculum, as part of the school culture, would also counter bullying. This approach would be dependent on a host of school actors working in unison. For example, one whānau member gave a recent example of the lack of coordination when dealing with a bullying issue:

I'd like to see more awareness with bullying at school. I don't think there's enough for me, my son he is 7 now, but from a 5 year old who's been bullied on the school bus by little kids ranging from same age to high school kids, I found every time I laid a complaint I just got passed from the bus driver, to the tumuaki, to the teacher, to the bus monitor, you know, who was 10 years old.

Increasing the numbers of quality Māori teachers

Whānau saw teachers as having a key role in helping their tamariki and their own whānau achieve their aspirations. Positive teachers were remembered as having significant impact on the education of tamariki. The converse was also true. In order to encourage change, whānau offered an example of positive practice:

I was at a school camp for a whole week, and I watched this guy and thought this is amazing... They [the school] did realise this was a unique teacher, who respected everyone of them [the kids] and celebrated each personality ... I was really taken with that I've never forgotten that.

These kōrero ā-whānau indicate a need to increase the number of quality Māori teachers. For whānau, increasing Māori teachers who are culturally responsive to the “whole person” is needed because they can become positive role-models for tamariki. Whānau believe more must be done to have Māori teachers in front of Māori children:

They [tamariki] are taught in a way by a Māori teacher that they can relate to ... You know, you have Pākehā teachers that try their hardest—well some of them do—to relate to these Māori kids ... But at the end of the day it's really, really difficult for them to because they're coming from a whole other world.

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I chose to put her into the [that] school because I feel that the people in that school embrace all language[s] ... I was right, because a year and half later she just couldn't wait to speak Māori ... So I'm very pleased about that ... In saying that, our school doesn't have a Māori teacher, [and] it suffers in that area.

Encouraging greater trust within the school community

Positive relationships within the school community, and with whānau, was seen as an area that helps Māori educational aspirations. Ideally, whānau relationships need to be positive across all aspects of the school. Participants talked in some depth about peer, tuakana–teina, teacher–students, teacher–whānau, and whānau–school relationships. Positive and affirming relationships on all levels of schooling is considered to be necessary for Māori tamariki, mokopuna and the wider whānau. This is so a sense of common purpose and belonging among the school and whānau can develop:

There is potential for a better way of educating our kid ... It's around using that whole older sibling, or the older relationship in the school, otherwise the relationship that they [can] build is very segregated ... [I'm thinking] of country schools, where you have an entire family at a school, that it's not being utilised in a way in which it should be.

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The foundation for kids being happy at school, and safe, [is] having that relationship... You never know what you're sending the kids home with, but if they can trust one adult, or if they can feel comfortable at school then they're going to be learning ... If they don't have that then they'll block you out, so I think everything else comes from that, every sort of curriculum area or subject... I know it sounds flowery but I know when you go a bit deeper then that's what it's all about—relationships in the classroom.

Finally, when whānau feel they can approach teachers and the school to talk about their child's education, a positive learning experience takes place:

Even if you just go in the morning to drop the boys off, just to sort of get a rapport with the teacher and a bit of a relationship built up ... So that you have the confidence to go and see them

Areas that need to be strengthened for whānau to reach their aspirations in Pākehā education

Areas for development identified by whānau were extensive, and included school specific and wider structural issues. Critical issues identified included structural racism and a lack of understanding and recognition of Māori world-views.

Counter racism

Whānau firmly believed that racism impeded their educational aspirations. Participants saw this form of racism was expressed through:

- a lack of commitment to te reo and tikanga Māori
- a view of Māori as deficient
- mispronunciation of Māori names
- construction of Māori children as “problem” children
- lack of inclusion of Māori knowledge and history within the curriculum
- lack of commitment to engage fully with whānau Māori
- limited or lack of engagement with hapū and iwi of the area
- lack of knowledge or training of non-Māori teachers in relation to Māori understandings and practices.

These issues were consistently raised by whānau, and are areas that need to be urgently addressed. For one whānau, their schooling experience demonstrated to them that their tamariki were not uniquely Māori, which was troubling:

That’s the thing with these schools, our children are unique. I don’t care what they say, they can call us what they like, our children are unique and they [mainstream schools] are not fulfilling their responsibilities to our children. The core is racism. A lot of these teachers aren’t getting over their own subcultures. Therefore they can’t address things with our children, in particular violence in schools, which they like to call bullying, which affects the education of the children.

Whānau believed that for many teachers their expectations for Māori remained low. For them this was demonstrated through the deficit views and approaches taken. For example, Māori tamariki and whānau were often referred to as “lacking”. Whānau reported that often, teachers articulated that the failure lay solely at the feet of those tamariki and their whānau.

Build understanding and recognition of Māori world-views

Whānau explained that their tamariki were confronted with schooling experiences that did not recognise their Māori cultural backgrounds and heritage. Examples included teacher practices that demonstrated a low level of awareness of Māori world-views, and teachers disciplining Māori students because they did not understand them:

It’s the teachers’ lack of understanding of who Māori are. [They] haven’t even bothered to look into why our Māori children are like they are. Because if you put those children on a marae, they are Māori children, they know how to be Māori. They [teachers and schools] need educating themselves.

*

It’s the everyday life culture [reflecting te ao Māori throughout the curriculum] ... Even their classroom [should] reflect a bit of me ... Some brown people on the walls maybe ... I mean it’s

a small country school, surely part of their curriculum should be learning about their local whenua.

*

I have had to work in a predominantly Pākehā school ... I had a group of Māori students that were seen to be ratbags. I saw something that was lacking there, and it was their cultural identity and pride in themselves.

