

KAHUKURA COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE (COP)



TRUDY HEATH PRINCIPAL ADDINGTON TE KURA TAUMATUA
GAVIN BURN PRINCIPAL CASHMERE PRIMARY TE PAE KERERŪ
ROSS HASTINGS PRINCIPAL CHRISTCHURCH SOUTH INTERMEDIATE
DENISE TORREY PRINCIPAL SOMERFIELD TE KURA WAIREPO
FRANK MCMANUS PRINCIPAL SACRED HEART SCHOOL
CHRISTINE HARRIS PRINCIPAL THORRINGTON PRIMARY
MARRIENE LANGTON PRINCIPAL WEST SPREYDON SCHOOL

This article is submitted by the above group of Christchurch principals who have formed what they call Kahukura, a 'Community of Practice' (CoP). They were seeking a structure for true professional collaboration and found that the compulsory nature of the post-earthquake clustering and the Investing in Educational Success (IES) model of Communities of Learning (CoL) fell short. This is their story.

THE KAHUKURA COP is characterised by true collaboration starting with its model of leadership, where no single principal takes an overall leadership role but each member has leadership responsibilities. This model is strongly supported by our Boards of Trustees.

Unlike the Communities of Learning (CoL) or Kahui Ako, which we believe are highly structured and too tightly prescribed to allow for true collaboration and eventual transformation, the Kahukura has its own internal accountabilities.

Fullan and Quinn (2016) state, 'Internal accountabilities must precede external accountabilities if lasting improvement in student learning is the goal.' Kahukura works on the premise that we are willing to take personal, professional and collective responsibility for the learning of all the children within the Kahukura.

Kahukura acknowledges the need for a holistic approach to learning and has not focused on achievement targets. These are dealt with by individual schools in response to their own context. Instead, Kahukura looks to be truly transformational and equitable in our strategic plan by ensuring our students understand the cultural context we are part of as citizens of Aotearoa. To prepare learners for the future we offer authentic learning experiences where students can work collaboratively to tackle real world challenges that are meaningful to the learner allowing for creative solution finding. We focus on developing competencies and partnerships, using the most effective teaching pedagogies to personalise learning and we use technology to support learning. Creativity is an important learning element and we acknowledge this in our strategic plan.

All the schools in the Kahukura cluster have had positive ERO reviews in the last two years. We continually strive to support each other to be the best we can be.

As a group of schools who are undertaking transformational learning for its students, we invite you to examine the advantages of this model. It is a highly efficient model, built on real trust and challenge.

Our Vision

Our Kahukura cluster vision is – supporting responsive, collaborative learning; connecting Students and teachers across the south west of Christchurch.

Our history and purpose:

- Formed post-earthquake when all schools were put into clusters by the MOE whether they wanted to or not, or whether they had any common beliefs and purpose
- The original cluster included a large number of ECE centres and Cashmere High School, and resulted in endless talk fests that went nowhere. There was never clear purpose or rationale and our frustration grew
- Seven schools then broke away determined to take positive steps together
- Those schools already had a strong commitment to the cluster and had set a vision
- We were a collaboration well before CoLs and have a highly collaborative leadership model
- Principals and lead teachers alternate leadership positions according to need, skills and expertise and passion for particular areas of learning
- All CoP members have a deep respect and personal regard for each other as people, professionals, and colleagues
- Our driving motivation is to provide the best education for every child in our cluster Area, irrespective of which school they belong to. We are a constellation of aspirational schools
- Sharing of ideas, strengths, personnel, and resources is generous and spontaneous
- We laugh together and do the serious work in a spirit of collaboration and support. We have no obligation to agree but we are driven to accord for the greater benefit of our tamariki
- We challenge ourselves to be and do what matters
- We are also Māori Achievement Collaboration (MAC) Schools and one of the original six MACs
- We were the first cluster to join New Pedagogies for Deep Learning and have been part of the project for three years. This project is based on what we believe is important to learners for the future – authentic learning experiences where students can work collaboratively to tackle real world challenges that are meaningful to the learner allowing for creative solution finding. We focus on developing competencies and partnerships, using the most effective teaching pedagogies to personalize learning and use technology as a lever to support learning
- Kahukura Schools have all had positive ERO reviews in the last two years



