

# Capability, Wellbeing and Engagement:

*Effective practices in the South Auckland Catholic  
Schools  
Kahui Ako.*



**Research  
2019**

# Context

The South Auckland Catholic Schools Community of Learning (CoL) has now been active for 2 years. The focus has been on raising student achievement in Literacy and Maths and raising achievement levels in NCEA level 2. In particular, the targeted approach was to raise achievement in these areas for Boys as well as Pasifika and Maori learners.

Approaches included the use of inquiry, development of student agency, digital literacy and fluency, growth of collaborative teaching practice within and across CoL schools as well as effective coaching and mentoring practices for leaders of learning.

Achievement outcomes resulting from the focus was varied, showing improvement in different areas and across different levels within schools and across schools. Teacher and learner capability grew and overall, results from data gathered and feedback from schools led to the general consensus that the process had been beneficial.

On reflection and in planning for the future direction, the CoL Principals identified areas of development that would align and address needs more specific to individual school's goals. These needs and the resulting direction for CoL support and development fell within the areas of Wellbeing, Engagement, and Capability, including Digital capability.

This research document firstly provides feedback from the responses of the initial survey that was conducted with CoL Principals and Senior Leaders at the beginning of this year. The Across Schools Lead Teachers (ASLT) then visited each CoL school and met with Principals and Senior Leaders to gather and document examples of best practice within the three key areas as well as identify areas of need. In the second part of this document, the ASLT team examine each key area by discussing relevant research and their findings of best practice from across the CoL. To conclude, suggestions have been made for possible areas for future focus as well as recommended further reading.

# Initial Survey

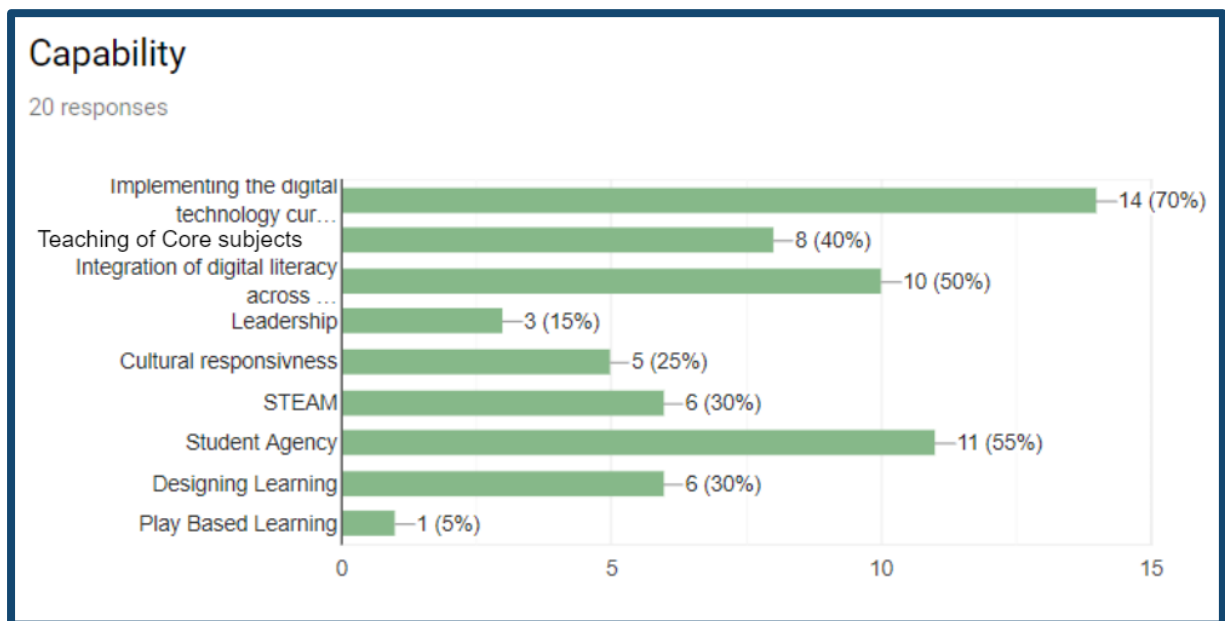
An initial survey was set by the ASLT Team and completed by all CoL Principals and Senior Leaders at the beginning of 2019. There were 21 responses received and this feedback has helped to inform the strategic direction of the CoL for the next two years.

The survey asked the Principals and Senior Leaders to identify key elements of support they would like for their schools under the areas of **engagement**, **capability** and **wellbeing**.

## Capability

The initial survey conducted, asked principals and senior leaders to identify areas of need in a series of options which included: Implementing the Digital Technology curriculum, teaching and learning in the core subject areas, integration of digital literacy across the curriculum, leadership, cultural responsiveness, STEAM, student agency, and designing learning.

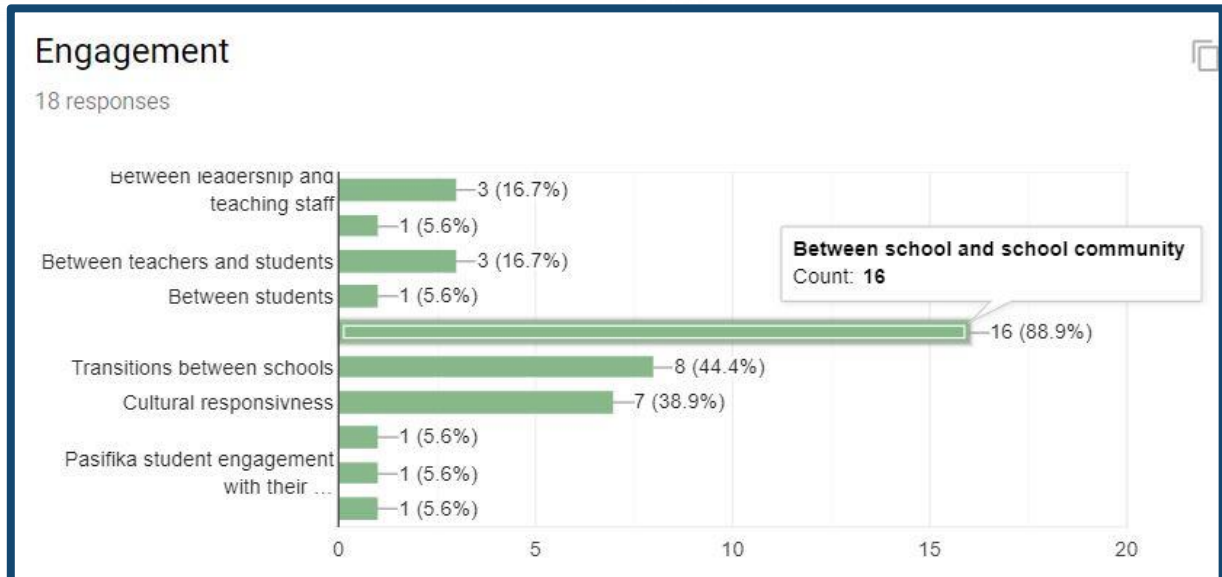
The area that was identified as an area in need for support was *Implementation of the Digital Technology curriculum*. This was followed by *Student Agency* and *Integration of Digital Literacy across the curriculum and Teaching of the Core Subjects*. Follow up interviews looked at successful processes and practices and sought clarification of needs



