The Development of a Framework of Criteria for Aromatawai

A Pūrākau

He Mihi

TE TĀHUHU O TE MĀTAURANGA
Ministry of Education

Te Kāwanatanga o Aotearoa

Contents

The Development of a Framework of Criteria for Aromatawai – A Pūrākau

The development of a framework of criteria for aromatawai[1] tools, tasks, and activities in Māori-immersion educational settings (kura[2]) is presented in this paper as a pūrākau[3]. Educationist Dr Jenny Lee advocates the use of an identifiably cultural (Māori) pedagogical tool – pūrākau – to write in ways that create interest, "stimulate inquiry", and "relate to, and engage people of the 'real world'".[4]

This pūrākau is a synthesis of three sets of voices:

1. four participants who were interviewed because of their involvement in developing the aromatawai criteria framework

2. selected teachers, and pāngarau and te reo matatini professional development facilitators whose brief was to align the Māori e-asTTle tools with te marautanga[5]

3. six developers and producers of assessment tools currently available for kura, four of whom have developed pāngarau tools, and two literacy tool developers. One of the pāngarau developers had also been involved in literacy for many years.

Links from the aromatawai criteria developed for the Ministry of Education aromatawai position paper – *Rukuhia Rarangahia* – are made through synthesising the stories of the participants. Links are also made to the ways that the aspirations, preferences, and purposes of Māori-immersion education can be better realised through aromatawai processes.

Kura are a response by Māori whānau, hapū, and iwi to provide a schooling system that supports the potential of Māori children to succeed in education with Māori language and the cultural world views of their tīpuna (ancestors) intact[6]. Ka Hikitia, the Ministry of Education's strategic plan for Māori education from 2008, advocates that success in education by Māori is fully realised when students are identifiably successful as Māori. Kura develop graduate profiles that indicate what success as Māori might look, sound, and feel like in their community. Kura are therefore charged with developing localised curricula and assessment to support them in realising the aspirations, preferences, and priorities articulated in their graduate profiles.

Since the development of *Te Marautanga o Aotearoa* and *Ngā Whanaketanga*[7], the inception of the advisory group for assessment – Te Tīrewa Mātai, and the creation of *Mātaiako*[8], discussion about assessment and aromatawai has led to the two documents that are the focus for this pūrākau:

• *Rukuhia Rarangahia* – the position paper for aromatawai by the Ministry of Education

• the Draft Aromatawai Criteria – a framework of criteria for developing aromatawai tools, tasks and activities.

The first section of this pūrākau synthesises the stories of four participants who were closely involved with the development of the aromatawai criteria framework. They were brought together to support further development of a set of criteria guiding the creation of tools, tasks, and activities to enable assessment under the umbrella of aromatawai as described by *Rukuhia Rarangahia*.

The second section synthesises the pūrākau of six participants who have been involved in the development of tools, tasks, and activities for assessment, made available nationally in kura. These developers talk about their perspectives on the framework, how they see their tools in relation to the framework, and what they see as possible next steps. This group has contributed to the iterative process of ensuring that the aromatawai criteria framework is relevant and appropriate. Their feedback and feedforward is incorporated in the latest draft following this pūrākau. Within this section there are also statements about an existing tool that went through an exercise determining its alignment with the marautanga, and with the aromatawai criteria framework. This exercise informed participants about the relevance and appropriateness of current aromatawai tools in terms of their purpose, that is, what they can do, and what they cannot do in terms of what they were designed to do. This section then imagines the future development of aromatawai tools based on the aromatawai criteria, which are particularly tailored toward meeting the priorities, aspirations, and preferences of kura. Statements with quotation marks have come directly from interviews with participants.

1. For an in depth discussion of aromatawai, see Rukuhia Rarangahia: Ministry of Education Position Paper Aromatawai
2. Māori-immersion primary and secondary educational settings which include communities as teachers and learners.
3. Story.
4. J. Lee, Māori Cultural Regeneration: Pūrākau as pedagogy. Centre for Research in Lifelong Learning International Conference, Stirling, Scotland, 2005.
5. Te Marautanga o Aotearoa is the curriculum for Māori-immersion schools. [link to: nzcurriculum.tki.org.nz/Curriculum-documents/Te-Marautanga-o-Aotearoa
6. See G. Smith. Indigenous Struggle for the Transformation of Education and Schooling. Keynote Address to the Alaskan Federation of Natives (AFN) Convention. Anchorage, Alaska, U.S., 2003.
7. http://www.minedu.govt.nz/theMinistry/EducationInitiatives/ NgaWhanaketangaRumakiMaori/TeMarautangaOAotearoa.aspx
8. http://tmoa.tki.org.nz/Mataiako

