



The Graduate Profile: Why? Who? What? When?

***Ko te pae tawhiti whāia kia tata
Ko te pae tata whakamaua kia tina!
Haumie! Hui e! Taiki e!***

Encompassed within this saying is the essence or the reason why schools should consider the notion of The Graduate Profile or any variance thereof, that enables schools to reflect and refocus their energies with our learning environments. Companies and corporations are continually revamping their strategies and products for the consumers with the consumer bring the centre focus of all business.

Why then is it difficult for schools to fathom the notion of revamping their products or services such as leadership, management, teaching and learning for their consumers or students being the centre of all business? The graduate profile, put simply, is the vision you have for your child at certain stages of their schooling. Therefore what does the child look like at year 4, 8 and 12? What attributes such as knowledge, skills, values and beliefs will they possess at each stage? Where do these come from and how do we ensure our teachers are skilled and have the knowledge to teach these attributes to our children? How can whānau support schools and their children to possess these attributes at home? All of these questions are vital starting points for schools who wish to develop a graduate profile of some sort.



Haumi e! Hui e! - Who?

Literally the words haumi e and hui e mean to gather together in a group or that the group has come together to work or make progress on the reason for coming together.

So, when thinking about who should be involved in the development of the graduate profile we need only think about the triangulation of support around our tamariki such as whānau and community, teachers and those who work within the schools and the Ministry of Education. Together each of these groups play an integral role in the development of the teaching and learning of the child.

It is the responsibility of each of these groups to work together to co-construct the graduate profile based on their respective aspirations for students. The Ministry of Education outlines the expected framework and guidelines for teaching and learning. The school alongside ministry, support personnel coordinate the discussions and feedback from the whānau and community. All feedback is collated and reformatted to outline the draft of the graduate profile.

Now before we forget that our tamariki are the centre point of the graduate profile, consider the importance of student voices. Who better to ask about teaching and learning than the students? Who better to tell you how they best learn or what it is important for them to learn? Students voices are key to the development of a unified co-constructed graduate profile.



Ko te pae tawhiti whāia kia tata – What?

There is no black line master nor are there templates to follow. Again, it is your hands to develop however your school, students and whānau see fit to develop. Some schools produce booklets, some produce billboards, others have printed posters. What is important is that your school is able to advertise not only via media such as these but also via students, staff and the whānau the components of your graduate profile as if they had written it themselves. Here lies the true meaning of co-construction. What your graduate profile looks like depends on how well it was co-constructed. Therefore a school that has produced a booklet should also be able to verbally articulate its content as if they live and breathe every word.

A good example of this is the billboard type that sits outside some schools. Most have nice graphics with keywords such as independent, life long learners, caring, environmentally aware etc etc etc. However what is more important is that every person connected to that school or that graduate profile can expand or elaborate on these keywords as if they are all reading from the same book.

Ko te pae tata whakamaua kia tina! – When?

A rhetorical question? I think no! When should you consider doing this? Well now of course, that is if you haven't already done so. And even then it could be time to revisit it again. Once schools have developed a draft, a final and they have lived what they have developed as a graduate profile like all things they have a shelf life. Graduate profiles have a shelf life and we all know teaching and learning is forever evolving. So too must our graduate profile. When developing your graduate profile, consider its lifespan. Put a timeline to it so that all stakeholders are aware of when what is going to be completed. From there you will know when it is time to start the discussion again.



Ka tō he rā, ka rere he rā

There are resources that can be found on the Te Marautanga o Aotearoa online community that can support schools and whānau to become more informed consumers.

Remember our aspirations or goals we must draw closer. Those within our grasp we must take hold of and utilise. We can only do this together united.

Haumi e! Hui e! Taiki e!