Not surprisingly, low recognition and understanding of Māori world-views limited the provision of Māori language and culture. For example, te reo and tikanga Māori was often not offered to whānau as a school option. Only one participant explained that the bilingual option was available to them:

I know the school tries and they do a lot of different things, but it's actually upping their own expectations and their levels of Māori understanding of education Māori ... It's not just kupu and it's not just kapa haka, there is a whole other side of Māori culture that they're not really tapping into. I think there's a lot of stuff that could be used to grow healthy, happy young people [in schools] ... A positive community and all those types of things ... So yeah, that it is actually an everyday thing, part of the [school] culture.

One whānau offered the following suggestions to use Māori world-views in teaching practice:

I prefer that education be about the four pou: whānau, wairua, tinana and hinengaro, that encrusts the whole child, the whole being, based on Māori culture ... [The] whole whānau being involved in the teaching of our tamariki, from our kaumātua, our pākeke, and whānau katoa ... Being involved in nurturing our tamariki and educating them, having that balance of that academic education ... As far as tikanga, yeah, nurturing the pride of being Māori. I think the only way to do that in our generation today is to educate them in who we are.

Curriculum and pedagogical approaches for Māori students were identified by whānau as requiring urgent attention. Whānau explained that curriculum content was often irrelevant to Māori. Their tamariki were becoming bored in class, which was interpreted by some teachers as the student being “a problem”, “lacking motivation”, or “interest in learning”. Whānau wanted the curriculum to be made more relevant to and include a range of learning styles. Some whānau noted that fundamental life skills were not included in the curriculum. For whānau, life skills meant tamariki learning how to problem-solve and take responsibility when making decisions.

Critical questions for early childhood education and Pākehā education

This section presents critical questions that emerged from the kōrero ā-whānau associated with early childhood education and with Pākehā schools. We posed the following question to all whānau: *What sorts of educational research would be of benefit to your children and whānau in education?*

The following questions are based on whānau responses. They address important areas of future development for kaupapa Māori educational initiatives in Aotearoa New Zealand. These questions seek to provide fertile areas for research, with the ultimate aim of enhancing early childhood education and Pākehā schools for whānau. These questions and issues have not been analysed for particular themes, nor have they distilled or categorised for consistency. The issues appear in the way that whānau articulated them to us. Many of the questions or issues overlap. Because of this, they must not be read in isolation. Rather, each area informs the other.

Pākehā schools

- How can the provision of te reo and tikanga be more successfully implemented in Pākehā schooling?
- What key elements are necessary for the support and affirmation of cultural identity for tamariki Māori within Pākehā schools?
- How can the curriculum be made more relevant to whānau Māori?
- What mechanisms and pedagogical approaches can be employed to ensure that curriculum areas are of interest and relevance to Māori?
- What are successful ways of dealing with bullying within a schooling context?
- What elements are necessary within teacher training and professional development programmes that can engage positive teacher expectations in relation to Māori learners and whānau?
- How are deficit views able to continue to be prevalent in educational contexts?
- What are key elements in the definition of success and achievement for Māori?
- What elements and practices are needed within the Pākehā schooling environment to ensure positive engagement with whānau Māori? What are the means by which schools/teachers are able to be more approachable?
- How do we increase Māori teacher numbers?

Early childhood education

- Many non-Māori teachers are interested in supporting whānau who are faced with particular challenges. Teachers are asked to support whānau with issues that relate to tikanga, or a particular way of knowing and being, such as bereavement or makutu. Where there are non-Māori teachers supporting Māori pupils and their whānau, what does the ECE centre need to know? How can they support whānau whose needs reside in a te ao Māori way of knowing and being? Who is available to give appropriate advice? What should the ECE centre do?
- How can ECE centres build collegial relationships with neighbouring centres when there is an element of competitiveness for resources?
- How can ECE practices and philosophies (e.g. *Te Whāriki* curriculum) continue to support whānau and tamariki in each stage of the child's schooling: primary, intermediate and high school?
- How well do tamariki perform in mainstream schools where there is a quality Māori component, or Māoritanga and te reo is well integrated across the curriculum, as opposed to Māori achievement in kura kaupapa or mainstream schools where Māoritanga/te reo is taken for granted?
- Whānau prefer to send their tamariki to local schools. However, it seems that in the southern South Island funding for Māori programmes and education is a lot

less than other places. Is this because there is a perceived sense that there is a lack of Māori numbers?

- How do kaiako/teachers approach whānau who do not know how to access good information because they are whakamā or do not know how to be involved in the centre? ECE centres have good news stories, and the negative information that is being conveyed in the media impacts on the way some whānau interact with the centre.
- We want more access to appropriate resources as well as learning from other teachers. So it is about being able to share information and knowledge willingly with others. We want this for all our colleagues as well, but how are we going to get it out there?
- There needs to be a continuity of whanaungatanga and building relationships across the sector for the benefit of all our tamariki and whānau.
- How can we get a Māori teacher at our centre?
- How can we best support whānau experiencing tough situations?
- How can we get support for professional development beyond an ECE teaching degree?
- We need more Māori leadership in ECE.

4. Wānanga and kōrero ā-whānau: Determining critical research issues for whānau in Māori education

As part of this project we organised two specific wānanga with whānau from around the country. This section presents the kōrero from each wānanga.

- **March 2012 wānanga:** Held at Tapu Te Ranga Marae, Te Whanganui-a-Tara, this wānanga focused on “What are the significant questions and critical issues you have for Māori throughout all stages of education?”
- **September 2012 wānanga:** Held in Wellington city, this wānanga brought whānau together in order to present the kōrero ā-whānau, refine our research approach and settle on our research priorities for the next five years.

