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Applying culturally responsive practices: Implications for mainstream education

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Introduction

According to the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) (2012) high-performing education systems are those that combine equity and quality and “give all children opportunities for good quality education” (p. 3). In light of this statement, and given the ongoing research which highlights disparities between the achievement of Māori and non-Māori students (Crooks, Hamilton, & Caygill, 2000; Project asTTle Team, 2006a, 2006b, 2006c; Wylie, Thompson, & Lythe, 1999), it would be appropriate for New Zealand citizens and in particular, those of Māori descent to question the performance of their country’s education system. Although concerns about inconsistent systemic performance were articulated seven years ago (Ministry of Education, 2005), the most recent Statement of Intent (Ministry of Education, 2012a), indicates that the issue remains unresolved with the Minister of Education acknowledging that while the system is performing strongly for many students, this is not the case for all students. In the 2012 version of the Statement of Intent, Māori students are identified within a group of priority learners with the Minister emphasising the need to address system failure and maintain an unrelenting focus on raising the achievement of these learners.

This commitment from the Ministry of Education to raise the achievement of Māori learners is mirrored in *Me Kōrero—Let’s Talk* (Ministry of Education, 2012b). This document provides an outline of the Ministry’s refreshed Māori education strategy—Ka Hikitia Accelerating Success 2013–2017 (Ministry of Education, 2013) and explains how the Ministry aims “to make a greater and faster difference for and with Māori learners over the next five years and beyond” (p. 3). The vision of “Māori enjoying and achieving education success as Māori” (Ministry of Education, 2012b, p. 3) has been carried forward from the preceding Ka Hikitia strategy (Ministry of Education, 2008). As well as explaining what the strategy is about, providing the current data, the government’s priorities and how progress will be measured, the Ministry has also used the document as a means of inviting readers to share their ideas about “what works well for Māori learners so that they are able to enjoy and achieve education success and be proud and happy being who they are as Māori” (Ministry of Education, 2012b, p. 30). My response to this invitation forms the basis of this paper. I consider my response in



relation to my own experiences of being a Māori student who did achieve education success, but crucially I did not achieve this success as Māori. I discuss how my education impacted on my own sense of identity and how this has influenced the aspirations I have for my own children. I merge my personal experiences with what I have learnt through my professional experiences as a teacher, school leader and educational researcher to provide my own answer to the question of how the performance of the New Zealand education system can be improved so that Māori students can achieve and enjoy education success as Māori.

Cultural identity

According to Weeks (1990), identity is attuned to belonging. It encompasses what you have in common with and what differentiates you from others. He suggests that, at its most basic, identity “gives you a sense of personal location, the stable core of our individuality ... it is also about your social relationships, your complex involvement with others” (p. 88). When considering the New Zealand context Lui, McCreanor, McIntosh and Teaiwa (2005) contend that identity construction is at the heart of heightened public tensions and political debates that engage with issues such as the Treaty of Waitangi, immigration and ownership. As New Zealand citizens contemplate the future and pose questions around notions of belonging, commonalities and difference the authors propose that

the era of the ethnically homogenous nation is over. Claim and counterclaim articulation and debate are now part of the personal/political landscape of New Zealand. It is now more important than ever to describe who ‘we’ are and how we live our lives. (p. 11)

As a tribal people, however, Māori have always contested the proposition of ethnic homogeneity. Similarly they would contest that the modern era of political debate around identity construction has meant that being able to describe ‘who’ Māori are is necessarily more important now that it has been in the past. For centuries Māori have been describing who they are in relation to their tipuna (ancestors), their waka (canoe) in which their tipuna travelled to New Zealand, the specific location where tipuna originally established their iwi (tribe), their marae (tribal gathering places) and the geographic features that characterise this location such as moana (ocean), maunga (mountains) and awa (rivers). Importantly, this process of connecting themselves with other people and places allowed Māori to identify commonalities with their own iwi while at the same time differentiate themselves. This relational ritual or declaration of identity remains important today for the same reasons it did centuries ago, because fundamentally “waka and iwi membership, together with links to the land and waterways, to turangawaewae (birth place) and marae, provide the very foundations of a Māori person’s cultural and societal identity” (Berryman, 2008, p. 41).