Pūrākau Tuatahi
Development of the Aromatawai Criteria Framework

Four members of Te Tīrewa Mātai advisory group, alongside a Ministry liaison person in charge of tools and items development within the *Mātaiako* work programme, took part in the development of the *Aromatawai Criteria Framework*. Individual interviews were carried out capturing members' perspectives on the rationale for the framework, its focal points, and further development of the aromatawai criteria and their views of the framework's future potential.

Three different focus areas were generated from the interviews. The first was in relation to the monitoring of achievement for kura nationally. The second discussed the need and desire to have an aromatawai system tailored particularly for kura educational settings, aspirations, priorities, and preferences. The third was a synthesis of views about what kaiako (teachers), kura, and developers of tools, tasks, and activities might need to enable them to utilise the criteria framework.

Te Tīrewa Mātai was charged with developing a research- and evidence-based system for national monitoring and evaluation of Māori educational settings from years 0–13. There was a degree of controversy about, and support for creating a uniform national monitoring system to gather information about the levels of educational success that students in kura across the country experience. Participants posed questions around who gains the greatest benefits from the system, what it will monitor, how it will carry out that monitoring, whose knowledge and whose criteria are utilised to make decisions, and how could it be possible to "ensure consistency of interpretation across a range of settings?" At the core of these questions was a return to focusing on the priorities, aspirations, preferences, and needs of the sector – a Māori-immersion schooling system deliberately set up outside the already existing New Zealand schooling system, together with a desire to ask the sector what is best for the sector.

While the Te Tīrewa Mātai rōpū (group) were developing their thinking around the national monitoring framework, *Rukuhia Rarangahia* emerged in response to the Ministry of Education's English-medium position paper for assessment. The *Marautanga o Aotearoa*, *Ngā Whanaketanga*, and *Mātaiako* were also being developed. A group within the *Mātaiako* project was charged with gathering information about what assessment tools were being used in kura, and how they were being used.

Each project added to the creation of the *Aromatawai Criteria Framework* in different ways, according to its unique focus. The framework is able to inform the understanding of the purpose/s of assessment tools that currently exist, and to guide the future development of tools, tasks, and activities. To understand the aromatawai criteria, it is useful to understand the relationship between aromatawai and assessment.

The pūrākau asserts – through the synthesised voices of the participants – that assessment is a part of aromatawai, and aromatawai serves a larger purpose than assessment. Aromatawai is described by one participant as going, "beyond numbers and letters ... having a wider view" and includes what is said to be missing in assessment – some intangible elements – by, "shifting into a Māori way of thinking", being "brave" enough to include aspects like tairongo (the senses), and going beyond the notion that student achievement can only be quantitatively measured, based on assessement which can only gather quantitative data. The framework has potential to:

> "put ways of thinking together, so there are synergies with those who are connected to wairua[9], compared to those who are connected to systems and processes –numbers and letters – it links to wairua, the x-factor".

Aromatawai, as described by *Rukuhia Rarangahia*, is a way to:

> "have the permission to use intuitive knowledge about the wairua o te tamaiti[10], to make teaching and learning decisions".

It also opens the space for validating a starting point that springs from kaupapa Māori:

> "Because we live in a society that wants empirical evidence, you have to be able to measure it, which is counter-intuitive to intuition. Yet from a kaupapa Māori perspective, that's your starting point, that's your default position and anything else you do informs that."

The *Aromatawai Criteria Framework* informs decisions about developing particular tasks, tools, or activities that monitor and/or assess learning, and inform future teaching and learning decisions from a kaupapa Māori focus. The framework also suggests who could be included in making those decisions. Aromatawai goes beyond measuring the attainment of procedural knowledge and skills and drills that are "normally" associated with classroom teaching and learning as aligned to the *Marautanga o Aotearoa* and *Ngā Whanaketanga*.