March 2012 wānanga

This wānanga included Māori community leaders, kaiako from kaupapa Māori and Pākehā schools, and Māori educational researchers. The kōrero generated ranged from present-day realities for tamariki and whānau, to larger strategic priorities regarding Māori education in the future. Issues such as teacher quality, improving the fluency of te reo Māori in kaupapa Māori and Pākehā schools, and providing quality Māori education information for whānau to make informed decisions were some of the topics discussed. The kōrero ā-whānau represented here show that the philosophical foundations and principles of education for Māori is highly contested and complex. What follows are five broad topics that surfaced at the wānanga.

Revisioning a philosophy for Māori education

How do we as Māori define success as learners? What do we believe “Māori” education to be? If the current education system does not support whānau aspirations, or provide the diversity of provision and choice that tamariki need to succeed, then how should it look? Whānau felt that these are important questions that must be revisited often to make sure that complacency in education is avoided. Whānau discussed how it is important to not simply accept an education system that continues to fail many Māori learners. A transformative challenge for whānau, teachers, schools and decision makers is to critically examine what is happening with our tamariki within the education system. For whānau attending this wānanga this meant striving to create supportive and effective learning environments that “work for”, and lead to “success for” Māori learners.

Whānau are wary of Crown and academic researcher attempts to distil ideas about what constitutes “success as Māori” into a quantifiable and measureable frameworks. Whānau felt that their interpretation of Māori educational success is broader than most measures. This is particularly the case if these measures are not based on kaupapa tuku iho and inclusive of the interconnected elements of wellbeing, such as wairuatanga, rangatiratanga, whanaungatanga, te reo, whakapapa, pūkengatanga, kotahitanga and so on.

“Success” is a very personal concept, and changes depending on perspective, context and place. It can imply individual achievement and advancement in a particular discipline, and also include the efforts needed for collective success at hapū and iwi levels. Whānau have different expectations and definitions as to what counts as “quality”. Issues such as student “success”, “achievement” and “quality” are all topics that were debated amongst whānau. They were particularly interested in considering how these notions of student “advancement” connects or disconnects with a philosophy for Māori education based on kaupapa tuku iho, and our uniqueness and values as Māori.

Whānau reflected on what is working, rather than what is not. As part of this process they wanted to identify the key characteristics and factors that lead to “success” by Māori as defined by Māori. Whānau thought this could be done by:

- examining student achievement in kura kaupapa Māori, kura auraki, bilingual units and other schooling models
- learning from the stories of tamariki who are navigating barriers and succeeding both academically and culturally.

Equity, access and resources to support Māori wellbeing and success

Whānau discussed how racism continues to be a barrier to Māori learners’ wellbeing. Decision makers who do not understand the value of being Māori, and see no worth in being Māori, overtly or inadvertently create barriers through policy and procedures that result in inequitable and unfair treatment of Māori. Whānau attending the wānanga strongly believe that ensuring equity and fair treatment in education depends on the policies, attitudes and practices of those whose decisions shape the education system. These institutional elements create disparities in whānau access to their preferred

educational options (Māori or Pākehā). At the same time, whānau have found that funding, resources, planning process and monitoring requirements all differ among diverse kura and school settings.

Whānau discussed how Te Tiriti o Waitangi offers ways of identifying and addressing institutional barriers that impede whānau wellbeing. For example, they see value in ensuring the teaching sector has the knowledge and skills to support learners and their whānau. Some of the issues that continue to affect the teaching sector could be addressed by using a Tiriti o Waitangi framework, which address power sharing issues between Māori and the Crown. Topics of particular relevance for whānau included:

- school cultures and their role in supporting Māori learners
- increasing numbers of Māori kaiako
- initial teacher education and teacher registration requirements
- access to and uptake of quality professional learning and development (PLD) and associated training
- improving support networks for teachers
- addressing compliance and accountability issues the impact on whānau wellbeing.

Identity and curriculum

Knowing who you are and where you are from is one of the facets of being Māori that gives tamariki security. For whānau attending the wānanga, cultural knowledge and self-confidence has positive “flow-on effects” in education and personal development. It was suggested that curriculum approaches that addresses where students are geographically and supports “place-based” learning is important to Māori identity. Whānau explained that knowledge of place helps tamariki understand their place in the world. Subsequently, curriculum that supports place-based learning and notions of tūrangawaewae must ideally take place in early childhood education through to secondary schooling.

Whānau are interested in using the curriculum to “co-construct lessons”, as this includes the world of tamariki and whānau in classroom pedagogy. Co-construction of lessons raised discussion about the way that many Māori children actually determine the curriculum in their school. Whānau would like to know how best to create more capacity in the sector to deliver “place based” curriculum.

Informed decisions about transition through accessible information

Kōrero in the wānanga highlighted how whānau and tamariki participation in education, regardless of what level, is very important. To participate effectively and to make informed decisions about their children’s education, whānau need good access, and good information about their choices. There are key questions that whānau have about the factors that influence whānau educational decision-making.

- Why are whānau choosing certain models of schools and not others?

- Why would whānau not choose Māori-medium when it is producing good achievement results?
- How are learners connecting their learning to their future plans?
- What is happening at key transition points (e.g., transition from kura kaupapa to kura auraki, or kura kaupapa to wharekura and so forth)?
- How best can we retain tamariki in the schooling system?