I am what Webber (2008) refers to as a person of mixed Māori/Pākehā (a New Zealand citizen of Caucasian descent) heritage. I inherit my Māori whakapapa (genealogy) from my mother, who was born and raised in the Far North region of New Zealand in a small rural settlement called Waimanoni. Waimanoni is also the name of my marae and Ngāi Takoto is the name of my iwi. My father was born and raised in Taranaki (a region located on the West Coast of the North Island) and his lineage reflects a situation that is fairly common to many non-Māori people in New Zealand.

He is a Pākehā whose grandparents and great-grandparents left their ancestral lands in both the Northern and Southern countries of Ireland in search of better opportunities they believed they could find in New Zealand.

I was born in the Far North in 1975 and at the end of that year my family left the region so that my father could pursue a new job opportunity in the central North Island. Although we had left my mother's ancestral homelands, throughout my childhood we maintained close contact with our whenua (land), iwi and marae. We frequently travelled considerable distances to return to Waimanoni for holidays, birthdays, gravestone unveilings and/or to participate in tangihanga (a ritual held on a marae to remember, mourn and then bury someone who has passed on). Regardless of whether the occasion was to celebrate or to grieve, these trips were always an important means of physically reconnecting us with our Māori world—both the people and the place.

Similarly, we spent holidays in Taranaki with our paternal grandparents, aunts, uncles and cousins. Our Irish origins were a source of pride for our Pākehā family and the Catholic faith had a strong influence; therefore family prayers and a roast lunch after a Sunday morning church service were important rituals when we came together. As a young child I aligned being Catholic with my Pākehā identity because religious principles and practices were very much a part of our familial bond just as hui (a group gathering) and hangi (food cooked in an earth oven) were part of gatherings in Waimanoni.

My siblings and I had a strong sense of both our Māori and Pākehā cultural identity and we were encouraged by our parents to be proud of our dual lineage. Like McIntosh (2001) and Webber (2008) I was aware that I existed 'in-between' both the Māori and Pākehā worlds and as a pre-school child I felt secure and comfortable to claim membership in both. However, that same sense of security that I felt about my dual identity did not carry over into my mainstream schooling.

The impact of school on identity

An explicit link between school and identity is made by Wenger (1998) with his suggestion that "education, in its deepest sense and at whatever age it takes place, concerns the opening of identities" (p. 263). The proposition that the education students experience can positively and/or negatively influence the sense they make of their identity is consistent with Penetito's (2010) theorising in relation to Māori students in the New Zealand context. In recalling his own teaching experience Penetito reflects on the implications that mainstream or 'Pākehā' education raises for the identity of Māori students:

Teaching Māori children in the metropolitan environment had already raised questions for me. I knew that Māori could safely be Māori in their own communities and could move within the Pākehā world with some equanimity. But it seemed to me that in doing so, their identity was threatened and compromised, and in particular that Māori entering the Pākehā education system were inherently compromised. (p. 26)

I started primary school in the early 1980s when Penetito was teaching and making the observations detailed above. It is important to note that Penetito was not alone in his concerns about the impacts of mainstream education on the identity of Māori students. Since the 1970s Ranginui Walker had been hypothesising that the predominantly

Pākehā teaching population conceptualised and delivered education through a single cultural frame of reference and that they were generally ignorant of Māori culture (Walker, 1973). He proposed that the implication of this was that Māori students saw that the education system had little relevance to them, and in terms of identity, Māori parents were “afraid of their children becoming monocultural and of losing them to the Pākehā world (Walker, 1973, p. 112).

My entry into the formal schooling system in the early 1980s also coincided with a resistance and cultural revitalisation movement that became known as *Kaupapa Māori*. Smith (2003) contends that this revolutionary movement evolved out of the concerns expressed by people such as Ranginui Walker (discussed earlier) and a widespread growing dissatisfaction amongst Māori about the marginalised status of Māori language, people and culture. I recall being aware that collectives of Māori people were establishing *kōhanga reo* (Māori centred pre-schools) as a means of revitalising *te reo* (Māori language) and *tikanga* (Māori practices). We observed media reports about the development of *kōhanga reo* with interest because the loss of *te reo* was something that we had direct experience of within my immediate family.

My nanny (maternal grandmother) had been a fluent speaker of *te reo*; however, she attended school in an era when the policy that governed education was that of Europeanisation or assimilation (Berryman, 2008). Teaching practice that transpired in schools as a result of this policy failed to recognise Māori worldviews, and also belittled and attempted to eradicate aspects of Māori culture such as language (Bishop & Glynn, 1999). During this era Māori students were effectively prohibited from using what Bruner (1996) refers to as their own “cultural toolkit” or more specifically, the shared language, experiences and cultural symbolism of their own families and communities.