The participants identified that aromatawai and the aromatawai criteria provide space to bring to the fore the aspirations, priorities, and preferences that exist in marau ā-kura[11]. Aromatawai criteria have an imperative of ensuring that iwi (tribal) objectives are met:

> "It's a given, the marautanga, but actually, what makes a difference is whether the tamaiti has a really strong sense of belonging and identity."

Kura create strong graduate profiles that align with their iwi priorities, but those criteria can be neglected because of the focus on marautanga outcomes. The aromatawai criteria afford kura and kura kaiako another type of permission, opportunity, and support mechanism to monitor not only what is happening within the framework of the marautanga, but also within the framework of their localised marau. Through the criteria kura are enabled to develop tools, activities and tasks – in some cases alongside whānau and the wider community – that determine graduates' development according to their graduate profiles.

However an issue with this is:

> "they're waiting until the end, then talking about how that student turned out. What if by not monitoring [the graduate profile, the kura-ā-iwi criteria] they've missed these huge opportunities to give as much attention to those qualities and values that they've expressed in the graduate profile? … [The framework] is mitigating the risks of missed opportunities … and making sure that when we move into the space of opportunity that we … are not doing it hegemonically … again."

The hegemonic space is one that does not acknowledge the presence of the "unmeasurable", or "intangible" dimensions of knowledge. The intangible aspects talked about in this pūrākau are wairua, intuition, identity, and tairongo. Monitoring or tracking these aspects has been less developed, "under-utilised, unappreciated, and unexplored", and:

> "it deserves to be qualified in some way, whether that's done at an individual level, whether you can package it in any way, the opportunity is there to at least try … We haven't found the way to talk about it and to nurture it. Nurture it more than anything else, let alone try and measure it. We don't have the discourse that goes around, 'how do you talk about tairongo'?".

For kaiako given the responsibility of using aromatawai tools, tasks, and activities, these are small examples of the types of challenges to be negotiated. The participants have told a pūrākau about kaiako not having strong reference points to base their teaching and learning decisions on.

While there is a common feeling that there are enough assessment tools available, there is also a feeling that kaiako have not had access to strong pre-service training in assessment or adequate professional development in either assessment or aromatawai to be able to fully utilise the available tools to their full potential:

> "For a long time we haven't had the permission to do what we know or think

is right and so we've just absorbed the traditional ways of doing things. We know how important it is and it would appear we have so little to help us do it. I don't agree that it is a lack of tools. I think that it's a lack of knowledge."

According to the participants, *Rukuhia Rarangahia* has not yet filtered to the sector, kura, and kaiako, nor has it filtered to those who would normally disseminate information and professional development about either *Rukuhia Rarangahia* or the *Aromatawai Criteria Framework*. It is expressed via this pūrākau that providers of professional learning and development will need to think more about the needs of their target audiences, they will need a framework that provides a basis for evaluating their success at being able to meet kaiako needs more immediately, needs that are not always directly related to student achievement, and then think about evaluating how to meet student achievement needs. Questions are asked about how well professional learning and development providers will engage with both *Rukuhia Rarangahia* and the *Aromatawai Criteria Framework*:

> "Where will they see themselves in it"?

> "If providers can't see the value in *Rukuhia Rarangahia*, how well will it filter through to the sector? Where are the meeting points for the extremes of philosophy of measurement?"

The philosophies of measurement are about "those who are connected to wairua compared to those who are connected to systems and processes, numbers, and letters". If the space is provided by the *Aromatawai Criteria Framework*, and there is a population of kaiako and professional learning and development (PLD) providers who are enculturated into the "numbers and letters" system of assessment, can kaiako or providers pick up and run with the framework without support:
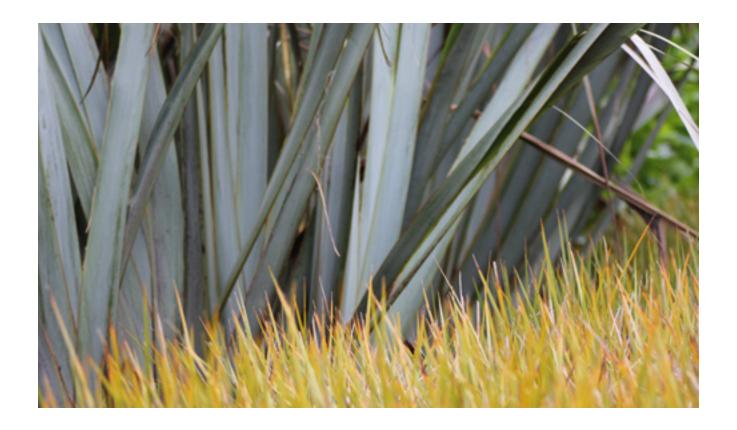
> "Teacher understanding of tools, tasks, and activities will be informed by their understanding of aromatawai … We do not have enough understanding of aromatawai. Teachers get it, but they do not have all that understanding."

