

Student Voice: Understanding the Implications

Being able to contribute to the success of others

In an education system that focuses on individual success, these Māori students were clear that for them, success wasn't just about personal success. They expressed an obligation and a willingness to support the success of others by contributing to the success and motivation of other Māori students and Māori in general.

- As Māori you want everyone to be there with you to help you along the way, and to help them along the way. You don't just want to succeed for yourself but you're taking everyone with you.
- I am doing it because I want to give back to my community. I think that's what our goal in life is just to give back.
- It's not the achievement itself; it's what happens afterwards - being able to provide and give back to the people who have helped and supported you along the way.

For this student the focus on contributing to others was an important part of Māori cultural values and therefore Māori identity.

- Doing the best that you can do academically, still holding on to who you are as a Māori person. Not just thinking of yourself and your immediate whānau; thinking of your whole iwi, your whole rohe, all your people; wanting to help others, but holding on to who you are.

A number of students explained how their schools already had some effective and enduring mechanisms to foster learning relationships between students. These relationships persisted beyond school entry orientation procedures.

- I'm a part of the tuakana-teina (older-younger sibling) system, where you aspire to be a good role model for our younger students, and for all cultures. There are no barriers.

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- We have a tuakana-teina set up. When I was little I was set up with a tuakana, and they would guide me and help me and advise me, and it was so cool. Tuakana help you through school with everything, like sports or education. They just help you. Now that I'm older, I'm a tuakana and I've got a teina, and helping them and giving them that support, it's such a cool way to promote success and whanaungatanga. It's... it's just so awesome

Evidence in a number of the senior Māori students' comments showed that they saw their leadership roles as providing an opportunity to 'give back'.

- As a leader for next year, one of my main goals is to bring a lot more Māori students along the journey to success with me. I like to encourage it - to tautoko (support) it any way I can.

From a Māori worldview, being able to contribute to the success of others comes from a position of understanding that success, be it knowledge and/or skills, is not something that is acquired by an individual alone. Indeed, when such a state has been achieved, it has usually been achieved through a space of shared endeavour or mahi tahi. While Māori students are often incorrectly cited as being embarrassed or whakamā when they are singled out for their achievements this could come down to how we as educators sometimes model and undertake these processes ourselves.

The students interviewed shared their stories of success with great humility, but were definitely proud of their own achievements and the achievements of others. They understood their own success had come with support and they in turn had a responsibility to pass that support onto others.

They understood that when you as an individual receive success it comes with the responsibility of *paying it forward* - and they welcomed the opportunities to do this.

Activating our own agency by engaging others

Manaaki atu, manaaki mai, me haere whakamua.

By helping one another we can move forward

The cultural relationship within tuakana/teina provides a mechanism for *paying it forward*.

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- What do we understand by this cultural relationship?
- Where could we find out more about it?
- What does/could that look like in our school?
- How could we actively encourage tuakana teina relationships to endure?

View the [Roopu Tautoko](#) video in the Cultural Identity video kete and watch the videos in the [Leadership video kete](#).

Consider:

- what do the institutions for celebrating success look like in our school?
- To what extent do these institutions address the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi?
- How are the schools' responses understood by Māori students and their community?
- What are the implications for other cultural groups?

see: [all student comments on this theme](#)