## Engagement

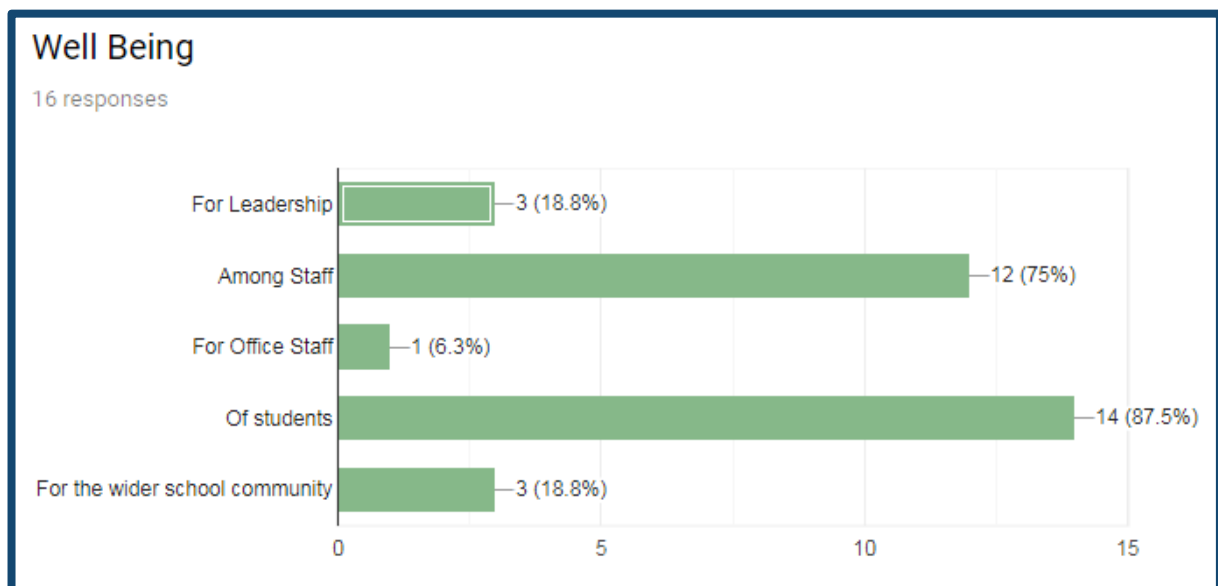
The initial survey conducted asked principals and senior leaders to identify areas of need in a series of options which included engagement between: leadership and teaching staff, staff, teachers and students, students, school and school community as well as transition between schools and cultural responsiveness

The area that was most clearly identified as an area of need from the responses gathered was engagement *between school and school community*, followed by *transitions between schools* and cultural responsiveness. Follow up interviews looked at successful processes and practices and sought clarification of needs.



## Wellbeing

The initial survey conducted asked principals and senior leaders to identify areas of need in a series of options which included wellbeing for leadership, among staff, for office staff, of students and for the wider school community. The area that was most clearly identified as an area of need from the responses gathered was the wellbeing *of students* followed closely by the wellbeing *of staff*. Follow up interviews looked at successful processes and practices and sought clarification of needs.



# Capability

By December 2020 our teachers are ready and equipped to deliver the digital technology strand of the Technology Curriculum. Digital Technology will support the delivery of the wider school curriculum.

## What is Capability?

Capability in teaching and learning stems from a clear understanding of the processes for effective practice and learning opportunity. Capable teachers use an inquiry approach to inform teaching strategies and learning opportunities and enter into professional learning conversations to develop this. Capable teachers take full responsibility for the achievement of their students, understanding and knowing their learners in their unique environment.

In order to meet the needs of a changing working landscape, teachers need to be able to provide an integrated, innovative curriculum linked to learner's lives and experiences with students fully involved. Teachers need to have the capability to develop skills and competencies in their learners to be agentic in how, what and when they learn. Digital capability is fundamental in achieving these aims within the current world people live in.

[Leading Innovative Learning in Schools](#) (ERO, 2018), note the "Imperatives for Change" (p.8), stating:

*When today's students leave school they will enter a rapidly changing world. More than ever, academic success and personal competencies will be the key to their future success. Most students now have ready access to a vast amount of information on the internet but they have to learn to make sense of what they find, examine it critically, and use it appropriately and wisely. The demands imposed by both rapid change and ever-expanding knowledge have major implications for educators, who are responsible for helping students develop the attributes they need to thrive in such a world (p.8).*

Based on the responses from the initial survey conducted, four areas significant to growing capability in a school setting will be discussed. These are inquiry, collaboration, pedagogical knowledge/curriculum design and delivery, and styles of learning.