The assimilationist approach to education in the 1930s meant that in order to participate in formal schooling, my nanny was required to forfeit the language of her ancestors and family, “the symbol of culture and the essence of identity” (Walker, 1973, p. 111). My mother contends that it was this exclusion of *te reo* from the school setting that convinced my grandmother and other relatives of her generation that it was not wise or useful to teach their own children *te reo* because success in education would need to be on Pākehā terms.

Consequently, the ability to speak *te reo* was not an option for my mother, which ultimately meant that it was also not an option for me and my siblings. Unfortunately, my family’s experience of losing the ability to speak *te reo* was not an isolated case but a widespread phenomenon that impacted generations of Māori all over New Zealand. Therefore, the idea that *te reo* was being recovered in some Māori communities in the 1980s was intriguing and exciting. However, I was unable to connect any of these events of Māori cultural revitalisation with my own experience of mainstream education.

For most of my primary school years I attended a small school where Pākehā students were the majority. The insecurity I felt about my Māori identity, however, was not primarily due to the demographic imbalance. Aside from being conscious of the fact that Māori were the minority, there were signals that indicated to me that Māori identity was not entirely welcome in the school environment. One example occurred not long after I started at this particular school. I recall being engaged in a group reading exercise where the text described the attributes of blood. As part of a discussion around

the text I was identified by the teacher as a person who would have ‘darker’ blood than everyone else because I was a Māori. This notion that Māori blood was darker aligned with the prevailing discourses of the time that emphasised difference between Māori and Pākehā. The teacher did not extend beyond this statement and I suspect this was because my face was burning red from the shame I felt about being ‘darker’, ‘different’ and more specifically about being Māori. Although the teacher may not have intended to humiliate me, what I interpreted from being identified as this unique specimen was that having a point of difference—that is, being Māori—was **not** a good thing.

If this experience was not enough to convince me that my Māori identity did not fit comfortably within this school, the omission of anything or anyone Māori from the curriculum programme indicated that Māori people and culture might as well have been invisible. I also noticed early in my schooling that my few Māori peers were more prone to getting into trouble than Pākehā children who received regular positive reinforcement from teachers for being well behaved and clever. Just as the assimilationist teachers ensured that my nanny knew that they did not value her first language, my own teachers sent me a very clear message about the marginalised status of my Māori cultural identity.

It is important to reiterate that I was a primary school student during the years that the kaupapa Māori movement was taking shape. Education policy had moved on from assimilation and integration (which sought to combine Māori and Pākehā elements) into biculturalism, which sanctioned the incorporation of selected aspects of Māori culture in education such as Taha Māori (Smith, 1996). However, despite the revitalisation of te reo that was happening in the wider community context and government policy that acknowledged that there was some value in learning te reo and tikanga, I was not provided with opportunities to utilise my Māori cultural toolkit during my 12 years of mainstream schooling. My own prior Māori knowledge and experiences as a basis for learning were disregarded and I was required to learn the content and knowledge deemed to be legitimate and therefore important by my predominantly Pākehā teachers.

However, when I considered the Pākehā dimension of my identity I did not feel the same sense of alienation at school. In terms of the curriculum I recall studying Medieval England and talking about the Potato Famine in Ireland and each year we wore green clothes to celebrate St Patrick’s Day. What I learnt from these experiences was that defining myself as ‘Pākehā’ was better than being different, ‘safer’ than being Māori and therefore less shameful. I also concluded that my Pākehā heritage was valued and important because we did actually learn about and celebrate Irish culture and people. Consequently, rather than positioning myself as Māori or claiming both lineages I firmly positioned myself as Pākehā, “blended” into the safety of the majority group and left my Māori identity at home every day that I attended school.