Teachers and providers of PLD will best support student achievement by being given support themselves. Together with *Rukuhia Rarangahia* and the *Aromatawai Criteria Framework* is a strong call for supporting kaiako to be able to see the progress and achievement that their students make in moments every day (day-to-day, moment-to-moment monitoring). A caution offered by one of the participants was to ensure that tasks, tools, and activities do not take away the ability of a kaiako to use their intuition about students, but rather to find a balance between the two ways of knowing. It is important that tool developers, kaiako, and kura are able to design tools, tasks, and activities that are specifically tailored to the purposes of assessment and aromatawai. Those purposes might be to assess content knowledge, procedural knowledge, or skills from the marautanga or the whanaketanga, or they might be to provide perspectives about how the child's identity, tairongo, and/or wairua are developing in line with the community's aspirations and priorities.

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9. Spirit.
10. Child.
11. Curricula written by kura for their unique contexts and embodying their unique philosophies.

Pūrākau Tuarua
Stories from Developers of Existing Tools

The next section of the pūrākau is a synthesis of elements from the first story, and what the next group of participants have added with their pūrākau.

Five participants were involved in telling this pūrākau. Three were most closely aligned with pāngarau assessment tools (one was also experienced and had expertise in literacy), and two participants had been involved in literacy and the development of reading, writing, and oral language assessment tools for Māori language education for many years. The stories told by these participants suggest possible refinements to the structure and wording of the framework criteria. There is close agreement with the first group of participants in calling for tools, tasks, and activities that support and align with iwi, hapū, and whānau aspirations, the marau ā-kura, and kura graduate profiles. There was a discussion about kaiako and kura being enabled to utilise the framework to develop their own tools, tasks, and activities, and to be able to utilise tools, tasks, and activities that are developed by others using the framework.

The tools that have been produced were also discussed in terms of the impact that pre-design, design, and production has on the validity and robustness of tools, tasks, and activities utilised for assessment or aromatawai.

Potential adaptations of the tool

What follows are excerpts of conversations directly related to suggestions for adapting and refining the *Aromatawai Criteria Framework*. There is also commentary on points that have been made in relation to suggestions for changes, adaptations, or refinements.

> "You may need to add more, or to better reflect in the principle bit [about] how reliable is the tool, activity, task – you may need to define what reliability means. It means seeing how something works over time."

The example of a car was the metaphor used to illustrate the concept of reliability. A car is reliable when you first buy it (hopefully). But over time things start to wear out, or need to be changed for the car to continue to be reliable, and this was the same for the aromatawai criteria, for it to be an iterative framework which can be reviewed, adapted, or tweaked. Therefore:

> "You need to add a definition [for reliability], ask has anything changed over time since we've been using it. Put something under validity – is it [still] valid, is it [still] making sense, is it [still] doing what it was designed to do in terms of measuring what we want it to measure, is it [still] a valid tool for measuring what it's been targeted to?"

The framework provides a scale that is useful for determining how well the tool, task, or activity meets any one criteria. The comment for the scale was:

> "I like the idea of the rating scale. The scale is end-user type target, but the rating needs to be qualified". [For example the type of language used could be: 1 means strongly disagree, 2 means disagree, 3 means neutral, 4 means agree, and 5 means strongly agree. It was agreed that the rating scale can be used by whānau as well as kaiako and developers.]

Two of the participants asked about a change of wording under the practice and practicality of the tool section:

> " I would call that tool management – the whole administration, how easy is it to generate or give to the students, to supervise the students, to collect the information and analyse it [so that] assessment tools are manageable, not too difficult to use, results can be readily collated. I'd call that management of the tool, or management of the process."

The second contribution to this idea was:

> "How is the process manageable and how do we know?"

