



## OUR VISION...

To grow an empowered and connected community



## **Our Community**

The schools in the Palmerston North East Kāhui Ako are situated in the East side of the city and then rurally eastwards. The schools in this community are all in the Freyberg High School's school zone although many students attend other secondary schools across the city. Prior to the formation of Kāhui Ako many of the primary schools and the intermediate school were already working together as a cluster.

Primary Schools: Ashhurst, Hokowhitu, Milson, Parkland, Roslyn, Russell Street, Terrace End, Whakarongo and Ross Intermediate  
Secondary School: Freyberg High

## **Roll Summary**

As at September 2019, the total school roll number in the Kāhui Ako was made up of 4215 students from years 1 – 13. This reflects a 3% roll increase from 2017.

Of this number 1177 (28%) identified as Māori, 2258 (55%) NZ European, 181 (4.1%) Pasifika and 421 (9.2%) Asian. The only demographic change over the 3 years is an increase of 1.2 % in Asian student numbers.

## **ERO Reflections**

ERO presented their report of this Kāhui Ako in the very early stages of formation. However, on reflection many of their statements continue to be relevant, even if they are seen in a different context. They stated that all schools had a positive reporting history with ERO with many long-serving principals. ERO included PLD foci that included such programmes as the use of digital technologies, modern learning pedagogies, teaching as inquiry, managing transition, use of Ka Hikitia, te rea me ngā tikanga Māori, literacy and writing, mathematics, leadership and provision for Pacific learners.

The following ERO listed common strengths remain as high priority:

- Almost full participation in early childhood education
- Board of Trustees' and leaders' commitment to improving outcomes for students
- An appropriate range of learning opportunities for students, well aligned to the New Zealand Curriculum
- Strong home-school relationships and evolving partnerships
- Continued strengthening of systems and processes to guide operations and practice
- Ongoing integration of e-learning

ERO also made suggestions for areas of improvement. Most of the suggestions have progressed significantly, however, due to their nature they still remain a high priority across the Kāhui Ako. For example:

- Deliberate strategies to successfully accelerate students' progress and raise achievement
- Specific, needs-based targeting of boys and Māori

- Engaging students as active, self-directed learners
- Continuing to promote learning-focused partnerships with parents and whānau
- Further developing capability for analysing and using achievement data systematically for improvement
- Strengthening use of evaluation and inquiry to monitor quality, impact and progress

## **Our New Beginning**

Consultation occurred over a considerable amount of time to reset the focus of the Kāhui Ako (Appendix One). We were able to identify that the priority areas of our Kāhui Ako going forward needed to include some of the following:

- Effective transitions
- Culturally responsive practice
- Staff and student wellbeing
- Personalised learning
- Student-centred learning
- Integrated learning
- Key competencies
- Social and emotional development
- Future focussed curriculum
- Innovative practice
- Adaption
- Teacher inquiry

The group discussed the possible areas of focus in more detail (including the interdependency of some items) and agreed that they wished to focus on a smaller number of areas for progressing as a Kāhui Ako, with at least one of these being common to all Kāhui Ako members. Five preferred options were identified.

- Effective transitions
- Social-emotional wellbeing (originally socio-emotional development)
- Culturally responsive practice
- Innovative practice
- Learner-centred practice

The group discussed each of these in more detail and evaluated them through two lenses – which did they feel most passionate about, and which could they achieve better outcomes as a collective rather than working as individual teachers / schools. Each principal brought to the table the evidence from their own school. What they felt the most passionate about was what was on top of their list with respect to student concerns and issues. The most apparent option was social-emotional well-being.

It was decided that while all five options were worthy areas of focus, the Kāhui Ako would channel its energy into a single area until it strengthened the collaboration across members as well gaining momentum as a functioning Kāhui Ako. Consequently, a decision was made to adopt a social-emotional wellbeing as the single collective area of focus for the Kāhui Ako in 2019 and 2020, and to maintain a wait list of other important areas of focus which can be added in the future. The importance of our focus was reinforced by a recent ERO publication.

'Student wellbeing is strongly linked to learning. A student's level of wellbeing at school is indicated by their satisfaction with life at school, their engagement with learning and their social-emotional behaviour. It occurs when their basic needs are met and it is enhanced when evidence-informed practices are adopted by schools in partnership with families and community. Optimal student wellbeing is a sustainable state, characterised by predominantly positive feelings and attitude, positive relationships at school, resilience, self optimism and a high level of satisfaction with learning experiences.' 'Wellbeing is vital for student success. The ethical responsibility of teachers, leaders and trustees is to consider, promote, balance and respond to all aspects of the student, including their physical, social, emotional, academic and spiritual needs. '

**(Wellbeing for Success: a resource for schools. ERO 2016)**

We determined early on in our discussions that to be successful in developing our collaboration, we needed to better define the roles and responsibilities of the Within School and Across School teachers. We also believed that it was critical to develop the

We then discussed transitions as we believed the quality of the transition into and between schools significantly impacts wellbeing.