# Best Practice

## Inquiry

Inquiry underpins capable teachers and successful outcomes for learners. [Teaching approaches and strategies that work](#) (ERO, 2017), mention teachers who develop a cycle of review, consultation and action to inform and mould effective practice are more likely to see improvement in effective teaching practices and achievement of learners - This involves being assessment capable with relevant data, considerate of current research to inform and support teaching, having clarity in actions to take forward, and being consistent in monitoring progress to inform review. Many schools across the South Auckland Catholic Schools CoL have embedded practices of systematic inquiry, informing and directing classroom teaching of priority learners, through to the strategic direction for school-wide development. Effective practice is evident with systems of coaching and mentoring established or being developed to support teacher's growth and development and targeted teaching practice to improve student outcomes.

## Collaboration

Capability relies on collaborative working relationships, which enables teachers and relevant stakeholders to share strengths, to grow knowledge and skills and to develop supportive networks. [Teaching approaches and strategies that work](#) (ERO, 2017), notes that



working collaboratively recognizes the collective responsibility for the learner at the centre and strives to ensure best practice is applied. [Leading Innovative Learning in Schools](#) (ERO, 2018), highlights effective collaborative practices to plan and deliver, or accelerate and extend learning, with the shared responsibility being seen as a support for students who were interviewed. The literature review [Supporting Pasifika Literacy Education in New Zealand](#) (Falconer, 2017), links relevant research, identifying the importance of home-school partnerships along with connections to develop a culturally responsive pedagogy to grow student success. A number of schools in the CoL have made collaboration a focus, developing practice within and between teaching teams, and reviewing and strengthening practices with whanau and across leadership levels. Schools have looked at ways to grow collaborative practices across the CoL with teachers and leaders in similar roles. There is a strength evident of teachers undertaking professional learning conversations, with an openness to grow and learn from the skills and capabilities within their own working environments and across the CoL.

## Pedagogical knowledge, and curriculum design and delivery

Strengths in teacher capability stem from sound pedagogical knowledge of content and process. This involves understanding the curriculum and educational practices in order to develop necessary key competencies and skills in preparation for a modern workforce. [Supporting future-oriented learning and teaching - a New Zealand perspective](#) (Bolstad, Gilbert, McDowall, Bull, Boyd & Hipkins, 2012), highlights the importance of authentic learning contexts, linked to the wider world, in a responsive curriculum connected to individual interests and needs. [Keeping children engaged and achieving through rich curriculum inquiries](#) (ERO, 2018) builds on this, noting opportunities



be provided for a broad education, capturing the diversity of learners' culture and interests, with community involvement in design and implementation. Learning areas are integrated within a relevant, localized and personalized inquiry-based programme. Leaders support and strengthen effective teacher capability in curriculum understanding and delivery through the provision of guidelines and planning formats that are coherent and uniform and provide for professional development and systems of mentorship.

## Styles of learning and learning opportunity

Effective teacher capability recognizes learning styles and opportunity that prepare students for a future in an ever changing technological age and variable working landscape. [The Nature of Learning. Practitioner Guide](#) (Dumont, Istance & Benavides, 2016), stresses the necessity for the development of skills and mind set for self-directed and lifelong learning, evident through the curriculum, environment and learning experiences. Teachers need to develop student “adaptive expertise” (pg3) with students experiencing a combination of guided, action and experiential learning, leading to positive achievement outcomes. [The 7 Principles of Learning](#) (TKI, 2016), emphasize design and approach which takes into account the position of the learner, the social nature of learning and development of

metacognitive capability, enabling students to develop effective learning pathways and be actively involved and agentic in choices around curriculum design and delivery. [The assessment-capable teacher: Are we all on the same page?](#) (Booth, Hill & Dixon, 2014), identifies the importance of key formative assessment practices, to grow necessary assessment capability as part of developing learner agency. [Teaching approaches and strategies that work](#) (ERO, 2017), notes effective teaching develops learning opportunity which is both practical and digitally based, cooperative, inquiry focused and growing out of interests and prior knowledge. Furthermore, a common language of learning exists within schools which students are supported to learn and is consistent across levels.



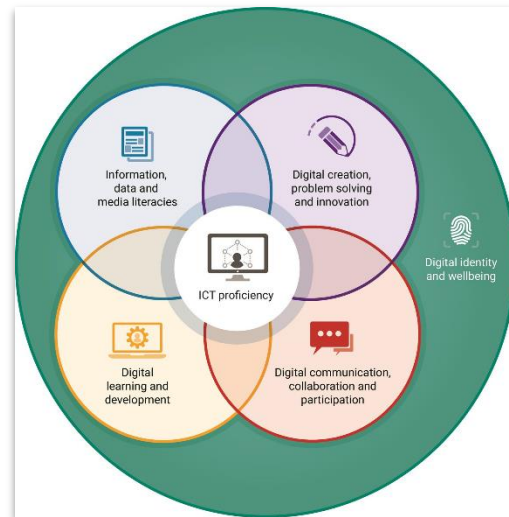


# Digital Capability

*By December 2020 our teachers are ready and equipped to deliver the digital technology strand of the Technology Curriculum. Digital Technology will support the delivery of the wider school curriculum.*

## What is Digital Capability?

**Digital capability** is the term we use to describe the skills and attitudes that individuals and organisations need if they are to thrive in today's world. At an individual level we define digital capabilities as those which equip someone to live, learn and work in a digital society. At an organisational level we need to look beyond the capabilities of individuals and consider the extent to which the culture and infrastructure of an institution enables and motivates digital practices.



With the increased importance of technology in society, **digital literacy** is gaining recognition as the most valuable tool for lifelong learning. Society has changed over the last 15 years. It has become increasingly important to continue education after entering the workforce. The influence of technology on business is the main reason for this new mandate.