As an adult I reflected on the blood experience and the lack of acknowledgement of ‘things’ Māori in my schooling in the 1980s and was saddened to find that my experiences were almost identical to the narratives of experience that Bishop and Berryman (2006) gathered from Māori students in mainstream schools at the beginning of the new millennium. Both engaged and non-engaged Māori students reported feeling frustrated and hurt that teachers in mainstream schools applied practices that demonstrated that they did not understand, respect or acknowledge Māori culture or how the students were culturally located. Additionally some practices such as requiring Māori students to remove or conceal their taonga (a traditional greenstone or bone

carving worn around the neck) and/or reprimanding them for returning to school late after they had participated in Māori cultural practices such as tangihana resulted in these students feeling ashamed and inadequate about their cultural identity. Like me, these students felt that it was not a positive experience to be Māori in mainstream education.

Not achieving as Māori

By the time I completed secondary school I had gained all of the standard qualifications that were required to enter university and after four years of tertiary education I received a Diploma of Teaching and a Bachelor of Education. I became a classroom teacher in the mainstream education system that I had graduated from and made steady progress up the educational and professional hierarchy, assuming my first senior leadership position of assistant principal after seven years of teaching.

Becoming an assistant principal coincided with my first pregnancy and becoming a mother challenged me to consider the notion of cultural identity. I agonisingly recalled my own experience of forfeiting my Māori identity and I worried about how my daughter might perceive herself, given that my husband is Pākehā, and therefore from a Western perspective my daughter might be considered ‘less Māori’ than me. I was concerned that this would mean that her Māori identity would be even more fragile than mine had been and I knew that this could have implications for the sense she made of her own identity.

As I was contemplating the notion of cultural identity from a maternal perspective, in my leadership role I was working to address the academic disparities that were evident between Māori and non-Māori in my school context. Māori students were achieving below non-Māori in both literacy and numeracy. As a school leader I wanted to reduce these disparities and I was therefore familiarising myself with literature and policy documentation that focused on raising Māori student achievement. During this time I read an address that was presented by prominent Māori scholar Professor Sir Mason Durie at the Hui Taumata Mātauranga Māori Education summit in 2001. Durie (2001) proposed that a broad goal of education should be to enable “Māori to live as Māori” (p. 4). I was intrigued by this proposition and the specific explanation he offered:

To the extent that the purpose of education is to prepare people for participation in society, it needs to be remembered that preparation for participation in Māori society is also required. If after twelve or so years of formal education a Māori youth were totally unprepared to interact within te ao Māori (the Māori world), then no matter what else had been learned education would have been incomplete ... it is equally unreasonable to assume that the education sector should ignore the meaning of being Māori and not accept some obligation to prepare students for active lives within Māori society, not simply to learn about Māori but to live as Māori. (p. 4)

On a personal level two critical words in this statement, “as Māori”, absolutely challenged me and certainly caused me to pause and think very carefully about myself and then my daughter. From a Western perspective, my own academic record would verify that I had been an educational success; however, I did not at any time do this “as

Māori”. I held fast to my Pākehā identity for the entire 12 years of my schooling and therefore, according to Durie (2001), my education had in fact been incomplete. Since then I have painfully accepted that I was a Māori student in mainstream education who achieved education success *as Pākehā*.

As an adult, I had begun to reconcile the insecurities I had about my identity as a child and I felt more comfortable about claiming both my Māori and Pākehā identity—all of the time. This transformation was strongly influenced by a greater sense of Māori pride and affirmation that had emerged in New Zealand as a result of the kaupapa Māori movement, and becoming a mother had increased my determination to foster and instil this sense of pride in my own children. Consequently, it was extremely hard to look at myself and accept that from a Māori perspective I may not be an educational success. The profound impact of this has been the realisation that this same situation is not what I want for my own children or for other Māori children. This realisation also had implications for me on a professional level.

In a professional sense I found Durie’s (2001) description of the purpose of education and the responsibilities of those who work within the system to be very confronting. It was a revelation and an alien way of conceptualising education for me. I had never before considered the notion that mainstream education should allow Māori students to be Māori. I certainly had not thought at any time that as a teacher I had a responsibility to prepare Māori students to interact with and participate in the Māori world. In retrospect, I would suggest that I did not really consider what Durie was suggesting because my own mainstream education had certainly not achieved this purpose.

