

## Student Voice: Understanding the Implications

### Being able to resist the negative stereotypes about being Māori

The students were very aware of negative stereotypes expressed through societal racism that are held by members of wider society in regard to Māori. This continues to influence Māori education success (or lack of success).

- People saying stuff like Māori can't do this, can't do that, it's just heart-breaking, because we do have a lot of Māori achievers within New Zealand. It's really good knowing when you have done something and you've done your culture proud.
- It feels good to prove other people wrong when they're stuck thinking that because we're Māori we can't achieve in an academic world and we can only achieve in visual arts and nothing related to English and careers and science and technology. Everyone is capable of anything we set our mind to.
- Everyone knows we have this stereotype - that we're not as high achievers as anyone else in our world today. Yesterday, this actually happened to me. Someone came into work and when I was serving them they pretty much told me that Māori can't achieve, that they're not successful people. And it really hurt me. I want to prove that stereotype wrong.

For these students it was important to actively resist and overcome those negative stereotypes, to prove that Māori are capable, and to also become role models for other Māori students.

- There's a hope for the Māori generations [to] become something more than everyone's stereotypes for Māori students... it brings hope just to see that we can actually make a difference from what everyone actually thinks.

This student articulated that strong Māori identity was something that could support success rather than being something, as perceived by wider society, that contributes to lack of success by Māori.

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- A lot of people think being Māori is trying to work against something, but if you're Māori you're working with your whole culture, you have your ancestors your family, they're all behind you, being Māori is something that will support you, not something that you have to fight against.

### **Activating our own agency by engaging others**

*E kore taku moe e riro i a koe.*

*My dream cannot be taken by you*

- What about these quotes is familiar to you? Why?
- What about these quotes surprises you? Why?

When we consider what students have told us about being able to resist the negative stereotypes about being Māori, what are the implications for:

- leaders and teachers in the school?
- Other students? Māori and non-Māori?
- Family and home community?
- The wider community

Consider

- what might an effective response to the negative stereotyping look like?
- What is the role of schools to spread shared-understandings and more effective responses so that Māori students do not have to reject negative stereotyping on their own?

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

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