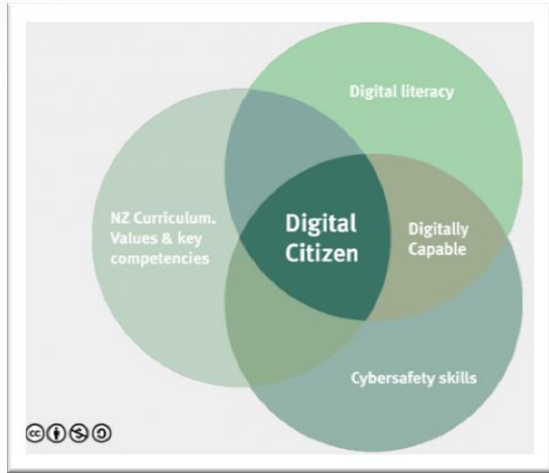


The integration of **Digital technologies into the New Zealand Curriculum** is a response to the need to ensure that our children are growing up prepared to navigate an ever increasing digital society, as well as equipping them with the essential skills to not simply be consumers of content, but creators as well.

## Digital literacy and Digital Fluency.

Digital literacy and digital fluency describe students' capability in using digital technologies to achieve desired learning outcomes. While a digitally literate person may know **how** to use digital technologies and **what** to do with them, the overall desired outcome for our students is for them to be able to decide **when** to use specific digital technologies to achieve their desired outcome and be able to articulate **why** the tools they are using will provide their desired outcome.

According to [Miller and Bartlett \(2012\)](#) the essence of digital fluency is to make core critical thinking and information literacy skills relevant to the new challenges of the digital environment. While this may include teaching students the ins and outs of creating digital content using a variety of apps, it must also include a focus on the need to critically reflect on information shared across the Internet (to avoid deception, whether deliberate or not) and equipping them with the skills and knowledge to interact safely and responsibly as members of a digital society.

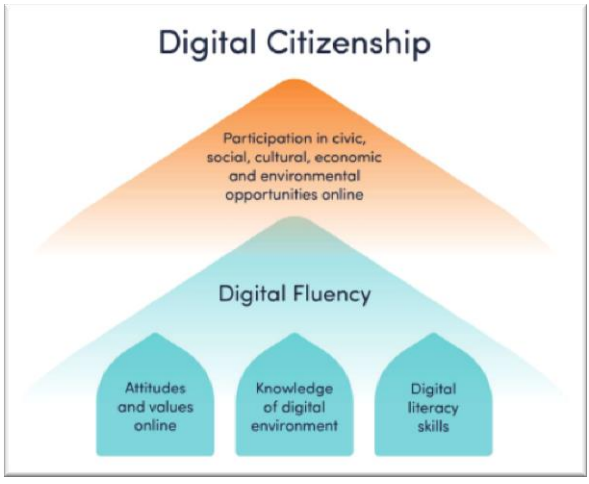


### Digital Citizenship.

**"A *digital citizen* understands the rights and responsibilities of inhabiting cyberspace."**

While digital technology has opened up significant opportunities for learners to develop new understandings and skills as well as providing new learning networks in which to do so, it has also opened them up to significant risk and harm. As with all societies, it is essential there be set expectations for their citizens on what constitutes acceptable levels of use and behaviour. The Internet is no exception. The unique ability of the Internet, to bring the world right into the immediate sphere of our learners, also brings with it a number of unfettered dangers. Attempting to shield our children simply by blocking access to certain sites may provide them with temporary protection while in monitored systems such as in our schools, however without bringing awareness and deliberate focus on how to manage their interactions while online, we put our children at risk. While risk factors are more often perceived as online predation, some of the greater risk factors to our children are due to the

[addictive nature of digital technology](#). It is essential while working with digital technologies, that learners be made aware of the physical, emotional and psychological impact that digital technology can have on everyday life and develop strategies to ensure one can lead a balanced life.



Digital citizenship combines the confident use of:

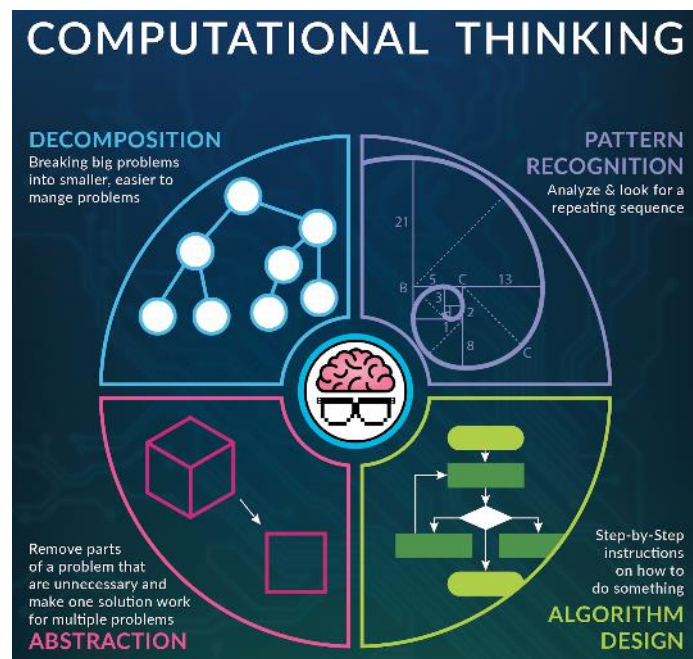
- **skills and strategies** to access technology to communicate, connect, collaborate, and create
- **attitudes, underpinned by values** that support personal integrity and positive connection with others
- **understanding and knowledge of the digital environments and contexts** in which they are working, and how they integrate on/offline spaces.

And then, critically, for students to have the ability to **draw on this competency of "digital fluency"** to participate in life-enhancing opportunities (social, economic, cultural, civil) and achieve their goals in ways that make an important difference.

### Computational Thinking (CT) for Digital Technologies

The introduction of CT into the curriculum aims to equip students with core programming concepts and a knowledge of how to take advantage of the capabilities of computers, so that they can become creators of digital technologies, not just users. In being able to understand what computers can and cannot do, students are able to design solutions to problems utilising digital systems which they have deduced to be the best fit for the task and can be used over again, despite some differences in details.

Take for example when designing a system solution to making toast. Under the category of abstraction, the brand of bread is an unnecessary detail in coming up with one solution on how to make toast and therefore is not included in the final algorithm.