Providing whānau with information across all the schooling models is vital. Accessible information should include what elements of the education system works well for whānau, explanations about the achievement rates in the different models, and an illustration of the different strategies used to keep children engaged and interested in their learning. Combined, these elements will help to produce informed whānau who can participate and contribute more fully in the education of their tamariki and mokopuna.

Quality reo at all levels of learning, including reo in the home

Te reo Māori remains a critical issue for Māori. The kōrero ā-whānau at this wānanga demonstrated that key concerns about language survival identified in the 1970s continue to be relevant today. Whānau felt that the fluency and level of te reo Māori in education has become more dire. This is particularly so because irreplaceable knowledge is lost with the passing of kaumātua. Generally, whānau explained that the following critical issues impact on the survival and quality of te reo in education:

- whānau commitment to the reo
- kura commitment to the reo
- need for more Māori teachers who are proficient Māori-language speakers
- need for more Māori-speaking teachers who are proficient in specialist subject areas
- the Māori-language fluency of teachers in kura kaupapa Māori
- Māori-language training for teachers
- remuneration for the language skills of fluent speakers
- the demographic profile of te reo speakers.

Ensuring our research work addresses the aspirations of diverse whānau

Whānau reiterated that educational aspirations differ among whānau. They were motivated by a research process that intends to better understand this diversity. For example, whānau discussed that more must be done to represent this diversity in Māori education. They welcomed the critical-issues research approach we were taking, as it begins to illustrate the realities and the aspirations of diverse whānau. Further exploration of diverse whānau educational aspirations could include:

- how rangatahi see education changing, and how they can influence change

- how whānau encourage and support children to get a great education in order for them to make choices and determine their futures
- how hapū, iwi and collective dynamics influence Māori education
- the educational experiences of Māori boys
- the educational experiences of Māori girls
- the educational experiences of teenage parents
- the educational experiences of taiohi takatāpui
- the educational experiences of Māori with special learning needs.

This one-day wānanga illustrated that any Māori educational research must be “visionary” and “open” to how Māori look at education now and in the future. Importantly, whānau urged researchers to take note of what those most involved in learning care about, which includes the multiple realities of whānau aspirations. Research must be focused on exploring what will make a difference and contribute to achieving the many aspirations that diverse whānau, hapū and iwi aspire to.

Wānanga reflections, by Moana Jackson

Moana Jackson acted as an adviser for He Whānau Mātau, He Whānau Ora, and attended our wānanga with whānau in March 2012. We invited Moana to present his reflections on the one-day wānanga. Below is a transcript of his kōrero.

Kia ora anō tātou

NZCER had a planning meeting before Christmas [2011] and I was surprised when I got to the meeting yesterday and saw my name on the board because I couldn't remember the earlier discussion about what I was going to do. I still wasn't sure after the planning meeting yesterday about what I was going to do. What I will try to do though is just pull together some of the kōrero that we've had, but to preface it with two thanks. First, to thank Jessica and the team because this sort of hui is actually really unusual in that people who want to do research are going out to ask our people “what do you think needs to be researched?” Normally it happens, as Leonie [Pihama] said earlier, the other way around. A researcher goes to our people and says “this is what I am going to do”, so I commend the team for that approach. The second thanks is to all of you for your kōrero and the input you've given so far.

Those who have heard me talk before know that I like telling stories. So I thought I would tell a story about this place, and a couple of other stories, and then I will try to pull the stories together because I think they illustrate where I hope this hui will go. I think it is important that the kōrero that's been held today actually leads somewhere; that we don't just have a big kōrero and then just drift off somewhere.

In 1990—and I know that there's someone in this whare who was there—the Human Rights Commission decided to have a rangatahi hui on the Treaty. It was the Waitangi Centennial, 150 years since 1840, and the Commission asked if I would help with that hui. Then they did what I think was a foolhardy thing: they sent a pānui to every secondary school in the country.

Perhaps not surprisingly, most secondary schools didn't reply, but on the day of the hui, 1,500 teenagers assembled on the road outside. They came in, we had the p ōwhiri and then we had to figure out how we were going to sleep 1,500 people in what was then only the downstairs part of Tapu Te Ranga. So Bruce and his team solved that by, on that first night, building this whare. This was built in twelve hours, and while they were building, the adults downstairs were walking around with crowbars trying to keep apart 1,500 hormonally rampant teenagers.

On the second night a number of rangatahi disappeared, so teachers were scouring Wellington trying to find their students. One of the young men, James, who had helped with the organisation, was gay. I got a call about one in the morning from a whanaunga, Jean Chase, who was then a community constable. There was an office in Cuba Street, and he said "I think you better come down". There used to be a gay bar called Paradise in Vivien Street, and they said, "I think you better come down, James has a couple of your students at the gay bar". So that particular hui was filled with all sorts of conflicting memories for me, but the thing that I remember most was that: talking with all of those rangatahi, many of who were for the first time hearing about Te Tiriti o Waitangi. A question that I got asked most often was a very simple one. "What does this mean for us?" Those young people are now parents and so on, and the question which was threaded through your kōrero this morning, was not so much, "what does this mean for us?", but, "what does this mean for our mokopuna?"

Because what I hope will come out of identifying critical issues, is a set of research imperatives that will lead to change for our mokopuna. And I say that particularly because it is 40 years ago this year—some of you look far too young to remember—that what I think was the first national Māori hui on education was held at T ūrangawaewae. I remember two things in particular about that hui as well. The first was that the issues that were raised then are actually not that different from the issues that we talked about this morning: access to resources, racism in the institutions, lack of understanding of relationships between schools and Māori communities. So if we take that first question, "what will this kōrero mean for us and our mokopuna?", then my first answer is that I don't want my mokopuna coming to a hui like this in 40 years' time and identifying the same issues. I want us to actually have left with something different; I want us to have envisioned something different.