## Our Achievement Challenge

Our Achievement Challenge		
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Challenge One</b> <b>Raise the level of Wellbeing of Students and Staff</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Why – our evidence</b></p> <p>Wellbeing for success: a Resource for schools. ERO (2016) Wellbeing for Children’s Success at Primary School. ERO (2015) Wellbeing for Young People’s Success at Secondary School. ERO (2015) Stories of Resilience &amp; Innovation in Schools and Early Childhood Services: Canterbury Earthquakes. ERO (2013) The Educators’ Guide to Building Whole-School Wellbeing. Denise Quinlan &amp; Lucy Hone Resilient Grieving. Dr Lucy Hone Positive Psychology News: NZ Institute of Wellbeing and Resilience Promoting Wellbeing in Schools. Dr Lucy Hone. NZIWR Podcast</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>How will we make a difference?</b></p> <p>PLD sessions Wellbeing events / conferences Wellbeing Champions in Schools Learning Support Coordinators Data gathering and sharing Leadership capability ASTs &amp; WSTs Kāhui Ako self-review Kāhui Ako annual planning and alignment with school strategic planning</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Challenge Two</b> <b>Develop and Strengthen Collaborative Practice across the schools and early learning centres</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Why – our evidence</b></p> <p>Collaboration. CORE Education Ten Trends (2017) Communities of Learning Kāhui Ako: Collaboration to improve learner outcomes ERO (2016) Communities of Learning   Kāhui Ako: Working towards a collaborative practice ERO (2017) Communities of Learning   Kāhui Ako in Action. What we know so far: ERO (2017)</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>How will we make a difference?</b></p> <p>PLD sessions Senior Leader Coaching &amp; Mentoring AST Liaisons Data gathering and sharing Leadership capability ASTs &amp; WSTs Kāhui Ako self-review Kāhui Ako annual planning and alignment with school strategic planning</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Challenge Three</b> <b>Enrich and Consolidate Transitions for students across the Early Learning Sector to Year 13</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Why – our evidence</b></p> <p>Transition from Primary to Secondary School. ERO (2010) Evaluation at a Glance: Transition from Primary to Secondary School. (ERO 2012) Literature Review: Transition from ECEa to school: Report to MoE. (2010)</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>How will we make a difference?</b></p> <p>PLD sessions Transition Champions AST Liaisons Learning Support Coordinators Data gathering and sharing Leadership capability ASTs &amp; WSTs Kāhui Ako self-review Kāhui Ako annual planning and alignment with school strategic planning</p>

## **Challenge One**

### **Raising the Level of Wellbeing of Students and Staff**

#### **Rationale**

There is a strong belief that students do not have access to strategies to allow them to successfully and confidently face challenges in their lives and their learning. Specifically students are:

- Presenting with high levels of anxiety
- Unwilling to take risks through fear of failure
- Showing low levels of resilience

#### **Possible school based causes of the wellbeing problem**

As part of our review process with our we identified the following possible causes:

- Our staff were unclear about understanding exactly what well-being is and how it can be developed further in students to support their learning
- Transitions are a known challenge for students and can significantly increase anxiety
- We are finding that anxiety is increasing in our students and evident in all year groups
- There are some inconsistencies in the way that routines are established and reinforced across schools - particularly those relating to behaviour management
- There is variance in teacher expectations of students
- High stakes assessment particularly in secondary schools impact students
- There is an opportunity to strengthen the connection with family and whānau
- The peer culture in schools has a significant impact on how students experience the day
- The pressure experienced by students as Social Media use and it's consequent challenges increase
- Uncertainty students have around future prospects and opportunities
- Teacher well-being

#### **Other possible impacts**

- Changing family structures
- Parental expectations
- Increasing numbers of youth offending ( in particular years 11-14)
- Awareness of NZ suicide rates (particularly in males)
- Increasing number of students requiring interventions (counselling...)
- Stand-down and suspension rates.

## Our Strategic Goal

By 2022 our Kāhui Ako will have a greater understanding of the impact and effectiveness wellbeing can make to improve learning outcomes as well as systems within schools that promote wellbeing for all.