## Designing and developing digital outcomes

**“Designing and developing digital outcomes** is about understanding that digital systems and applications are created for humans by humans, and developing knowledge and skills in using different digital technologies to create digital content across a range of digital media. This part of the curriculum also includes learning about the electronic components and techniques used to design digital devices.” [Nikki Kaye \(2017\)](#).



In this area, students understand that digital applications and systems are created for humans by humans. They develop increasingly sophisticated understandings and skills for designing and producing quality, fit-for-purpose, digital outcomes. They develop their understanding of the technologies people need in order to locate, analyse, evaluate and present digital information efficiently, effectively and ethically. This requires students to combine digital fluency with a developed sense of digital citizenship; being able to

demonstrate an awareness of the ethical and legal rights and responsibilities that one has when using information from and creating information for a range of digital platforms such as the web.



# Effective teacher capabilities

## Across the South Auckland Catholic Schools CoL

- All schools show processes involving professional learning conversations and inquiry practices with a number of schools using coaching and mentoring processes to support teacher growth.
- There is a growing strength in collaborative practice among teachers and with stakeholders within schools and across the CoL. This is evident in the planning and delivery of the curriculum, organisation of learning environments and sharing of learning styles, and in professional discussions around meeting student needs. All schools have targeted programmes to meet learning needs of students for support and acceleration.
- All schools show capability in delivering the curriculum with provision being made in many schools for teachers to develop skills and capability in innovative teaching practice. Growth in capability is evidential through outcomes from school-based PLD opportunities, including ALiM, Collaborative practice and DMIC.
- There is a growing development and provision of innovative learning opportunities with connections to the local community and real-world challenges. Learner agency continues to be developed with pockets of strength. Examples include; student-led goal setting conferences, formative practices in the learning environment, student-led learning initiatives.
- Digital literacy and fluency continues to develop with many schools having capable teachers and students using a variety of digital tools and mediums for learning and communicating effectively within different curriculum areas.



Areas identified by schools within the CoL for future support, growth, and development

- To continue growing collaborative practice and supportive networks across the COL. In particular, at leadership levels.
- To develop an online network to share practice and support across the levels of teaching across the CoL.
- To support inquiry and development of an inquiry-based integrated curriculum - STEM practices, RE integration.
- To support inquiry into Design for Learning - the big picture. How are we designing, developing, implementing and reviewing our curriculum?
- To work with schools in the CoL with the implementation of the digital technologies curriculum and its integration across the curriculum.
- To integrate new digital technologies in a culturally responsive way, in order to avoid a digital monoculture.
- Develop opportunities for staff and students to learn about the importance of developing safe and healthy behaviours when it comes to the use of digital technologies in and out of the classroom.
- To support all schools to effectively implement the digital technologies curriculum and its integration across the curriculum.



## Further Readings

[Raising Achievement through Targeted Actions \(ERO, 2015\)](#)

[The Nature of Learning: Using research to inspire practice \(OECD, 2010\)](#)

[Journal of Initial Teacher Inquiry \(UC, 2017\)](#)

[Keeping children engaged and achieving in mathematics \(ERO, 2018\)](#)

[Keeping children engaged and achieving in reading \(ERO, 2018\)](#)

[Innovative Learning Environments \(OECD, 2013\)](#)

[Collaboration in Practice: Insights into implementation \(ERO, 2019\)](#)

[Evaluation at a glance: A decade of assessment in New Zealand Primary Schools - Practice and trends \(ERO, 2018\)](#)

# References

- Arden-Close, E., McAlaney, J., & Ali, R. (n.d.). Digital addiction: how technology keeps us hooked. Retrieved May 9, 2019, from The Conversation website: <http://theconversation.com/digital-addiction-how-technology-keeps-us-hooked-97499>
- Bolstad, R., Gilbert, J., McDowall, S., Bull, A., Boyd, S., & Hipkins, R. (2012). Supporting future-oriented learning & teaching — a New Zealand perspective (Report). Wellington, New Zealand: Ministry of Education New Zealand.
- Booth, B., Hill, M.F., & Dixon, H. (2014). The assessment-capable teacher: Are we all on the same page? *Assessment Matters*, 6, 137-157.
- Digital citizenship / Teaching / enabling e-Learning - enabling eLearning. (n.d.). Retrieved May 9, 2019, from <http://elearning.tki.org.nz/Teaching/Digital-citizenship>
- DTCP1701-Digital-Technologies-Hangarau-Matihiko-ENG.pdf. (n.d.). Retrieved from <https://education.govt.nz/assets/Documents/Ministry/consultations/DT-consultation/DTCP1701-Digital-Technologies-Hangarau-Matihiko-ENG.pdf>
- Dumont, H., Istance, D., Benavides, F. (2012). The Nature of Learning. Using research to inspire practice. Practitioner Guide. OECD.
- Education Review Office. (2017). Teaching approaches and strategies that work. He rautaki whakaako e whai hua ana. Keeping children engaged and achieving in the upper Primary School. Wellington, New Zealand: New Zealand Government.
- Education Review Office. (2018). Leading Innovative Learning in New Zealand Schools. Wellington, New Zealand: New Zealand Government.
- Education Review Office. (2018). Keeping children engaged and achieving through rich curriculum inquiries. Wellington, New Zealand: New Zealand Government.
- Falconer, P. (2017). Supporting Pasifika Literacy Education in New Zealand. *Journal of Initial Teacher Inquiry*, 3, 28-31.
- Miller, C., & Bartlett, J. (2012). 'Digital fluency': towards young people's critical use of the internet. *Journal of Information Literacy*, 6(2). Retrieved from [https://www.academia.edu/2263638/Miller\\_C.\\_and\\_Bartlett\\_J.\\_2012.\\_Digital\\_fluency\\_towards\\_young\\_people\\_s\\_critical\\_use\\_of\\_the\\_internet.\\_Journal\\_of\\_Information\\_Literacy\\_6\\_2\\_pp.\\_35-55](https://www.academia.edu/2263638/Miller_C._and_Bartlett_J._2012._Digital_fluency_towards_young_people_s_critical_use_of_the_internet._Journal_of_Information_Literacy_6_2_pp._35-55)
- Te Kete Ipurangi. (2016). The 7 principles of learning. Retrieved from: <https://nzcurriculum.tki.org.nz/Curriculum-resources/NZC-Online-blog/The-7-principles-of-learning>

# Engagement

*Using effective engagement practices to improve outcomes for all – by 2020 we will have gauged, can measure and track engagement through the community to deliver best practice across all schools.*

## What is Engagement?

The term engagement suggests clearly that a relationship or partnership must exist between two or more parties. Engagement in education can be viewed similarly. What kinds of engagement are considered most educationally powerful? The connections that value, affirm and acknowledge that in order to improve student outcomes, reciprocal partnership and collaboration between the learner, families and the school - must exist. It is also important that effective communication supports and strengthens relationships and that community collaboration enriches opportunities for students to become confident, connected, actively involved, lifelong learners.