Left to right
 Gavin Burn Cashmere Primary Te Pae Kererū;
 Trudy Heath, Addington Te Kura Taumatua;
 Denise Torrey, Somerfield Te Kura Wairepo;
 Christine Harris, Thorington Primary;
 Marriene Langton, West Spreydon School;
 Ross Hastings, Christchurch South Intermediate;
 Frank McManus, Sacred Heart School

Why a Community of Practice?

We are a group of people, (leaders, teachers, and students), who interact regularly to engage in collective cluster learning which widens and deepens insights, understandings, and knowledge for all participants; experts and apprentices, leaders and teachers, students and parents.

As a CoP we have already developed a repertoire of shared resources, experiences, stories, and tools which have become our shared practice beyond the walls of each school.

Our CoP enables a living curriculum that creates connections to support and benefit all learners as it is not limited to formal structures.

Belonging to our CoP means we are creating our own understanding of the world of teaching and learning for all participants and making connections across time and space. The CoP's key goal is focused on the depth and breadth of inclusive learning experiences for all, and not the narrow, competitive model we used to see with national standards. We believe that it is our job to identify the strengths and talents in each child and to give them the opportunity to flourish and excel.

Features of Our Community of Practice

A CoP can evolve naturally because of the members' common interest in a particular domain or area, or it can be created deliberately with the goal of gaining knowledge related to a specific field. It is through the process of sharing information and experiences with the group that members learn from each other, and have an opportunity to develop personally and professionally, (Lave & Wenger 1991).

As a CoP enables all participants to learn from each other it is aligned with the concept of Ako where we are all teachers and learners. The relationships inherent in our CoP enable the growth of social capital both within our schools and across our wider community as we take advantage of the connections that upskill participants and break down barriers between school communities.

This is a truly collaborative model with principals working together to achieve the best outcomes for the students across the seven schools. We believe that every child deserves a high quality education and that by working together in a high trust model we can raise the bar for all children in our local area. We are strength based, rather than hierarchical. We support and challenge one another, generously sharing knowledge and resources. We have a strategic plan that covers five strategic areas – Deep Learning,

Creativity, Cultural Responsiveness, Inclusive Education, and Leadership.

Each principal has a strategic area of responsibility and four of the strategic areas have lead teachers. Leadership works across all areas of practice. We are supported philosophically and financially by our Boards of Trustees. We use multiple sources of evidence to develop the strategic plan.

Challenges and Possible Solutions

The challenge to Kahukura is the risk to its very essence if it does not remain autonomous. It is currently funded internally from school operational grants at about \$50,000. Some funds are held by an agreed fund holder school to be used for cluster wide activities. We would like access to equivalent funding currently attributed to each CoL Kahui Ako. We believe CoL funds would be better utilized differently.

Extensive levels of administration do not exist in Kahukura. It's a highly efficient model. The strategic plan is collaboratively constructed and responsive to the collective schools' needs. We are not caught up in achievement challenges; each school has its own achievement targets in response to their own learners.

Schools within the CoP with similar learning needs share resources e.g. outside providers to improve teaching practices.

How we see the equivalent resources of a CoL Kahui Ako being used to improve outcomes for all the tamariki of Kahukura.

