



Taitokerau Education Trust

The Taitokerau Education Trust is a Whangarei based incorporated trust that has recently been set up by local community leaders to provide equity and access to modern learning pedagogies that are proven to improve the educational achievement and engagement of students.

The Trust is in partnership with a cluster of schools spanning the primary, intermediate and secondary continuum. The Trust and its partners have a shared belief that our children, young adults and families can learn and live successful lives.

It will be the Trust's role to provide the financial and professional resource to the schools and their families to enable accelerated learning outcomes for students.

Specifically the project aims to tackle student underachievement and engagement in low socio-economic communities in Whangarei and Northland by equipping as many Northland students as possible with tablets. Access to future focused education that meets the needs of students has the potential to transform the lives of whanau, our community and the future of this region.

In the year since launching, the programme is proving this with 300 children equipped with tablets already in 2015 and a further 800 to receive tablets in 2016.

Most importantly, it has the potential to be a game breaker for children currently growing up in impoverished families, with high transience rates (up to 75% in any one year) and generally low educational achievement.

The aim is to create digitally enabled teaching and learning environments in the schools that we are working with. Access to learning is anytime, anywhere and at any pace; thus extending the learning hours beyond the school day. The programme works for students from Year 4 upwards. This is not about swapping pencil and paper with a device. The research is clear that digital literacy and engagement is a big factor in educational success as long as the teaching pedagogy that facilitates this learning is sufficiently available. Plus, parents are supported to become the single biggest investor in their child's learning.

The Taitokerau Education Trust initiative is new to the region but it is based on the highly successful Learn-Create-Share pedagogy developed by the Manaiakalani Cluster that is proven to work for Maori and Pacific Island students from low income backgrounds in Auckland.



Woven by Values

The Taitokerau Education Trust is committed to transforming the futures of children and young adults in Whangarei and Te Taitokerau.

We are dedicated to growing deeper levels of commitment and motivation to the educational growth needs of our children by forming mutually beneficial alliances and partnerships with other schools, the local community and society at large with an emphasis on enhancing the common good.

We are committed to remaining focused on generating community funding, advocating for systems that better meet the learning needs of the students in our communities and reporting on progress. We will do this by upholding our core values of - Manaakitanga, Generosity of Spirit, Partnership, the Treaty of Waitangi, Inclusivity, Innovation, Realising Potential and Openness. In doing so, we are committing to equity and access of a future focused learning environment that raises the educational achievement and engagement of students.

A comprehensive research and evaluation programme will be co-designed by the Woolf Fisher Research Centre of the University of Auckland, the schools and the Trust.

This means that there is strong alignment and existing institutional knowledge about the Manaiakalani pedagogy and journey that this initiative has direct access to, so that the same outcomes that have been achieved by our pioneer partners can be replicated here in Te Taitokerau.

Founding Partner



Online survey

232 students contributed to an online survey and they were unanimously positive about their experiences.

The respondents were asked to reflect on what contributed to their learning in a Chromebook class.

Within this, 47.4% of students believe that they are learning a lot more than previously.

72% loved being in a digital class and don't want to learn in another way.

59.9% have begun with a personal blog or are experiencing a class blog.

72.4% have communicated with their teacher outside of school hours to facilitate or improve learning.

"It is making my work tidier and helping my spelling".

The students commented on the collaborative sharing and licensed learning environments such as mathletics.

While the project will ultimately be Northland-wide, the initial rollout has begun with a cluster of six Whangarei schools under the name Te Puawai Digital Immersion Cluster. This has been successfully led by Manaia View School in the initial roll out of e-learning and other programmes aimed at raising student achievement. The other schools in the The Te Puawai Digital Immersion Cluster are Hikurangi Primary, Whangarei Intermediate, Te Kura Otangarei, Whau Valley Primary and Tikipunga High School. The schools range from decile 1 to 5 and the majority of students are Maori.

This project is about equitable access by bridging the digital divide to enable families with limited resources to enjoy the same opportunities as those from more privileged backgrounds – at school and in their own homes. Students in the Taitokerau Cluster have recently stated: "It's like having a library at your desk" and "You are very lucky to be a part of this class". The programme is already changing behaviours, encouraging high engagement and fast decreasing truancy and attendance issues. The first and immediate change has been the lift in engagement, and proof that this learning pedagogy and environment is inspiring higher engagement and value for their learning.

This a digital immersion learning environment that is extended to the student's home, encouraging their whanau to be a part of it via the whanau cyber smart training and access to affordable internet. This enables the students and their whanau to participate as global citizens. The children take pride in their work as their blogs enable them to share what they are doing with other students across the world. The Taitokerau Trust's role is to enable Northland children to bridge that digital divide and to enable them to enjoy digital citizenship.

One of the many things that Whangarei, and Northland for that matter, has going for it, is the abundance of talent that sits within its children and young adults and its relatively young Maori population. Access to future focussed education that is geared to the learning needs of these students is therefore fundamental to fully realising their potential and enabling the region's future citizens to build meaningful lives.

About the Trust

The Taitokerau Education Trust was established late August 2014. With Northland featuring at the sharp end of the measures of extreme poverty in the country, the need for the Trust is not understated, nor is the commitment of its Trustees who have stepped up voluntarily to create the movement and investment that is needed to cause a radical shift in tide for our children and families.



"That it is not just about playing on computers, it is that we are learning in a completely different way"

Trustees:

Chair Jo Brosnahan, professional director, QSO, MA Hons, CFInstD, FNZIM, FCILT, Chair Hunter Downs Irrigation, Former founding chair Leadership NZ, Chair Northpower Fibre, former Chair Landcare Research, former CEO Auckland Regional Council and Northland Regional Council.