Engagement is evident across education. The values of whakamana, manaakitanga, pono and whanaungatanga that underpin the [Code of Professional responsibility and standards for the teaching profession](#) can be considered as the underlying values of engagement in schools. Relationships exist between leadership and teaching staff, teachers and students, students and other students, teachers and parents as well as the school and wider community.



[The School leadership and student outcomes: Identifying what works and why Best Evidence Synthesis](#) (Robinson, Hohepa and Lloyd, 2009) suggest that some kinds of engagement with families and communities can be counterproductive where schools invest considerable, time, energy and resources in activities and events that end up having minimal and sometimes even, a negative impact on student outcomes. A key reflection question for CoL schools is: what kinds of connections make the biggest difference?

Based on the responses from the initial survey conducted, three areas of engagement will be discussed as significant within educationally powerful connections. These are partnership, transition and cultural responsiveness.



## Partnership

There is a significant amount of literature surrounding home-school partnership. Three key factors can be summarised from the available research. The first key factor is the emphasis on the relationship and partnership between home and school. The terms relationship and partnership are used interchangeably in literature to describe the connection between home and school, however, in order for the partnership to be effective, significance is placed on effort from both parties. The second key factor is that the relationship between home and school must be focused on the learner and their needs. In the document [Building genuine learning partnerships with parents](#) (ERO, 2018), reports that many schools with successful partnership strategies improved student achievement by; having genuine learning partnerships, differentiated approaches to working with parents and, schools found specific ways in which to involve parents in their child's learning. The third key factor found to be common in research on engagement is the attempt from schools to limit and address potential barriers to successful home-school partnership. There are many complex factors to take into consideration when schools plan and set up parent meetings and interviews. Schools that are aware of the existing circumstances and backgrounds of their parents and



families, are more likely to succeed in engaging effectively for the sake of their learners.

Many Principals and senior leaders in our South Auckland Catholic CoL know their school and the school community and make every effort to connect and work in partnership with learners and their families. Strengths can be seen in the willingness of leaders to differentiate the way in which they connect with all parents and families as there is no one way that would suit everyone.

## Transition



Moving from early childhood education to school, from one school to another and onto further education or training can be challenging for a young person because every change comes with the need to become familiar with new people, practices and expectations. The document [Continuity of learning: transitions from early childhood services to schools](#) (ERO, 2016), found

considerable variability in the way in which schools supported children to transition to school. This document looked firstly at how early childhood services support children as they approach transition to school. This document then discussed how school leaders and teachers support children as they settle into school. In this research, the leaders in schools where the children experienced smooth transitions laid the foundation for success but also they emphasised that critical elements to succeed were in place. These were:

- They built strong relationships around the children
- They developed a curriculum that placed the children at the centre, focusing on them as individuals and providing them with a relevant learning, targeted to their needs.
- They constantly reviewed transition processes and outcomes for children - which led to the refinement of transition policies and practices.

Many schools in our South Auckland Catholic CoL have induction processes and specific procedures to ensure that learners are welcomed into their school community. Most schools regularly review their transition processes and refine the way in which both students and their families are received and monitored throughout their



schooling journey. A few schools have identified and targeted transition as an area of focus for their learners. Within the CoL, a strengthened collaborative approach to the process of transition and sharing of data could be of benefit for all. This highlights the importance of valuing transition as an ongoing process that is crucial to the successful continuity of learning for all students.



### Cultural responsiveness

There is a growing body of literature focussed on cultural responsiveness and culturally responsive pedagogy. Given the multicultural and diverse ethnic backgrounds of many learners in the South Auckland Catholic CoL, this pedagogical approach is

not only important but necessary. Cultural responsiveness pedagogy is understood and defined differently across the education sector within Aotearoa New Zealand. [Cultural relationships for responsive pedagogy](#) (2018), provide examples of how this exists in the

present day classroom through various interactions. This document discusses cultural relationships, responsive pedagogy and combining these two concepts together.

*“Dialogue within responsive pedagogy requires relationships in which risk taking is encouraged, where there is no shame in being a “not knower” and where it is understood that everyone brings with them knowledge, ways of knowing, and experiences of value to share” (p. 7).*



Berryman, Lawrence and Lamont (2018)

continue by suggesting that cultural responsiveness has come to be defined as being all about relationships when in fact, a cultural responsive approach considers the thinking behind the nature of these relationships. In the context of our South Auckland Catholic CoL, this is a particularly useful and valuable question to reflect on: how do we reflect on the nature of our relationships with students, parents and their families and ensure that we are being culturally responsive?

In another resource, [Tātaiako](#), Earl, Timperley and Stewart (2008), state that cultural responsiveness means *“interacting with their families to truly understand their reality; it means understanding the socio-political history and how it impacts on classroom life; it means challenging personal beliefs and actions; and it means changing practices to engage all students in their learning”* (p. 3)



Many schools are aware of the complex and changing needs of the very diverse communities within the CoL schools. Some schools have engaged with different initiatives and frameworks (see [Tapasā](#) and [Tātaiako](#)) as part of professional development to look at ways to connect with their learners and families. A strength across CoL schools can be found in the openness and willingness to meet learners and families' needs as a means to support and bring about the best outcomes for all.