CoL Resources	Kahukura
CoL Leader \$25,000	This fund would be held by the Kahukura fundholder school to support initiatives of the CoP Strategic Plan
Across School Leaders	This funding would be held by the Kahukura fundholder school and be used to: – Release lead teachers – Fund lead teacher PLD
In School Leaders	The units would be given to the lead teachers to carry out their work within the school with their staff. Each school would be allocated their units on an agreed formula
Back Fill	This is used for professional development for Middle Leaders and teachers

Kahukura Leadership Structure

Areas of Focus

Deep Learning	Performing Arts	Cultural Responsiveness	Leadership	Inclusiveness
Christine, Ross	Marriene, Frank	Trudy, Gavin		Denise
Lead Teachers	Lead Teachers	Lead Teachers		SENCOs

PLG

Numeracy	Literacy
Areas of Focus each have: <ul style="list-style-type: none">2 PrincipalsA Lead Teacher from each school released 2x each term/PLD providedStrategic goals and action plans for each area	
PLG <ul style="list-style-type: none">Lead teachers of literacy and numeracyMeet after schoolGoal to share best practice	

Lead Teachers

The role of the lead teacher is to work with other school leads to develop programmes and activities. These lead teachers then work within their own schools. They meet once a term for a day or half a day depending on the requirements of the strategic plan.

The Plans and the Outcomes

Deep Learning

Our lead teachers have challenged thinking and practice across our schools to ensure that teaching and learning opportunities are authentic, relevant, and purposeful. We believe that learning is enhanced by the deliberate use of ICT and that as a result of deep learning, we can affect positive changes in our local community, our nation and our world. We have developed a sense of social justice and responsibility, kaitiakitanga, and citizenship through our shared learning experiences.

Deep learning is also about ubiquity and about a community learning together. Our learning experiences have involved experts, whānau, and iwi. Sometimes what has begun as a school wide learning experience has spilled over into a CoP wide shared experience.

We have created global connections through our involvement with Michael Fullan's New Pedagogies for Deeper Learning and our partnership with Core Education. Our CoP work has been showcased internationally and our lead teachers have also presented at international conferences in Toronto and Vancouver.

Performing Arts

Our lead teachers of Performing Arts share the dream to be able to provide high quality music tuition and performance experiences for all children in our schools. They share their own expertise as professional learning for their colleagues in each school and across the schools. The lead teachers also work directly with students to maximize every opportunity to provide learning and performance experiences. They tap into a wide range of music tutors and experts across the seven communities.

We believe that music and performing arts can bring magic to every child and that every child should have the chance to be the magic.

Our lead teachers organize and present the Kahukura Music Festival which is a celebration of the performing arts in our seven schools. Hundreds of students perform together and are encouraged by hundreds of their whānau who love the opportunity to see their children shine.

The Kahukura Chorale is an auditioned group of students from across our schools who rehearse together out of school hours and who have the opportunity to perform together.

The Junior Orchestra is a new initiative for our students who qualify to belong to the orchestra by their level of expertise. They rehearse individually with their tutors and will perform together on set pieces.

Our initiatives are about all children being able to flourish in the performing arts and for the gifted children to have the doors opened for them to pursue their musical talents and possible future careers.

Māori

The purpose of our Lead Teachers of the Māori Achievement Collaboration is to:

- be the primary point of contact for staff within our schools to help develop Māori programmes, and run staff development to raise Māori students' achievement.
- be the primary point of contact at our schools to connect whānau with school programmes, and advocate for their child
- participate in Māori professional development as a group and to continue to build professional knowledge and promote professional development opportunities for other staff at our schools
- advocate for all Māori students and their whānau in our schools
- organise and run school wide and cluster wide Māori events. In 2017 this was an Outdoor Summer Cultural Celebration in the grounds of one of our schools
- network with the community to connect the school with local experts and resources
- meet at a cluster level to discuss and plan shared cluster objectives and projects and to learn from one another to better serve our schools. During 2017 these lead teachers worked with our Deeper Learning leads to develop a cluster wide Deep Learning Unit themed around Children Initiating Change in our World using the Story of Parihaka
- track Māori students achievement across the school in collaboration with team leaders/DPs/APs, and advocate for their learning.
- liaise with the principals and BOTs with regards to raising Māori students achievement.

SENCOs

SENCOs meet to share best practice in inclusiveness.

