

9 February 2018

A Summary of Activity Four From the Waimea Kahui Ako Day

On 5 February, 2018 over 300 educators from 12 schools, all part of the Waimea Kahui Ako, came together at Hope Community Church. The focus of the day was to inspire, collaborate and to build the foundation of our learning pathway for our Community of Learning.

One of the sessions was for educators in 20 groups of around 15 to discuss and record the following questions:

- **What would you like the Community of Learning to do for you?**
- **What would be helpful / useful to help you as a teacher to work toward the achievement challenges?**
- **Do you have any ideas / thoughts / actions for the CoL leadership team?**

The following is an attempt to summarise all of the comments that were written on that day. Most groups did not categorise their comments according to question 1, question 2, etc. Instead they proposed a list of ideas, comments, questions and insightful feedback about the speaker, Nathan Wallis. Naturally, it was difficult to categorise the “type” of response. However, there were certain ideas that certainly were quite consistent throughout the groups.

I have put the comments into seven different categories and of course, there will be some overlapping of ideas. In bold are the categories that I have proposed. The responses in italics are actual comments by the participants and not paraphrased by me. Some of the comments I could not read, so sorry if yours did not get included!

Time and a Focus on Supporting Staff

Having the time to further ourselves professionally was a common theme amongst all of the groups.

- *Time to get out and see what's happening (X3)*
- *Meeting teachers of same subject are to share ideas. TIME to do. (X3)*
- *Support process of inquiry. Share (time) with community. Ability to try new things and share (failure as well as what worked).*
- **TIME! (X4)**
- *Admin is killing teaching time. Employ people to do it.*
- *No extra box ticking work*
- *Time for discussions across subject areas. How can what we teach be supported in other subject areas?*
- *Support for us all*
- *Opportunities to share successes and failures*
- *Open door policy for sharing best practice*

- *Overlap appraisal systems-should be the same. All on the same page. Different schools doing different things for registration*
- *Facility for across CoL links and discussion*
- *Targeting curriculum areas. Asking staff what their interests are.*

Providing Professional Development

All of the groups commented on the types of PD that would be needed for themselves and also to try to reach the Achievement Challenges.

- *CoL could apply for more funding for workshops*
- *Have more CoL days. Support staff workshops (X3)*
- *Provide ongoing PD*
- *Quality PD. CoL based but work in teams to develop strategies. PD to change classroom practice (Russell Bishop).*
- *Encourage creativity*
- *Save \$. 1.5 hrs after school, all together*
- *Getting to know the schools and teachers that the students come from.*
- *Stronger links with teachers at other levels.*
- *More Nathan*
- *Finding out other expertise out there among teachers*
- *Looking at the research and go forward using it (X3)*
- *Seeing long term impacts of issues and ideas.*

Mindfulness and Building Relationships

Nathan spoke passionately about this and it struck a chord with many of the educators. Several participants wanted to tie it in with decreasing anxiety amongst students. Others thought that decreasing anxiety and increasing well-being should be one of the Achievement Challenges.

- *If relationships are so key then change timetable / classes so students have more consistency*
- *Develop inter-school relationships to help support each other and students*
- *Mindfulness PD with go to activities and sharing current practice*
- *Pathway of behavioural expectations*
- *Mindfulness and relationship building*
- *ECE invited to PD opportunities*
- *Achievement Challenge around relationships (X2)*
- *Mindfulness so kids are calm enough to learn. As teachers we do not know much about practices regarding this*
- *Various age groups of learners interacting to improve relationships (X2)*
- *Put pressure on Ministry on how we teach and measure boys achievement*

- *Is the “achievement gap” between boys and girls natural since their brains develop quicker? (X2)*

Sharing Best Practice and an Online Community for the CoL

How do we share best practice? Is there a way for the CoL to have a shared database to share student information between schools? Many people asked these questions and the sharing of ideas and information between schools should be the foundation of a Community of Learning.

- *Shared drive of professional resources e.g. culturally effective pedagogy at yr 9*
- *Would like central location for info on students TAP's - pastoral, etc. that is able to be accessed before we meet students*
- *Really need central system for recording info. (E-tap, Kamar?) (X3)*
- *How is collaboration going to continue?*
- *Within school / Across school communication to see what is happening across CoL*
- *Set up CoL wide database (X2)*
- *Use Office 365 etc. to make transitions easy*
- *Leadership / Strategic plan to be put into place quickly and available*
- *Between school L.T.s to see best practice and disperse it*
- *Common LMS across CoL*

Key Speakers

After listening to the talk by Nathan Wallis, many thought that it would be a good idea to bring in other speakers that would help unite and strengthen our Kahui Ako.

- *Bring key speakers e.g. Jo Boaler, Bobbie Hunter, Sheena Cameron and Gail Lowe*
- *High quality guest speakers (X3)*
- *Have CoL pay for Nathan Wallis to speak to parents*
- *Alice Chisnall*
- *Russell Bishop*

Wider Community, Whanau and Iwi

The 12 schools in the Waimea Kahui Ako must not be isolated from the greater community. Connecting with whanau and local iwi is crucial especially after listening to the talk by Marcus Akuhata-Brown.

- *Workshops to empower families to empower their children*

- *Informing community. CoL pays for speakers to talk to children*
- *Need to be careful how we go about Achievement Challenge 3 so that child does not feel singled out. Discuss this with iwi.*
- *Include parents. Understand childhood brain development*
- *Instead of staff meetings-CoL meetings*
- *More dialogue between high school / int / primary*
- *As students move up the schools there is less parental involvement- and students feel lack of “care” with lots of different teachers. This needst to be developed further so parents feel involved and students feel “cared for”...*

Transitions and Other Ideas About the Achievement Challenges

Many people commented on changing the Achievement Challenges after listening to Nathan’s talk with regard to brain development and gender. This was a common theme throughout most of the groups. Also, there was much discussion about transitions between schools.

- *Achievement challenge 2 needs to be rewritten in light of Nathan’s speech (X2)*
- *More collaboration between primary and secondary. School visits, etc.*
- *Hear from students 4-18 years about how they feel about transitions*
- *Change the first Challenge of yr 1-13 to yr 3 -13 in respect to talk by Nathan (X2)*
- *The boy/girl achievement gap exists because of brain development according to Nathan*
- *Shouldn’t a measure of anxiety reduction be a better goal*
- *Early childhood is included in any inquiry about transitions*
- *Clarify the roles of the CoL positions and determine suitable outcomes*
- *Having a transition unit*
- *Older students working with younger students to improve transitions (X2)*
- *Focus on key competencies*
- *Look at whanau classes-more pastoral*
- *How do we measure achievement consistently?*

And of course,

- *Pay rise!*
- *Waimea Kahui Ako pens*

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