The second reason I remember that hui actually has resonance with this room. There was some in our community who found it really difficult to accept the fact that these beautiful pou were painted by a woman. I went to several hui where there were long discussions about whether in fact women were even allowed to do this. The issue that arose at the national hui on education that I remember particularly clearly was from one of our great heroes, Mira Szaszy, who stood in the very first session when the agenda was being finalised and said she would like to see some discussion at this hui about the violence that was being done to our women and children. This was in 1972, and her suggestion was greeted by the top table, which was all men, with absolute horror and anger. I think that she even raised the issue, and it was dismissed as it was not an educational kaupapa. And so Mira ran a workshop on that kaupapa anyway. I went along to that workshop. There were about 60 women there and four men. I can name the men. There was me, my brother Sid, Hone Kaa, and a young man who had run away from school to come to the hui. His name was Rawiri Paratene. No one else wanted to know. And so the relevance those two stories have to our kaupapa today is, "what has led our people to that place". What has led

our people to a place where we have to debate—in a really narrow exclusionary way—who can and cannot paint something in a whare like this, and why, 40 years later, the issue of the violence we do to ourselves is still an issue that some of our people have difficulty confronting. So in spite what was said 40 years ago, that is very much, in my view, an educational issue.

The third story I want to tell is, there is in each group a really clear identification of where the issues lie, so there were words used like racism and institutional racism and structural racism and so on. What I hope we might do, as we envision something 40 years ahead, is that we contextualise where that racism comes from. That racism, in a sense, particularly in a term like structural and institutional racism, has become a term that excuses, that takes away responsibility from where it lies, because it can be responded to by people saying “oh well you know we have a cultural sensitivity programme, we have a carving at the entrance to our school” or whatever, and those things are nice, but they don’t address what I believe is the fundamental issue, that structural racism, racism of any sort, arises within the context of what I call the “culture of colonisation”. And we seem to have got nervous in the last 10 to 15 years to use that word. I can sort of date it back to a time when everyone was caught up in the first flush of biculturalism, and people were saying that colonisation has finished. Whenever I used to hear that phrase, I would think of one of my heroes, a woman who was involved in the Aboriginal land rights movement in Australia called Bobby Sykes, and she is quoted by Linda Smith in her book [Smith, 1999]. When told that colonisation had finished, Bobby’s response was to say, “really, have they all gone?”

If we see colonisation as a cultural process that exists to disempower; disenfranchise and alienate the people to whom the land belongs, then colonisation is alive and well. And unless we can go back to using that term to position any sort of racism within the vocabulary of colonisation then we provide an easy excuse—“so I am not racist, some of my best friends are Māori, but I won’t let Māori schools have the same resources as mine”. We provide an out, and I don’t think they deserve an out.

The fourth story I want to tell, and as I said I will try and pull these all together to link up so just bear with me, is about one of my other heroes. A Native American man—he was a Lakota Sioux—called Vine Deloria and if you get a chance to read anything that he wrote, I would recommend it. The first book he wrote was entitled *Custer Died for Your Sins* but my favourite book that he wrote is called *Red Earth White Lies*: they are really knowledgeable and often really funny analyses of what has happened to Native American peoples. When I first got to know Vine Deloria, he used to talk about positions in different Native American communities of what are known as faith keepers—people who are responsible for protecting and nurturing the faith and the faith systems of their people. Those people are also often called dream keepers, they keep alive the dreams of the ancestor and encourage the mokopuna to dream. I remember the first time he spoke to me about that, and I asked him “how come you ended up becoming a teacher?” and he said something that I have never forgotten. He said, “if an educator cannot keep faith, if an educator cannot dream, than he or she cannot teach”. And so what I hope can come out of this hui is a programme of research that will not only be critical, not only be analytical, but will actually be brave enough to ask the hard questions, and contextualise them in that broader construct which still disempowers us all. But, most of all, it will be research that gives back to us the faith in ourselves.

Because in my work I see a lot of mainly young Māori who, as I'm sure many of you do, who actually have no faith in themselves, who have no faith in what it is to be Māori. Part of the challenge I think in education is to deal with the reality which creates that situation. How do we give back faith in ourselves to our mokopuna? What can we plan in the years ahead that can help them rekindle that faith in who we are? And, most importantly for me, how can we encourage our people once again to dream?

Dreaming has become almost an irrational, unhelpful, unrealistic notion. Every time someone talks about a dream of something in this country they are usually greeted with a refrain, "oh get real!" But whatever we construct as reality comes initially from a vision or dream. It's just like that phrase, "somebody acts without thinking". I don't think that is true because every action is preceded by a thought of some kind, and so every reality is preceded by a dream or a vision, and what colonisation does most successfully to the people it dispossesses is it constrains the ability to dream. Because if we dream Māori dreams, then we will automatically, axiomatically, challenge the reality we are forced to live in.

So in acknowledging all of the issues you have raised, some are day-to-day issues that cause hurt, frustration and stress. How wonderful it will be if our mokopuna do not have that frustration and stress, how wonderful if they can have absolute surety and faith in themselves as Māori, and that's for every one of our mokopuna, not the few lucky to go to a kura. Not the few that are lucky to grow up with parents who are fluent in the reo, but the young kids who sleep under bridges, the young kids whose education is taking dope. All of our mokopuna. That to me is the research challenge that is ahead of us. And the word research simply comes from the Latin; the Latin root of the word research is to "find new visions". That's what I would like to see the research that comes out of our kōrero head towards.