Personal and professional implications and opportunities

As a mother I have made a choice to enrol my children in mainstream schools and drawing from my own experience of mainstream education I have a very clear idea about what I want their experience to be. I know, for example, that my children’s Pākehā identity will ‘fit’ easily within the mainstream context because, as Penitito (2010) suggests, mainstream education has been set up to match the identity characteristics of a particular version of Pākehā New Zealanders. Therefore, I know that at times my children will recognise and be able to connect with this construction of identity. However, my children are also Māori and I do not accept that they should be subjected to a monocultural education experience that marginalises their Māori cultural identity—as I was. I, like the Minister of Education, absolutely expect that my own and all Māori children will achieve and enjoy education success as Māori in the mainstream schools that they attend. This personal expectation that I have of the teachers and leaders who work within the mainstream schooling system was also a professional expectation that I had of myself as an educator in a mainstream school.

In my role as a school leader I struggled to find solutions to the educational disparities in my school context and I felt frustrated that the status quo continued to be perpetuated. I recognised that I had a responsibility to move beyond the feelings of frustration and focus on what I could do to ensure Māori students lived, learned and achieved as Māori so I returned to university study. Bishop and Berryman (2006) had introduced me to the notion of relational, culturally responsive pedagogy and university represented a means by which I could develop my understandings around this concept. I

also saw that undertaking my own research could represent an opportunity to potentially benefit Māori students in the wider mainstream context.

Consequently, my personal and professional experiences and expectations have merged to inform and guide the educational researcher that I have become. The next section describes how I work with school leaders and teachers to develop relational, culturally responsive pedagogical practices.

Applying relational, culturally responsive practice

In my role as an educational researcher I work alongside teachers and leaders in mainstream secondary schools within the Te Kotahitanga research and development project. This work focuses on supporting mainstream practitioners to develop culturally responsive pedagogical practices that will enable them to raise the achievement of their Māori students.

The Māori students' narratives of experience that Bishop and Berryman (2006) collected form the basis of Te Kotahitanga. These narratives were considered by the original researchers alongside Māori cultural metaphors which were "inclusive and focused on the importance of relationships and interactions for success in education" (Bishop, Berryman, Cavanagh, Teddy, & O'Sullivan, 2007, p. 9). The Māori metaphors that were examined also reflect the metaphors that L. Smith (1996) identified as being essential to Māori medium schooling, namely rangatiratanga (self-determination), taonga tuku iho (cultural treasures are handed down), ako (reciprocal learning), kia piki ake nga raruraru o te kainga (mediation of socio-economic and home difficulties), whānau (extended family) and kaupapa (collective vision).

Bishop et al. (2007) suggested that this pattern of metaphors could guide and support educators to create the classroom learning contexts that could facilitate engagement and improve the achievement for students by developing teaching and learning relationships:

where power is shared between self-determining individuals within non-dominating relations of interdependence; where culture counts; learning is interactive, dialogic and spirals; participants are connected and committed to one another through the establishment of a common vision for what constitutes excellence in educational outcomes. (p. 15)

Bishop et al. (2007) further suggest that this pattern reflects a combination of culturally responsive pedagogy described by Gay (2000) and Villegas and Lucas (2002) and a pedagogy of relations described by Sidorkin (2002) or by the Māori metaphor of whanaungatanga. They define this merger of the concepts as being a "Culturally Responsive Pedagogy of Relations" (Bishop et al., 2007, p. 15) and use this pedagogical framework as the foundation of Te Kotahitanga.

Application in classrooms

At the classroom level a culturally responsive pedagogy of relations is characterised by an environment where relationships of care and respect are fundamental. Within such relationships the cultural identity of Māori students is recognised as being important and relevant to learning. This recognition requires teachers to come to know and relate to their Māori students. It also requires teachers to share power in the classroom by

providing Māori students with opportunities to determine what is learned and how it is learned. When Māori students are able to co-construct learning pathways with their teacher and with their peers, the capacity to learn interdependently—from and with each other—is maximised. In such classrooms, learning contexts such as these enable Māori students to draw from their own cultural toolkit. This in turn reinforces a positive sense of identity because they understand that their own cultural knowledge and prior experiences are valued and legitimate.

While culturally appropriate practices, such as incorporating te reo and Māori metaphors, enable Māori students to see and hear evidence that their own culture is valued in classrooms, a culturally responsive pedagogy of relations goes beyond this. It requires teachers to engage and interact with students and their families in a way that enables them to come to appreciate the realities that are their students' lives (Villegas & Lucas, 2002, 2007). This means that teachers do not make assumptions about what the Māori students in their classrooms need or want and they don't allow others (both Māori and non-Māori) to determine what this might be. Rather they carefully listen to their own Māori students and their families and respond accordingly (Berryman, 2008). When teachers let their Māori stakeholders define for themselves what they want for their children's education, they are likely to find that Māori parents such as myself expect kapa haka (Māori performing arts) and the occasional karakia (Māori prayer) as well as opportunities for determining other learning contexts.