One rationale behind using the terms manageability or management came from a participant who suggested that one of the biggest barriers for teachers is having confidence and being competent about what data to collect, how to collect data, and how to keep track of learning. There was discussion about what type of data is priority data for the kura and the kura community/ies. This could suggest consideration of monitoring spreadsheets or rubrics that are accessible for any frequency of usage, and that are relevant to priority focus areas. In relation to this, four participants strongly advocated for the aromatawai framework to indicate that aromatawai occurs in any given moment during teaching and learning, and therefore should not be confined to tests, or specifically made aromatawai or assessment tools, tasks, or activities. A concern raised by all four was that frameworks have the potential to tie kaiako into determining student learning by only "doing" tests, aromatawai, or assessments. Participants strongly advocated for the notion of kaiako realising that any activity they do at any time has the power to indicate what students are achieving whether it is the kaiako teaching and learning focus or not. Another idea that supported this was how tools, tasks, and activities link with aromatawai, assessment, monitoring of learning, evaluation, and overall teacher judgements:

> "take out [the idea of] triangulation and ask, 'Could the tool/task/activity along with other aromatawai tools and processes contribute to an overall picture of student achievement?' ... Build up a culture of gathering information from a range of sources. [So that you only need to] use tools, tasks, and activities to confirm your judgement."

Related to this was a question about how aromatawai, assessment, monitoring, evaluation, and overall teacher judgement decisions are moderated, and how quality assurance is guaranteed for tools, tasks, and activities.

This was echoed throughout both pūrākau, that kaiako, for whatever reasons, have varying degrees of understanding and expertise about assessment and aromatawai. While there is support for kaiako and kura being able to utilise the criteria framework, there is also concern that the varying levels of expertise will create varying levels of validity across results. However there was support for the framework having the potential to further inform and develop kaiako and kura understanding of aromatawai and assessment because of the "Criteria" and "Further reflective questions" sections. For one of the participants, the framework had provided ideas around the facilitation work that they were doing:

> "because I've been thinking, what parts of it might I even be able to put into my facilitation".

Finally, changes in the focus of questions that start in a certain way were suggested:

Instead of saying, "How can …" it was suggested that the questions that start this way should begin by asking, "Can the tool be used for …?" and then asking, "If so, how?"

These ideas have led to a second level draft reorganisation of the framework for consideration. Other considerations for reorganising the framework have come from experiences of tool developers about what robust and valid assessment and aromatawai needs to incorporate, and how this should be considered for strengthening the framework.

Both sets of voices state in different ways (not all quotes are included here) that the framework should support kura graduate profiles and iwi, hapū, and whānau aspirations, and that the students should be at the centre of all assessment and aromatawai, and to be aware of external bodies driving assessment and aromatawai for priorities that do not necessarily match the priorities of kura and may be changeable depending on shifts in directives. This was expressed in different ways:

> "Keep the focus on the big picture outcomes that we want for our children, not just on [external] directions, that way when changes happen you still have the core of what the kura are there for."

> "The purpose of kura is not to see if all kura can show that their children are the same as other children across the country. It is to ensure that they are successful according to the kura graduate profile."

It was clearly stated that tools should be built from the grass roots, from the needs expressed by kaiako, and from observing ways that ākonga interact with tools, tasks, and activities when they are trialled. Tools should be used to find what students know and can do. They should be designed so that the "students can make choices about where they can go in the assessment" and feel safe about the tool and the aromatawai process. While the essence of this principle could be identified in *Rukuhia Rarangahia*, it was not as obvious in the framework, so this was one of the areas where the framework could be strengthened:

> "Whatever the assessments look like they need to be safe for kids to participate in and for the teachers as well … If you get it right for the tamaiti, you get it right for teachers."

One of the participants talked about the development and commercialisation of tools, tasks, and activities. Once the tools are developed, and trialled to determine their validity and "fitness for purpose", care needs to be taken when they are produced. If tools are tested by trialling them with students and teachers over time, and they are changed during their production, they are no longer valid and need to be tested with students and teachers over another period of time to ensure that they are still fit for the purpose they were designed for.

This relates to earlier statements about the reliability and validity of a tool, task, and/or activity over time. If a tool no longer supports the purpose that it was required for, the language being used in it, or the contexts that shaped it, there is potential for it to be

tweaked, but how is validity and reliability ensured, particularly given the varying levels of expertise of kaiako, kura, and contractors in any of the areas mentioned (purpose, language, context, and other)?