And I would like to pick up in closing on just a couple of quite specific points that were raised. In a number of the groups there was some discussion about how our young men, our boys, are leaving without any qualifications. That is an ongoing issue and the corollary of that often is that they will end up in the jaws of the Pākehā justice system and end up in prison. In 1984, I was approached by the then-Justice Department to do some research on the relationship between our people and the so-called criminal justice system to find out why our people thought so many of our people were ending up in jail. So we did three years of research and the report was published in 1988. Some of you may remember it caused some controversy at the time. The Government initially refused to publish it. Among many of the recommendations we made was that part of the problem was that you can't look at a young man in a prison cell in isolation from the history that has impacted upon him and his community. That issue was put really clearly by a woman from Ngāti Hine, Christina Lyndon, who sadly is no longer with us, who said, "you can't see 20th-century criminal offending in isolation from the crime of colonisation".

In 2008, four years ago, Ngāti Kahungunu asked us to do an updated research project to see if things have changed in that area in 20 years. The report on that research will be published shortly, but there is one stark difference from 20 years ago. Very little has changed, but the one stark difference is that in 1988 51 percent of the male prison population was Māori, and only 3 percent of the female prison population was Māori.

In 2010, the latest year for which we have statistics, the figure for Māori men has hardly changed. 52 percent of the male prison population is still Māori men—young Māori men—but 63 percent of the female prison population is now young Māori women. So while I think we should maintain and do what we can to deal with so many of our male rangatahi leaving without qualifications, I think there is an even greater and probably even more damaging educational failure being imposed upon our young Māori women. The figures Jenny and her group discussed about the really disproportionate provision of education for teenage mums shows that really clearly. And I just wanted to raise that because often we tend to only discuss difficulties with the education system, and its broader sense as an issue that affects our boys, when it actually affects our girls. The depth of that effect is now being mirrored in prison statistics. Our women are now imprisoned at higher rate than any women anywhere in the world; and we should know that, and I think we should be concerned about it. Ultimately comes back to an educational failure as well.

So finally can I just thank you again for your kōrero. As you have probably seen from my kōrero, listening to your talk and discussions and feedback tends to send me off in all sorts of strange directions, but I hope what I have said has been of some value. I know that Te Wāhanga now will take all of your ideas and try to identify what are some of the things over the next several years that we can do as researchers that might address and hopefully advance the issues that you have raised. If they do that well, then I hope it will create a situation that is based on a vision, that is based on a dream, that addresses the hard issues and gives our mokopuna hope.

If we do that, then I think this hui will become a milestone in our history.

So thank you again to Te Wāhanga for organising, thank you all for coming, thank you all for listening.

September 2012 wānanga

In September 2012 we invited whānau that had participated in our research over the last 14 to 18 months to regather at a wānanga in Wellington city. The purpose of this second wānanga was to maintain the whanaungatanga we had established with whānau over the life of the research, present our work to date, and refine our research approach for the future. We presented a summary of our research, including the critical questions and issues whānau raised, and we shared our understandings of the central themes. This second wānanga created an opportunity to explore with whānau how the research resonated with them. Whānau also offered suggestions on refining our approach further.

Ngā kaupapa matua: Ngā Moemoeā, Rangatiratanga, Te Reo Rangatira, Whānau Transitions

We discussed the fact that whānau had raised a plethora of critical issues in Māori education. Reflecting on the different issues, we found that interrelated kaupapa of Ngā Moemoeā (whānau aspirations), Rangatiratanga (whānau autonomy and authority) and Te

Reo Rangatira (learning and maintenance of reo Māori) were prominent overarching themes.

Within these interrelated kaupapa, there were between 15 and 20 specific questions that referred to a central issue of Whānau Transitions. Whānau Transitions transcended both Pākehā and kaupapa Māori learning environments, and were all connected to the interrelated kaupapa of Ngā Moemoeā, Rangatiratanga and Te Reo Rangatira.

In relation to Ngā Moemoeā the kōrero ā-whānau tells us that whānau transitions will differ because of the location and cultural connections whānau have. At the same time, different organisational structures can work to support whānau transitions, while others may not. These are serious considerations if the diverse aspirations of whānau during the transition process are to be realised in Māori education.

Issues relating to Rangatiratanga are salient for whānau transitions. These issues include accessibility of kaupapa Māori educational options, high-quality Māori educational programmes, whānau educational choice and decision-making processes, and organisational systems that support healthy whānau transitions into or out of particular settings. Māori educational rights, equity and access can be understood by exploring the circumstances that either enable or constrain whānau autonomy.

Regarding Te Reo Rangatira, the kōrero ā-whānau inform us that exploring the conditions of transition that strengthen reo Māori revitalisation and identifying how whānau can best access te reo resources all contribute to how whānau learn, maintain and further build their reo Māori knowledge and confidence. All these issues are critically important for the survival of reo Māori. Our work will contribute to the revitalisation of te reo Māori me ōna tikanga by informing language acquisition and transmission across diverse learning environments.

Wānanga participants affirmed the work done up until that point. It was confirmed that whānau transition is a fundamental issue for whānau when considering the type of education they want for their tamariki and mokopuna. Wānanga participants reiterated that the transition process touches on issues related to student wellbeing and success, whānau educational choice and access, and the learning and nurturing of reo Māori. Whānau transition raises issues about how best our education system can support whānau aspirations.