Te Kotahitanga provides teachers with an opportunity to contemplate the extent to which a culturally responsive pedagogy of relations is reflected in their practice and consider how their practice might be improved. The results of this professional development and support have been positive with quantitative and qualitative evidence indicating that Māori student achievement has improved as has Māori students' sense of pride about who they are (Bishop, Berryman, Wearmouth, Peter, & Clapham, 2011; Ministry of Education, 2010).

Application across the school

In my experience of working with school leaders I have found that fundamentally what needs to happen to ensure the development of a culturally responsive pedagogy of relations within classrooms is no different from what needs to happen to develop a culturally responsive pedagogy of relations across the wider context of the school. Like teachers, school leaders need to carefully consider the notion of power-sharing and how this plays out in the relationships and interactions between themselves, their Māori students, their Māori whānau and other community members and the wider teaching staff.

In my role I specifically work alongside school leaders to support them to develop their capacity to engage with their Māori whānau and community. For example, I ask school leaders to consider how often they are seen by local iwi and whānau at community functions and what opportunities exist to develop relationships with these stakeholders to ensure that the goals and aspirations the school has for their Māori students are actually aligned with those of their Māori whānau and community (Berryman & Ford, 2012). For some leaders, consideration of these questions has resulted in them reframing how they seek to include their Māori stakeholders or not. In some cases this has meant that school leaders have engaged beyond the boundaries of the school in sites that Māori whānau and communities have determined. Allowing

Māori whānau and community members to co-construct the agenda of these rituals of engagement and contribute to decision-making at the school has required school leaders to be attentive listeners and take a more humble and participatory stance as opposed to being directive or oppositional.

Taking a less powerful position and providing Māori with a degree of self-determination is challenging (Berryman, 2008). However, many leaders who have been able to position themselves as listeners and responders rather than speakers and directors have found that engaging within a culturally responsive pedagogy of relations can eliminate assumptions and help them to really come to know and understand who their Māori stakeholders are and how they can better serve them in order to ensure that their Māori students can achieve and enjoy education success as Māori.

Conclusion

It has been seven decades since my grandmother attended school, over two decades since I attended school and over a decade since Bishop and Berryman (2006) spoke to Māori students about their experiences of mainstream education, indicating that in over 70 years of education in New Zealand mainstream schools, little—if anything—has changed for Māori students. However, evidence from Te Kotahitanga holds much promise that the next 70 years of mainstream education could potentially look considerably different. In schools where culturally responsive pedagogy of relations is being implemented there is much evidence to indicate that Māori students can achieve education success and crucially they can achieve this secure in their identity as Māori. Although Te Kotahitanga has been a focused intervention in secondary schools, the theoretical framework can be applied across other sectors for mainstream practitioners who are committed to addressing the systemic failure that the Minister of Education is so concerned about.

Therefore, in response to the invitation proposed in Me Kōrero, “What works well for Māori learners so that they are able to enjoy and achieve education success and be proud and happy being who they are as Māori” (Ministry of Education, 2012b, p. 30), I would suggest that classrooms and schools that reflect a culturally responsive pedagogy of relations are the means by which this vision can be achieved. In such schools teachers and school leaders interrogate where power is located and understand how and why it needs to be shared, particularly with Māori students and their whānau and communities who for so long have held little power in mainstream systems.

For too long Pākehā culture has dominated, thus preventing many Māori students from being able to bring their own cultural toolkit into the learning context. Repositioning power to create metaphorical and literal spaces so that Māori can determine their own “values their identity, language and culture” (Ministry of Education, 2013, p. 6) represents the critical challenge for mainstream educators who are serious about developing a high-performing education system where disparities between Māori and non-Māori no longer exist. I understand from my own work with school leaders that repositioning power is difficult. However, our educational history is testimony that with little power to be self-determining, Māori students are unlikely to achieve or enjoy education success as Māori.

On a personal and professional level I know the cost of having one’s cultural identity compromised and, where I have agency and influence, I am committed to doing

what I can to make this aspiration a reality for my own children and for others. I challenge other mainstream educators to do the same.

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