In 2017 they worked together to develop a tool that collected data for Māori students they had concerns for in terms of overall well-being. This comprehensive data was collated and trends and patterns identified to inform the work of the SENCOs and CoP in 2018.

This work includes:

- Working with other leads to track achievement
- Targeting and tracking the Year 4/ 5 cohort
- Collating family referrals looking at trends and resources that can be utilized across the cluster to support whānau

- Digging deep into data to look at the number and types of referrals made
- Focusing on well-being in the CoP
- Developing resources for whānau

Leadership

Kahukura works to ensure they have best leaders across the CoP to ensure that everyone is working together to achieve the CoP goals by providing leadership opportunities and professional development.

NPDL Lead teachers have travelled and will continue to travel to international conferences.

Middle leaders' professional learning will be offered twice annually on topics identified by the Middle Leaders. This PD also gives them an opportunity to share practice across the cluster

Māori leads will attend the MAC Hui 2018

Principals will attend the MAC Hui 2018

Principals attend overseas conferences, NZPF Conference, and conferences of special interest to their development as leaders e.g. Two Principals doing coaching training.

Principals are kept abreast of issues that affect them as leaders and look to regularly share best practice e.g. principal appraisal, using ERO effective school evaluation as a basis of inquiry and evaluation

Funding

Currently Kahukura is fully funded by the schools in the cluster. Funds are used to:

- Release lead teachers
- Provide lead teachers and principals with PLD opportunities, including international conferences
- Fund our CoP Teacher Only Days

Kahukura Strategic Plan

Vision: Supporting responsive, collaborative learning connecting students, teachers and communities across the cluster.

KAHUKURA COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE ANNUAL PLAN 2018 (DRAFT)

MUSIC

Strategic Goal	Lead teacher Job Description/ Role	2018 Action Plan	2022 Goal
1. To increase cluster capacity, knowledge in Music/Performing Arts a. Lead Teachers b. Classroom Teachers 2. To provide increased opportunities for music/performing arts excellence, extension and performance 3. To recognise and celebrate our students talents and abilities in the Music/Performing Arts	Develop opportunities for other staff at your school Connect with the community to link the school with local experts and resources	Term 1 Co-ordinate and/or rehearse/assist students in preparing for the Kahukura Music Festival in June Establish a special choir (Led by Kate R) with the aim of a collaborative chorale performance in the June Festival Establish an orchestra (Led by Kate R) with the aim of a collaborative orchestral performance in the June Festival	Establish a Long Term Plan of Performance Opportunities for <ul style="list-style-type: none">Combined Schools Band/OrchestraSpecial ChoirA Kahukura Dance FestivalJunior Music Festival – in school hours in a relaxed settingSolo Showcase – vocalists, instrumentalists
	Support quality arts programmes Organise and run school wide and cluster wide Music/Arts events.	Term 2 Co-ordinate and/or rehearse/assist students in preparing for the Kahukura Music Festival in June	Have a pool of specialist music teachers that we can engage with to make instrumental tuition more accessible for all our students <ul style="list-style-type: none">look at funding optionsInvestigate Sistema Aotearo
	Work with cluster leads to plan and run Kahukura Music Festival Seek performance opportunities in the community – within and outside school	Term 3 Kahukura chorale perform at schools chorale performances and attend day workshop	To send a delegation of teachers to a Performing Arts Conference http://www.drama.org.nz/conference/2017-dnz-national-conference/ http://menza.co.nz/
	Lead clubs/groups within the school at a formal or informal level (skill dependent) Be the primary point of contact for staff at your school to help develop Music programmes	Term 4 Ongoing Regular Meetings inc – 1 day x release a term Begin to collate and assemble a cluster online library of resources of song books, music resources Ongoing in 2018 Seek PD opportunities for all teaching staff Using Youtube waiata playlists https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLHrFbw3PcvivxzCksWU3GtbH6eJgcFlt5	TO EXPLORE The possibility of having 3 PD sessions on classroom music programmes per school per year- possibly led by Kate R and/or Menza (an example)