## What will we do?

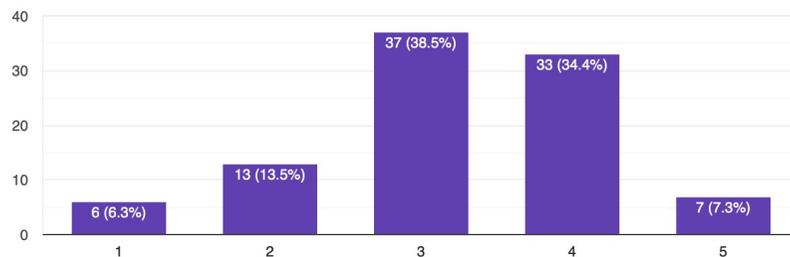
- Engage with the NZ Institute for Wellbeing and Resilience (NZIWR)
- Develop and implement annual action plans for with guidance from the NZIWR (Appendices Two and Four)
- Complete a wellbeing diagnostic with staff
- Conduct PLD days and staff sessions
- Appoint wellbeing champions in all schools – and provide mentoring for these staff members – and provide with NZIWR resource: The Educator's Guide to Whole-School Wellbeing
- Develop further the wellbeing teams in all schools
- Discuss with NZIWR possible data collection tools for use with students and then analyse the baseline data from students in each school
- Conduct evening sessions for community engagement
- Ensure the Learning Support Coordinators attend the professional learning around wellbeing
- Analyse Attendance, Stand Down and Suspension data across our Kāhui Ako
- Monitor wellbeing aspects from the Learning Support register across all Kāhui Ako members
- Review 2020 and develop 2021 Action Plan.

## How will we know we have made a difference? – Monitoring and Impact

Continue to annually review the success of the wellbeing focus using 2019 data as the baseline for future years. Ensure that staff input is gathered on wellbeing strengths, areas for improvement and priorities for action.

How successful do you feel the Kahui Ako has been in terms of developing wellbeing for staff within your school? (This has been our primary focus this year).

96 responses



A review of the success of the wellbeing focus in the Kāhui Ako was undertaken in term 4, 2019. An analysis of data collected shows that 80% of the respondents believe the focus has been successful. The focus this year on the recommendation of NZIWR was on the staff. Staff report having been more proactive in looking after their wellbeing.

Comments include:

*“The focus on wellbeing has encouraged me to take time and reflect on my personal wellbeing. It has allowed me to look at the areas I am strong in and those which need more attention. I believe that by working through these strategies personally, I will be better able to support my students’ wellbeing as our Kāhui Ako focus moves towards student wellbeing in 2020”.*

*“It has had a massive change on how I perceive my job and how I am at home. I am more relaxed, take time for myself at school when needed and it's helped to allow to balance work/life better. Staff morale is high and it's been so nice to do things together as a staff. I don't feel as overwhelmed either at school or at home. I am more aware of my stress triggers and not letting things get on top of me.”*

## **Challenge Two Developing and Strengthening Collaborative Practice across Schools and Early Learning Centres**

### **Rationale**

ERO outlined in their publication “Collaboration to Improve Learner Outcomes”, that effective communication and high levels of relational trust create the conditions for successful organisational learning and change. ERO goes on to say that developing relational trust goes hand in hand with collaboration, and that both take time.

Our Kāhui Ako has experienced this journey over time (Appendix One). We know that by strengthening our collaborative practice we will be able to improve outcomes for our students. We also know that making the best use of all available resources creates a stronger collaborative model for the Kāhui Ako.

### **Our Strategic Goal**

By 2022 our Kāhui Ako will have strong collaborative practice between all stakeholders within all schools and ECE partners.

### **What will we do?**

#### **Teachers**

- Refocus Learning Networks around topics of interest rather than year levels – Wānanga Groups
- Collaborate with teachers to identify learning focus areas each term
- Review 2020 and develop 2021 Action Plan

#### **Leaders – ASTs and WSTs**

- Undertake a survey across the Kāhui Ako to measure the impact of collaboration
- Provide PLD for AST's and WST's to strengthen their leadership of the achievement challenge across and within schools (refer Appendix 3)
- Review 2020 and develop 2021 Action Plan

#### **Principals**

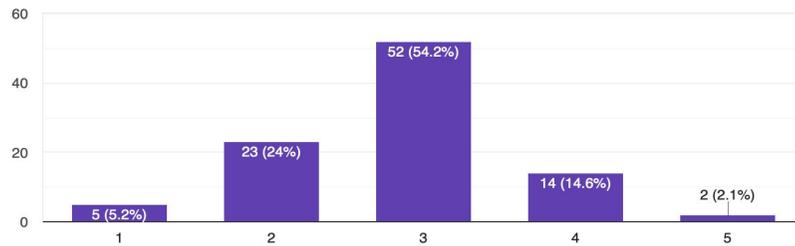
- Work with our PLD Facilitator on collaborative problem solving
- Termly hui for all principals
- Provide PLD and opportunities to explore best practice as a group
- Review 2020 and develop 2021 Action Plan.