## Across the South Auckland Catholic Schools CoL

- The way in which schools conduct their student learning conferences (SLCs) or academic counselling. These are well attended and focused on the student learning.
- Communication that is repeated and conducted through several different mediums in order to ensure the expectation of attendance to SLCs is clear.
- Most schools hold meetings/hui/fono for different ethnic groups. Many of these are conducted in the various languages.
- The way in which schools involve the Parish and Parish community to engage with families.
- The informal ways of connecting with families through sporting and cultural events is seen across all CoL schools. A meet-the-teacher picnic is common in some schools at the beginning of the year.
- The various digital platforms used to strengthen the partnership between home and school for learners. For example Seesaw, Edmodo, website, school apps, parent portal, ClassDojo, Google Classroom.
- Some schools ensure that the identity of the community is reflected in the physical environment of the school so that parents and families feel that they belong to the school.
- In one school, parents assist the staff by leading and facilitating workshops for parents. This enables parents to take greater ownership of workshops.

## Future focus

- Some schools commented that Pasifika families will attend for sporting/cultural events, but wondered, how can they get Pasifika parents in for the learning of their children?
- Continue to gather parent and community voice to inform strategies and processes in the school
- Consider a collaborative CoL wide approach to transition particularly from primary to secondary school
- Catering to the complex needs of families in terms of language, identity and culture

## Further reading

Educationally powerful connections with parents and whānau (ERO, 2015)

Teaching approaches and strategies that work (ERO, 2018)

In order to teach you, I must know you" The Pasifika initiative: A Professional development project for teachers (2008)

Responding to Language Diversity in Auckland (ERO, 2018)

Vocational pathways: authentic and relevant learning (ERO, 2016)

Partners in learning (ERO, 2016)

Secondary schools in 2018: Findings from the NZCER national survey (NZCER, 2018)

## References

Berryman, M., Lawrence, D., & Lamont, R., (2018). Cultural relationships for responsive pedagogy. *Set: Research information for teachers*, 1, 3-10.

Earl, L. M. with Timperley, H., and Stewart, G. (2008). Learning from QTR&D Programme: Findings of the External Evaluation

Education Review Office. (2018). Building genuine learning partnerships with parents. Wellington, New Zealand: Education Review Office.

Education Review Office. (2015). Continuity of learning: transitions from early childhood services to schools. Wellington, New Zealand: Education Review Office.

Ministry of Education. (2018). Tapasā: Cultural Competencies Framework for Teachers of Pacific Learners. Wellington, New Zealand: Ministry of Education

Ministry of Education. (2011). Tātaiako: Cultural Competencies Framework for Teachers of Māori Learners. Wellington, New Zealand: Ministry of Education

Robinson, V., Hohepa, M., & Lloyd, C. (2009). School leadership and student outcomes: Identifying what works and why. Best evidence synthesis iteration. Wellington, New Zealand: Ministry of Education.

# Wellbeing

By December 2020 all students, staff, and whanau feel valued and have a sense of belonging and purpose.

## What is Wellbeing?

The foundation of wellbeing is a positive school climate where all feel valued, actively participate and respect and care for each other. In this environment, a strong sense of pride and connectedness is fostered. ERO has identified four fundamental concepts to supporting student wellbeing which has the power to transform the learning environment for students. These concepts are manaakitanga, whanaungatanga, ako and mahi tahi (ERO, 2016).

The ERO document [Wellbeing for Success: A Resource for Schools](#) (ERO, 2016), states:

*Wellbeing is vital for student success. Student wellbeing is strongly linked to learning. A student's level of wellbeing at school is indicated by their satisfaction with life at school, their engagement with learning and their social emotional behaviour. It is enhanced when evidence-informed practices are adopted by schools in partnership with families and community. Optimal student wellbeing is a sustainable state, characterised by predominantly positive feelings and attitude, positive relationships at school, resilience, self-optimism and a high level of satisfaction with learning experiences (p. 4).*

Current data and trends highlight a nationwide concern for wellbeing. Core Education has identified wellbeing in their [Top 10 Trends of 2019](#) (CORE, 2019), highlighting our shockingly high youth suicide rates, with New Zealand having the second highest rate of workplace bullying in the developed world..

Based on the responses from the initial survey conducted, three areas of wellbeing will be discussed to grow wellbeing practice within a school and community setting. These are school wide and strategic level, deepening classroom practice and monitoring and reflecting.



Figure 1. *Wellbeing for Success: A Resource for Schools* (ERO, 2016. p. 6)

## School wide/strategic level

School leaders need to be trusted by students, staff and the wider community as well as students being kept at the centre of all decisions. Schools need to establish core values, mission statements and a vision in consultation with the school community that is linked to wellbeing. This in turn will form the basis of the school's culture and practices. Clear systems and frameworks are needed to actively monitor the wellbeing of students, staff and the wider community.



Educationally powerful connections and relationships need to be developed and strengthened between all members of the school community, where everyone feels safe, significant and has a strong sense of purpose. [Wellbeing for Success: Effective Practice](#) (ERO, 2016), notes the importance of developing student voice, student agency, and student leadership opportunities. Schools that focus on wellbeing develop personal skills (such as problem-solving

and conflict resolution), helping young people to build resilience in the face of life challenges. All schools across the South Auckland Catholic Schools CoL pride themselves on having positive relationships with their whanau and students and provide many opportunities for student leadership.

## Deepening classroom practice

Schools need to support a responsive, authentic curriculum where teachers provide rich tasks to ignite passion and curiosity in their students. A report from [New Pedagogies for Deep Learning, A Global Partnership: Wellbeing and Deep Learning: What we Know](#) (NPDL, 2019), identifies significant links between wellbeing and deep learning. Teachers need to provide a combination of choice, authenticity and wonder to engage student interest, facilitating rich learning experiences that engage students in relevant topics that ignite their curiosity.

Students are encouraged to engage in authentic tasks that focus on a deeper meaning that has a larger purpose than themselves. The report identified three key components necessary to improve wellness of students: students need to feel safe, to feel significant, and to feel a sense of purpose.