In assisting us to refine our research priorities, wānanga participants wanted our future research work to:

- remain based within the kaupapa Māori philosophy of whanaungatanga, uphold relationships with those whānau that have contributed to our research process, and extend these research relationships to new whānau
- continue to use, deepen and and share our knowledge of kōrero ā-whānau methods with interested parties
- create Māori education information that resonates and connects to number of audiences—whānau, Māori educational researchers, Māori and Pākehā learning environments, policy makers and government research
- link to Te Tiriti o Waitangi, and rights-based approaches such as the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples

- address structural problems, such as racism, that encumber whānau aspirations, autonomy and reo Māori
- be strengths-based, focusing particularly on “how Māori kids like to learn”.

Participants were appreciative of the whanaungatanga approach we had built with them, and were particularly supportive of the kōrero ā-whānau being representative of the day-to-day experiences of whānau in the education system. The interconnected kaupapa of Ngā Moemoeā, Rangatiratanga, Te Reo Rangatira and Whānau Transitions resonated strongly amongst those present. There were particularly distressed by the ongoing issues of racism in Pākehā schools, and saw this as an institutional problem that needs to be urgently addressed in our work.

5. Creating a whānau-informed kaupapa Māori research agenda in education

Through the processes of whanaungatanga that privilege kōrero ā-whānau, this kaupapa Māori education report presents the diverse voices of whānau regarding what they determined to be the critical issues in Māori education. The kōrero ā-whānau span kaupapa Māori and Pākehā educational models. We asked whānau: *What sorts of educational research would be of benefit to their children and whānau in education?*

The kōrero ā-whānau presented is not an exhaustive account of the critical issues facing whānau in Māori education. A diversity of Māori values and priorities exist in relation to the philosophy and practice of “Māori education”. However, the responses we did receive from whānau provide areas that need re-examining in Māori educational research.

“He whānau mātau, he whānau ora” —A knowing whānau is a healthy whānau

Whānau articulated a variety of critical issues that span Māori and Pākehā models of education. Many of the issues raised are interconnected, and yet they also reflect their unique cultural and structural context, whether it be kaupapa Māori or Pākehā models of education. For example, the importance of building relationships between wharekura and tertiary institutions and wānanga is partially dependent on the how prepared students are for the transition, and what information whānau use to guide their decision-making. Similarly, producing quality kaupapa Māori and rumaki kaiako with specialised te reo Māori skills is also dependent on the types of Māori pedagogy supported and applied in kura, rumaki, Pākehā schools and kaiako professional learning and development, as well as the use of te reo in the home and local community. On the other hand, elements that support Māori cultural identity in Pākehā schools are connected to how well these schools work with whānau in meeting their educational aspirations. We have found that a

diversity of Māori values and priorities exist in relation to the philosophy and practice of “Māori education”.

The critical issues articulated by whānau, guidance from our Rōpū Tikanga Rangahau, our respective team strengths and our organisational capacity both enables and constrains our future work. We are restricted in the ways we can address all the critical research issues raised by whānau. Bearing in mind these restrictions, and in keeping with our kaupapa Māori methodology methodology of whanaungatanga, we went back to whānau to wānanga and refine our research agenda.

Upon reflecting on the critical issues for whānau, and with the guidance of Te Rōpū Tikanga Rangahau over the last 14 to 18 months we found that the interrelated kaupapa of Ngā Moemoeā (whānau aspirations), Rangatiratanga (whānau autonomy and authority) and Te Reo Rangatira (learning and maintenance of reo Māori) were prominent overarching themes. A central theme that brings these three kaupapa together is the issue of Whānau Transitions. This has emerged as a critical issue that transcends Pākehā and kaupapa Māori learning environments.

Ngā mahi kei tua: Exploring whānau transition aspirations, autonomy and reo Māori

Taken as a whole, our work with whānau to identify the critical issues in Māori education has resulted in this overarching research question: *What aspects of the educational system support whānau aspirations, autonomy and Māori language, and what aspects need to change?*

This general focus creates room to explore:

- the structural obstacles that hinder whānau aspirations, autonomy and reo Māori
- how Māori kids like to learn.

From this we can explore how can we take these learning models of—or approaches to—how taura like to learn across transitions and between diverse learning environments.

How taura and whānau can best be supported at key transition points in the education system will assist in identifying what works well for whānau and what must change. For example, we envisage that by identifying the whānau transition issues at each stage of the educational process—being inclusive of Pākehā and Māori models of education—we will “build a picture” of the whānau considerations and potential within the education system when moving between learning environments.

There is much work currently being undertaken in relation to what constitutes Māori “success” in the education system, and how best to achieve this. Our research is distinctive in that we are not focusing on teacher practices, or a “culturally responsive pedagogy of relations”, nor will be undertaking a review of educational pedagogy. While there are links to this work, our research primarily concerned with whānau educational experiences. We

believe that identifying how taura and rangatahi like to learn, what supports whānau transitions, and what needs to change will result in the following practical advantages.

- **Whānau:** Generate new ideas on how their tamariki and mokopuna like to learn, what supports them to remain connected in their learning, and what whānau should be looking for when deciding what transitions to make.
- **Learning environments, schools and kura:** Clarity about whānau and taura/rangatahi aspirations, and what learning systems and practices can best support whānau throughout the education system.
- **Research and policy makers:** An analysis of structural barriers to whānau educational wellbeing, and how to support these through the everyday experiences of taura and whānau voice.