Another aspect of reliability and validity was highlighted when a participant talked about kaiako using tools, tasks, and activities that have inappropriate questions, or language, or contexts. Kaiako need the ability to be guided by their goals and what they are trying to assess to know what questions are appropriate or inappropriate in existing tools. It was expressed that the aromatawai criteria probably will not assist with this process. The asTTle tool was mentioned as an example:

> "if they're needing to change it, asTTle doesn't have that capability either of [being changed], you know if the teachers are just going to say, only do questions 5, 10, and ... but that's not really how asTTle was designed to be used either. There's so much of [asTTle] that doesn't align with the framework as [asTTle] currently is, but it wasn't designed for aromatawai. It was designed around assessment and John Hattie['s work]".

Teacher knowledge about assessment and assessment data was also discussed in terms of having a critical lens for viewing the outcomes and analysis reports from assessment tools, tasks, and activities:

> "to have that knowledge to just not believe everything they see in it, you know, to look critically at the reports ... if they think that it's inconsistent with assessments that they've done, then to not just say, 'oh yes, it's asTTle, then it must be right'".

The framework and *Rukuhia Rarangahia* are seen as support for kaiako in being able to reflect on their overall teacher judgments, about what they are really looking for, and whether or not their tool, task, and/or activity is the right way to find what they are looking for, and make decisions. A participant was reminded that rather than going into kura to teach teachers how to use a tool, their purpose is to support teachers in understanding what they are looking for in what

students can do. It brought the focus away from the tools and back to the student:

> "It's not about the tools, it's about the tamaiti ... what they can do, rather than what they can't do".

Summary of Pūrākau and Discussion

The aromatawai critieria is seen positively by the framework developers and the group who have been involved in developing past tools, tasks, activities, and assessment tools. The main ideas that emerged from the pūrākau have been to:

- ensure an emphasis on supporting iwi, hapū and whānau express aspirations, preferences, and priorities by assisting contractors, kaiako, and kura to develop tools, tasks, and activities that suit kura contexts and graduate profiles

- use kaiako, student, and kura interaction and ideas to ascertain what sort of tools are needed and how they are most useful; whānau, hapū and iwi should also be involved to ensure the sustainability of the localised aspirations, preferences, and priorities

- ensure that the ākonga in their kura context are the focus of all teaching, learning, and assessment and aromatawai, rather than external agendas, tools, tasks, and activities being the focus; prevent assessment taking over teaching and learning and aim towards the graduate profiles

- theorise the principles of aromatawai so that kaiako, kura, tool developers, and whānau have ways of articulating and representing the essence of the principles of aromatawai without being compromised in a system that gives greater support to measurement, and is less able to comprehend and/or articulate aspects of learning like wairua, intuition, and identity

- ensure that kaiako have the training they require to be critical users and creators of assessment and aromatawai – this can alleviate issues about:

  - appropriate use of tools, tasks, and activities that suit the purposes and goals of the kaiako and kura

  - designing tools that are consistent and robust (nationally – where appropriate)

  - consistent checking of the validity and reliability of tools (over time)

  - moderation of overall teacher judgement, tools, tasks, and activities

  - kaiako ability to use and appropriately adapt a range of tools, tasks, and activities

  - kaiako ability to see and note student achievement at any time with or without specific tools, tasks, or activities

  - too much focus on tools, tasks, and activities and not enough focus on the child as the centre.

  - ensure that once tools, tasks, and activities are designed, trialled, and submitted that the production of them does not invalidate them

- recognise that some of the older tools need to have changes made to them and these should be thoroughly trialled and tested by tamariki and kaiako, rather than have them tweaked in ways that will not suit the purposes that they were designed for, which then invalidates results

- acknowledge there are some areas that do not as yet strongly reflect the principles in *Rukuhia Rarangahia*, the aromatawai position paper – they can be seen, however they need a stronger emphasis.

Kāti, koina. Nō reira, ka mihi rā ki a koutou te hunga i whakarite wā matapaki ai i te kaupapa nei. Ko koutou rā ērā e pukumahi kaha tonu nei kia whanake ai ngā āhuatanga ako o roto i ngā kura, kia tū pakari ai ā tātou tamariki, ā tātou mokopuna. E kore e mutu ngā kupu whakamihi ki a koutou. Tēnā koutou katoa.