## How will we know we have made a difference? – Monitoring and Impact

Continue to annually review the success of our Collaborative Practice programme using 2019 data as the baseline for future years. Ensure that areas for improvement and priorities for action are identified.

How successful do you feel the Kahui Ako has been in terms of building collaboration between schools?

96 responses



1= Not at all successful, 5= highly successful

An analysis of data collected shows that 70% of the respondents believe that the Kāhui Ako has been successful in creating opportunities for collaboration. Teachers report that there is evidence of the beginnings of some exciting possibilities to work together at whole of Kāhui Ako meetings but little evidence of follow up beyond those meetings at this stage.

Teachers have appreciated:

1. The opportunity to get to know other teachers.
2. The sharing of resources, ideas and frustrations.
3. Access to a broader base of advice and support.
4. The increased trust that is being built across schools.

Teachers would like to:

1. Have more opportunities to visit other schools to share practice.
2. Consider the possibility of collaborative professional inquiries.

As a consequence of the review we have committed to refocusing the learning network groups from year levels to collaborative professional inquiries. Teachers are currently being surveyed to identify up to 5 areas of focus and vertical teams will be established within each of those identified areas. This will be reviewed on a termly basis.

## Challenge Three

### Enriching and Consolidating Transitions for students across the Early Learning Sector to Year 13

#### Rationale

In the ERO (2015) publication “Continuity of learning transitions from early childhood services to schools”, it is emphasised that helping children to have a positive and rewarding experience as they move from early childhood education to school sets them confidently on a continuous pathway of learning. Any school teacher will support this statement, not only as children begin their primary school journey, but also at further critical points of transition between classes and into intermediate, secondary and tertiary.

We also know that when considering Wellbeing as a major theme we know that the quality of the transition has an influence on wellbeing in a child’s new educational environment. In the wellbeing section we noted:

- Transitions are a known challenge for students and can significantly increase anxiety
- We are finding that anxiety is increasing in our students and evident in all year groups
- There are some inconsistencies in the way that routines are established and reinforced across schools - particularly those relating to behaviour management
- There is variance in teacher expectations of students

We know that there are some very strong transition practices in our Kāhui Ako at each of the points into school, intermediate and high school. What we need to do is ensure that there is consistency across our early learning sector and schools. Whilst we know that not all students transition into the Kāhui Ako schools we know that our students will benefit no matter where they will transition to.

#### Our Strategic Goal

By 2022 our Kāhui Ako will have shared practices and processes across all transition points in our Kāhui Ako as well as improved internal transition practices.

#### What will we do to improve transitions across schools from Early Childhood through to Year 13?

- Strengthen the conversations around the transition of students through their learning pathway
- Continue developing the three transition networks (ECE – Year 1, Year 6 – Year7, Year 8 – Year 9)
- Review and revise current practice/ protocols around transitioning and sharing of student information
- Review Kāhui Ako procedures for students transferring between schools during the year – including for those students who are transient – defined as moving schools more than twice
- Learning Support Coordinators to establish clear processes across each of our schools for the transition of all students with additional learning needs
- Review 2020 and develop 2021 Action Plan

#### How will we know we have made a difference? – Monitoring and Impact

- Continue with the termly network meetings to explore a number of areas, including: different parts of learning journey, challenges students face, better ways to share information and ways to collaborate in future
- Gather year 1, year 7 and year 9 student and parent voice on the transition experience
- Data to be used both summatively (measure impact) and formatively (identify strengths and areas for improvement)

## **Appendices - Redacted**

**Appendix One:** Palmerston North East Kāhui Ako Review Document

**Appendix Two:** New Zealand Institute of Wellbeing & Resilience – Planned Outcomes for Navigating Wellbeing Change (2019)

**Appendix Three:** Delivery Plan proposal for Centrally Funded PLD (2020)

- Build evaluative capability and knowledge – building cycles underpinned by teaching as inquiry in order to raise outcomes for learners across the Kāhui Ako
- Develop effective change leadership strategies as a Kāhui Ako with a specific focus on school improvement and wellbeing
- Establish highly effective collaborative practice across the Kāhui Ako in order to collectively build culturally sustainable practice and collaboration

**Appendix Four:** New Institute of Wellbeing & Resilience – Action Plan (2020) for the Palmerston North East Kāhui Ako