



Tō Mātou Haerenga: he wero, he kupu āwhina

Nā te kura o Herewini ki Rotorua



Our school

Selwyn Primary is a mainstream school in Rotorua that sits at the foot of Mount Ngongotaha. It has a 3 classroom bilingual unit, junior, middle and senior. This is part two of our story. Firstly we outline some of the challenges we met on our journey. Secondly, we offer some advice.

Our journey to creating a 'graduate profile' and a 'localised curriculum' continues. Challenges arise to both provoke and strengthen us. One such challenge we faced was the difficulty of summarising the whānau thoughts. How were we to sort the thoughts of the whānau and maintain the essence of their thoughts? The answer? Do the job, go back to the whānau and they will validate, or not, what you have done.



Other challenges included:

- Having all immersion unit staff on board.
- Whānau hui are good to gather thoughts, however, analysis and summarising is time consuming.

If you are developing your graduate profile and localised curriculum, here is our advice.

- Conduct genuine whānau hui. Don't meet for the 'hell of it' or for meetings sake.
- Find alternative ways of gathering information, don't leave it for the face-to-face meetings alone. Provide opportunity for those who are unable to attend to give their thoughts.
- Seek clarification of whānau thoughts. As an example, 'whanaungatanga' is a widely used term, however we wanted to know what they perceived this word to mean, and to also see if we were living up to their expectations or not.
- There must be support from the school principal! There must be physical, intellectual and emotional support. Some of the supports provided by our principal were teacher release, financial support, resourcing, a physical presence at whānau meetings and teacher meetings. If it were not for the principal's support, this project would not be moving forward.
- All immersion or bilingual staff should support the project. If their support isn't there, the way ahead will be difficult.
- Some of the thoughts that arose at whānau meetings we are already doing in the classroom. You don't always have to change what you are doing in the classroom to suit what the whānau are suggesting. Rather, listen to their suggestions, as there may be new or different things you can add to what you do already to make things better.



Ka tō he rā, ka rere he rā

- Yes, this process is long, that is, meetings with whānau. It is sometimes difficult, and other times smooth going. Despite this, one must endure. There is much to be gained in the future. The whānau thoughts are precious, if one takes the time to nurture and encourage them, the welfare of our children will benefit.

So, there is much more to do in front of us. Sorting, writing and agreeing upon the graduate profile. Analysing and agreeing upon our principles, values and belief statements. The localised curriculum is present and we are currently delving deeper and wider in to this.

We want to acknowledge the families of the Selwyn Primary immersion unit for their efforts thus far. The saying, ‘many hands make light work’ is very applicable.