Nikki Davies Colley, BBS, MBA, CFInstD, Chair Northpower, Director Landcorp Farming Ltd and Farmlands, Director the Tree People Ltd and MP Logging Ltd;

Allan Pivac, former CEO of Te Runanga o Ngati Whatua for 18 yrs, former BOT for three terms and two as Chairman, Team Leader for the implementation of the MoH Healthy Families NZ Initiative within the Far North district;

Dan Johnston, former partner in YHPJ Ltd accounting practice;

Tony Coyle, School representative and owner of a global internet application development business;

Mike Preece, background in media and digital enablement industry, with a strong interest in education;

Dr Brent Mawson, Recently retired as Associate Dean of the Taitokerau campus, he continues to lecture part-time for the University of Auckland;

Ross Tipene, School representative, BOT of Manaia View School and Tikipunga High School, contract tutor for Computers in Homes, Bachelor of Education with Auckland University;

Jim Allardyce, PGDipOIM, PGDipOHS, CMIOSH, RMaPS. School representative, BOT of Whangarei Intermediate School, Process Safety Engineer, Northpower.

Rosemary Sanderson, BSC Chair Whg Quarry Gardens Trust, Community philanthropist.

The Trust has also engaged Rangimarie Price as its Executive Officer. Rangimarie was initially tasked to carry out the feasibility study that led to the decision to establish the Trust.

Executive Officer: Rangimarie Price ACA, strategic leadership consultant 13 yrs working with Iwi individually and collectively, not for profit and NGO organisations, contracted EO to Taitokerau Iwi CEs Consortium, lead writer for He Tangata, He Whenua, He Oranga

There is also provision for community champions who are willing to volunteer their time to promote and support the initiative in a number of ways e.g. organising fundraising events, media liaison and promotion and access to support networks.

Community Investment

This Taitokerau Education Trust programme has evolved thanks to the passion, drive and generous support of individuals and organisations in our community who also want to transform the futures of children and young adults in Whangarei and Northland. From the initial private investment for the feasibility study through to the support to enable students from Otangarei to be part of the pilot, the community has demonstrated its willingness to get behind our children and schools.

Peter and Nikki Davies-Colley, Northpower Fibre, 20/20 trust, Northpower and the Oxford Sports Trust plus many other people have generously given their time to champion this cause in the community.

The Trust continues to focus on securing more funding to expand the programme and ensure its longevity.

Teacher feedback

100% of the pilot teachers feel that the students are more engaged in the curriculum.

“The students are able to do so much more than just a worksheet. They can create very attractive responses to reading and writing.”

The chromebooks have facilitated more learning time *“(With chromebooks) they have more thinking time and most can self-manage their learning.”*

“There are no barriers to being connected now. They are displaying the key competencies more vividly.”

“Students are more engaged in topic studies because of variety of resources available for research and presentation.

“Mathletics is a great motivator for knowledge and strategy, also other maths sites such as Maths Playground and E Ako maths.

“Audiobooks help them with language experience/enrichment.”

“Kids love their chromebooks. They love the fact that they can make their learning look really good and can share it globally.”



As one of the students have said “It makes us put more effort in to our learning as the whole world can view our learning”.

The 20-20 Trust who runs the "Computers in Homes" programme is working with the Trust to provide cybersmart training for whanau and enable those who don't have internet at home for affordability reasons, subsidised support so that their child's learning environment extends to the home 24/7. There are up to 300 families involved in 2015. All will go through the cybersmart training so that parents get a good grounding in their child's new learning environment and how they can access and navigate their way through their child's work. 100 of those families will be offered more comprehensive support around affordable internet. Sue Kini, the Computers in Homes coordinator for the Whangarei region, is working with the schools to set this up. It is a fantastic coup for this programme and our community that 2020 is on board to make this work for us all.

Modelled on the Nationally recognised Manaikalani Programme

A revolutionary teaching and learning innovation developed by the Manaikalani education cluster in East Tamaki, Auckland, has been successful in raising the education achievement and engagement of thousands of primary and secondary students who come from low socio economic and stressed families. Independently assessed since 2010 by the Woolf Fisher Research Centre of the University of Auckland, students in the cluster of 12 schools have sustained an average learning rate that is 1.5 times the base learning rate for all students across the country.

Most importantly though, it has inspired a love for learning in the students and their families and has been a powerful affirmation of the value that they have to contribute as global citizens. Knowing this changes their lives.

Through the adoption of devices, whanau engagement with the child's learning is easier and family members can more readily engage with and support the child with their school work.

Whangarei and beyond

Whangarei has been prioritised for the initial Taitokerau Education Trust initiative because of its access to UFB. The Te Puawai E-learning cluster of schools have progressed strongly in the field of e-learning and have championed the pilot programme.

That said, it is the Trust's intention to support the implementation through the Te Puawai Digital Immersion Cluster and to capture the learning around its successful uptake in the Whangarei school environment, so that it can be shared across the district and region. As the saying goes, it takes a village to raise a child, and for our children, Northland is their village.

Google educated

The cluster has its own registered Google Educator.

Beth Lamb, a senior teacher at Manaia View School is one of 50 registered Google Educators in the world. As Professional Learning and Development (PLD) Manager, Beth trains lead teachers from the other schools in the new teaching and learning pedagogy. As a result, the Te Puawai cluster's six schools have made significant progress in 2015.



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