

Pungaru School: Tamaiti Ora Final Report

Te Rau Puāwai provided \$20,000 to employ a Pou Whirinaki – a connector- to work in collaboration with ākonga/students, whanāu, kaiako/teachers, and hapori/community to re-engage tamariki who have disengaged from school, through place based and Mātauranga Maori learning.

Key points:

- The kaupapa of the programme is to get the tamariki to believe in themselves, to believe that a different reality is possible, that they are believed in and that each has their own kite of knowledge and skills which may not be acknowledged in the current education curriculum.
- Whakataukī are often used to as words of encouragement and to build aspirations in the tamariki.
- Activities have included community work such as helping farmers, kapa haka, camping.
- Of the 9 tamariki in the programme, 5 have successfully re-engaged and are now attending school every day, 2 are still on the programme and 2 have left school and the Principal is still searching for them.
- Teacher aides and other additional support are given to the tamariki within the classroom.
- The role of a Pou Whirinaki -connector- to build trust with tamariki and whānau is essential- most parents and whānau are now coming to parent /teacher interviews
- The programme goal has been achieved for all but 2 of the ākonga on the programme *-95% attendance of our priority students, not necessarily at kura but in place based learning activities within our community and based on needs. Whanau feeling valued and supported by the school.*
- Methamphetamine use is having a huge impact on some whānau with disengaged, absent parents, some who have neglected and “normalised” developmental issues e.g a 7 year old who has virtually no oral language.

Next Steps:

- Continuing to partner with other agencies such as counselling, vocational pathways.
- Continuing to access funding , including outside the education and philanthropic sector, e.g. Regional Council. This is a real challenge - *We do often pay from our own pockets, to get the best for our students.*
- Concern for a group of younger tamariki at substantial risk and how to keep them safe.