*What we know about Well-being: Connections to Deep Learning.*  
(NPDL, 2019)

Restorative practice plays a powerful part in establishing a strong positive culture, empowering students to lead, and take increasing responsibility for their actions. [Wellbeing for Young People's Success at Secondary School](#) (ERO, 2015), highlights the need to facilitate opportunities for students to develop in leadership roles and build on relationships with peers and adults that are based on mutual respect. Students must understand their goals and feel safe in their environments in order to learn and take risks and will therefore become “confident, connected, actively involved, and lifelong learners.” A number of schools in the CoL have made learner agency a focus last year, growing student capability to enable students to have more ownership of their learning pathways, in how, what and when they learn, as well as being able to articulate their learning goals and take risks.

“Manitoba Education, Citizenship and Youth suggests a ‘circle of care’ approach that places the student at the centre surrounded by layers of care – of which a guidance and counselling team is only one layer.” [Wellbeing for success: A Resource for Schools](#) (ERO, 2016).

### Monitoring and Reflecting

All students’ wellbeing needs to be actively monitored with clear systems in place, which are followed to respond to issues. [Wellbeing for Success: A Resource for Schools](#) (ERO, 2016), looks at how schools promote wellbeing and evaluates effectiveness by gathering whanau, teacher and student voice and analysing data as part of this process. [Pastoral care and pastoral care teams: a review to inform policy and practice in schools](#) (CDHB, 2018), identify key principles and frameworks of pastoral care in school settings, providing a table to consider pastoral care and next steps within a school setting. Many schools in our South Auckland Catholic CoL have robust systems or are in the process of reviewing and developing new programmes to help monitor and support student, staff and the communities’ wellbeing.



Figure 4. [Wellbeing for Success: A Resource for Schools](#) (ERO, 2016. p.

[The EAP Services](#) is an organisation to support school organisations to lift the wellbeing, development and performance of employees, and ensure the smooth running of businesses.

*“Our children’s wellbeing is central to their success as confident lifelong learners. Wellbeing is a concept that covers a range of diverse outcomes. In schools, it’s about young people playing an active role in their own learning and in developing healthy lifestyles.”* (ERO, 2015)



# Effective Wellbeing practices

## Across the South Auckland Catholic Schools CoL

- All schools focus on having a positive school culture for wellbeing and have clear values/visions/mission statements and strategic plans that underpin the schools Catholic Character. Students' wellbeing is at the centre of all decision making and the leadership teams reflect this in meetings and in minutes.
- All schools pride themselves in knowing their individual learners and having strong bonds with their communities with many having established bonds across generations of families and have a strong history and connection. Newer schools are in the process of developing this.
- Most schools conduct surveys to investigate the wellbeing of staff, students and communities. These surveys are completed annually and provide an insight to how the school is running in regards to feeling supported, safe and connected. These surveys can help identify key areas, year levels or groups that may need attention.
- All schools can identify wellbeing concerns within the school, staff and community and have some processes that are in place to respond to issues. Some schools have SWISS workers, nurses or councillors onsite to provide support for student, staff and communities wellbeing. This has been identified as being a great asset to the school as students are able to meet with these individuals and talk through issues and concerns.
- All schools have a variety of leadership opportunities for students to grow and take ownership within the school and community. Leadership roles provide students the opportunities to strive towards common goals and to be part of something bigger than themselves.
- Some schools run programmes that support and teach wellbeing. E.g. Mana potential, Mahi Tahi, KiVa and PB4L (Positive Behaviour for Learning) in schools.
- The physical wellbeing of students is addressed in a variety of ways across CoL schools with examples such as, breakfast clubs, fruit and milk in schools and free or ordered lunches when requested. A number of schools have community and board financial support to help address individual needs of students.
- There are a number of ways CoL Schools positively acknowledge staff members and students. Some of which include; special morning teas, acknowledgement in staff meetings or school assemblies, cookies, awards, secret angels, certificates from a teacher or principal, team or school wide prizes.



# Future Focus

Areas identified by schools within the CoL for future support, growth, and development

- To develop and share effective frameworks and systems that actively monitor and respond to wellbeing issues of staff, students and communities.
- To have clear systems that can identify who the families are in our community that we need to support and how we can actively monitor this.



## Further Reading

Wellbeing for Children's Success at Primary School (ERO, 2015)

Te Pakiaka Tangata Strengthening Student Wellbeing for Success (Ministry of Education, 2017)

Wellbeing and Mental Distress in Aotearoa New Zealand: Snapshot (Health Promoting Agency, 2016)

Positive Behaviour for Learning, School-wide (Ministry of Education, 2015)

Positive Behaviour for Learning, Restorative Practice (Ministry of Education, 2015)

Positive Behaviour for Learning, Incredible Years Programme (Ministry of Education, 2015)

Health Promoting Schools (Ministry of Health)

Wellbeing: The Five Ways to Wellbeing (Mental Health Foundation of New Zealand, 2019)

Bullying- preventing it and dealing with it (Ministry of Education, 2018)

Wellbeing for Success: a resource for schools, Improving wellbeing in your schools (ERO, 2016)

Preventing and responding to suicide: Resource Kit for Schools (Ministry of Education, 2013)

Ministry of Youth: Stand Up and Be Heard Toolkit (Ministry of Social Development, 2009)

## References

Community & Public Health, CDHB. (2018). Pastoral care and pastoral care teams: a review to inform policy and practice in schools. Retrieved from <https://www.cph.co.nz/wp-content/uploads/pastoralcareinschoolsettings.pdf>

Education Review Office. (2015). Wellbeing for Young People's Success at Secondary School. Wellington, New Zealand: Author

Education Review Office. (2016). Wellbeing for Success: A Resource for Schools. Wellington, New Zealand: Author

Education Review Office. (2016). Wellbeing for Success: Effective Practice. Wellington, New Zealand: Author

NPDL. (2019). What we know about Well-being: Connections to Deep Learning. Retrieved from <https://www.npdl.global/well-being-and-deep-learning-introduction/>