Our kaupapa Māori educational research work aims to explore and generate knowledge that is determined by Māori, and that is of practical benefit to them. Our goal is to make sure that the future kaupapa Māori research plan for Te Wāhanga is grounded in, and facilitative of, the diverse aspirations of whānau in education. Through the whanaungatanga approach of kōrero ā-whānau, we have found that Ngā Moemoeā, Rangatiratanga, and Te Reo Rangatira provide a distinctive and valuable kaupapa Māori framework for our future work. Exploring Whānau Transitions through these multidimensional kaupapa holds possibilities for a holistic and aspirational whānau-led agenda that is concerned with whānau self-determination, and contributes to the revitalisation efforts of reo Māori.

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Appendix

NZCER human ethics application: Critical issues in Māori education, 2011–2012

Recruitment and informed consent

The project team is utilising a whanaungatanga method to recruit participants for the sector-based whānau case studies i.e. drawing on whānau and personal relationships and networks. A number of key people have been contacted, including parents, principals and Māori teachers, and are keen to be part of this project. Care will be taken to ensure that all participants are fully informed of the project and have consented to be part of it before any focus groups or interviews take place. Participant Information Sheets and Participant Consent Forms will be sent out in advance, and where possible, the relevant kōrero ā-whānau leader will meet with participants to go over the material and obtain consent kanohi ki te kanohi.

Parental consent for student participants

Another issue the research team discussed was the potential difficulty and delay in having the parental consent forms required for student participants returned. The research team decided that, regardless of the student's age, it was important to gain parental consent for students to participate in the research. This is consistent with a kaupapa Māori approach which privileges whānau and whanaungatanga (family and family relationships). We realise that it is likely that some of the students will not return parental consent forms, and we do not want to burden teachers with the responsibility of having to follow these up. We will therefore work closely with Māori teachers involved and the principals of the schools to find ways/opportunities to obtain consent from parents and whānau in a timely and tika

(proper) manner. Further to this, and where appropriate, the research team will work directly with whānau to get parental consent for student participants.

Recording of wānanga

The research team has discussed the logistical complications that would arise should one or more wānanga participants decline to be recorded. The team agreed that the wānanga will be recorded in order to assist with producing an accurate set of written notes. The Participant Information Sheet for wānanga participants and the consent form make it clear that consent to participate in the project will mean having the wānanga recorded. As a security measure, all audio recordings will be deleted at the close of the project as outlined in the Participant Information Sheet for wānanga participants.

Whānau in kōhanga reo, early childhood education, kura kaupapa, mainstream schools

Participants will be clearly informed from the outset about the project and invited to participate. All participants will be given Participant Information Sheets and the research project will be explained and discussed with participants prior to focus groups and interviews taking place. If they agree to take part in the research project, each will be asked to sign a Participant Consent Form. Focus group kōrero will be audio taped and written notes will also be taken. A set of notes from each focus group will be developed using written notes supported by the audio recording. Individual interviews will be audio taped and key points transcribed. Sets of notes and transcripts will be sent to each of the respective participants, giving them the opportunity to change, add, or delete information they have provided, or to withdraw from the project should they wish. Participants will have the option to be named or remain anonymous. The leader of each sector will conduct the focus groups and interviews, supported by another member of the research team.

Written parental consent will be sought for all student focus group participants, regardless of actual age. A Participant Information Sheet and Participant Consent Form will be sent home with each of the participants prior to the focus groups taking place. These focus groups will also be audio taped and a set of notes developed from written notes and the audio recording. Each student will be sent a set of notes and have the opportunity to make amendments or withdraw from the project. The identity of all student focus group participants will remain anonymous.

A koha (petrol vouchers to the value of \$30) will be given to adult participants. A koha (movie vouchers to the value of \$15) will be given to student participants. At the close of each focus group, participants will share a kai together. Whānau leaders will have \$40 to purchase kai for each focus group.

Participants will be sent a draft copy of their respective kōrero ā-whānau. This will allow them to see what has come from their kōrero, and to have an additional opportunity to comment on the accuracy or contribute further. Once the kōrero ā-whānau reports are finalised, participants will be sent a copy of their respective final report for their records.

At the end of year one of the project, the project team will feedback to the whānau participants and provide them with a brief summary report of the years work pertaining to their sector. Where possible, this will be done kanohi ki te kanohi.

One-day wānanga: whānau, kaiako, Māori education researchers

This wānanga will be held with Māori who work in the sectors under investigation. Invitations will be sent to 30–40 people, made up of 5–8 people from each of the four sectors under investigation. Included in this will be those who have experience in the Māori boarding schools sector so that this sector can be referred to in the overall write-up of year one. Participants will come together for a one-day wānanga in Wellington, and will wānanga together and in semi-structured focus groups (five focus groups in total).

All participants will be given a Participant Information Sheet when invited to participate in the wānanga, and each will be asked to return a signed Participant Consent Form at the hui. The kōrero from the focus group discussions will be audio taped. A set of notes from the full group kōrero will be developed using written notes supported by the audio recording, and sent to each participant. A set of notes for each sector-specific focus group will also be developed using written notes and the audio recording and sent to the respective focus group participants, giving them the opportunity to change, add, or delete information they have provided, or to withdraw from the project should they wish. Participants will have the option to be named or remain anonymous. Moana Jackson will facilitate the wānanga and members of the project team will run their respective focus group. Participants will receive a small koha of organic produce, and \$40 of petrol vouchers to cover (or help cover) travel costs.

Participants will be sent a draft copy of the wānanga report. This will allow them to see what has come from their kōrero, and have an additional opportunity to comment on the accuracy or contribute further. Once the wānanga report is finalised, participants will be sent a copy for their records. At the end of year one of the project, the project team will feedback to wānanga participants and send them a brief summary report of the year's work pertaining to their sector.

